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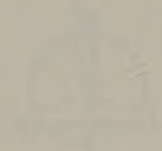






CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION

PAUL H. D. LANG



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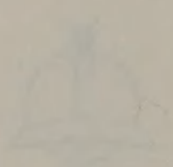


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PAUL B. JAY



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*To my daughters*

Janet (Mrs. Robert Temple)

Mary Margaret (Mrs. M. Clyde Day)



## Preface

WHEN THE EMINENT German Lutheran historian, Paul Graff, wrote his two-volume history of the Lutheran liturgy, he gave it the title: *Geschichte der Auflösung der alten gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands*, that is, The History of the Dissolution (Decay) of the Old (Original) Worship Forms in the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of Germany. He said that the history of the Lutheran liturgy is the history of its dissolution or degeneration.

This degeneration of the Lutheran liturgy began already in the 17th century. The Lutheran Church allowed herself to be influenced in succession by Zwinglianism, Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism. The story of the devastating influence which these forces exerted on the Lutheran liturgy is one of the saddest chapters in the history of the Lutheran Church. Even today, the Lutheran liturgy is still suffering the consequences of this history.

Fortunately the tide began to turn in about the middle of the 19th century. Men like Theodore Kliefoth and Wilhelm Loehe started a liturgical revival in the Lutheran Church. This revival gained momentum in later years through the efforts of Georg Rietschel, Emil Sehling, Julius Smend, Paul Drews, Leonhard Fendt, Hans Asmussen, Joachim Beckmann, Peter Brunner, Friederich Buchholtz, Friedrich Heiler, Theodor Knolle, Walter Lotz, Christhard Mahrenholtz, Karl Bernhard Ritter, Wilhelm Stählin, and others in Europe; and Conrad Bergendoff, Edward Horn, Henry Jacobs, Friedrich Lochner, Luther D. Reed, Paul Z. Strodach, and others in the United States.

Men like this have done a great deal to reclaim much of our Lutheran liturgical heritage. They have written valuable books and monographs on the history, theology, rites, and music of the Lutheran liturgy.

To our knowledge, however, little has been written on the ceremonial of the Lutheran liturgy.

It is our hope and prayer, therefore, that this book may contribute something to that phase of the Lutheran liturgy which is concerned about its ceremonies. May it help to promote the welfare of the church and the worship of God in and by the church, especially the Lutheran Church.

We thank Ann Hesselmeyer, who donated her time and skill to type and read the manuscript, and Roland Seboldt, who made valuable suggestions for its improvement.

St. Bartholomew the Apostle's Day,  
A. D. 1963

PAUL H. D. LANG  
*Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Palo Alto, California*



"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

*1 Thessalonians 5:21*

"Falsely are our (Lutheran) churches accused of abolishing the Mass (The Holy Communion Service); for the Mass is retained among us, and celebrated with the highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved."

*Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV*



## Definition of Liturgy

**A** BOOK on the ceremonial of the Lutheran liturgy will have to make clear, first of all, what is meant by liturgy.

As a result of the current liturgical revival in all branches of Christendom, the word liturgy is in common use, but it means different things to different people. To some it means only the order of service, or the rite, or the words which are used when a worship service is carried out. To others it means a type of church service which they call formal and regard as cold and unspiritual in contrast to one that they call informal and regard as spontaneous, emotional, and more spiritual. What, then, do we mean when we speak about liturgy?

### *Liturgy the Church's Worship*

By liturgy we mean the church's worship as distinguished from private, personal, and group devotions. It is true, of course, that private Christian worship cannot be dissociated from the church's worship. The church is the body of Christ and all true Christians are members of that body whether they participate in the church's worship or are engaged in private or group devotions. From the point of view of membership in Christ's body, the daily life and personal devotions of every Christian are part of the liturgy. St. Paul speaks of the liturgy from this viewpoint in Rom. 12:1, when he says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service (liturgy)."

But personal and group devotions, though not dissociated from the

church's worship, need not and may not be an expression of the worship of God by the universal church. If they are not such an expression, we call them private prayer and not liturgy. Liturgy is the worship of God by the universal church or by an individual Christian or a group of Christians as an expression of the church's official worship. Private prayers and group devotions which are not said or done as an expression of the church's worship are, of course, God-pleasing and good, but we do not call them liturgy.

### *Liturgy an Action*

The materials of liturgy include such things as history, theology, rites, rubrics, bodily movements, music, poetry, books, architecture, painting, sculpture, metalcraft, needlecraft, and vestments. Some or all of these things are included in the concept of liturgy. But they are not the liturgy. They are only the liturgical materials. It is not until Christians use these materials and do with them the church's worship or what is an expression of the church's worship that it is liturgy. Liturgy is essentially something that is done. In this respect it is like music. Musical instruments, notes, scores, and books are associated with music. But they are not music. They are only musical materials. There is no music until someone takes up a musical instrument and plays the notes. So it is with liturgy. An order of service written in a book is not liturgy, it is only a liturgical material. There is no liturgy until the order of service is done, is carried out. Liturgy is an action.

### *The Liturgy Christ's*

To say that the liturgy is something that is done, that it is an action, does not yet give us the deeper meaning of the liturgy. We have to ask: who does the liturgy, by whom is it done? Looked at from the outside, it is easy enough to see who does the liturgy. It is done by Christians, by church people. That is true, of course. But is that the full answer? Who is the real doer? Not until we have the answer to this question can we understand the deeper significance of the liturgy. It is precisely because the answer to this question was obscured that people came to look upon the liturgy as something done for them by the clergy and the musicians, and that in it, at least among Protestants and many Lutherans, they had no part except to listen to a sermon and sing a num-

### *Definition of Liturgy*

ber of hymns. The laity came to believe that they could go to church when they felt like it and when they came, they came to be instructed or prayed for or entertained by specialists in what they hoped might do something good for them. Often there was no intention of coming to do something themselves or to participate in an action to glorify God in the saving of souls and in the edifying of the body of Christ.

By whom is the liturgy done? The real actor in the liturgy is our Lord Jesus Christ. In the liturgy He continues His high-priestly office (Heb. 7—8). Together with Christ and through Him, the actor in the liturgy is the royal priesthood which is the body of Christ, the universal Christian church. From this deeper insight of the nature of the liturgy we can see how inadequate some definitions of the liturgy are. The liturgy is not the prescribed or authorized order of service of certain churches. It is not the manner in which some churches carry out their worship services. Such definitions fail to consider who it is that carries out the liturgy. The liturgy is an action by Christ and His body, the church. It is done by the congregation in church or by individuals or groups of Christians in the name of the universal church and as an expression of the church's worship.

To say that our Lord Jesus Christ is the chief actor in the liturgy is to say ultimately that the liturgy is carried out primarily by God, the Triune God. For Christ is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Trinity is inseparable. God is active in the liturgy through His Word and Sacraments as Creator, Savior, and Sanctifier. God in Christ and by the Holy Spirit has created the church, the new Israel, the royal priesthood, the ecclesia, the chosen people. Created and moved by God, the chief function of the church is to worship God, to do the liturgy. In the liturgy primarily the church "offers up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God," and shows forth the praises of Him who has called her out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:5, 9). Man's activity in the liturgy is that of response to God's activity. But even this response is initiated and motivated by God. When the church preaches the Gospel and administers the Sacraments, it is God who speaks and acts through the church for the salvation and sanctification of people. When the church offers her sacrifices to God, she offers them through Christ in the Holy Spirit to the praise and glorification of God. It is God who initiates and motivates the church's worship, the

liturgy. This church's worship or liturgy is the worship of God by, and in, and through Christ in union with the members of His body, the church. In this definition we see the deeper meaning of the liturgy and by it we protect the word liturgy against misunderstanding and improper use.

### Terminology

In modern scholarship the words liturgy, liturgics, liturgist, and liturgiologist are used in the following way. If anyone uses them in another sense, he should define his meaning.

Liturgy is the church's worship in distinction from private worship and group devotions.

Liturgics is the science or discipline of liturgy.

A liturgist is a person who does the liturgy.

A liturgiologist is a scholar or authority in liturgics or the field of liturgy.

According to this usage of the terms it would not be proper to apply the word liturgy to the rites and ceremonies of the church's worship or to use it when private prayer and group devotions are meant.

Likewise it is more accurate to call the clergyman who conducts the Holy Communion Service the celebrant, and the person who conducts the Preaching Service (Morning Service without Communion), or Matins, or Vespers, or any other minor service the officiant, rather than to call either one a liturgist. A minister of the Gospel who conducts a worship service is, of course, a liturgist, but so are also all other clergymen and laymen who participate in the service, and Christ Himself is the chief Liturgist. Since all true Christians are members of Christ's body and of the royal priesthood by whom, in and with Christ, the church's worship is carried out, they are all liturgists in that sense. The difference between clergymen and laymen is that, in addition to being a layman, the clergyman holds the office of the holy ministry and has the additional duties of that office to perform. Also among the laity some persons have special services to do, for example, organists, choir members, servers, ushers, and acolytes. But the liturgy is done together by the clergy and laity. Both are liturgists who have an obligation in doing the church's worship and to participate in it by doing their particular parts of the service.

### *Definition of Liturgy*

This point is brought out by Dom Gregory Dix in his book, *The Shape of the Liturgy*: "Writing at the close of Domitian's persecution, in the autumn of A. D. 96, S. Clement of Rome reminds the Corinthian church: 'Unto the high-priest (the celebrant-bishop) his special "liturgies" have been appointed, and to the priests (presbyters) their special place is assigned, and on the levites (deacons) their special "deaconings" are imposed, the layman is bound by the ordinance of the laity. Let each of you, brethren, make eucharist to God according to his own order, keeping a good conscience and not transgressing the appointed rule of his "liturgy."' (1 Clem. 40, 41). . . . Here in the first century the Eucharist is emphatically a corporate action of the whole Christian body, in which every order from the layman to the bishop has his own special 'liturgy,' without the proper fulfillment of each of which the worship of the whole Church cannot be fulfilled."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1949), pp. 1 f.

## Ritual and Ceremonial

**R**ITUAL and ceremonial are component parts of the liturgy. They are materials of the liturgy, the things involved in doing the liturgy. Since the terms ritual and ceremonial are often confused, it is desirable that we should have a clear idea of the exact meaning of these terms.

### *Ritual*

Ritual refers to that part of a divine service which consists of its words, that is, the rite or the order of service. For example, the rite or order of service of the Holy Eucharist, or Holy Baptism, or Confirmation, or Matrimony, or Burial, are rites in the ritual of the church. A book called Ritual contains the church's rites or printed order of services.

### *Ceremonial*

Ceremonial is everything connected with the performance of a rite. It refers not only to bodily expressions, such as speaking, singing, kneeling, bowing, making the sign of the cross, and the outward observance of the church year, but also to the ornaments, symbols, and material objects employed in the church's worship, for example, the church building, the altar, crucifixes, candles, and vestments. Ceremonies are solemn religious things and actions. All these are, as stated, included in the term ceremonial.



## *Ritual and Ceremonial*

### *Necessity of Rites and Ceremonies*

Rites and ceremonies are necessary in worship because, as Luther says, "We cannot live on earth without them." The only kind of worship imaginable without rites and ceremonies would be private worship which is entirely without intelligible words. As soon as words are used, spoken or unspoken, symbols are employed, for words are symbols, and symbols belong to ceremonial. Public worship cannot be unceremonial because it requires some form of communication and all forms of communication are ceremony. When people speak about unceremonial worship, it is not a question of ceremonies, but of informality and spontaneity. Even informal or spontaneous worship, however, must have some kind of form or ceremonial. The phrase so commonly used in so-called informal worship, "Shall we pray," is just as much a form as "Let us pray." A hymn is a form, even a prescribed form. So also are hymn tunes and the Lord's Prayer. In time even unprescribed, spontaneous forms become routine and then the worship is formal, ritualistic, or ceremonial. Such rites and ceremonies may differ from the traditional ones, but they are nevertheless ceremonial. Thus it is evident that rites and ceremonies are inevitably associated with worship, especially the church's worship, the liturgy. Man cannot get along without them.

The necessity of ceremonial is obvious also from the fact that man is composed of soul and body. Soul and body belong together and both belong to God. They are not separated so long as we live on earth. They are united to make a "soul," a person, and what affects the one affects the other. The body is the instrument of the soul in both directions, that of expression and impression. For example, when one smiles, it expresses friendliness and at the same time makes one feel friendly. The soul expresses itself through the body and the body is the instrument through which the soul is informed and moved. Even if religion is primarily a thing of the heart and will, it is at the same time also a thing of the body. "Therefore," says St. Paul, ". . . present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1)

The words of our Lord to the Samaritan woman, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24), have sometimes been used to condemn ceremonial worship. But in the context of St. John's Gospel these words "spirit and

truth" mean Holy Spirit (John 3:5, 6) and the truth revealed in Christ, the Word of God (John 1:1; 4:25). They do not refer to ceremonial worship. Christ said, of course, that the worship in the New Testament will no longer be confined to Jerusalem, but it would be reading something into the text to suppose that He condemned either ceremonial or the setting apart of places for Christian worship. What the words mean is that the worship of God, who is Spirit, must be done in the faith wrought by the Holy Spirit and must agree with the truth of the Word of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Any other interpretation would contradict Christ's own express ordinances, such as the sacrament of Holy Baptism and the Holy Communion, both of which involve prescribed words, actions, and material things. In other words, they are ceremonial.

Furthermore, without ceremonial it is impossible to accomplish fully the objectives of Christian worship. These objectives are the honor and glory of God for Himself and in the salvation and sanctification of men.

We cannot rightly honor God with our souls without glorifying Him for who and what He is in Himself and without acknowledging His claim upon our bodies as well as souls, material things, time, and talents. God is duly glorified by us only when we acknowledge that we belong to Him with all that we are and have, because He is our Creator and Redeemer. God is dishonored when we do not fear, love, and trust in Him above all else, but are selfish and use selfishly what He has given us. For example, He is dishonored by cheap, ill-kept churches and by bare, slovenly services when such things are due to selfishness. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" (Hag. 1:4). "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Ps. 96:8, 9). "Holiness" here does not only refer to the nature of God or to an inner quality of a Christian, but also to the expression of that quality in worship.

Neither can we convey the Gospel to others without ceremonial, or make our devotion to God known to them and so excite them to like devotion. The Gospel cannot be transmitted without various forms of communication and, as we have stated, all forms of communication belong to ceremonial. We must also not underestimate the necessity and value of ceremonial in helping to arouse proper feelings of reverence and

## *Ritual and Ceremonial*

piety and as an educational force. The Christian's faith is propagated, preserved, and stimulated by the use of ceremonial. In the Christian training of children, ceremonial is particularly necessary and important. Children learn through ceremonies. They love them, they live them, and they gain a lifelong impression from them. The divine proverb, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6), refers to this lifelong value. It is, therefore, also highly important that the right kind of ceremonial be employed in the Christian education of children and that the meaning of the ceremonies is explained to them. Both for adults and children ceremonial is necessary in the achievement of the objectives of Christian worship.

### *The Historical Consideration*

Whether or not our worship today should be of a ritualistic and ceremonial nature must be considered from the viewpoint of the type of worship which was practiced by the people of God in the past. We learn from the Bible that the worship of God's people in the Old Testament was highly ritualistic and ceremonial. God prescribed in detail the size, shape, and ornaments of the tabernacle and the temple. He designated the place of worship, the days, the festivals, and the seasons. He ordered the elaborate rites and ceremonies of the temple and its beautiful sacred vessels and vestments. None of these things were allowed to be changed or abolished. Of course, the ritual and ceremonial of the Old Testament had a prophetic and typical purpose in relation to the Messianic promises and the Mosaic covenant. It is legitimate, however, to conclude that the ritualistic and ceremonial type of worship which God ordained in the Old Testament represents a divine principle. It is the principle that God is pleased with a rich ceremonial and with beautiful objects, regardless of cost, when the worship is genuine and proceeds from faith.

Many people consider the use of incense in worship as extremely ceremonial, but it must be remembered that in the New Testament the announcement to Zacharias of the birth of St. John the Baptist was made while he was burning incense in the temple (Luke 1:9-11). When our Lord Jesus came into the world, one of the gifts the Wise Men presented Him was incense (Matt. 2:11). In the Book of Revelation we have

a description of worship in which we read, "The four beasts and four-and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors (*thumiana*, that is, incense), which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev. 5:8). Again, incense is mentioned in Rev. 8:3-4: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of all saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." It is to be noted that the use of incense is here described in connection with worship at an altar and the apostle who wrote the Book of Revelation was St. John, the beloved disciple who knew Christ's attitude toward worship as well as anyone. Therefore the use of incense in Christian worship is thoroughly Biblical and cannot be forbidden, even though it is considered by some to be the extreme in ceremonial.

In the New Testament all the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament which were of a prophetic and typical nature have been abolished because they were all fulfilled in Christ. The New Testament has no liturgical laws. Such general principles as "they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24), "let everything be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40), and "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8), prescribe no rites and ceremonies. The liturgical information in the Book of Revelation, however, implies at least that ceremonial worship is not inconsistent with the spirit of the Gospel, but it orders nothing.

There is no doubt, however, as to the mind of the universal Christian church on this matter. The church's worship from the first to the sixteenth centuries was ritualistic and ceremonial. As proof of this fact, one need only examine the writings and liturgical records which have come down to us from the ancient and medieval church.

### *The Relation to Faith*

Rites and ceremonies are an outward expression of what a church believes and teaches. An ancient Latin formula puts it this way: *Lex*

### *Ritual and Ceremonial*

*orandi lex credendi.* "As we worship so we believe" or "as we believe so we worship." The externals in worship are a means of communication which people understand and by which they are often affected more readily and powerfully than by words. A crucifix may move the heart of an ordinary person more than a sermon on the crucifixion of Christ. Bowing the head when the holy name of Jesus is said in a worship service may be a very powerful testimony of our faith in Christ as Savior and Lord. The wearing of Eucharistic vestments by the celebrant in the Holy Communion Service may testify to the preeminence of the Holy Eucharist as the chief service of the church more than the words of the rite itself, "This do in remembrance of Me."

As ceremonial is related to faith, so ritual is also related to faith. The rite of the Holy Communion Service in the Lutheran Church, the Common Service, is a witness to the Lutheran Church's unity of faith with the church in the age of the apostles, of the ecumenical councils, the undivided church, the Western church, and the Lutheran Church of the 16th-century Reformation. The Words of Distribution, "The Body of Christ, the Blood of Christ," express a simple belief in the mystery of the real presence more than the reasons given for it in the Catechism.

What we have said about ritual and ceremonial testifying to the truth is equally real about their testifying to error. For example, the following words of distribution used by some Rationalists testified to their erroneous concept of the Lord's Supper: "Receive this bread: the spirit of devotion rest upon you with fulness of His benediction; Receive a little wine: virtue lies not in the wine, but in you, in the heavenly doctrine, and in God." Likewise, the celebrating of the Holy Communion Service on Communion Sundays, quarterly, or once a month, or bi-weekly, instead of celebrating it as the chief service of the church on every Sunday and feast day, as was the universal custom of the pre-Reformation church and of the Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession; using individual cups in the Holy Communion instead of a chalice; placing a plain cross on or above the altar instead of a crucifix; worshiping in plain and drab church buildings; wearing a black gown; singing subjective hymns; playing sentimental music; letting Private Confession and Absolution fall into disuse by substituting the General Confession before the Sunday service for it; imposing on worshipers extempore, subjective,

## CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION

and wordy prayers; all these things may betray a denial, or perversion, or a misunderstanding of the truths of the Christian faith. It may be that some of these variations on traditional ritual and ceremonial were themselves introduced in protest against misunderstandings of truths of the faith, but what they neglect may often be more apparent than what they advocate.

Rites and ceremonies may not only be an unreflected testimony of what is believed and taught, but they may also be a valuable safeguard for the retention of purity in doctrine among the people, even after a church has departed from the truth in its doctrinal position. The history of the churches shows that the right traditional rites and ceremonies have had a good effect. Sometimes they have helped churches over religious crises and at other times they have influenced the restoration of truth from a lapse into error. The rites and ceremonies of the Book of Common Prayer, used both in the churches and the homes of Anglicans and Episcopalians, have had a wholesome influence in keeping the people in the faith and of preserving those churches in the days of Puritanism and Deism. The liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Eastern Orthodox Church minimized the impact of Pietism and Rationalism on these churches. On the other hand, the lack of traditional and conservative rites and ceremonies in the Protestant and some Lutheran churches made them an easy prey to Pietism, Rationalism, and Modernism.

Conservative ceremonial represents the great truths of the Christian faith and is a constant reminder of what the universal church teaches and believes. Reverencing toward the altar on entering and leaving the church is a reminder of God's special presence in the house dedicated to the administration of the means of grace and prayer. Making the sign of the cross is a perpetual reminder of one's Baptism, in which the sign of the cross was placed on the forehead and breast, and that Holy Baptism has an ongoing meaning every day of one's life. These are but a few examples of the relationship between rites and ceremonies and the Christian faith and life. Rites and ceremonies have a very real and practical value in teaching, preserving, recalling, familiarizing, and impressing the truths of our holy Christian faith.

The danger of the traditional rites and ceremonies degenerating into

### *Ritual and Ceremonial*

formalism and even superstition has shown itself here and there in all ages. But the same danger is manifested in the use of the nontraditional rites and ceremonies of the so-called informal churches. Because of that danger, some people have denounced all rites and ceremonies. But such denunciations solve nothing. First of all, it is impossible to live without some kind of rites and ceremonies, and secondly, the history of the church shows that the solution is not in trying to discard the traditional ceremonies, but in revitalizing them by constantly teaching their meaning and value.

Someone has said that doctrine is the *substance* of religion while ceremonial is of the *circumstance* of religion. According to this saying, rites and ceremonies are of secondary importance, and in the Christian church no particular rites and ceremonies are divinely prescribed except those of the sacraments. But the particular forms that we use do have a significance in testifying to our union and communion with the Christians of past ages, with the saints, the martyrs, and the apostles. They are of value as a means of proclaiming and preserving the historic faith of the universal Christian church. They can have great value both for instruction in the faith and aiding the devotional life. If our rites and ceremonies have lost important elements in relation to our faith, we should seriously consider restoring those elements. This should not be done abruptly and without proper explanation and motivation. Such actions would be uncharitable and could only lead to suspicion and opposition. But even as important truths that were lost have to be recovered by patient teaching, so also significant rites and ceremonies can be recovered. The result, then, will be salutary and joyful, for, once established, the traditional rites and ceremonies need no justification on our part, for they will justify themselves.

## The Lutheran Position on Ceremonial

WHILE radical reformers in the 16th-century Reformation discarded the traditional rites and ceremonies of the church, the Lutheran reformers retained them, except for such changes as the Gospel demanded. The church buildings and ornaments remained as they were and the Mass was retained with the omission of propitiatory features and the addition of the vernacular. Otherwise everything remained practically the same as it was, so that the Lutheran reformers could say that no perceptible changes had been made.

The Lutheran Church's position is that she accepts without reservation 1. the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice, and 2. all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit, the three ecumenical creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord. These Confessions of the Lutheran Church, to which every congregation, pastor, teacher, and member is solemnly pledged, are clearly on the side of the traditional rites and ceremonies of the church. While they condemn everything that is contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the use of ceremonies for propitiatory purposes, and while they designate rites and ceremonies as *adiaphora*, except when involved in



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a state of confession, they retain and uphold the traditional ceremonial of the church as good and useful in the Lutheran Church.

To make the Lutheran position clear, we give the following quotations from the Lutheran Confessions:

*Usages not contrary to Holy Scriptures are to be observed:* "Of Usages in the Church they (Lutherans) teach that those ought to be observed which may be observed without sin, and which are profitable unto tranquility and good order in the Church." (Art. XV, Augsburg Confession) ✓ 1

*The old ceremonies are not abolished:* "For it is a false and malicious charge that all the ceremonies, all the things instituted of old, are abolished in our churches." (Art. XXI, Augsburg Confession)

*The Mass is not abolished:* "Falsely are our churches accused of abolishing the Mass; for the Mass is retained among us, and celebrated with highest reverence. Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved." (Art. XXIV, Augsburg Confession)

*Ceremonies of past retained:* "Forasmuch, therefore, as the Mass with us has the example of the Church, taken from the Scripture and the Fathers, we are confident that it cannot be disapproved, especially since public ceremonies, for the most part like those hitherto in use, are retained." (Art. XXIV, Augsburg Confession)

*Nothing but Catholic ceremonies admitted:* "Only those things have been recounted whereof we thought that it was necessary to speak, in order that it might be understood that in doctrine and ceremonies nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic." (Conclusion of the Augsburg Confession) ✓ 2

*Goodly ceremonies and church customs maintained:* "From this condition of the churches it may be judged that we diligently maintain church discipline and goodly ceremonies and good church-customs." (Art. XV, Apology of the Augsburg Confession)

*The Mass celebrated every Sunday with usual ceremonies:* "At the outset we must again make the preliminary statement that we do not abolish the Mass, but religiously maintain and defend it. For among us Masses are celebrated every Lord's Day and on other festivals in which the Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, after they have ✓

been examined and absolved. And the usual public ceremonies are observed, the series of lessons, of prayers, vestments, and other like things." (Art. XXIV, Apology of the Augsburg Confession)

*Ceremonies have vital purposes:* ". . . ceremonies ought to be observed both to teach men Scripture, and that those admonished by the Word may conceive faith and fear of God, and obtain comfort, and thus also may pray, for these are the designs of ceremonies." (Art. XXIV, Apology of the Augsburg Confession)

The above statements are official, they are binding on Lutherans, and they clearly show that the Lutheran Church is a liturgical church which has retained, and is bound to, the traditional rites and ceremonies of the universal church.

It is important to bear in mind that the continuity of the universal church was in no way broken by Lutherans in the Reformation. Not only in doctrine but also in the liturgy, including ceremonial, this continuity was preserved. A study of the Lutheran Confessions, the writings of Dr. Martin Luther, and the liturgies of the 16th-century Lutheran Church make this conclusion clear. It must also be observed that Dr. Luther and the other Lutheran reformers, including the authors of the Lutheran liturgies, were men thoroughly acquainted with the ceremonial in use in the Western church. When they conducted the church's divine services, they naturally continued the traditional ceremonies to which they were accustomed insofar as they did not conflict with the Holy Scriptures. If we keep these facts in mind, we shall not be surprised that these writings contain very few explicit directions as to how the liturgy is to be performed. It was simply taken for granted that both clergy and laity would know what to do and would continue the practice of the same ceremonial which they had before the Reformation. In other words, when no directions were given, the traditional rites and ceremonies would be continued.

From these facts we can deduce this principle: If no specific rubrical directions are given in the Lutheran liturgical books, then what is missing should be supplied by the usage of the Western church at the time of the 16th-century Reformation. This principle would apply to everything included in the ceremonial of the church, the church building and its ornaments, as well as the manner in which the services are conducted.

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The rubrical directions in the Lutheran service books are not, and never have been, detailed and explicit. They require interpretation and supplementing according to the broad principle stated above. Behind the rubrics that are given is the traditional ceremonial of the Western church of, and prior to, the 16th century. We have to fall back on these ancient customs when the rubrics need interpretation and when no directions are given.

If this principle were carried out today, we would have a distinctly Lutheran ritual and ceremonial. Arthur Carl Piepkorn says, "The sixteenth century saw the beginning of extensive innovations in Roman ritual and ceremonial. In general, these had not reached northern Europe by the time the Reformation began. Consequently they exerted only slight influence on the historic Lutheran rite. Where the historic Lutheran rite has been retained or restored, it generally reveals a purer and older form of the Western rite than the reformed Roman Catholic rite of today exhibits. This is significant. It gives us a denominationally and confessionally distinctive rite to which we have historic title and which we have not lately borrowed from alien sources. It gives us a rite which is an invaluable symbol of the antiquity, historic continuity, and the thorough Catholicity of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. At the same time it gives us a rite which is both older than, and significantly and recognizably different from, the present Roman Catholic rite."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Adiaphora*

In the Lutheran Confessions rites and ceremonies are called *adiaphora*. But when we use the term *adiaphoron*, we do not mean something that is indifferent. Today the word "indifferent" may have the meaning of unimportant, not mattering much, and rather bad. Rites and ceremonies, however, are not indifferent matters in the sense of being unimportant or rather bad. They may be very important and matter very much, as was the case in the *Adiaphoristic Controversy*. At that time the Romanists demanded the restitution of discontinued ceremonies on pain of persecution and violence. This brought up the following issue of the controversy: May Lutherans under such circumstances submit to

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *What the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church Have to Say About Worship and the Sacraments* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952), p. 11.

the demand of the Romanists without sanctioning the errors of the Roman Church and without giving offense to the enemies and friends of the Lutheran church! <sup>2</sup> Here rites and ceremonies were not "indifferent," but very important.

An adiaphoron, therefore, is not a thing that is indifferent. It is only something that is not essential. For many reasons it may be important and very good, but it is not essential.

Adiaphoron is not to be applied to the word liturgy, for, as stated above, liturgy refers to everything belonging to the church's worship, including its essential as well as unessential features. The Eastern church, for example, calls the Holy Communion Service the Divine Liturgy, and the Holy Communion Service is certainly not an adiaphoron. Our fathers who wrote the *Book of Concord* were very careful not to apply the word adiaphoron to the liturgy but to human rites and ceremonies.

### *Uniformity*

Absolute uniformity in ceremonial is not necessary for the unity of the church. Our Lutheran Confessions clearly state: "To the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike" (Art. VII, Augsburg Confession). "We believe, teach, and confess also that no church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other, if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy Sacraments, according to the wellknown saying: Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith." (Art. X, Formula of Concord, Epitome)

It is only proper, however, that all congregations belonging to a church denomination should adhere to the orders of service given in their church's official or authorized and approved service books, such as *The Lutheran Hymnal*, the *Lutheran Service Book and Hymnal*, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, *The Lutheran Agenda*. Such conformity applies not only to the order for the celebration of the Holy Communion Service, the chief

<sup>2</sup> See *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), Historical Introduction, pp. 107—112.

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service of the church, but also to minor services and occasional offices — the Preaching Service without Holy Communion, Matins, Vespers, the Confessional Service, the Service for Opening and Closing Christian Schools, Holy Baptism, Marriage, the Burial of the Dead, dedications, ordinations, installations, and all other authorized rites and ceremonies.

While the ceremonies used in carrying out these services may vary according to the size, ability, and usage of a congregation, it is becoming that the orders themselves and their recognized varieties should be left intact. One of the general rubrics in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 4, states, "Congregations are urged to let the basic structure of the Service remain intact. The wide choice permitted in the Rubrics makes it possible to have the Service as simple or as elaborate as the circumstances of each congregation may indicate." Such conformity is desirable according to the law of love and the spirit of loyalty and fellowship. Luther, in his "Exhortation to the Christians in Livonia Concerning Public Worship and Unity," said: "Even if the external regulations in the services — such as masses, singing, reading, baptizing — do not add anything to salvation, nevertheless, it is unchristian to be disunited over such things and thereby confuse and unsettle the common people, and not the rather to consider the edification of the people to be more important than our own thoughts and opinions. . . . For, as has been said, even if the external uses and regulations are free and, taking the faith into consideration, may with good conscience be changed at all places, at all hours, by all persons, still, taking love into consideration, you are not free to use such liberty, but are in duty bound to consider how matters may be made bearable and better for the common people, as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 14:40, 'Let all things be done orderly and honorably among you;' and 1 Cor. 6:12, 'I have power over all things, but all things do not profit;' and 1 Cor. 8:1, 'Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.'" <sup>3</sup>

Again, in his "German Mass and Order of Service," Luther states: "It would be well if in every jurisdiction public worship were uniform and neighboring towns and villages observed the same ceremonies as the city." <sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Works of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Co., 1931), Vol. VI, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

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The very idea of liturgy excludes individualism and self-will. In private worship every person may follow his individualistic way of worship. But in public or corporate worship this is impossible. There the congregation can only worship in a common and prescribed form. And a group of congregations, a synod, and a larger church body should show its unity of faith by adhering to common rites and ceremonies. If a congregation uses a rite different from the church's service books, it is generally the result of the personal preference of its pastor or some of its members who have imposed this on the people. Fortunately, such stubborn individualism on the part of some pastors and individual laymen is not as common today as it once was.

Orders of service usually admit some variations in the rite itself and a variety of expression in its ceremonies. Such alternate materials and rubrics may be recommended by the church and printed in the service books. But the rite itself, or its recognized varieties, should be adhered to. Private fancy and the desire to be wiser than the church are not becoming. Those who desire changes should seek to obtain them in the regular way through the liturgical commission or board of the church denomination. Luther advised that the same rites and ceremonies should be followed at least on a provincial basis. If that was recognized as desirable in his day, when most people lived and died within a few miles of their birth-places, how much more important it is in our day of much traveling and changing of residence.

But while we plead for careful adherence to the church's authorized forms and their recognized varieties, we believe that considerable liberty may be permitted in nonliturgical worship, private prayer, and group devotions. In the opening and closing devotions of meetings and Bible classes, song services, and the like, every pastor may be free to exercise his skill in ordering the service. Even if some of the brethren, in their zeal by all means to save some, and their inclination to indulge in free prayers and revival songs, seem to go altogether beyond the bounds of doing everything "decently and in order," we may well trust that Lutheran consciousness will gradually correct such excesses. The important thing is that the principle be observed: individualism, if needed, in the nonliturgical devotions, but uniformity in the liturgy ac-

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ording to the usage of the Lutheran Church as prescribed in her Confessions and in her official service books.

### *Evangelical Attitude*

Our attitude toward human rites and ceremonies is evangelical, not legalistic. Rubrics and directions do not proceed from the Law but from the Gospel. We do not want conformity on the basis of legal compulsion, but on the basis of our new life in Jesus Christ by which we are made free from the curse of the Law and are enabled by the Holy Spirit to live more and more in Christian love and liberty. In this new life we respect everyone's conscience and freedom. We live by the principle that everything which is neither commanded nor forbidden by God is a matter of Christian liberty. And since human rites and ceremonies are neither commanded nor forbidden by God, we do not criticize or condemn one another for using more or fewer of them.

Neither do we feel constrained by any force of resolution, compulsion, or law — except the law of love — to adopt any particular human ceremony for ourselves or to force it on others. To decide by a majority vote that certain human rites and ceremonies may not be done can be just as much a violation of the law of Christian love and liberty as to decide that certain ceremonies must be done, or better be done by everyone who does not want to be criticized. Rather than to make an issue of these things in a congregation by bringing them up for a majority vote, it would seem to be more praiseworthy if pastors and laymen would simply follow the traditional rites and ceremonies which the Lutheran Church retained in the Reformation. In other words, let them follow the Lutheran service books, and when these lack directions, conform to the usage of the Lutheran Church as professed in her Confessions. If, for example, the question comes up as to how often the Holy Communion service is to be celebrated, it is becoming to answer it, not on the basis of a majority vote, but according to the usage of the Lutheran Church as it is clearly stated in Article XXIV both of the Augsburg Confession and the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. In case the Lutheran Confessions do not give an explicit answer to a question, the advice of a Lutheran liturgiologist may be obtained. In our opinion, because of human weakness, it would be better for the good of order

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and harmony in the congregation not to make an issue of adiaphoristic matters and finally forcing a decision by a majority vote.

The Lutheran position in human ceremonial is evangelical and not legalistic. We do not say, this or that must or must not be done, but, "we beseech you by the mercies of God" to do or not to do so-and-so.



## CHAPTER IV

# The Altar and Its Ornaments (Part 1)

LONG before churches were built, the church's worship was carried out at or around an altar. In Gen. 8:20 we read that "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord." Even before that, "Cain brought of the fruits of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof" (Gen. 4:3,4). These sacrifices must have been offered on an altar. Therefore, the altar was the place of worship before there were church buildings, and the altar is more than an ornament or piece of furnishing in a church. It is a monument or object around which and in which the church's worship is centered.

We may regard the altar as: 1. the Lord's table, 2. an emblem of sacrifice, and 3. a symbol of God's presence.

In one of its aspects the Holy Communion Service is a fellowship meal in which we are united with Christ and all fellow believers in a holy union or communion. As such it is celebrated at a table. This table is the altar, which for that reason is called the Lord's table. (1 Cor. 10:21)

The altar is also an emblem of sacrifice. The word altar itself indicates this. It comes from the Latin *altare ara*, which means an elevated place for sacrifice. In the church's worship the altar represents by association Christ's sacrifice of Himself for the redemption of the world, and the place where the benefits of this sacrifice and all the blessings of God are conveyed to the believers. But the sacrificial aspect of the altar does not end there. It is the monument on which we offer in response to God's

mercy our sacrifices to God, that is, our sacrifices of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and such material tokens of the offering of ourselves with all we are and have as money, bread, and wine.

Thirdly, the altar is a symbol of God's presence. It symbolizes the place where God and His people meet. Our Lord Himself refers to the altar as a symbol of God in Matt. 5:23 and 23:18-20. The altar stands for God as our flag stands for our country. That is why we direct our worship to the altar and reverence toward it by bowing, genuflecting, and kneeling. That is also the reason why the altar itself, and not any of its surroundings or ornaments, such as crucifix, reredos, pulpit, or any other object, is in matter of location and all other considerations the focal point and center of the church's worship and the church building.

#### *Material, Shape, and Location*

The altar may be built of wood or stone. A "rubrical" or "fixed" altar is made entirely of stone and is built up from the ground on a foundation of stone below the footpace. The latter point is sometimes overlooked and a stone altar is placed on a footpace which is often only a wooden floor. The kind of stone used is immaterial, whether marble or other stone, but concrete, stucco, or other artificial materials are not becoming to the nature of the altar. If the altar is constructed of wood, it may have a stone mensa or, according to tradition, at least an altar stone placed as an insert in the wooden mensa. This stone is about ten by twelve inches in size. When Holy Communion is celebrated, this stone is the place where the sacred vessels are located. Five Greek crosses may be incised in this stone or in the mensa, whether wood or stone, one on each corner and one in the center. These crosses symbolize the five wounds of our Lord.

The shape of the altar is either that of a table or a box-like structure which is enclosed on all sides. Whether it is oblong, square, or round is immaterial. But a mere shelf attached to the wall with brackets and without supports standing on the floor is contrary to the nature of the altar. Innovations of this kind reveal the influence of those who regard the church building only as a meeting house and the so-called altar only as a convenient place on which to put things.

The size of the altar in length depends on the size of the chancel

and church. A proportion of 5 to 12 has been suggested. This would make the altar 10 feet long in a chancel 24 feet wide. The standard height of the altar is 40 inches. It is possible to add to the length and height of an altar which is too short and not quite high enough by adding a mensa two or three inches thick and extending a foot or so beyond the ends of the altar and projecting an inch or two in front. It is desirable that the mensa project a little in front so that the minister will have room for his feet at the base of the altar. A recess on the bottom for the feet is not becoming to an altar because it reminds one of the cabinet work in a kitchen. Such associations are not in keeping with the dignity of an altar.

The location of the altar is at the head or in the midst of the worshipping congregation because the altar is the object toward which and in which the church's worship is centered. This location is naturally a place on the axis of the church building. To place a large cross or crucifix on the axis or center, with the altar on one side of it and the pulpit on the other, is an innovation contrary to the nature and meaning of the altar. It is desirable that the altar stand free from the east wall so that it may be approached from all sides. It is not placed directly on the floor of the chancel, called the pavement, but on an altar platform, called the predella or footpace. This platform may be one to three steps higher than the pavement. If three steps, the lower step is traditionally for the subdeacon or epistler, the second step for the deacon or gospeler, and the top step for the celebrant. In smaller churches where only two steps are needed, the subdeacon may stand and kneel on the pavement. If the church is very small, only one step is necessary. The steps are not higher than five inches and have a depth of about eighteen inches. The footpace around the altar has a depth of thirty inches or more, large enough for two officiants at the altar to pass each other.

### *Ornaments of the Altar*

According to tradition, the altar is furnished with a crucifix, candlesticks, altar linens, frontal and superfrontal, and missal stand. It may also have a gradine, reredos or dorsal, riddles, and a canopy. Flower vases may also be added to this list of altar ornaments.

*The crucifix* is the principal and most prominent object on or above the altar. Its place is in the center-rear of the altar, in such a position as to be seen easily by all, and so that the arms of the cross rise above the candlesticks. The crucifix is a reminder of Christ's suffering and death, but also of His resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father. His triumph, however, was not possible without His suffering and death. Perhaps this is the reason why the crucifix at the time of the Reformation represented the suffering Christ, and why it is the traditional type on Lutheran altars. An interesting testimony to this Lutheran tradition is given by the Anglican liturgiologist, F. E. Brightman, in his paper on "The Eucharistic Sacrifice." He says, "At this moment I believe a central crucifix is most strikingly characteristic not of Catholic churches at all—but of Lutheran, where the altar and the church is often dominated by a huge crucifix."<sup>1</sup> But whether the corpus on the cross be representative of the suffering Christ or of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, it is not desirable that the altar cross be a mere cross without a corpus. Some people claim that the empty cross represents the risen Christ. But be that as it may, the empty cross may be a distinctive mark of that kind of Protestantism which spiritualizes Christ. There seems to be some evidence for this in their supply catalogs. These usually do not feature crucifixes but only empty crosses, as also not chalices but only trays of individual Communion glasses. The exclusion of crucifixes and chalices may express their Reformed doctrine, their disbelief in the bodily presence, or real presence, of Christ. But we believe in the real presence and our Confessions say, "We regard it as a pernicious error when such majesty is denied to Christ according to His humanity; for thereby the very great consolation is taken from Christians which they have in the aforecited promise concerning the presence and dwelling with them of their Head, King, and High Priest, who has promised them that not only His mere divinity would be with them, which to us poor sinners is as a consuming fire to dry stubble, but that He, He, the man who has spoken with them, who has tried all tribulation in His assumed human nature, and who can therefore have sympathy with us, as with men and His brethren—He will be with us in all our troubles also in the nature according to which

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Vernon Staley, *The Ceremonial of the English Church* (Oxford: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1899), in footnote 1, p. 114.

He is our brother and we are flesh of His flesh.”<sup>2</sup> This does not mean that every cross must have a corpus on it. But if the empty cross and the individual Communion glasses become confessional marks, then it may become necessary to give the crucifix and the chalice a prominent place in our churches and chapels.

In this connection it may also be pointed out that if pictures, carvings, statuary, stained glass, or any other representations are placed on or above the altar, it is becoming that they harmonize with the idea of the atoning sacrifice of Christ which the altar symbolizes. Attention has been called to the fact that, while a painting of Christ in Gethsemane represents sacrifice, it is the sacrifice of prayer, a sacrifice which man offers to God, but not the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Even when it is correctly understood as a sacrifice of faith and not of merit, it still places the emphasis on a sacrifice concept of the altar which is secondary and may be misunderstood. All representations of the Lord's Supper are in keeping with the altar as the Lord's table, but this, too, is not the central idea. A statue or painting which shows our Lord saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," such as the famous statue of Thorwaldsen, does not convey the idea of sacrifice very well. In some churches the words, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," are inscribed on the reredos of the altar. Those words would be better on the pulpit. On the other hand, the words, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," is an excellent inscription for the altar.

*Candlesticks* were probably not placed on the altar itself before the 11th century. Before that, floor candlesticks were used which stood around the altar. Not until the 12th century did the custom of placing two candlesticks on the altar come into vogue, and then it was still a novelty. In the 13th century we have references to seven candles carried in a papal Mass at Rome. Two of these were used in the ceremony of reading the Gospel and the other five were placed on the altar. But this was a papal Mass and not an ordinary Mass. In Northern Europe during the 15th century five, seven, and nine candles on the altar are mentioned. But even as late as this the number of lights on the altar was generally limited to two.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Concordia Triglotta*, Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Art. VIII, p. 1047.

<sup>3</sup> W. C. Bishop, *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), p. 301 ff.

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In general, light is a symbol of God. He is "light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). He created light. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush. He led the people of Israel in a pillar of light.

In a special sense, light is a symbol of our Lord. He is "the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). He is "Light of Light." (Nicene Creed)

A burning candle or lamp also symbolizes the sacrificial love which spends itself in the service of God or man as a candle consumes itself in burning. Thus it is a symbol of the sacrificial love of Christ who gave Himself for our redemption. But it is also a symbol of the sacrificial love of believers who give themselves to the service of God and their fellowmen.

The Lutheran usage is to place at least two candlesticks on the altar for the celebration of the Holy Communion Service. These stand at the extremities of the back of the mensa or the gradine. They have assumed the symbolism of the human and divine natures of Christ. They are called eucharistic lights and are burned throughout every Holy Communion Service. Additional candles may be provided either on the altar or around the altar. But candleabra holding three, five, or seven candles are not used as a substitute for the two single eucharistic lights. They are known as office lights, because they are used particularly in minor services, such as Matins and Vespers which are called offices. If, however, there are no office lights, the eucharistic lights are used for all services.

It is desirable that both the candles and the candlesticks be of such a size as to be in scale with the altar and chancel. They are not to out-rank the altar crucifix. In fact, great care should be exercised that the candles are not too tall. Many altars are spoiled by overly tall candles.

Candlesticks may be made of gold, silver, brass, or wood. Pure beeswax or at least 51 percent beeswax candles are traditionally used on the altar. Candles made of paraffin and stearine may be used for other than altar candles. Electric lights used as a substitute for candles are considered vulgar. So also are all deceptive devices, such as imitation candle tubes and springs. Even the brass burners placed on top of candles to prevent dripping and to make the candles last longer are anything but desirable on the altar, because they attract attention to themselves

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and detract from the simple, natural, and devotional character of the candles.

The number of candles may vary with the feast. On ferial days and for simple services, the smallest number may be employed and the greatest number on the highest feast and for the most festive services. Too many candles, however, are theatrical and contrary to the spirit of the liturgy, for the Church does not use candles for the gratification of men, but for the honor and glory of God.

The candles are lighted with a taper and extinguished with a snuffer. This may be done by a server, acolyte, or altar boy vested in cassock and surplice or cotta. The proper procedure is to light all the candles on the epistle side first and then those on the gospel side, beginning each time with the candle nearest the altar crucifix. The reverse order is observed in extinguishing the candles. All the candles on the gospel side are extinguished first, beginning with the one farthest from the crucifix, and then those on the epistle side are extinguished in the same way.

## The Altar and Its Ornaments (Part 2)

THE *altar linens*, covering the mensa, or top of the altar, are the fair linen and two lower cloths. They are made of pure linen or hemp, not cotton or muslin, are kept scrupulously clean, and are changed with sufficient frequency.

The fair linen is the uppermost of the three cloths. It is prescribed by the general rubrics in *The Lutheran Liturgy* in the words: "*The Fair Linen*, a cloth covering the altar, extending one third or two thirds or all the way to the floor at the narrow ends, shall always be upon the altar."<sup>1</sup> The general rubrics of the *Service Book and Hymnal* say: "The Fair Linen, a cloth covering the Altar, extending one-third or two-thirds to the floor at the narrow ends, and a span in front, shall always be upon the Altar."<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, contrary to our rubrics to omit the fair linen and leave the altar bare. The finest linen is used in making the fair linen. It may have, as is the general custom, five crosses worked in flat embroidery, one in the center and two at each part corresponding to those on the top corners of the mensa. It is not becoming to sew any kind of lace on the fair linen to extend over the front edge of the altar. The plainer the altar linens are, the better.

The two separate lower cloths fit the top of the altar exactly. If the altar has a stone mensa, the lowest cloth may be a cerecloth, permeated

<sup>1</sup> *The Lutheran Liturgy* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> *Service Book and Hymnal* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1958), p. 277.



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with wax, to prevent moisture coming up from the stone. To the front edge of the middle cloth, the superfrontal of the altar may be attached. The two lower cloths may be made of coarser linen than the fair linen.

The sacramental linens may also be classified with the altar linens. Regarding these, *The Lutheran Liturgy* gives the following rubrics:

"The *Corporal*, a square of very fine linen, is laid on the center of the Fair Linen cloth. Upon it the sacramental vessels are placed." This means that the sacred vessels for the Holy Communion are not placed at either end of the altar.

"The *Pall*, a small square of stiff material covered or lined with linen, is used to cover the chalice. It should be removed at the Consecration." Notice that no provisions are made for the use of individual communion glasses. Neither do the Lutheran Confessions contemplate the use of individual glasses.

"The *Purificators*, squares of heavy linen, are used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the Administration." Notice again that the Lutheran liturgy prescribes the use of a chalice for administering the precious blood of Christ.

"The *Veil*, made of silk or of the finest linen, is used to cover the sacramental vessels upon the altar or credence table. It is removed before the Preface and should be folded carefully and laid upon the altar and again placed over the sacramental vessels after the Administration at the Nunc Dimittis." In some churches a silk chalice veil of the color of the day is used before the Preface and a linen post-communion veil is used to cover all the sacred Holy Communion vessels after the Distribution.

"When not in use on the altar, the sacramental linens should be properly folded and kept in the *Burse*, a square envelope made of strong cardboard, covered with silk or heavy linen."

The rubrics in the *Service Book and Hymnal* are given on page 277.

The *Lavabo* and *Baptismal Towels* may also be added here. They are made of medium heavy linen and of any convenient size.

The *chrisom* or baptismal robe was retained by Lutherans to place over a child when it comes out of the font, that is, when it has been baptized. Luther prescribes it in his *Taufbüchlein* and Friedrich Lochner describes its Lutheran usage in his *Liturgische Formulare*. The ceremony

of placing the chrisom on the child is connected with the words, "As thou art now clothed with this pure, white, and unspotted garment, so mayest thou evermore be clothed with the innocence of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for whose sake God has made thee His child and received thee as an heir of eternal life." Thus the chrisom symbolizes the innocence and righteousness of a baptized person and expresses ceremonially the words of Gal. 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

### *Frontal and Superfrontal*

Together with the altar linens, the altar is vested traditionally with a frontal and superfrontal, at least a superfrontal. The ceremonial vesting or clothing of the altar is very ancient. The original material used was linen, but gradually silk cloths replaced the linen and they came to be decorated beautifully with orphreys, embroidery, and even jewels. The vestments have assumed the symbolical meaning of the royal vesture of Christ and His body, the church. But even only from the standpoint of giving prominence to the altar and of adding beauty and variety to the church's worship, the altar frontal and superfrontal are of great importance. The variety in the change of color which marks the feasts and seasons gives life to the whole church. If the altar were to remain the same month after month, if it were to look the same on Easter as on Good Friday, the whole atmosphere of the church would suffer from drabness and dreariness.

The frontal which covers the entire front of the altar down to the footpace traditionally carries the color of the day. The superfrontal which hangs down from the mensa from seven to ten inches was added to cover the rod under the mensa to which the frontal is attached and may be of a neutral color.

Five sets of vestments or paraments are used during the church year: a white, red, violet, green, and black set. The white set is used on the high festivals and their seasons, the red for Pentecost and minor festivals, the violet for the penitential seasons, the green for the ordinary days, and the black only on Good Friday. If the altar is plain and if it is stripped bare on Good Friday, no vestments are necessary and the black set may be omitted. If a church cannot afford to acquire all the

## *The Altar and Its Ornaments (Part 2)*

sets at once, it may start with the red set. For the time being, this may take the place of the white and green, while the altar may be left bare during the penitential seasons. After the red set, the violet may be added. This will provide something for all seasons. The next set should be green. Red will then be used for the high and minor festivals, green for the ordinary days, and violet for the penitential seasons. After this the white set may be added, and finally black.

Ordinarily the frontal and superfrontal cover only the front of the altar. But if the altar is in a central position, or is round, or of another shape which requires special treatment, they may cover the entire base of the altar.

### *The Missal Stand*

The purpose of the missal stand is to hold the missal or altar book which contains everything necessary for the celebrant or officiant in conducting the church's services. Anciently cushions of the color of the day were used for this purpose. The common usage today is to have a wooden or metal stand. It is a laudable custom to cover the stand with a cloth of the color of the vestments. A stand that is too tall or too conspicuous is not pleasing. Its normal position outside of service time, as well as at the beginning of the Holy Communion Service up to the reading of the Holy Gospel, is at the epistle horn of the altar parallel with the front of the altar. When the Communion vessels stand on the corporal in the midst of the altar, the stand is placed left of the corporal at such an angle that the celebrant can read from the altar book. For non-Eucharistic services the missal stand may be in the midst of the altar with its front edge parallel with the front of the altar, not left of the center and slanted as is seen sometimes.

### *The Gradine*

Everything was kept off the altar until about the ninth century, except the offerings of the people, including bread and wine, the sacred Holy Communion vessels, and the altar book. But when the custom arose of placing statuary, crucifix, candles, and flowers on the altar, a gradine, or retable, or shelf was constructed on the back of the altar on which to place these things. If the gradine is kept low and does not

detract from the altar, it is a convenience for placing those things which do not belong on the altar itself.

*The Reredos*

From the gradine developed the reredos which was erected behind the altar, made of wood or stone and richly carved and ornamented. The panels were beautifully decorated with paintings or silk damask. Canopies and niches were constructed which contained carved figures of our Lord, the apostles, and saints. Sometimes the reredos was made in the form of a triptych with side panels hinged to the center compartment. These could be closed during Lent or, at least, during Holy Week so as to hide bright and festive decorations. Unfortunately, what began as a convenient shelf on the altar developed during the Renaissance and Baroque periods into an imposing structure which detracted from the altar and made the altar appear as only a base or foundation for the reredos. During the 19th century, church supply houses manufactured reredoses by mass production which were usually high, three-gabled affairs with imitation Gothic tracery and unsightly decorations. It is necessary, therefore, to caution against unbecoming reredoses, realistic paintings, cheap statuary, and everything that militates against the central position and reverent dignity of the altar.

*The Dorsal*

Instead of a reredos, a dorsal may provide a suitable background for the altar. The dorsal may be hung from a metal rod or from hooks six to eight feet above the footpace and extending about one foot beyond the ends of the altar. It may be hung flat or in folds, and may, like the frontal on the altar, carry the colors of the church year. If a permanent dorsal is provided, it may be of a neutral color, such as a deep red damask, red and gold, blue and gold, a deep shade of gold, or a tapestry of churchly design. Also contrasting colors and materials with three or five orphreys or panels edged with gold galloons make a beautiful dorsal.

*Riddles*

To the dorsal may be added riddle curtains or wings, hung parallel to the ends of the altar about one foot away and extending a little be-

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yond the front edge of the altar. These may be hung on brackets fastened to the wall or to rods attached to riddle posts. Except in large churches in which the dorsal can be quite high, the riddles may be the same height as the dorsal, that is, 6—8 feet, and they may fall to within a few inches of the footpace. They may be made of the same cloth and color as the dorsal or of a contrasting color.

### *The Altar Canopy*

The erection of a canopy over the altar probably goes back to the fourth century and may be derived from the custom of fitting a royal throne with a canopy. Undoubtedly, a canopy does set off a place or object as one of dignity and honor. When erected over an altar, it proclaims it as a holy and sacred object. When the canopy is placed upon four posts, it is called a ciborium. When it is hung from the ceiling or a structure attached to the east wall, it is called a baldachin. The canopy covers both the altar and the footpace. It may be constructed of wood or stone, or it may be made of the same material as the dorsal and fastened to the wall at the top of a high dorsal. The front may be finished with an edge of silk fringe.

### *Flower Vases*

Flowers have probably always been brought to church by Christians and used as an adornment of the altar. But before the development of the gradine or retable, they were not placed on the altar itself, but on the floor around the altar. When placed on the gradine, suitable flower vases are provided. These may be made of glass, ceramics, or metal of a reverent and conventional design so as not to draw attention to themselves. They are not left on the gradine when the flowers are removed.

Flower pots containing potted flowers may be placed around the altar, but are not considered becoming on the gradine of the altar.

Flowers are encouraged for all Sundays, feasts, and days of the church year but not for Advent and Lent except on Gaudete and Laetare. At all times, however, restraint should be used because the frontal and superfrontal are the real adornment of the altar and flowers are only an accessory decoration.

*The Central Altar and Its Ornaments*

The arrangement of the paraments and other ornaments on a centrally located altar will naturally be somewhat different from that of a conventionally located altar. Consideration will have to be given to the fact that such an altar is seen from all sides. The fair linen may have to be made differently. If Holy Communion is celebrated "facing the people," the altar crucifix cannot stand in its usual place. The two eucharistic candlesticks may have to be placed in a different position. Flowers cannot be placed on an altar gradine or retable, since there is none.

We suggest that the arrangement retain as much of the traditional as possible. The parament problems may be solved by extending the frontal and superfrontal all around the altar. The fair linen may be made the same size as the mensa instead of hanging down on the ends. The altar crucifix may be suspended from the ceiling over the center of the altar, or it may be mounted on a floor standard. This standard may be located in such a way that it will be directly behind the celebrant when he faces the people. The eucharistic lights may stand in a central position at the ends of the mensa to the right and left of the celebrant. Flowers may be placed in floor-stand flower vases and be located near the altar.

## The Church Building and Its Ornaments

THE principal place for administering the liturgy is the church building. In fact, it is the purpose of the church building to be the setting for the liturgy. The liturgy determines its requirements in rooms, arrangements, and furnishings. More than that, it determines the psychological and esthetic aspects of the building, which is symbolically, and through the means of grace effectually, "the house of God and the gate of heaven." When these things are missing, it may be ever so practical and still fail as a church building.

As long as this purpose of the church building is fulfilled both in its internal and external effectiveness, the style of architecture is immaterial. Notable styles of the past are the Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance. The modern or contemporary style differs from these in making use of modern building methods and materials. While this style is still in the experimental stage, it has in some cases produced very fine church buildings and may develop into something as good as Romanesque and Gothic.

According to an old custom, the church building is, if possible, orientated, that is, the axis of the church is east and west, with the altar in the east end, so that the congregation faces east in their worship toward the altar. From ancient times people have worshiped toward the east, because that is the place where the sun rises and light is said to come from the east. And since God and the Son of God and the truth of God are spoken of as the Light of the World, it is but natural

that Christians should try to arrange their churches so that they face east when they worship God.

Traditionally, the church building consists of a chancel, which may be composed of the sanctuary and liturgical choir, the nave, which may include transepts, the narthex, a room for the organ and congregational choir, a place for the baptismal font, a place for the church bell or bells, and the necessary sacristies.

### *The Chancel*

The chancel may be composed of two sections. The section in which the altar is located is called the sanctuary. Some Protestants use the term sanctuary to designate the church building. Such a usage is unfortunate and Lutherans should avoid it. In liturgical terminology the term sanctuary means that part of the church building in which the altar is located.

In some churches, especially cathedrals, abbey churches, and seminary chapels, a liturgical choir facing north and south, is located immediately in front of the sanctuary for the purpose of saying the daily offices, particularly Matins and Vespers. In that case, this place is called the choir, and the choir and sanctuary together constitute the chancel.

The ornaments of the chancel are all such items as are related to the altar. For all that, every ornament of the entire church building is in one way or the other related to the altar, for the altar symbolizes God, and essentially all of the church's worship is for the glory of God.

The *credence* is an auxiliary table or shelf in the sanctuary for the altar to hold certain things that are needed in conducting the services. Ordinarily, it is located on the epistle side and, if it is a table, it is covered with a white linen cloth extending to the floor on all sides. If it is only a shelf or niche, it is covered in some other reverent manner with a white linen cloth. For the celebration of the Holy Communion Service, the vested chalice may be placed on the altar before the service, but the other sacred vessels, especially those containing the bread and wine, may stand on the credence until the Offertory. Other items sometimes placed on the credence before the service are the lectionary, the containers for the gathering of the offerings, and the acolytes' candles.

The *piscina* is for the disposal of the leftover wine from the Holy



## *The Church Building and Its Ornaments*

Communion Service and the water used in Holy Baptism. It may consist of a cupboard-like recess in a wall of the chancel, fitted with a bowl or basin to which is attached a pipe leading directly into the earth. Sometimes the piscina is put in the sacristy or one in both the chancel and sacristy. For the reverent disposal of the sacred elements, the General Rubrics of *The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 421, says: "When the Service has been completed, the Celebrant or a deacon shall remove the sacramental vessels from the altar to the sacristy and dispose of that part of the bread and wine which remains as follows: He shall carefully remove the bread from the paten and ciborium to a fit receptacle, there to be kept against the next Communion. He shall pour what remains of the consecrated wine into the piscina or upon the ground at a proper and convenient place outside the church."

The *sedilia* are benches in the chancel for the celebrant and his assistants. If necessary, a bench may be located on both the south and north walls. The clergy usually sit on the south bench and the other assistants on the north bench. Chairs, especially armchairs, in place of benches are considered to be unsuitable for *sedilia*.

The *pulpit* stands at or near the west end of the chancel, either on the north or south side. Since the preaching of the Gospel belongs to the Holy Communion Service and is closely associated with the altar, it is desirable to keep the pulpit within the chancel. In large churches, however, it may be necessary to locate it near the east end of the nave.

The *lectern* usually stands in line with and on the opposite side to the pulpit. Since a lectern is not needed for all services, it may be made so as to be movable.

The *communicants' rail* is not required, since for many centuries the communicants received the Blessed Sacrament standing and the kneeling position did not become customary until the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, a communicants' rail is desirable, both for convenience and as an ornament of demarcation between the nave and the chancel. It designates the place of approach to the altar. This is why the communicants' rail is also called the *altar rail*. If it is placed on the first step leading from the nave into the chancel, it will not be necessary for the aged and infirm to climb steps, nor to lift persons in wheelchairs up steps, for them to partake of the Sacrament of the Altar. Located there, it will also

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serve well for the administration of Private Confession and Absolution required by the Lutheran Confessions.<sup>1</sup> Care should be exercised not to make the communicants' rail too prominent by its size and decorations. Its purpose is to serve the altar and not to obstruct it or detract from it.

### *The Nave*

The church is often compared to a ship sailing over the sea of time. That is probably the reason for the term nave, from the Latin *navis*, meaning ship. It includes everything outside the chancel where the laity of the congregation are located for worship in the church building.

The *baptismal font* is the most important ornament in the nave. It ranks in importance with the altar and the pulpit in the chancel. For symbolical reasons, however, it is placed in the nave or a room adjoining the nave. It symbolizes the entrance into the church universal or "the communion of saints," which leads to participation in the sacrament of the Holy Communion. For these symbolical reasons, the font is often placed near the west entrance door of the church or somewhere near the entrance into the chancel. It is becoming to provide the font with a suitable cover and to keep it closed when not in use.

*Pews* and *kneelers* are not absolutely necessary in the nave. In some old churches in Europe, pews and kneelers are unknown to this day. The matter of sitting, standing, and kneeling does not belong here and will be considered later. Pews and kneelers are ornaments of convenience in the nave if the congregation is expected to sit and kneel for certain parts of divine worship in church.

The *organ* was originally a small instrument to assist the congregation in singing certain parts of the church services. Later it developed into a large instrument and it came to be used for the playing of independent parts, such as preludes, interludes, and postludes. The primary function of an organ, however, still is to assist the congregation in singing. If this is kept in mind, as well as the principle of genuineness in all matters of worship, it should not be difficult to provide the right kind of pipe organ for the church and to evaluate an electronic organ as a temporary substitute only when a pipe organ cannot be had.

The question of location for the pipe organ and the congregational

<sup>1</sup> See page 141.

## *The Church Building and Its Ornaments*

choir is a liturgical and theological problem. The church is not a concert hall in which the congregation is the audience and the ministers and the musicians are performers on a stage. The organ and choir belong to and with the congregation in the nave. They perform necessary parts of the worshipping assembly. They lead and guide the singing of the congregation and in the name of the congregation perform some of the more difficult musical parts of the services. It is becoming, therefore, that they should be located with the congregation and face the altar like the rest of the congregation.

The *litany desk* or *prie-dieu* is a convenient ornament of the church for use in both the chancel and nave for the saying of prayers and especially the litany. In some churches it is customary for the officiant to descend into the nave and to lead the saying or singing of the litany at a prie-dieu placed in the center aisle before the chancel. This position is probably chosen in reference to Joel 2:17, "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare Thy people."

The *processional cross* is, as the name indicates, used only for processions. It may be of wood or metal and should have a corpus, a representation of our Lord, on it. A wooden cross painted red is used during Lent; if a metal cross is used, it is veiled. The crossbearer or crucifer carries the cross turned forward and not toward himself, as is the archiepiscopal cross. He does not have his head covered, not even outdoors, and he does not genuflect or kneel. Neither do acolytes bearing candles genuflect or kneel or make the sign of the cross when they attend the crossbearer.

### *The Narthex*

The narthex is the entrance room into and in front of the nave. It may contain a table or desk where visitors and newcomers may write their names and addresses in a guest register. A tract rack may also be provided in the narthex for the distribution of the church's literature, as well as benches for those who wait to enter the church.

*Church bells* are a very ancient ornament of a church building. They were small at first but later large, numerous, and very important. In our country today their influence is not very great except in small

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towns and rural areas. In new church buildings in the city they have largely gone out of fashion.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Sacristy*

The sacristy, usually located adjoining the chancel, is a necessary room for the preparation of the clergy and the keeping of certain things needed in conducting the church services, such as vestments, service books, a crucifix, prie-dieu, piscina, and wash bowl. In some churches two or even three sacristies are provided, one for the clergy, one for the use of the acolytes and altar guild, and a third one for the choir. It may be stated here that if the clergy sacristy is located behind the altar, the celebrant and his assistants enter and leave the chancel on the Gospel side of the altar.

<sup>2</sup> A full set of regulations regarding the use of church bells and chimes is given in *The Occasional Services* from the *Common Service Book of the Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: The Board of Publication of The United Lutheran Church in America, 1943), pp. 187—193. The interested reader will find rubrics for the ringing of a single bell, a peal, and chimes on the eve of a greater festival or day, on the greater festivals and Sundays, at weekday services, daily hours, the Lord's Prayer, marriage services, and funerals. In the 1962 edition of the same book these regulations are no longer retained.

## The Sacred Vessels and Vestments

**T**HE sacred vessels for the Sacrament of the Altar are: the chalice, the paten, the flagon and cruets, the ciborium and pyx. For the Sacrament of Holy Baptism they are the bowl and the ewer.

The *chalice* has four parts, namely, the cup, the stem, the knop, and the foot. It may be made of silver or gold, and at least the cup itself is lined with gold on the inside. A crucifix or cross is usually engraved on the foot.

The *paten* is a round plate with the center concave. The concave part is usually made so as to fit into the mouth of the chalice. Like the chalice, the paten may be made of gold or of silver with the upper surface plated with gold. It may be plain or engraved with a sacred design like the Hand of God raised in blessing.

The *flagon* is the vessel containing the supply of wine for the celebration. It may be made of silver and lined on the inside with gold. The flagon may also be made of glass or crystal.

The *cruets* are small containers for water. One is used to pour a little water into the wine when the traditional mixed chalice is used, and the other is for the lavabo ceremony where that custom is practiced. The cruets are made of glass.

The *ciborium* is similar in shape to a small chalice, but it has a lid or cover surmounted by a small cross. It may be made of the same material as the chalice. Some churches use it both as the container for

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the supply of wafer bread to be used in the celebration and, instead of the paten, for the distribution of the consecrated bread.

The *pyx* is another type of container for the supply of wafers. Its shape is like a round box with a cover surmounted by a small cross. It may be made of the same material as the chalice.

The *bowl* for Holy Baptism is made of silver and is placed into the opening made for it in a wooden baptismal font. A stone font which has a stone bowl and a drain to the ground does not need a silver bowl or basin.

The *ewer* is a pitcher-like container to carry the water used for Holy Baptism. It may be made of silver or copper.

*Individual Communion cups* have come into use in many Reformed churches and have been adopted by some Lutheran churches. For that reason something has to be said here to suggest at least a reverent way of using them. It should be borne in mind, however, that neither the Lutheran Confessions nor the Lutheran liturgy envision the use of individual cups in the celebration of the Holy Communion Service.

Two Lutheran liturgiologists propose the following regulations where individual cups have been adopted:

1. The material of the cups should be silver or glass and never paper or plastic.
2. The cups should not be filled before the church service, and trays and cups should never be placed on the altar.
3. Only the chalice should be on the altar and the chalice should be used for the Consecration and the Distribution.
4. The chalice should be provided with a pouring lip of such a nature as to prevent spilling and dripping.
5. From the chalice the consecrated wine should be poured individually into the cup held in his bare hand by each communicant.
6. In order to make the cups available to the communicants, a cabinet of churchly design should be built in which the cups are stored. This cabinet should stand in the nave near the communicants' rail from which each communicant can take a cup when he comes to the rail and into which he can replace it when he returns from the rail.

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7. To preserve order and reverence, an elder should stand by the cabinet, not to hand out the cups and take them back, but only to oversee the action.

8. After the service the cabinet should be moved into the sacristy, where the cups should be cleansed with the same care as is exercised in the cleaning of the chalice and flagon. Glass cups should be boiled for at least twenty minutes. Each cup should be wiped dry individually with a clean linen towel and returned to the cabinet.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Vestments*

The *cassock* is historically and traditionally the basic garment of a Christian clergyman. It is really not a vestment in the sense in which the alb, the surplice, and the chasuble are vestments, because it is still in theory a part of the ordinary dress of the clergy. But custom and convenience have made it—at least for many clergymen—a vestment worn only in and around the church. The cassock is a black garment with narrow sleeves and covers the entire body from the neck to the feet. The so-called Roman cassock is buttoned down the front, while the Anglican is fastened on the right side. A band of cloth like a sash or girdle, called a cincture, is worn around the middle.

A *black gown or robe* is worn over a cassock or without the cassock according to the tradition of the Reformed Church. It was originally the daily dress of certain monks and of university faculty members. They wore it in the street and in the classroom and, if they were clergymen, they also wore it sometimes for preaching. In the 16th-century Reformation the Lutherans retained the traditional clerical vestments, but the other reformers rejected these and adopted the black gown or robe instead. About two hundred years after the Reformation, Reformed rulers in Germany more or less forced the black gown also on Lutheran pastors.

In recent years a white gown resembling in shape the college graduation robe has been introduced in some churches, both for catechumens at their confirmation and by clergymen for conducting divine services. This is an innovation for which there is no church tradition whatsoever. If a white vestment is desired, the traditional surplice or the alb ex-

<sup>1</sup> Paul Zellar Strodach, *A Manual on Worship* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), pp. 103—106; and Luther D. Reed, *Worship* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), pp. 327—329.

tending to the ankles will serve the purpose. These can be worn with or without a cassock and will be cooler in hot weather than a white gown.

The *surplice* is a loose, full, and flowing garment of linen, round at the neck, with wide and long sleeves. Silk, rayon, or poplin are liturgically not desirable materials for this and the other linen vestments. Wrinkling is no longer a problem, since wrinkle-resistant linen is now available. In regard to the surplice Arthur Carl Piepkorn says, "Most Lutheran surplices are too skimpy and too short. A surplice is etymologically just an alb made full enough to go over (*super*) a fur coat (*pelliceae*); it was invented in Scandinavia. It should therefore be as long and at least as full as a good alb; that is, it should extend to the wearer's ankles and its skirt should be at least 4½ yards around. . . . Generally speaking, surplices are unadorned and unembroidered. Smocking at the yoke is a traditional ornament; a narrow band of color or embroidery just above the hems of the skirt and sleeves is not unprecedented. . . . The surplice may be worn over a pulpit gown or a cassock. (In hot weather the cassock can be dispensed with and cassock-top rabat substituted if the surplice is decently long.) Bands may be worn with a surplice with perfect propriety. . . . In the Lutheran Church the wearing of a pectoral cross over either surplice or gown has historically been limited to Scandinavian bishops and to certain clergymen in the domains of the Prussian King or the Russian Tzar who received the privilege as a reward of length of service or as a special mark of the monarch's favor."<sup>2</sup>

The *stole* is a narrow strip of silk or other material passed over the neck. It is usually embroidered and fringed at both ends, and varies with the colors of the church year. It is the peculiar vestment of the ministry and a symbol of the yoke of Christ. The celebrant wears it crossed over his breast, the officiant wears it hanging straight down in front, the deacon wears it over his left shoulder and fastened under his right arm, and the subdeacon does not wear it.

Most stoles are made too wide and not long enough. The width at the neck should be only about 2½ inches and at the ends 4—5 inches. It should be 9—10 feet long so that the ends appear below the chasuble.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "When Selecting A Vestment," in *The Seminarian*, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (March 1938).



### *The Sacred Vessels and Vestments*

The stole is not worn at preaching services, matins, vespers, and other minor services. According to Dr. Piepkorn: "There is no justification in Lutheran tradition for wearing a stole with a surplice (except for non-Eucharistic sacramental and quasi-sacramental rites in parishes where Eucharistic vestments are worn at a celebration of the Holy Communion). If a pastor who wears a surplice as the only liturgical vestment wishes to vary his appearance to conform to the color of the day (a frequent justification for the stole), let him do so by attaching an apparel of brocade in the color of the day just above the hem of the skirt front and back. The dimensions of the apparel are not critical — 14 inches wide by 8 inches high is a good size. A set of brocade apparels in the five liturgical colors can easily be made up; for convenience in attaching and removing them, they can be held in place with snap fasteners. Unlike the use of a stole, the use of such apparels is justified by traditional Lutheran practice, and it helps to differentiate the Lutheran rite from both Protestant Episcopal and the Roman Catholic rites. Apparels of the same size were frequently worn (in addition to the ones at the hem) at breast height front and rear; somewhat more often proportionate smaller apparels were also worn on the surplice sleeves. Embroidery was frequently applied to all apparels."<sup>3</sup>

In reply to an inquiry concerning this matter, Dr. Piepkorn said, "My interest in making the statement referred to was solely that of liturgical propriety. It is recognized that the combination of surplice and stole is justified for certain Sacramental and quasi-Sacramental rites, such as Holy Baptism and the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony. No such historic justification exists, however, for the use of this combination by the officiant at the services which are usually held in Lutheran parish churches, that is, Holy Communion, Ante-Communion, Matins, Vespers, and non-liturgical devotions in Advent and Lent. I should be reluctant to say that it is indefensible to begin introducing the historic vestments by starting with surplice and stole; the Augustana Synod proposed this combination, however, along with another even less justifiable (gown-and-stole), as the standard *ne plus ultra*.

"As for an alternative, there are four possibilities justified by historic Lutheran procedure:

■ *Ibid.*

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"First and most desirable is the restoration of the full Eucharistic vestments (cassock, amice, alb, cincture, stole, chasuble, and maniple) with cassock, surplice, and scarf (or stole for Sacramental and quasi-Sacramental offices, as indicated above) for non-Eucharistic offices, a cope for solemn services, and a biretta and cope for out-of-doors.

"The second combination is cassock, alb, and chasuble, a use preserved by the Churches of Denmark and Norway.

"The third combination is the cassock and alb, in the Slovak and German tradition. The alb referred to in this and the preceding paragraphs is somewhat different in each case from the sixteenth-century alb, taking on the characteristics of a surplice or rochet.

"The fourth and least desirable vesture is the black priest's gown, or a similar academic gown to which the education of the wearer may entitle him, with or without bands, starched white ruff collar, tasselled black stole (which is really a remnant of the scarf), or scarf.

"It is therefore suggested that when a pastor desires to lead his parish back to the old Lutheran way he begin with a black priest's gown, and finally reintroduce the whole Eucharistic vesture. The stole, which the Augustana Synod's proposal would make the next step after a plain black gown, is accordingly something that should be included in the last stage, when Eucharistic vestments are reinstated."<sup>4</sup>

As indicated by Dr. Piepkorn above, the ideal to strive for is the restoration of the traditional clerical vestments which Lutherans in the Lutheran Confessions profess to have retained. That does not mean that the style of these vestments of any particular period should be restored. For example, the fiddleback, Roman, or even the Gothic styles of the chasuble may not be desirable in our day. New styles may be developed as they were in the past. In fact, this process is going on today. Some very fine modern styles of the chasuble are being produced in Scandinavia and central Europe. As times change, so styles change, but it is the course of wisdom to retain and, if lost, to restore the old, the tried, and the true basic elements. In the case of the Eucharistic vestments, these are: the cassock, amice, alb, cincture, stole, chasuble, and maniple. The cassock and stole we have already discussed and we shall, therefore, proceed to consider the others.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "An Inquiry and Answer," *Una Sancta*, VII, 1, 22 f.

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The *amice* is the first vestment the celebrant puts on after the cassock. He places it on the back of his head and lets it fall over his shoulders. Then he crosses the tapes, passes them under his arms and around the back and ties them in front over his breast. In this position it remains until he puts on the alb, the stole, and the chasuble.

The *amice* is an oblong piece of linen with a narrow hem all around, about 25×36 inches. It has two tapes, each 72 inches long, sewed to the upper corners (if apparelled, at the lower edge of the apparel) to keep it in place when put on. A cross may be embroidered in the center of the upper edge and an apparel sewed along the upper long edge measuring three or four inches in width and from 18 to 26 inches long. The *amice* has been worn by Christian ministers for more than 1,300 years. Its name comes from the Latin *amictus*, a wrapper. It represents the helmet of salvation. The traditional prayer said when putting it on is, "Put, O Lord, the helmet of salvation on my head."

The *alb* is a long white garment made of linen. It covers the cassock completely. The sleeves are narrow like those of the cassock. The neck is open about twelve inches down the front and is buttoned after the garment has been put on. The *alb* is more beautiful when it is full. It may be apparelled on the sleeves at the wrists and at the front and back bottom of the skirt above the hem.

The *cincture* or *girdle* is worn about the waist of the *alb* to confine its fullness and to gird up the length for convenience in walking. Today it is usually a white linen cord, but it may also be a white linen band, plain or embroidered. The *cincture* is about four yards long and finished at the ends with tassels or knots. It is worn around the waist three times and tied.

The *cinctured alb* is the most ancient and universally used clerical vestment. It is derived from the tunic (*sticharion*), the commonest garment of ancient times. The tunic was a simple covering for the body reaching to the ankles. This garment became the white linen *alb*, hence its name from the Latin *albus*, white. The *alb* is worn over a cassock and, by ordained ministers, under the chasuble or cope. It may also be worn by deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, and others who assist in divine services. Symbolically the *alb* represents the white robe worn by our

Lord before Herod and signifies innocence. The celebrant puts on the stole over the alb, crosses it, and holds it in place with the cincture.

The *chasuble* is the most distinctive ancient Eucharistic vestment of the Christian church. The word chasuble comes from the Latin *casula*, meaning a little hut, because it covered the whole man. The *casula* resembled a present-day cape, a garment without sleeves put over the body and completely covering it. It was circular in shape with a hole in the middle for the head, and fell to the feet all around. It had to be lifted up in order to use the arms. St. Paul mentions this garment in 2 Tim. 4:13. When it passed out of common secular use, it was retained as a clerical vestment. At first it was worn full length, but in the course of time, it was shortened until it reached only to the knees. The material was wool or linen, but from about the year 1000, the chasuble began to be made of silk, which is still the general material today. The shape of the chasuble was changed gradually by cutting the sides shorter to free the arms. Only enough was cut away at first to leave the arms partly free. This shape is the so-called Gothic chasuble. Later it was cut so far back on the sides that the arms were entirely exposed, leaving only a garment hanging over the shoulders in front and back. This form is known as the Roman style. At first the chasuble was not ornamented, but during the Middle Ages it was decorated elaborately with orphreys and embroidery. The Roman style had a large Latin cross on the back with a single orphrey down the center of the front. The Gothic style was decorated with a Y-shaped orphrey cross in the back and a single orphrey, called the pillar, down the front. At the time of the Reformation, Luther retained the chasuble and the ancient vestments, while Zwingli and other reformers discarded them as "papistic," together with altars, candles, crucifixes, and the like. Since earliest days, however, the chasuble has been "the vestment" for the celebration of the Holy Communion Service, was retained by the Lutheran Church at the time of the Reformation, and is still used by a large section of the Lutheran Church.

The chasuble may be of fine white linen, unlined, or of silk damask and other materials lined with a contrasting color. When colored chasubles are worn, they match the color of the altar frontal. The best shape is an ellipse, the length of the front about 40 inches and the back

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45 inches, with the shoulders 20 inches. The size will, of course, be larger or smaller according to the size of the clergyman. The most usual orphreys for the cross in the back are the Y-shaped, although the Latin cross is also very beautiful. These orphreys may be made of strips of silk, or velvet, or cloth of gold from two to four inches wide. The front orphrey is a single strip down the center. The chasuble is more beautiful if it is not interlined or stiffened, but is allowed to fall in soft and graceful lines over the shoulders and arms.

The *maniple* is a strip of cloth hung over the left arm above the wrist and resembles the stole in shape, matching it in color and usually also in material. The length is about three feet and the width from 1½ to 2½ inches in the narrowest or central part. The ends are about 3½ inches wide and are finished with a fringe. Embroidery is not needed.

Originally the maniple was a linen napkin worn over the left arm as a badge of authority or for utilitarian purposes. Today it is merely ornamental and has no practical purposes. For that reason some liturgical authorities are in favor of discontinuing it. But it has been and still is being used in many Lutheran churches.

We have now given a brief description of the historic, traditional, Eucharistic vestments and we shall conclude with a quotation from P. Severinson to show their continued use in the Lutheran Church after the Reformation. Severinson says: "To form an idea of the richness of the vestments (*Gewandpracht*) used in a German Lutheran church in the days of the strict Lutheran orthodoxy, we will go into the church of St. Nicholai in Leipzig about the year 1650. (Paul Gerhardt 1607 to 1676). The Alb is used with Amice, *Maniple* and Parure which latter the sexton's wife must take off to launder and put on again. Then there is a surprising collection of Chasubles for many varied occasions: For ordinary Sundays there are five: one green satin, one red patterned velvet, one dark red smooth velvet, one red satin, and one violet-brown velvet. Besides this there are sixteen most elaborate ones for Festivals. For Advent one green velvet with Christ's Entry in embroidery, for New Year one of gold cloth, for the Presentation one of white satin with crucifix embroidered, for Palm Sunday one green with palm leaves, for Holy Thursday one of green satin, for Good Friday one of black velvet with crucifix, for Easter day (No. 2) one with crucifix of Pearle, for

Whitsunday one of brown-red velvet with the Trinity in pearle and stones, and so on. There still remains a collection of 'very old ones.'"<sup>5</sup>

Of the other traditional liturgical vestments, the following are the most frequently used in some Lutheran churches: the dalmatic, the tunicle, the cope, the biretta, the mitre, the pectoral cross, and the pastoral staff.

The *dalmatic* and *tunicle* are worn by the deacon and subdeacon respectively in the Holy Communion Service on festive occasions. The dalmatic probably derives its name from a garment worn in *Dalmatia*. The tunicle or tunic is similar in shape, but the dalmatic is larger and more ornate than the tunicle. Both were originally white linen vestments and were decorated with red or violet bands called *claves*. Later they became silk vestments made to match the color of the chasuble worn by the celebrant. Like the chasuble, they are put on over the head, but they are loosely shaped to the body, have short close sleeves, and are open on the sides for some distance from the bottom.

The *cope* is a vestment developed from a mantle worn in the first century as a protection against rain and dust. It was the shape of a semi-circle like a cape and was fastened in front by a clasp. The name of the garment was *cappa* from which the word cape is derived. It was worn by the clergy in ordinary life. Later it was used in church services, where it was worn over the other vestments to protect them, especially in outdoor services and in processions. The cope finally developed into a beautiful and costly vestment of silk damask or other rich material and was often elaborately embroidered and jeweled. It is such a garment still today. It has a wide orphrey attached to the full length of the straight edge which hangs around the neck and down the front. The front is held together by a clasp of metal or cloth called a *morse*. Originally the cope had a hood which could be pulled over the back of the head. But now the hood is generally only represented by a piece of cloth similar to a shield, edged with fringe, and with a tassel, attached to the bottom. The real hood, however, is coming into style again and is far more beautiful.

The cope is not a Eucharistic vestment and is, therefore, not worn

<sup>5</sup> P. Severinson, *The Proper Communion Vestments*, The Church Historical Society of Denmark, abbreviated in the English Rendering, p. 17.

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in the Holy Communion Service. Its chief use is for festive Matins, Vespers, and outdoor services. It is worn over the surplice and the alb.

The *biretta* as a headdress for outdoor services has already been mentioned. It was originally a skullcap on which was a topknot to make it easy to take off. During the Middle Ages it became a square cap. Today it is a stiff, collapsible, four-cornered cap made of black woolen material, surmounted by a black tuft of silk. It is only worn together with other clerical vestments.

The *mitre* was originally a white felt hat. During the Middle Ages it became the distinctive headdress of bishops. It has two stiffened rising sides coming to a point on top and worn at the front and back. These sides are sometimes decorated elaborately. The mitre is usually made of white silk or cloth of gold. It is still worn by some Lutheran bishops in Europe.

The *pectoral cross* is a distinctive insignia for bishops. It was originally a reliquary. In the late Middle Ages it became one of the ornaments of a bishop, worn during Mass and was retained as such by Lutheran bishops in the Reformation.

The *pastoral staff* or *crozier* carried by bishops is very ancient. Originally it did not resemble a shepherd's staff. It was a plain stick with a head like a tau, resembling a tau cross. From this shape the name crozier is derived. Later the tau head was replaced by a crook and many of the medieval crooks were elaborately carved and decorated. Like the mitre, the pastoral staff lends dignity to the presence of a bishop and distinguishes him as the chief pastor of his diocese.

### *For Acolytes or Altar Boys*

Acolytes and altar boys are properly vested in cassock and surplice or cotta. The black cassock is better than a colored one, and it may be made out of heavy cotton material. The surplice or cotta may be white linen or cotton. It should hang down below the knees. A cotta is like a surplice, except that it is not gathered at the yoke, which sometimes is square instead of round, and the sleeves need only be elbow length.

### *For the Choir*

Male choir members may wear a black cassock and white surplice. Like the acolyte's surplice, it should be more than knee length. Since the

surplice is a garment for males, it is not properly worn by female choir members. These may be vested in a black or white gown that is like a cape or cope, which falls from the shoulders to the feet in graceful folds. It should be fastened in the front and be made with slits through which the arms are extended, so that it will remain closed when the hands are used. An academic style gown is not churchly and should be avoided. Women choristers should also have their heads covered. Churchly caps, such as a small coif, Canterbury cap, or a simple black toque, are suitable. Oxford caps are not desirable, because they are associated with academic gowns.

#### *For Confirmation*

That persons who are baptized or confirmed are dressed in white is an ancient and symbolical tradition. This white dress, however, is not traditionally a special gown, but a white everyday dress. This custom presents no problem for girls, but it does for boys, since they do not ordinarily wear white suits. One solution to the problem is to rent white suits for the boys. Another is to provide special confirmation gowns for both the boys and the girls. This is being done, but unfortunately, the gowns are usually of an academic variety. Such gowns are most unsuitable for the solemn rite of confirmation.

Our suggestion is that a white cape-like garment be used like the one we suggested for women choristers. It could be made out of white linen or cotton and in such a way as to be a very appropriate confirmation gown both for the boys and girls. Since it is a Biblical custom for women to have their heads covered in church, it is fitting that this custom begin with girls at the time of their confirmation. Therefore, the *confirmation veil* could be worn by them when they are confirmed. This veil is made out of very fine linen, 27—30 inches square, with a 2-inch hem. It is fastened to the hair at each side with pins or by eight inches of elastic or tape run through a hem under the hair.



## CHAPTER VIII

# The Use of Other Candles and Lamps in Church

IN the chapter on The Altar and Its Ornaments we have already discussed the candles used on the altar. In this chapter we shall consider the additional candles and lamps which are used in the church's worship.

Candles and lamps may be employed in church merely to furnish light for reading or to produce a devotional atmosphere. Such lights may be regarded as office lights, but they have no symbolical meaning.

Already in apostolic days Christians used lights in their worship services. In the service which the apostle Paul conducted in Troas "there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together" (Acts 20:8). Christians employed lights at their *lucernaria* or evening meetings, as well as in all other services held during the night or in dark places. In the *Peregrinatio Etheria* (fourth century) we read: "Now at the tenth hour, which they call here (Jerusalem) *licinicon*, or as we say *lucernare*, all the people assemble at the *anactasis* in the same manner, and all the candles and tapers are lit, making a very great light. Now light is not introduced from without, but it is brought forth from within the Cave, that is, from within the rails, where a lamp is always burning day and night, and the Vesper psalms and antiphons are said, lasting for a considerable time."<sup>1</sup> The last statement about the lamp burning day and night is of particular interest. It is one of the earliest references to a sanctuary lamp kept burning before the altar. Perhaps

<sup>1</sup> L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship, Its Origin and Evolution*, trans. L. M. McClure, 5th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1931), p. 542.

this custom was a continuation of the light which God directed in the Old Testament to burn constantly before the veil in the tabernacle and temple (Ex. 27:20-21; Lev. 24:1-9). A little later in the fourth century we learn that lamps were burned as a mark of honor before altars, tombs of martyrs, and images. Thus Christians continued through the ages to burn many lamps and candles in their churches, not only to give light, but for devotional reasons.

The *sanctuary lamps* are what they are called, lamps burned in the sanctuary, the room where the altar is located. One, three, five, seven, and sometimes even nine sanctuary lamps are used. They may be made of any suitable material, although silver is preferred, and they may be fed with oil or wax. Usually they are suspended from the ceiling or wall brackets, or they are fixed on floor stands in suitable places in the sanctuary, but not directly over the altar. If they are placed on floor stands, great care must be exercised so that they do not interfere with the movement of those who are serving in the sanctuary and that they are not overturned. Whether the glass is white or colored is immaterial.

The *ambry light* is required in churches where the blessed Sacrament is reserved for distribution in their homes to the sick, dying, or others who could not attend the Holy Communion Service. This kind of reservation has been practiced at least since the second century in some churches. The lamp is placed before the ambry, has a white glass, and is kept burning so long as the Sacrament remains in the ambry.

*Office lights* may be placed in the sanctuary to supplement the candles on the altar. For instance, a pair of tall candlesticks may be placed in front of the altar step on either side of the altar, or floor candelabra containing three, five, or seven candles each may be set on each end of the altar. Candles may be mounted on riddle posts and attached to wall brackets in the chancel.

The *sanctus light* is burned in some churches between the Sanctus and the end of the Distribution or the end of the service. It is usually placed on a sconce or bracket fixed to the wall on the epistle side of the chancel.

*Gospel lights* may be used at the reading of the Gospel to express joy over the Holy Gospel and to symbolize our Lord Himself speaking to us in the Gospel. Gospel lights are used as follows: If the service

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is conducted by one minister alone, two acolytes with lighted candles come to the altar during the Gradual. They precede him to the gospel side of the altar and flank him while he reads or chants the Gospel. After that they return to their places. In a solemn service in which a deacon and subdeacon assist the celebrant, two acolytes with lighted candles escort the deacon to the gospel side of the chancel or the place where the Gospel is chanted. There they stand on either side of him and hold their candles aloft while he chants the Gospel.

The *Paschal candle* is a large white candle fixed into a floor candlestick which is lighted on Easter Eve at the first Vesper of Easter. This candle is symbolical of Christ's resurrection. Five grains of incense are inserted as marks of the five wounds of our Lord. The candle stands on the pavement at the gospel side of the altar and is lighted for all liturgical services from Easter to the Feast of the Ascension. On this feast it is extinguished and removed after the words of the Gospel have been read: "He was taken up into heaven."

The *Tenebrae herse* is used ceremonially in the Tenebrae services which are the Matins and Lauds of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday said on the preceding evenings. Fifteen or twenty-four candles are mounted on a wooden triangular frame called a herse. These candles are lighted before the service of Tenebrae and extinguished one after another at specific times during the service to symbolize Christ's bitter passion and death.

*Hand candles* are used by everyone at Candlemas, the feast of the Presentation of Our Lord and the Purification of the Virgin Mary, and may be employed in other services. In the ceremonies of Candlemas, candles are held aloft at the reading of the words of the Gospel, "A Light to lighten the Gentiles," and at the consecration and distribution of Holy Communion. In some churches the candles to be used in church during the year and others to be taken home are blessed and the people carry candles in procession chanting the *Nunc Dimittis*.

*Baptism candles* are given into the hands of persons when they are baptized or, in the case of infants, into the hands of their sponsors. This candle signifies the light of faith received in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. As the candle burns and is consumed, so the baptized person's

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life of Christian faith is to be a shining light in the world and is to be consumed in loving service to Christ, the Light of the World.

*Funeral candles* are used in church to place around the bier at a funeral service. Two or four candlesticks are employed, but there may be as many as six.

## General Rules of Ceremony

**T**HE following general rules of ceremony are based on tradition. Behind this tradition, however, are the principles or laws of reverence, love, order, and humility or respect.

Many rules of ceremony are governed by the principle of reverence. God demands reverence. We owe Him reverence. We owe it to Him, not only as an inner attitude, but also as an outward expression. At the burning bush God ordered Moses to take off his shoes, for the ground on which he stood was holy ground. This outward expression of the fear of God was demanded by the law of reverence.

We Christians show reverence to God because the Holy Spirit prompts and enables us to do the will of God in response to His grace and blessings. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28). In the church's worship we meet with God who has called us into His kingdom. Therefore we express our reverence toward Him, His Word, His sacraments, and all persons and things connected with our worship of Him. The first principle on which the traditional ceremonies are based is reverence.

The next principle is love. God's law demands that we love Him above all things and our neighbor as ourselves. But again, our Christian obedience flows not from the Law but the Gospel. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1 John 4:10-11). We show our love to God and

to our fellow worshipers in many ceremonies. The rule for these ceremonies is the law of love.

The law of order is another basis for the rules of ceremony. This law is expressed in the Word of God, "Let everything be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). God is a God of order. He is against disorder, confusion, slovenliness, crudeness, and ugliness. If that is true in every area of our lives, it is particularly true when God is present with us in a special way in the church's worship. The Old Testament worship which God prescribed was, in every detail of the tabernacle and temple, the sacred vessels and vestments, the rites and ceremonies of the services, orderly and beautiful. We have no such detailed prescriptions in the New Testament, but the principle remains. The rules governing the traditional ceremonies are based on the law of order.

The fourth principle is humility. We are exhorted, not only to be humble before God: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God" (1 Peter 5:6), but also to be humble in our relationship with our fellow Christians: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another" (Rom. 12:10). The rule governing the ceremony of kneeling for the confession of sins, for example, is based on this law. So also are the rules pertaining to the ceremonies of showing respect to one another, of honoring a person's position and office, and of the place of rank in a seating arrangement and procession.

It is on these principles that the rules of the ceremonies in the church's worship rest and from which they flow. If we remember these principles, we shall observe the ceremonies in the right spirit, not from compulsion, but from the Christian desire to do the will of God in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.

### *Types of Rubrics*

A rubric is a direction, rule, or suggestion as to how a service or the parts of a service are to be carried out. The name comes from a Latin word meaning red. The directions are called rubrics because they were written in red ink, while the rite was written in black ink.

The three principal types of rubrics are "shall," "may," and "should" rubrics.

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A "shall" rubric orders something to be done and allows for no alternative. For example, "The congregation shall rise, and the minister shall say."

A "may" rubric permits another action and leaves the matter optional. But ordinarily, what is suggested is to be preferred. For example, "The sign of the cross may be made at the Trinitarian Invocation and at the words of the Nicene Creed, 'and the life of the world to come.'"

A "should" rubric indicates more strongly the preferred action. "The Introit for the day, including the Gloria Patri, should be sung or spoken throughout," means that if a choice is made between singing and speaking the Gloria Patri when the rest of the Introit is spoken, then the best choice is to speak the Gloria Patri also. Sometimes instead of "should" the word "preferable" is used, as, for example, in the rubric: "Since the Preparation is not a part of the Service proper, it is preferable that the Officiant and the Congregation speak the entire Preparatory Service." The word "preferable" indicates most strongly the preferred choice and has almost the binding force of the verb "shall."

We also make a distinction between "general rubrics" and "particular rubrics." General rubrics are not limited to a particular item of a worship service, but pertain to the whole order of service or the church's worship in general. They also regulate the carrying out of the church year, the use of the paraments, and many other things. The following is a general rubric pertaining to all church services: "Silent prayer should be offered upon entering the church and after the Benediction."

Particular rubrics give directions for specific items of the rites and ceremonies. These rubrics are not collected and arranged separately as general rubrics usually are, but they are attached to or inserted in the rites themselves. This, for example, is a particular rubric, "Then shall follow the General Prayer."

Since the church's worship is done by the clergy and laity together, it is important that all members of the church learn to know the rubrics and carry out the worship in accordance with the rubrics. It should not be necessary for an officiant to direct the congregation during a worship service. To give directive signs or to make such directive remarks as, "Shall we now sing hymn so and so, or say the Creed, or rise and pray," is not only unnecessary, but it disturbs the worship and gives the im-

pression that the service is directed to the congregation instead of to God, and that the church service is only an ordinary meeting. For the sake of good order, let everyone make it his duty to know the rubrics and be guided by them.

*Positions and Actions of the Body*

Communication is not limited to language. We express ourselves to others and we receive impressions from others and from God through signs and symbols. These communications by signs and symbols are often more effective than those of language. While this is true in ordinary life, it is particularly true in the church's worship. The things communicated there have to do with the mysteries of our holy faith. These deep mysteries cannot, of course, be communicated so as to be understood fully or else they would no longer be mysteries. But signs and symbols often communicate the realities of the mysteries better than language.

Therefore, the devaluation of signs and symbols in the Protestant churches and also, at least since the day of Rationalism, in the Lutheran church, and the almost exclusive reliance on words as the means of communication seems to be a mistake. While we need to rely on language as the most important means of communication, we should perhaps reconsider our attitude toward the use of signs and symbols. Christ Himself gave us signs and symbols, i. e., material signs and symbolical actions, in the holy sacraments. These sacraments are, together with the words of the Holy Scriptures, the means of grace and the Gospel. But the Gospel is conveyed in various forms and manners of communication. In his *Christian Dogmatics*, Dr. Pieper says, "Such a means of grace is the Gospel in all forms of expression (communication), whether it be preached, written, or read, or spoken, or expressed in the form of absolution, or by means of signs, or pondered in the heart; for example, through a crucifix or another kind of picture, John 3:14-15)."<sup>1</sup> We ought to underline the words, "the Gospel in all forms of expression." In the opinion of this writer, Protestants and Lutherans have minimized the use of bodily and non-verbal signs and symbols in their worship ser-

<sup>1</sup> Franz Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1920), III, 124.



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vices at the expense of achieving most effectively the edifying of the body of Christ.

The positions and actions of the body in worship are included in liturgical signs and symbols. The number of such bodily actions is very great and the nature is diverse. Some are accompanied by words and verbal formulae and others are not. Some are gestures and actions of reverence, some of prayer, some of penitence, and others are sacramental. It is almost impossible to classify them, because many convey more than one meaning when used under different circumstances. We shall, therefore, simply discuss the most important ones used traditionally in the church's worship without trying to classify them.

### *Facing in a Certain Direction*

A general rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* prescribes: "When the Officiant stands before the altar, he faces the altar for all sacrificial acts and the Congregation for all sacramental acts." Then this rubric goes on to specify which are the sacrificial and the sacramental acts of the Morning Service and of the Order of the Holy Communion. Similarly, one of the general rubrics in the *Service Book and Hymnal* says, "The Minister may face the altar except in such parts of the service as are a direct address to the Congregation." By sacrificial acts are meant such parts as are directed to God and by sacramental acts those which are directed to the congregation. Both rubrics assume the eastern position of the altar, which means that to face the altar is facing east and to face the congregation is to face west.

The minister facing east or west in certain parts of the service expresses the idea that he represents God to man and man to God. He is not a mediator between God and man, but he is the ordained and authorized ambassador of God to the people and the mouthpiece and delegate of the priestly body, the church, before God. Therefore, when he acts as the spokesman of God, he faces the congregation; when he acts as the spokesman for the congregation, he faces the east.

All this appears to be simple enough, but the fact is that the parts of the service are usually not either sacramental or sacrificial. Most of the parts are both sacramental and sacrificial, as, for example, the Introits. With some parts it is only a matter of interpretation whether they are

sacramental or sacrificial, such as the Invocation and the Creed. Sometimes a part addressed to the people is said facing the altar according to tradition, as for example, "Let us pray" and "Lift up your hearts. . . . Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God." What should the minister do in those cases where no specific directions are given? Such cases are common. Lutheran service books are not rubricized in detail. They take for granted that the Lutheran principle will be observed as stated in the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXIV: "Public ceremonies, for the most part like those hitherto in use, are retained." This means that when we have no specific rubrical directions, we follow church tradition and do not decide the matter arbitrarily.

When the clergy and their assistants in the chancel are not serving in front of the altar, their usual position is to face north or south. This is also the position of choir members when the choir is located in the chancel immediately in front of the sanctuary.

Some of the minor services, such as Matins and Vespers, may be conducted from the north or south position, except for the reading of the lessons. But when the Gloria Patri is said, it is customary for everyone to turn to the altar, i. e., the east.

The ancient custom of facing west for the Renunciation and east for the Confession of Faith by adults when they are baptized will be considered when the rite of Holy Baptism is discussed.

### *Standing, Sitting, Kneeling*

For standing, sitting, and kneeling, the general rule is that we stand for prayer and praise, we sit for instruction and for lengthy chants and hymns, and we kneel for confession and adoration.

*Standing* was the normal position for worship in the early church and remained so for over a thousand years. It symbolized the fact that Christians had risen with Christ and for that reason could stand up before God. It was also regarded as an expression of joy and, therefore, the most becoming posture on Sundays, festivals, and during the Easter Season, the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost. Already St. Irenaeus (A. D. 180) mentions this custom of standing for worship on Sundays and during Eastertide and derives it from apostolic authority. In our liturgical worship today, it is desirable that standing should be the most

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usual posture. One of the general rubrics of the *Service Book and Hymnal* also seems to indicate this when it directs, "The congregation shall rise at the beginning of every service."

Sometimes standing is an expression of respect. When, for example, the clergy and their assistants enter the church during the chanting of the Introit, the people show their respect for the ministers of God by standing. This custom is based on common practice in our social life. In law courts all the people rise when the judge enters.

*Sitting*, except for the clergy, did not come into usage until about the fourth century. St. Augustine was perhaps the first one to allow it, and then only for the sermon. No seats were provided for the people. If they could not stand, they leaned on canes or reclined on the floor. Pews for sitting are a relatively late innovation. Today it is customary to sit for all lessons, except the Gospel, and for the singing of lengthy psalms and hymns. But even in the singing of psalms, the congregation rises for the Gloria Patri. The present tendency is to sit too much, which is not becoming to the spirit of Christian worship.

*Kneeling* is the natural expression of repentance, humility, and the feeling of one's littleness before God. For that reason it is prescribed as the desirable posture for the confession of sins (even on Sundays and in Eastertide) and for prayers on penitential days and all weekdays, except on Sundays and during the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost. Kneeling is also the expression of urgent petition, for example, in praying the litany, and of adoration, for example, at the words, "and was made man" in the Nicene Creed.

The proper way to kneel is to bend the right knee to touch the floor near the heel of the left foot and then bend the left knee and place it near the right. The reverse process is observed in rising. First the left knee is raised and then the right, the entire body being raised with the left leg.

The crucifer and the acolytes attending him never kneel, genuflect, or bow. But acolytes or altar boys do so at other times, even when carrying candles.

### *Bowing and Genuflecting*

Bowing and genuflecting are very closely related. A genuflection is merely a more profound bow. When genuflecting, one touches the ground

with the right knee at the place where the foot was and then stands upright again at once in a continuous action.

Bowing and genuflecting are reverences or, when directed to people, signs of respect. Giving form and expression to inner devotions, reverences help to make our worship meaningful and impressive.

Books on ceremonies distinguish between head bows and body bows. In head bows, only the head is inclined. An example of this kind of bow is the one an officiant makes to the people at the response, "And with thy spirit." In the body bow, the head and shoulders are bent forward. It is always made in expressing reverence to God.

Bowing or genuflecting towards the altar on entering and leaving the church is an act of reverence to God, for the altar is the symbol of God. The same thing is true of bowing to the crucifix when it is carried by in procession. Persons serving in the chancel likewise bow towards the altar when they enter and leave the sanctuary. They also show reverence to the crucifix located on or above the altar. But since the altar itself is the symbol of God's presence in the church, they need not bow or genuflect when merely going from one end of the altar to the other. They show their reverence to the crucifix in the manner of turning when they are at the north or south side of the altar. They will turn so as to face the crucifix while turning and will avoid the opposite, i. e., turning their backs to the crucifix.

Whenever they come into or go out of the sanctuary, the appropriate bow to the altar is made at the center. But when they are on the side of the altar, for example, the epistle side, and they want to go to the credence which is located on the same side, they do not bow to the altar. Only when two persons are working together and one comes from the opposite side, then both go to the center of the altar and bow together before going away from the altar.

Bowing the head at the holy name of Jesus every time it is mentioned during the worship service may have been suggested by the words of Scripture in Phil. 2:10. This is an old and reverent custom. But it may be made difficult and almost irreverent if the holy name is used too frequently in the sermon. The preacher could avoid creating this problem by using instead as often as possible such other terms as Christ, our Lord, and our Savior.

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Bowing the body whenever the words "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost" are said is a humble acknowledgment of the glory of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. All who are located so as to be facing north or south may turn to the altar in the east for this bow.

Bowing or kneeling when the words of the Nicene Creed are said, "And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost . . . and was made man," expresses reverent awe over God's grace in becoming man in order to redeem us. Luther speaks at length about the meaning of these words and how we should show our appreciation and reverence for the Incarnation. He even illustrates it with the following story:

"While the words 'And was made man' were being sung in church, he (the coarse and brutal lout) remained standing, neither genuflecting nor removing his hat. He showed no reverence, but just stood there like a clod. All the others dropped to their knees when the Nicene Creed was prayed and chanted devoutly. Then the devil stepped up to him and hit him so hard it made his head spin. He cursed him gruesomely and said: 'May hell consume you, you boorish ass! If God had become an angel like me and the congregation sang: "God was made an angel," I would bend not only my knees but my whole body to the ground. Yes, I would crawl ten ells down into the ground. And you vile human creature, you stand there like a stick or a stone. You hear that God did not become an angel but a man like you, and you just stand there like a stick of wood.' Whether this story is true or not, it is nevertheless in accordance with the faith (Rom. 12:6). With this illustrative story the holy fathers wished to admonish the youth to revere the indescribably great miracle of the incarnation. They wanted us to open our eyes wide and ponder these words well."<sup>2</sup>

Bowing is also done to people. Thus the people bow to the officiant when he says, "The Lord be with you," and he in turn bows his head to them when they respond, "And with thy spirit." This bow is made also to superiors, for example, by servers to the celebrant. When two or more persons are to be saluted, the first bow is always made to the one who has the greater dignity. One does not bow to a person who is kneeling.

<sup>2</sup> *Luther's Works*, Vol. 22, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John, Chapters 1—4, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1957), p. 105.

*The Liturgical Kiss*

The liturgical kiss has come down to us from apostolic days as a sign of greeting and farewell, of esteem, and of brotherly love (Rom. 10:16). In the Western church it is no longer a real kiss but a ceremonial action by which the lips are made to touch certain objects and by which brotherly love is expressed through formal words and gestures.

Before partaking of the Sacrament of the Altar, the early Christians expressed their love of one another and their oneness in Christ by kissing one another either at the Offertory or just before the Distribution. In our order of the Holy Communion, this kiss is expressed in the Pax Domini, "The peace of the Lord be with you alway!" immediately after the Consecration. In addition to these words, the celebrant may express it to the people by bowing and extending his open hands towards them, and they in turn may do so by bowing to him. But no attempt is made by all of the worshipers to extend the kiss personally to one another.

When the celebrant goes up to the altar for the first time and when he leaves it at the end of the service, he may bow down to it at the center and touch it with his lips. Here the kiss is an expression of greeting and farewell to the altar as the symbol of God's presence in the church.

After reading the Gospel for the day, the minister may raise the book to touch his lips. This ceremony expresses not only his own but all the worshipers' esteem and love for the holy Gospel.

These are some of the ways in which this most ancient ceremony may still be carried out significantly in our worship services.

*The Sign of the Cross*

Making the sign of the cross is another ceremony that has come down to us from apostolic times. We employ it in blessing persons and things. In the Order of Holy Baptism we use it with the words, "Receive the sign of the holy cross, both upon the forehead and upon the breast, in token that thou hast been redeemed by Christ the Crucified." When the minister pronounces the Benediction, he blesses the people with the sign of the cross. In the Holy Communion Service the celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the bread and the cup.

Care should be exercised not to make the sign too large or dramatically. It should be done easily, gracefully, and reverently.

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### Over Persons and Things

When making the sign of the cross over persons and things, the minister traces the sign with his open right hand, his left hand meanwhile resting on his breast.

#### *When Giving the Benediction*

The minister extends his right hand head high with his hand fully open. His left hand is held flat against his breast. When he says the Benediction, he may bow slightly every time at the words, "The Lord." At the end of the Benediction he makes the sign of the cross over the congregation from head down to his waist and from his left to his right shoulder. He may keep his right hand open or have only the thumb and first two fingers extended when making the sign. He may also elevate both hands to give the Benediction. But this form was adapted from the Reformed practice by some Lutherans in the 17th century.

#### When Reading the Gospel

When the minister announces the Gospel for the day, he may trace the holy sign with the tip of his thumb on the initial words of the Gospel, and then without opening his hand, he may trace three little crosses: one on his forehead, one on his lips, and one on his breast. These last three so-called little crosses may also be made by the people. They signify and express the prayer that we may retain the Gospel in our minds, proclaim it with our lips, and receive it in our hearts.

#### *Crossing Oneself*

Crossing oneself was practiced by Christians from the earliest centuries and may go back to apostolic times. We know that it was already a common ceremony used daily in A. D. 200, for Tertullian writes: "In all our undertakings — when we enter a place or leave it; before we dress; before we bathe; when we take our meals; when we light the lamps in the evening; before we retire at night; when we sit down to read; before each new task — we trace the sign of the cross on our foreheads." St. Augustine (A. D. 431) speaks of this Christian custom many times in his sermons and letters.

It is one of the traditional ceremonies that was most definitely

retained by Luther and the Lutheran Church in the 16th-century Reformation. Luther prescribed in his Small Catechism under the heading: "How the Head of the Family Should Teach His Household to Bless Themselves in the Morning and in the Evening." He says, "In the morning when you rise (In the evening when you go to bed) you shall bless yourself with the holy cross and say: In the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen." Again in his Large Catechism he recommends that parents should instruct their children to cross themselves for the purpose of recalling their divine Protector in moments of danger, terror, and temptation. This ceremony is also still authorized in many of the present-day Lutheran service books.

Crossing oneself is done by putting the fingers of the right hand to the forehead, to the breast, and to the left and right shoulders, with the words, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." By doing this we profess our faith in the Triune God and in our redemption through Christ crucified. But it is more than a profession of faith; it is a prayer in action of thanksgiving or for blessing to God the Father, in the Holy Spirit, through our one and only Mediator, Jesus Christ. The sign of the cross may also be made from the right to the left shoulder. This is the older form, which has been retained in the Eastern church.

In the church's worship it is a laudable custom to cross ourselves at the beginning and end of all services and at the following places in the Service or in the Order of the Holy Communion Service: During the opening words, "In the name etc."; at the end of the Absolution; at the beginning of the Introit; at the end of the Gloria in Excelsis; when the Gospel is announced (see above: When Reading the Gospel); at the end of the Creed; during the Sanctus at the words, "Blessed is He"; after the consecration at "The peace of the Lord"; when we receive the holy body and precious blood of Christ; when the minister says, "Depart in peace"; and at the end of the Benediction.

The holy cross is the symbol of our salvation. We were signed with it when we were baptized. It is the sign by which the church blesses people and things. By using it we become part of the wonderful history of our faith and companions in the company of the saints. It is right that we should make the sign of the cross frequently and to glory in



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it, saying with St. Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6:14)

### *Position of Hands*

The becoming position of the hands when they are not occupied otherwise is to hold them joined and folded before the breast. It is proper to fold them with palms together and fingers extended when facing the altar. This is especially becoming for ministers and others serving in the chancel. The hands may also be folded with fingers intertwined or by placing one over the other resting against the breast. When two persons serve together, it is desirable that they act uniformly in this matter.

When only one hand of a minister is engaged, he does not let the other dangle at the side, but lays it flat on his breast. When seated within the church, he lays his hands flat on his knees. During the prayers, he may hold them extended, that is, at the sides with palms facing each other and slightly higher than the elbows, rejoining them at the words of conclusion. He may extend them and lift them higher at the words, "Lift up your hearts," and again at, "It is truly meet etc." He may extend, raise, and at once rejoin them at the intonation of the Gloria in Excelsis and the Creed.

### *Carrying*

When carrying a closed book while in the chancel or in a procession, it is most becoming to hold it upright in both hands before the breast, the side of the book which opens being to the left so as to make it convenient to open. To carry a book under the arm or at the side in one hand, leaving the other hand to dangle, looks bad. When two acolytes walk together carrying candles, they hold them so that the upper hands are on the outside. Care must be taken that the candlesticks are held at the same level.

### *Walking*

When anyone is walking during a church service, it is desirable that he should walk erect, at a medium pace, and without looking around. When two or more are walking together (side by side or in a column), they should keep the same speed and go up steps with the right foot first. But they should not march in a military precision or try to keep

step; at least, no noticeable effort should be made to do so. All carelessness, needless walking around, and showing off must be avoided.

Those who serve in the chancel should avoid walking in such a slow, stiff, and sanctimonious manner as to give the impression that they are putting on a show for the people. Any display of super-holiness or of casualness is unbecoming. They should remember that they are not putting on a performance, but are serving in the presence of God where everything should be done naturally, humbly, and reverently.

To sidle along the altar is unbecoming. It is better to turn and walk straight forward and, when standing, to face squarely in the required direction. For example, when going from the center of the altar to the epistle side, one turns right and walks straight to it with face forward. One does not shuffle along sideways without turning.

As a general rule, those who walk in the chancel should not walk on a diagonal. When they must change directions, they go straight forward until they come in front of the object they want to approach and then turn and walk straight to it. For instance, when going from the sacristy to the altar, one walks to a position directly in front of the altar, makes a quarter turn and walks up to it on a straight line.

### *Turning*

When two people walk together in the nave (ushers) or chancel, they turn towards each other when they turn around.

Regarding those who serve in the chancel, additional rules apply. One of the general rubrics in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p.417) directs, "When turning at the altar, the Officiant shall ordinarily turn by his right side to face the Congregation and by his left side to face the altar." This is the ordinary rule, which is probably based on the fact that the deacon's normal position in assisting the celebrant at the altar is on the epistle side and it would not be polite for the celebrant to turn his back to him when turning to face the congregation. But anyone standing at the side of the altar, whether at the gospel or epistle side, always turns towards the crucifix in the center of the altar. For example, when a minister reads the Epistle at the south horn of the altar, he turns to the left where the crucifix is at the center of the altar and faces the congregation, and in turning back after the reading of the Epistle, he turns again to the crucifix of the altar or to the right. However, if so desired, those

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officiating at the altar may turn invariably by their right side to the congregation and by their left side to face the altar. In that case, on page 109, the suggestion, "turns to the left to face the congregation . . . turns to the right to the altar," and the directives on pages 110, 115, 116, 117, and 118 should not be observed.

### *Uniformity*

When two or more are doing an action together, for example, walking, reading, bowing, genuflecting, kneeling, good form requires their doing it at the same rate of time and manner of action. But while the action should be smooth and uniform, it should remain devotional and reverent and not give the impression that it is a "performance."

### *Precedence*

When two or three walk together side by side, the superior in rank walks on the right side. When walking in a column, the superior walks behind those of lower rank.

In a procession, the place of dignity is at the end.

Persons of lower rank cross behind superiors whenever this is possible.

If the arrangement is practical, those of higher rank are seated on the gospel side of the chancel facing south and those of lower rank on the epistle side facing north.

### *Miscellaneous*

Promptness is an important factor in ceremony and also in the matter of starting and closing church services on time.

Unnecessary noise and irreverent behavior should not be tolerated in church before, during, or after the service.

People should be taught that the church is not a showplace or concert hall where one goes to "hear a preacher" or "listen to a soloist or choir" or to show off a bride or the body of a departed, but it is the house of God where He, and not men, are worshiped and glorified.

The clergymen and their assistants in the chancel should make sure that the clothes they wear, which will show when vested, will be proper to the dignity of the service. For example, black and white shoes, colored stockings, a gay necktie or a bowtie, a soft collar, and a colored shirt are

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not becoming. Shoes and stockings should be black. If a necktie is worn, it should also be black. The collar should be white and, if any part of the shirt shows, it should be a white or black shirt.

Regarding announcements, a general rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p. 419) directs, "Notices to the Congregation, except in connection with requests for Intercessions, ought not to be read during the Services."

Clergymen should be dignified, natural, and reverent in all their actions when serving in the chancel. They should not be stiff, ceremonious, and affected. They should not sit crosslegged. They should not shout the service or drawl, mumble, mouth, or monotone their words. They should avoid walking falteringly or at any gait that might be disturbing. They should not stand at an indecisive angle. When at the altar, they should not turn the head to see what is going on in the congregation. If they need a handkerchief, they should not raise their vestments, but they should carry a handkerchief in their sleeve or in their hand to use when needed. If something has to be said among those who are officiating, it will attract less attention if said quietly in a low voice rather than in a whisper. The persons speaking should not bend to each other. If a mistake is made, they should not make a fuss about it during the service.

## General Principles of Liturgical Music

THE simplified modern Lutheran church service contrasts sharply with the rich and often elaborate liturgical forms of the early days of Lutheranism. Here, as in many other respects, Luther clung to the old church, and even today we note a strong resemblance between the two rituals.

"Until well into the seventeenth century complete masses were celebrated in the Lutheran churches. In the Lutheran ritual, the melodic framework, the *cantus firmus*, on which all parts of the mass are based, is a German choral."<sup>1</sup>

These words of Paul Nettl emphasize our Lutheran ceremonial position in regard to church music. The mass to which he refers is the sung mass or high mass, in which all the parts of the service are chanted or sung both by clergy and laity. The spoken service or low mass was not the principal and usual service in the ancient church. Not until the late Middle Ages did the low mass develop, originating with the reading of private masses. Both the *Formula Missae* of 1523 and the *Deutsche Messe* of 1526 by Luther were intended to be sung. He even provided the musical setting for chanting the Epistle and Gospel in the *Deutsche Messe*.

In Christian and Lutheran tradition liturgical music is not regarded as something unimportant and optional. It belongs to the church's wor-

<sup>1</sup> Paul Nettl, *Luther and Music*, trans. Frida Best and Ralph Wood (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1948), p. 57.

ship and plays a vital role in the communication of the Word and sacraments, the sanctification of the world and church, and in the offering of the church's sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God.

Not every kind of music, however, is church music. What is and what is not liturgical music is determined by certain basic principles with which every churchman should become acquainted. Lutheran pastors and church musicians especially need to know these principles and apply them in selecting the music for the worship services. Sometimes pastors disregard these principles on the plea of a lack of musical knowledge and training. But it is not necessary to be a trained musician to distinguish between church music and what is not church music. In fact, one need not be a musician to know the difference between good and poor church music. Besides, the pastor who says, "I'm not a musician and therefore I leave the music of the service entirely to the organist," has a false conception of his office. For the minister of a congregation is in charge of every part of all services, including the music. He should, therefore, be familiar with the fundamental principles of worship music and see to it that these principles are observed whether he has any musical training or not. He should also consider the realistic fact that not all good organists are good church organists.

### *First Principle*

Liturgical music must, first of all, be objective in character, that is, it must be directed to God and not to man. It must not be "art for art's sake," but "art for worship's sake." It must extol the glory of God and not the glory of the musician, whether singer, organist, or choir. It must express the "Soli Deo gloria" (To God alone the glory) idea.

Concert music is usually not objective in character and is, therefore, unsuitable for worship services. It is too subjective. It attracts attention to itself or to the skill of the musician. It is not God-directed.

Sentimental music is also subjective. It glorifies only or primarily the emotions. Certain musical devices, such as the organ tremolo stop, may cause music to be sentimental. Therefore, this stop should be used sparingly, perhaps only to emphasize certain phrases of music. It should not be used in bad taste or to sentimentalize. But in judging this matter, the vibrant or pulsating character of the tremolo must also be taken into consideration. Solos, too, are apt to be subjective, especially solos by

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women. They need not be, however; much depends on the soloist and whether the solo is an independent number in the service or a part of the song by the choir.

### *Second Principle*

The second principle is that worship music must be helpful in preparing the worshipers for the reception of the grace of God, which is offered and conveyed through the Word and Sacraments, and for the response to this grace with all their faculties of soul and body. It must help to put them into the proper frame of mind and into the proper mood for sorrow or joy, adoration or praise. It must draw them away from themselves and the world around them to God and spiritual things. It must be music which is rendered to God, even though the worshipers do it only by proxy through the musicians.

Many people have a false idea of church worship. They go to church to hear a preacher or to enjoy the music instead of going to church to worship God. Music must not be the object of worship but its servant and handmaid. If it is connected with words, it must not overshadow the words but clothe them in fitting dress and give them proper expression.

Neither is music to be employed in church just to have music, even though it is beautiful. It should certainly be beautiful, but not all beautiful music is worship music. Therefore it is inadvisable to play up the music or the musicians in the church announcements or the printed order of service. Such an emphasis may defeat the very purpose of the church's music.

### *Third Principle*

Thirdly, worship music must be sacred music; sacred as distinguished from secular or worldly. Operatic, dance, and all purely secular music is unsuitable for Christian worship, simply because it is not proper to and was not written for church worship. "All fitting music is good, but not all music is fitting."

We are aware, of course, that in the past some secular music was taken over by the church for use in worship. But we must remember that this was possible because secular life and the arts were dominated

by a Christian culture. Even though it was secular music, it was Christianized secular music.

When we speak about fitting music for church services, we have in mind, not only the Holy Communion Service, the Preaching Service, Matins, and Vespers, but also weddings, funerals, and the like. We have heard organists play such compositions in church as Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, Schumann's "Träumerei," Handel's "Largo," Dvorak's "Humoresque," Donizetti's "Sextet" from *Lucia*, Sullivan's "The Lost Chord," and of course Wagner's "Wedding March" from *Lohengrin*, Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and even De Koven's "Oh, Promise Me." All such music is good in its place, but it is out of place when we gather to worship God.

Ignorance, prejudice, and indifference are the cause of most of the inappropriate music which is tolerated in the churches. If, for example, those Christians who insist on having "Here comes the bride" were aware of the fact that Wagner's "Wedding March" from *Lohengrin* is really not a wedding march at all, but a sensuous dance into the bedroom, and that during this operatic act the bridegroom murders a rival and finally abandons his bride, they would not ask to have it played in the sacred service of holy matrimony. But in music, as in other things, much of the Lord's work is often done carelessly and thoughtlessly. Many lay people and clergymen yield to personal or popular likes and dislikes or to narrow professionalism of music for its own sake or to any of the many forms of self-glorification. Someone has well said that the music used in the church has within its power "to make or break the value of any service."

A general rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p. 419) says: "In view of the fact that the music presented by the Choir and organist is part of the Service of Worship, it is imperative that this music be in keeping with the spirit of the liturgical character of the Service."

### *The Prelude*

The purpose of the organ prelude is to set the stage, as it were, for the day's service. Therefore, in addition to observing the fundamental principles of church music mentioned above, we must ask ourselves such questions as: What is the general theme of the day's service? What is its character? What is the mood? Unless we know the answers to these



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questions, we cannot select and play a prelude which will help to create the right atmosphere and put the congregation in the proper frame of mind and emotional condition for the objective which that particular service is to achieve.

It is inappropriate, therefore, to use preludes which are unrelated to the thought, theme, and mood of the service. For an organist to shuffle through his music and select what happens to strike his fancy or at the last minute to choose just anything that he is able to play fairly well, is to do violence to the service from the start. Of course, it takes much careful planning and hard work to select and play a prelude which will introduce a service properly. But the worship of God requires our best efforts. And once the organist knows the overall theme, character, and mood of the day's service, he has all the clues as to what to play and what the tempo, volume, registration, and expression should be.

Nothing introduces the service so well as the hymn prelude. In saying this, we take for granted, of course, that the hymns are chosen thoughtfully and carefully. For when they are chosen, they become a part of the order of service; we may say, one of its propers. But while the other service propers for each day's service are prescribed in the service books, the hymns are left open to choice. Liturgical knowledge and skill, therefore, must be exercised in choosing hymns that are proper. In his workbook, *Planning the Service*, Ralph Gehrke says, "Hymns should not be considered casual additions but integral parts of the service. . . . This means, of course, that the hymns must answer the two-fold requirement of being appropriate to the church year and of being appropriate also to that point in the liturgy at which it is used."<sup>2</sup>

So then, if the hymns of the service are selected carefully according to liturgical principles, the best prelude is the hymn prelude. The reason for this is obvious; for if the words of the first hymn express the dominant idea of the day's service and if the tune reflects the correct mood, then a prelude based on that hymn will immediately lift the minds and hearts of the worshipers to the thought and spirit of the service. And the hymn prelude has the additional advantage of preparing the congregation for the singing of the opening hymn. Some of the great

<sup>2</sup> Ralph Gehrke, *Planning the Service*, A Workbook for Pastors, Organists, and Choirmasters (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 5.

organists, even before the days of Johann Sebastian Bach, understood this and therefore composed many fine hymn preludes.

In the preface of *The Anthology*, we read: "The place of the organ in church worship is that of serving the congregation both by preparing it for worship and by accompanying it in singing. Therefore, when the organist prepares himself, he must give attention primarily to the texts and hymns of the service. These will determine the choice of tune, tempo, and registration for the accompaniment of the singing. The prelude should also be closely related to these texts and hymns. This cannot be accomplished at all with a prelude of secular music and only in part with one of a general nature."<sup>3</sup>

A discussion of the hymn prelude also raises the question of the hymn tune. Our hymn books have set every hymn to a tune. Many of these tunes are intimately associated with the hymn. As a rule, therefore, the tune to which the hymn is set should not be changed by substituting another tune. Such a change is usually very disturbing to the congregation. If the tune to which the hymn is set is unfamiliar, it should be learned; for if the hymn is important enough to be selected, the tune is also important enough to be learned.

In addition to preludes based on hymn tunes, hundreds of good general preludes are available. Many of these can be used to introduce the service and the opening hymn. The usual procedure is to play a general prelude which is in the same key and the same character as the tune of the opening hymn and then to play the hymn tune. In order to vary this, the hymn could be played first, then the prelude, and perhaps the hymn again, or part of it, at the end.

### *The Organ Offertory*

The music which is played while the offerings are being gathered must also conform to the rules which we have considered. It can be based on the tune of the following hymn, especially when that hymn expresses the consecration of the worshipers in view of the grace of God proclaimed to them in that particular service. Perhaps the most common mistake is to play something soft and sentimental, but nothing could be further from the spirit of the offertory. The offertory should

<sup>3</sup> *Anthologie*, two volumes, German (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), no date or author given.

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express the fact that we offer gratefully ourselves, our substance, and our sacrifices of prayers, praise, and thanksgiving to God. If this is kept in mind, the organist will not go far wrong in the kind of music he will play during this moment of worship.

The length of the music should be adjusted to the time required for gathering the offerings, so that the music does not go on after the offerings have been brought to the altar. If the organist cannot conclude the music smoothly at the proper time, we suggest that he signal the ushers when he is near the end so that they know when to bring up the offerings.

### *The Postlude*

The postlude deserves much more attention, both by the organist and the congregation, than it generally receives. After the Benediction, about one-half minute is allowed for silent prayer. Then the postlude begins at once and the congregation leaves the house of God freely and reverently with a feeling of thanksgiving for the gifts of grace it has received. And it is this feeling which is to be expressed by the postlude.

Some people seem to think that the purpose of the postlude is to cover up the noise of the departing congregation and therefore it must be loud. But loudness encourages noise, and the postlude should not encourage but discourage unnecessary noise and talking.

A postlude based on the last hymn or the main hymn of the service is very appropriate. This will give musical unity to the whole service and will help to summarize it for the people as they go back into their daily life.

### *Chanting*

Chanting differs considerably from singing barred and rhythmic music. It is not really singing, but reading. The tune and time are merely a setting for the reading of the words. The tempo of the chant depends on the thoughts of the text and its rhythm on the accent of the syllables.

Since chanting serves a very important purpose in the liturgy, pastors, organists, and choirs should study it and learn to do it properly. Their training and leadership will influence the congregation's chanting. Much of the chanting in our churches is pitifully poor. Many good

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books on chanting are available. The introductions in such books as *The Choral Service*, *The Choral Service Book*, *The Introits*, and *The Psalter*, are also very helpful.<sup>4</sup> Nearly everyone can learn to chant, but no one will do it well without study and practice.

Things to be avoided particularly in chanting are: trying to sing the chant like barred music; chanting too slowly and stiffly by beating out the notes; breaking up the sentences so much as to make the chant sound choppy; breaking up the thoughts and phrases; observing such punctuation marks as commas too rigidly.

Chanting is good reading done on notes. It should be carried out lightly and fluently at the same speed and with the same rhythm as is done in good reading. Unlike barred music, chanting has its own rhythm and mode of expression.

If the organ is used to accompany chanting, it should be restricted to those parts of the service assigned to the people and choir. A minister should not be accompanied by the organ when he chants.

The basic idea of chanting is stated in the following rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p. 419): "Liturgical chant, more so than any other type of church music, is not a musical interpretation of the text: it is only the bearer of the text and hence should be sung in a simple, straightforward manner. To a lesser extent, the same thing is true of Hymn tunes. This is in keeping with the spirit of the objective character of liturgical worship, which disdains sentimentalization and tawdriness, musical and otherwise."

Another rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p. 419), which many officiants either ignore or do not seem to know, prescribes: "The Officiant shall chant those portions of the Service to which the Choir or the Congregation responds with chanting." This means, for example, that if the congregation chants the response: "And with thy spirit," the officiant is to chant the salutation: "The Lord be with you." The rubric is a "shall" rubric and refers to all those parts of the service in which there is a dialog

<sup>4</sup> The Joint Commission on Church Music of the Protestant Episcopal Church, *The Choral Service* (New York: H. W. Gray, 1930).

Harry G. Archer and Luther D. Reed, eds., *The Choral Service Book* (Philadelphia: The United Lutheran Publishing House, 1901).

Walter E. Buszin, *The Introits* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1942).

Herbert Lindemann, *The Psalter* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1940).

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between the officiant and the congregation or in which a portion of a part is done by the officiant and another portion by the congregation or choir. It means that all such parts are either spoken or chanted by both the officiant and the congregation and not, as one so often finds, that the officiant speaks his portion and the congregation chants the other portion; for example, the officiant reads the Collect, but the congregation chants the Amen.

### *Hymns and the Amen*

In regard to the singing of the Amen at the end of a hymn, the general rule is that an Amen is sung if it is a part of the original hymn text or if the last stanza of the hymn is a doxology or if the hymn is predominantly a prayer. But not every hymn should be automatically closed with an Amen, as is so frequently done. The Amen is a solemn affirmation of a prayer or the confession of faith. A careless use of this response, like the haphazard praying of the Lord's Prayer, destroys its meaning and effectiveness.

### *The Organ and Speaking*

For the organ to play any kind of music while parts of the service are spoken, such as the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, is not in keeping with the character of liturgical worship.

### *Antiphons, Psalms, Canticles*

Antiphons may be intoned by cantors or the officiant, but are chanted in full by all after the Gloria Patri.

Psalms and canticles are chanted antiphonally, including the Gloria Patri, that is, by two groups answering each other verse by verse, or the cantor or the officiant against the choir or congregation. But, except for the antiphons, psalms and canticles may also be chanted in unison by all.

### *The terms "speak," "say," "chant"*

When the term "speak" is used for the rendition of a part of the service, it means that the part is to be spoken. If the word "say" is used, the part may be either spoken or chanted. "Say" and "chant" are often used synonymously.

## Part I. The Ceremonial of the Order of the Holy Communion Service

(Note the following abbreviations: TLH—*The Lutheran Hymnal*; SBH—*Service Book and Hymnal*; TLL—*The Lutheran Liturgy*.)

WHEN we speak of the Holy Communion Service, we mean the chief service of the church, the Holy Eucharist or the Mass.<sup>1</sup> The Service or The Order of the Holy Communion Service is the title given in our service books to the whole service, including the Preparation, the Office of the Catechumens (or the Ministry of the Word), and the Office of the Faithful (or the Ministry of the Sacraments) on pages 15 to 31 in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and on pages 1 to 14 in the *Service Book and Hymnal*. When we want to speak only about the last part of the service, the Office of the Faithful, or the Ministry of the Sacrament, on pages 22 to 31 in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and on pages 5 to 14 in the *Service Book and Hymnal*, it is more accurate to say the Holy Communion, or the Sacrament of the Altar, or the Blessed Sacrament, or the Lord's Supper, or the sacramental part of the Holy Communion Service.

Much care needs to be exercised in the proper use of terms. We say, "The Holy Communion Service will be celebrated Sunday," "The Blessed Sacrament will be distributed," "Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, the Rite of Confirmation will be administered," "The Matin Ser-

<sup>1</sup> The Mass is the name used for the Holy Communion Service in the Lutheran Confessions. See, for example, Art. XXIV of the Augsburg Confession in *The Concordia Triglotta*, p. 65 f.

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vice or Matins, the Vesper Service or Vespers will be conducted." Such terminology is more becoming than to say, "Holy Communion will be served Sunday," "I shall serve Holy Communion," and "Communion will be offered this Sunday (or in the 11 a. m. service)." The term "serve" is too closely associated with serving ordinary food to someone and should not be used in connection with the Holy Communion Service, for Holy Communion is not ordinary eating and drinking. In reference to the Epistle and Gospel in the Holy Communion Service, we do not say Epistle-Lesson or Gospel-Lesson, but the Epistle and the Gospel. If a lesson from the Old Testament precedes the Epistle, it is called the Lesson. In his *Studies in the Liturgy*, F. R. Webber says, "There is no such thing as an Epistle-Lesson, for one might as well speak of the Bible-book, the Lectern-reading-desk, and the sacristy-vestry. We do not 'find' an Epistle, for such an expression implies that it was previously lost. There is no reason why the word 'recorded,' so dear to some parsons, need be inserted here. And why should one say, 'John,' when it is more respectful to say Saint John?"<sup>2</sup> To this last statement, the author could have added: Why should one say "Jesus" when it is more reverent to say "Jesus Christ" or "the Lord Jesus"?

The names applied to clergymen may also be mentioned in this connection. We may call a clergyman a pastor, minister, (the) Reverend Mr. (John Smith), or Reverend (Smith) — "reverend" is now used as a title — deacon (if ordained), presbyter, father, priest (cf. Book of Concord), and bishop, but most of these names are distinctive of certain kinds of clergymen. The name pastor should not be applied to a clergyman who is not in charge of a congregation; for example, a theological seminary professor. If a congregation has more than one pastor, the term co-pastor or associate pastor(s) is theologically incorrect, although there may be local reasons why it is used. The correct name is assistant pastor(s), or minister(s), or deacon(s), if ordained. The Reverend (Meyer) is applied to all clergymen. Ordained deacons and subdeacons are assistant ministers. Presbyter is used only by a few denominations. Father and priest have come into general usage, like minister. A bishop is a minister in charge of a district. We do not call a clergyman a doctor unless he holds that title.

<sup>2</sup> F. R. Webber, *Studies in the Liturgy* (Erie: Ashby Printing Co., 1932), p. 69.

*The Preparation*

"Since the Preparation is not a part of the Service proper, it is preferable that the Officiant and the Congregation speak the entire Preparatory Service. The Congregation may kneel until the Declaration of Grace has been spoken" (TLL, p.419).

This rubric does not include under the Preparatory Service a preceding hymn which according to *The Lutheran Hymnal* "shall," and the *Service Book and Hymnal* "may" be sung. By the Preparatory Service it means everything from the Invocation to the Amen after the Declaration of Grace. This section may be chanted, but it is preferable to speak it. If it is chanted, the officiant chants all his parts and the congregation all the responses, as required by the rubric: "The Officiant shall chant those portions of the Service to which the Choir or the Congregation responds with chanting" (TLL, p.419). This is a "shall" rubric which rules out the practice in which the officiant speaks the parts assigned to him and the congregation responds with chant. The rubric requires that either both parts are spoken or both are chanted. *The Music for the Liturgy* says: "The music for the chanting of the Confession of Sins is given for the convenience of those who desire to chant those parts; but this practice is not to be considered as being recommended by our Committee" (p.6). But, unfortunately, both *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal* in their tune editions have set the congregation's parts to music, and as long as the musical score remains there, the above rubric will be disregarded. We hope, therefore, that in the next printing of these books all the musical settings in the Preparatory Service will be omitted, so that the rubric will be observed more generally. For, since the Preparation does not belong to the service itself and since it is penitential in content and character, it should be distinguished ceremonially from the service proper by being spoken entirely without any music. It may be separated from the service still more sharply by a pause, as suggested in the rubric, "A brief silence may be kept before the Introit for the Day" (SBH, p.2).

Another rubric says, "For the Invocation and the Preparatory Service the Officiant may stand at the foot of the altar steps, advancing to the altar at the Introit" (TLL, p.419). "At the foot of the altar steps" means in the chancel but not on the predella, the platform on which



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the altar stands. If a further distinction between the Preparation and the service proper is desired, the officiant may conduct the Preparatory Service in the nave at the foot of the chancel step, as is done in some churches.

Sometimes the Preparatory Service is not held in immediate connection with the service proper. For instance, it may be held on the evening before or in the morning at a time separated from the service. The Order of the Confessional Service (TLH, p. 46) or the Order for Public Confession (SBH, p. 249) is generally used for that purpose. When this is the case, the rubric applies, "When the Service begins with the Introit, the Officiant shall proceed to the altar at once" (TLL, p. 419). It should be noted that the Invocation according to this rubric is not said before the Introit and the opening hymn is omitted.

When the congregation kneels for the Confession in the Preparatory Service, it remains kneeling even when the officiant rises to speak the Declaration of Grace.

*The Introit, Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Salutation, Collect*

"Then all may stand to the close of the Collect" (TLH, p. 16). "The Congregation shall stand to the close of the Collect" (SBH, p. 2). The second rubric, requiring standing, is preferable, because a sitting position is inconsistent with the nature of these acts.

The Introit. "The Introit for the Day with the Gloria Patri should be sung by the Choir. If a Choir is not available, the Introit may be said or chanted by the Officiant; in this case the Gloria Patri may be said or sung by the Congregation" (TLL, p. 419). Historically, the Introit is the entrance song chanted by the congregation or choir for the entrance of the clergy into the chancel. It is, therefore, not a clerical but distinctly a congregational part of the service and is properly to be done by the congregation or choir. Only under circumstances of necessity can the practice of the officiant's saying or chanting the Introit be justified, even though it is allowed in the rubrics.

"The Introit for the Day, including the Gloria Patri, should be sung or spoken throughout" and "The Antiphon, which announces the keynote of the Introit, shall be repeated after the Gloria Patri" (TLL, p. 420). These two rubrics prescribe the correct ceremonial rendering

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of the Introit over against such practices as the celebrant's reading the Introit antiphon and psalm verse and the congregation's chanting the Gloria Patri and the failure to repeat the Introit antiphon after the Gloria Patri of the Introit. The Gloria Patri belongs to the Psalm of the Introit and is not an independent part of the Introit.

The following rubric permits the saying of the entire Introit psalm instead of just the psalm verse: "Instead of the Introit, a Psalm may be used. The Introit consists of Antiphon, Psalm, and Gloria Patri." (TLH, p. 4)

No matter who does the Introit, it is rendered as follows: Antiphon, Psalm verse, Gloria Patri (except when silent), Antiphon repeated. In *The Lutheran Hymnal* the Gloria Patri is omitted on A Day of Humiliation and Prayer. Some churches omit it also in Passion Week and Holy Week or only in Holy Week. But the antiphon is always repeated at the end of the Introit.

On feast days the antiphon may be said three times, thus: at the beginning, after the Psalm verse, and again after the Gloria Patri.

The Lutheran service books permit the substitution of an entire Psalm or a greater portion of a Psalm for the Psalm verse. When this is done, the Psalm to be used is the one from which the Psalm verse in the Introit of the Day is taken. On the First Sunday in Advent, for example, the Psalm verse is the fourth verse of Psalm 25. Therefore the proper Psalm for that day is Psalm 25. If it is a long Psalm, it may be ended wherever the sense permits. But the Antiphon, Gloria Patri, and the Antiphon repeated remain as usual. On high feast days a part of the Antiphon may be repeated after every verse of the Psalm. For example, Psalm 8 on Easter Day may be rendered as follows:

He is risen, alleluia: why seek ye the living among the dead?  
Alleluia.

Remember how He spoke unto you, alleluia: The Son of Man must be crucified and the third day rise again. Alleluia, alleluia.

Psalm 8. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth: who hast set Thy glory above the heavens.

He is risen, alleluia: why seek ye the living among the dead?  
Alleluia.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained

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strength because of Thine enemies: that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

He is risen, alleluia: why seek ye the living among the dead? Alleluia.

(Etc., to the end of the Psalm. Gloria Patri and the full Antiphon follow.)

The Kyrie. " 'The Kyrie' shall be said or sung by the Congregation. A ninefold (the Officiant speaking the first line; the Officiant speaking each line) Kyrie may be substituted for the threefold Kyrie. In place of the English text, the Greek form, 'Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison, Kyrie Eleison,' may be used in either a threefold or ninefold form" (TLL, p. 420). When the ninefold Kyrie is sung or spoken alternately by the choir and congregation, we suggest the following arrangement:

Choir	Congregation
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	Christe eleison
Christe eleison	Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison	Kyrie eleison
Kyrie eleison	

If an elaborate chant setting is used by the choir, it may be rendered as follows: The cantor begins the first line and the choir concludes it; the second to eighth are sung alternately by the cantor and choir; the ninth line is chanted together by all.

The Kyrie prayer authorized by the *Service Book and Hymnal*, p. 2, is said alternately by the officiant and congregation.

The Gloria in Excelsis. "The Gloria in Excelsis shall be used on all Feasts and Festival Days; at other times a versified form of the Gloria in Excelsis (TLH 237, 238) or another hymn of praise, may be used. The Gloria in Excelsis shall also be used at all services of worship in which the administration of the Holy Communion takes place, except that in this case it may be omitted during the Seasons of Advent, Pre-Lent, and Lent" (TLL, p. 420). A simple rule to follow is that the Gloria in Excelsis is not said on any day when the violet or black vestments are used.

The officiant intones the Gloria in Excelsis with the words, "Glory

be to God on high." The words are not repeated by the congregation when it says the Gloria in Excelsis.

The Collect. Preceding the Collect, the Salutation is said. This Salutation occurs often in the church's worship in order to emphasize the fact that the services are done by the clergy and the laity together. "Then shall the Minister say or chant the Collect for the day" (TLH, p. 9). Notice that this is a "shall" rubric, which means that no other prayer shall be substituted for the collect of the day. "Other Collects may be used with the Collect for the Day; the Congregation shall say or chant 'Amen' after each Collect" (TLH, p. 4). If any other collects are to be said, they should follow the collect of the day. Other collects are usually added only for the commemoration of a festival.

"The Collect for Ash Wednesday is said in every Lenten Service after the Collect for the Day" (TLL, p. 418). Likewise, the collect for the first Sunday in Advent is said in every Advent service after the Collect for the Day.

"Whenever the Collect for the Day is said, the full termination as appointed shall be used. If other Collects are said after it . . . the full termination shall be used with the Collect for the Day and the last Collect only. . . . The short termination of the Collects used after the Collect for the Day will usually be: through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord; or, through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Exceptions to this rule will be found printed in full in the texts of the Additional Collects.

"When the Petition is addressed to God the Father, the full termination is: through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

"When the Petition is addressed to God the Son, the termination is: who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

"When the Petition is addressed to God the Holy Ghost, the termination is: who livest and reignest with the Father and the Son, ever one God, world without end.

"When mention is made of our Lord in the body of the Petition, the termination is: through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord,

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who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

“When mention is made of our Lord at the end of the Petition, the termination is: who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

“When mention is made of the Holy Ghost in the body of the Collect, the termination is: who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

“When the Petition is addressed to God the Holy Trinity, the termination is: who liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end” (TLL, p. 418).

A saint’s day or other feast which falls on a weekday may be commemorated on the following Sunday by saying the Collect for the saint’s day or feast after the Collect for the Day.

The words, “Let us pray,” may be said facing the altar before each collect. Likewise, the Amen is said by the congregation after each collect.

*The Lesson, Chants, Epistle, Gospel, Creed, Sermon*

The Lesson. “Before the Epistle for the Day an appointed Lesson from the Old Testament (cf. pp. 438, 439) may be read, but the Epistle for the Day and the Gospel for the Day shall always be read.” (TLL, p. 420)

Nothing is said about the congregation’s being seated after the Collect(s), but since the Lesson and the Epistle are considered to be instruction, it is proper for the congregation to be seated.

The Lesson is introduced with the formula: The (Old Testament) Lesson is written in the \_\_\_\_ Chapter of \_\_\_\_\_, beginning at the \_\_\_\_ verse. The word prophet is used for prophetic books; for example, in the seventh chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah. “Lessons shall not be chosen from the Psalter” (TLL, p. 422).

This rubric authorizes the restoration of an Old Testament lesson preceding the Epistle. The *Service Book and Hymnal* lists these Lessons in the propers for the day. *The Lutheran Hymnal* gives them in column four on pages 159—160. Psalms are not used as Lessons. The prescribed “Epistle for the Day and the Gospel for the Day” are the ones contained in the propers for the day. The reading of these in this place

is not to be omitted, even if one or the other is read again in the pulpit as the sermon text. Neither are substitutions to be made for them, such as the Synodical Conference pericopal system or a minister's own selections.

The Old Testament Lesson, like the Epistle, is read from the epistle horn of the altar. Reading the Old Testament Lesson, Epistle, and Gospel from the altar in the Holy Communion Service distinguishes them from the lessons in the minor services which may be read from a lectern.

The Old Testament Lesson and the Epistle may be read by a layman. He should, however, be vested suitably, either in cassock and surplice, or an alb and tunicle.

If another ordained minister besides the celebrant participates in the service, he may be invited to read one or more of the day's lessons: the Old Testament Lesson, Epistle, and Gospel.

The Chants. If the Old Testament Lesson is read, the Gradual may be chanted between the Lesson and the Epistle, or, as SBH, p. 3, suggests: "Then may be sung a Psalm or a hymn version of a Psalm."

The chant which is called the Gradual in TLH and SBH is a compilation of three separate and distinct chants: the Gradual chant, the Alleluia Verse, and the Tract. The Gradual chant is generally made up of two Psalm verses, for example (First Sunday in Advent):

All they that wait on Thee shall not be ashamed, O Lord.

Verse. Show me Thy ways, O Lord: teach me Thy paths.

The Alleluia Verse is one Psalm verse surrounded by Alleluias, usually two before and one after the verse, for example (First Sunday in Advent):

Alleluia! Alleluia! V. Show us Thy mercy, O Lord:  
and grant us Thy salvation. Alleluia!

The Tract is a number of Psalm verses, for example (Sexagesima):

Tract. Thou, O Lord, hast made the earth to tremble and hast broken it.

V. Heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh.

V. That Thy beloved may be delivered, save with Thy right hand.

During pre-Lent and Lent there is no Alleluia Verse (cf. Sexagesima),

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and in Eastertide, no Tract (cf. Quasimodogeniti). The Tract appears only in pre-Lent and Lent, displacing the Alleluia Verse (cf. Sexagesima). The Gradual chant is displaced in Eastertide by an additional Alleluia Verse, for example (Quasimodogeniti):

Alleluia! Alleluia! V. Christ, our Passover,  
is sacrificed for us. Alleluia!

No more than two chants, however, are used at one time. They are separated if an Old Testament lesson is read before the Epistle. The first is chanted after that lesson and the second one after the Epistle. If, for example, an Old Testament lesson is read on the First Sunday in Advent, it should be followed by the Gradual:

All they that wait on Thee shall not be ashamed, O Lord.  
Verse. Show me Thy ways, O Lord: teach me Thy paths.

The Alleluia Verse should follow the Epistle:

Alleluia! Alleluia! V. Show us Thy mercy, O Lord:  
and grant us Thy salvation. Alleluia!

It is important to distinguish these three chants from one another and to designate each one by its proper name. To speak of the Gradual in Eastertide when there is no Gradual chant is not accurate terminology. The proper term is Alleluia Verse, for that is the nature of the chant in Eastertide. During pre-Lent and Lent, the proper term is the Gradual and Tract. Something should also be said here about the spelling of Alleluia in our service books and worship materials. It is desirable not to spell it "Hallelujah," because that spelling in English has a secular connotation. It does not have this connotation in the German language, from which that spelling probably came into our service books.

Like the Introit, the Gradual Chant, the Alleluia Verse, and the Tract belong to the congregation and should be chanted or read by the congregation or the choir, rather than letting the officiant read them.

An appropriate place for special choir music is after one of these chants. This is directed in the following rubric: "Special choir music may be sung in place of, or preferably in addition to, the Gradual, between the Epistle and the Gospel. When this is done, it is important that the textual content of the choral selection harmonize with the theme

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of the Liturgy and Service. A hymn of Invocation to the Holy Ghost may be sung to replace the Gradual: the classical Gradual Hymn of the Lutheran Church is 'We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost' (TLH 231)" (TLL, p. 420). Some liturgiologists are opposed to singing a hymn of Invocation to the Holy Ghost in place of the Gradual.

Another rubric says, "The Hallelujah may be said or chanted by the Congregation, or the Sentence for the Season, or a Sequence Hymn may be sung." (TLH, p. 20)

The Sequence is sung by the choir in connection with the highest festivals. The traditional one for Easter is "Victimae Paschali"; for Pentecost, "Veni, Sancte Spiritus"; for Maundy Thursday, "Lauda Sion." Some of the Sequence hymns are: For Christmas, "Of the Father's Love Begotten"; for Palmarum and Passiontide, "The Royal Banners Forward Go"; for Good Friday, "At the Cross, Her Station Keeping"; for Easter, "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"; for Ascension, "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing"; for Pentecost, "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest."

The Epistle. The Epistle may be read from the epistle horn of the altar in the Holy Communion Service and from the lectern in the minor services. When announcing and ending the Epistle, the prescribed formulae given in the service book should be used. No explanatory remarks are in order before or during the reading of the Lesson, Epistle, and Gospel. The place for explanation, application, and exhortation is the sermon.

The Gospel. The reading or chanting of the Gospel has always received special honor, because in the liturgical sense Christ Himself here stands before us and speaks to us. The Gospel has also always been heard standing and has been attended with many ceremonies, such as a procession to the place where it is read solemnly, the use of incense, the sign of the cross, processional crucifix, acolytes and lighted tapers, and the like. In our use we have retained at least the standing position and the versicles before and after the reading of the Gospel, which indicate that it is Christ speaking. It is desirable that the congregation stand before the Gospel is announced.

The Creed. "The Nicene Creed shall be chanted or said by the Congregation on all Feasts and Festivals and whenever there is a Communion; at other times the Apostles' Creed may be used in its stead,



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or a versified form of the Creed may be sung, cf. Hymns 251, 252, 253, in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. On Trinity Sunday, the Athanasian Creed may be used after the Gradual" (TLL, p.420). But this rubric does not authorize omitting the Nicene Creed after the Gospel. "The Nicene Creed shall be used on all Festivals and whenever there is a Communion; at other times the Apostles' Creed may be used in its stead. After the Creed the Minister may make any needful announcements" (SBH, p.275). "The sign of the cross may be made . . . at the words of the Nicene Creed 'and the life of the world to come'" (TLH, p.4). In regard to making announcements, another rubric directs, "Notices to the Congregation, except in connection with requests for Intercessions, ought not to be read during the Service" (TLL, p.419).

The Hymn. Apart from the hymn before the Preparation, only one hymn is prescribed for the Holy Communion Service with a "shall" rubric in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. This is the hymn between the Creed and the Sermon. The *Service Book and Hymnal* makes the hymn before the Preparation optional, but adds another "shall" hymn between Prayer of the Church and the Preface. According to both service books, therefore, only two hymns are required. All other hymns indicated in the rite are optional.

The Sermon. The sermon is introduced becomingly with the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." To introduce it with, "Dear friends," as though it were a talk of a secular nature, is not becoming. Instead of this, it is more fitting to say, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus" or something similar. According to an old tradition, the sermon in the chief service is always on the Gospel for the Day; at least, it is a sermon in harmony with the propers of the day. "When saying the Votum at the close of the Sermon, the Preacher may raise his hand in blessing and make the sign of the cross" (TLL, p.421). But such signing with the cross at this point is not in the best tradition.

*The Offertory, Offerings, General Prayer*

Since the first part of the Holy Communion Service ends with the Sermon, it would be fitting to indicate the beginning of the second part, which starts with the Offertory, in some ceremonial way. The order in *The Lutheran Hymnal* fails to do this. It has the congregation remain

standing to sing the Offertory chant at once. Consequently, many people are under the impression that this chant belongs to the Sermon. The order in the *Service Book and Hymnal* prescribes the gathering of the offerings before singing the Offertory chant. This arrangement at least has the congregation be seated after the Sermon vatum and separates the Offertory chant from the Sermon.

The Offertory Chant. Historically and significantly, the Offertory Chant is the Psalm with its antiphon which the people chanted in procession as they brought their material offerings to the altar. All we have left today is a Psalm antiphon which we do standing. We have lost its significance and we have also lost all ceremonial moving around by the congregation in worship, except for the procession of the communicants coming to the altar for the Distribution of the Blessed Sacrament.

According to the office in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, the Offertory chant precedes the gathering of the offerings, and therefore the rubric, "The Celebrant may make ready the Communion vessels immediately after the Offertory" (TLL, p. 421), refers to the time when the offerings are collected.

The Offerings. One of the functions of the royal priesthood is to offer sacrifices. These consist of sacrifices of self, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. We express this offering also in the material gifts of money, in which are included the bread and wine used in the Sacrament of the Altar. That is why the bread and wine are brought to the altar when the money is collected. The money, bread, and wine placed on the altar are a token. A token is something which stands for something else. The Eucharistic token of material things — money, bread, and wine — stands for ourselves. By them and in them we are carried to and placed on the altar of God. They are not merely a donation, but a token of ourselves. This identification of ourselves with the Eucharistic token is not done automatically. It requires a sacrificial act of the will, of self-giving in response to the grace of God. When the money, bread, and wine are placed on the altar, we say in effect: "In these material things, O Lord, I offer Thee myself, wholly, unconditionally, with all that I am and have." These offerings are not an indifferent part of the Holy Communion Service; they belong to it as much as any other part. When the offerings are placed on the altar,

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no special prayer or hymn stanza is either spoken or sung. The General Prayer which follows contains the formula by which these offerings are properly presented to God.

The General Prayer (TLH), or the Prayer of the Church (SBH). "Before the General Prayer at the altar, the Officiant may announce special Petitions, Intercessions, or Thanksgivings which have been requested. He may also make mention of the birth, contemplated marriage, death, etc., of members of the Congregation. One of the General Prayers appointed for the Service shall always be used. The Litany may be used instead of the General Prayer, except when there is a Communion." (TLL, p. 421)

Standard formulae for announcing these special items are given in the *Service Book and Hymnal*, as well as *The Lutheran Liturgy*, and it is desirable that these be used without alterations. In the announcement the full name may be used (Paul Jones, Mary Lang, Elizabeth, the wife of Peter Smith), but in the prayer only the Christian name given in Holy Baptism (Paul, Mary, Elizabeth) is mentioned.

The following formulae are prescribed in the *Service Book and Hymnal*: For intercessions, "The prayers of the Church are asked for the following brethren who are sick (or, in adversity, or, in suffering, or, in need): N.N." For thanksgiving, "N.N. desires to return thanks to God, for special blessings (or, for restoration from illness, or, for gifts of grace), and asks the prayers of the Church." For commemoration, "Let us remember with thanksgiving before God our brethren who have departed this life with the sign of faith: N.N. (or, our brother N.N., who has departed this life)."

If we remember that the General Prayer and the Prayer of the Church are what the titles indicate, we shall avoid prayers that are not "general" and not "the prayer of the church." There are certain things the church needs to pray for every Sunday and feast day, such as the church, the government, our enemies, the sufferers, the prevention of calamities, God's blessings on our occupations, and God's acceptance of the offerings we bring in response to His grace. Luther D. Reed says, "It is most unfortunate that this meaning and purpose of the *Allgemeines Kirchengebet* is so frequently not understood or obscured. The con-

gregation's prayers at this place should never be a mere repetition of the thought of the day, or the sermon, or a narrow expression of selfish needs and desires. The minister, if he offers a free prayer at this place, should not seek to touch, please, or instruct the congregation, or to give a rhapsodic form of adoration, confession, or even thanksgiving—the so-called 'Long Prayer' of nonliturgical churches. The Lutheran Liturgy provides for these necessary features in another place."<sup>3</sup>

Any reverent ceremonial arrangement of the General Prayer which provides for the congregation's active participation is very desirable.

The General Prayers appointed for the Holy Communion Service in *The Lutheran Liturgy* are those on pages 251—274 and in the *Service Book and Hymnal* on pages 6—8, 238—241. The Litany may be prayed instead of the General Prayer, except in the Holy Communion Service. Other general prayers given in our service books are for use in minor services and in devotions. At the end of the General Prayer, "The Congregation shall sing or say: Amen" (SBH, p.9).

*Preface, Proper Preface, Sanctus, Lord's Prayer,  
Prayer of Thanksgiving, Pax Domini, Agnus Dei, Distribution*

Great solemnity, joy, thanksgiving, communion, fellowship, commemoration, oblation, mystery, and awe characterize this whole section of the Holy Communion Service. All this should come to ceremonial expression. The element of joy and thanksgiving is based on Christ's giving of thanks when He instituted the Holy Communion Service, and it gave to the entire service one of its earliest and most beautiful names, the Holy Eucharist. Likewise, the reality of communion and fellowship gave it the name of the Holy Communion. The aspect of commemoration is embedded in the words, "This do in remembrance of Me," and carries with it the idea of re-presentation or the bringing into the present all the benefits and blessings of Christ's redemptive work. The words, "This is My body; this is My blood, given and shed for you for the remission of sins," shows that Christ's redemption is "for you" and carries the action into the unfathomable depths of mystery and awe. Words, music, posture, gestures, and all other ceremonial instruments may be used to express the many facets of this Blessed Sacrament, especially the

<sup>3</sup> Luther D. Reed, *Worship* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), p. 100.

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central reality that God bestows on us here, and nourishes us with, His greatest gift of grace.

**The Preface.** If the Preface follows immediately after the General Prayer, the congregation remains standing; otherwise the following rubrics apply: "The Hymn ended, the Congregation shall rise and stand to the end of the Agnus Dei" (TLH, p. 24); "The Congregation shall rise at the beginning of the Preface" (SBH, p. 5). The second rubric is more flexible. It allows kneeling during the Sanctus, the Lord's Prayer, and the Words of Institution or the Prayer of Thanksgiving. According to Christian tradition, however, as stated before, worshipers do not kneel on Sundays and during Eastertide. Therefore the option for kneeling would apply to ferial days.

**The Proper Preface.** "The Proper Preface shall be used throughout the respective Season. The Preface of the Holy Trinity may be used on any Sunday for which no other Preface is appointed" (TLL, p. 421). But instead of using the Preface for the Holy Trinity, the *Service Book and Hymnal* directs (p. 9): "If there be none especially appointed, then shall follow immediately, Therefore with angels, etc."

**The Sanctus.** Except on Sundays and days outside of Eastertide, the congregation may kneel during the Sanctus or, as others do, kneel only for the words, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory," and rise for the "Hosanna" and "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." In Christian tradition, both customs are proper. In this connection, pastors and congregations might give attention to the pronunciation of such Hebrew words as Amen, Hosanna, and Sabaoth. In speaking, it is ā-men', ho-zăn'-a, sǎ'-bā-oth; when sung, it is ä'-men, ho-zăn'-a, and sä'-bā-oth.

**The Lord's Prayer, Words of Institution, The Prayer of Thanksgiving.** For all these parts, the congregation stands on Sundays and during Eastertide. On other days the *Service Book and Hymnal* (p. 11) permits kneeling for the Prayer of Thanksgiving.

**The Agnus Dei.** This is the first distribution hymn sung by the congregation according to both *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal* and "shall" be sung standing. For other distribution hymns which may follow the Agnus Dei, the congregation may be seated.

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The Distribution. Ceremonial expressions of reverence and communion are especially to be observed during the Distribution. During the whole action of presenting themselves at the Lord's Table, it is becoming for communicants to keep hands folded, except when making the sign of the cross. According to a late medieval custom, they may kneel at the communicants' rail. But their heads are not to be bowed so low while kneeling that the administration of the sacred elements is made difficult. When they return to their seats, they will keep their eyes from looking around at people, and they will occupy their minds with prayer and meditation. Prayers for use after receiving the Blessed Sacrament are provided in the service books.

### *The Nunc Dimittis, Post-Communion Prayer, Benediction*

The Nunc Dimittis. "The Distribution ended, all shall rise and say or chant the Nunc Dimittis." (TLH, p. 29)

The Post-Communion Prayer or Thanksgiving. This prayer is given a ceremonial setting by an antiphonal versicle which indicates the theme of the prayer.

The Benediction. The solemnity of this concluding act is introduced by the ceremonial Salutation and Benedicamus. To express the idea that the Benediction is laid on the heads of the worshipers, all may bow deeply throughout, or, as an expression of reverence to the name of the Lord, they may bow every time the words "the Lord" are said.

### *After the Service*

All ceremonies that follow the Benediction are of the nature of private devotion. They are no longer of a liturgical character. The church's worship has come to a close with the Benediction, and corporate action has ceased. Both *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal* at this point speak only of private silent prayer. Such practices as singing corporately, "Abide with Me" or another hymn, or making the people sit down again and not allowing them to leave until the ushers come up and permit them to go out one by one and pew by pew from the front to the rear of the church are unnatural in this place after the service has closed. Those who introduce these innovations try to justify them by saying that to sing "Abide with Me" or another hymn is a beautiful way to close the service, and that to

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keep the people in their pews until their turn comes to go out makes for an orderly exit. But it should be understood that the service was already closed with the Benediction and that, while reverence and order are always to be observed in the house of God, these are not to be achieved by regimentation and the encroachment on personal freedom after church. If anyone wants to remain for private devotion, he should be permitted to stay without being embarrassed; if anyone wants to leave, he should not be hindered by unnecessary formalities that smack of legalism. After the Benediction, let everyone privately say silent prayer and go out when he wants to, privately reverence to the altar before he leaves the church, and privately go out to exchange friendly greetings with his fellow worshippers or, if he so desires, to go his way unhindered and rejoicing over the grace of God which was bestowed on him in the church's worship service.

*The Sacred Elements*

"In making ready the elements for the Holy Communion, so much of the bread and the wine shall be placed in the proper vessels as in the judgment of the Celebrant will be required for the Administration.

"If the consecrated bread or wine be spent before all have communed, the Celebrant shall consecrate more, saying aloud so much of the Words of Institution as pertains to the elements to be consecrated.

"When all have received the Holy Sacrament, the Celebrant shall cover what remains of the bread and wine with the veil.

"When the Service has been completed, the Celebrant or a deacon shall remove the sacramental vessels from the altar to the sacristy and dispose of that part of the bread and wine which remains as follows: He shall carefully remove the bread from the paten and ciborium to a fit receptacle, there to be kept against the next Communion. He shall pour what remains of the consecrated wine into the piscina or upon the ground at a proper and convenient place outside the church." (TLL, pp. 421—422)

## Part II. The Celebrant's, Deacon's, and Layman's Parts

THE celebrant vests and prepares himself carefully and prayerfully in the sacristy.<sup>1</sup> Before, during, or at the close of the hymn before the service, he may cross himself as he leaves the sacristy and goes to the sedilia in the chancel or to the place where he will conduct the Preparatory Service. In the judgment of most liturgiologists, he should not come into the church at the tail end of a choir procession. For instance, F. R. Webber says, "Another absurd ghost is the procession of the choir before and after the service. Originally this was a procession of the priests and their assistants. They met in the sacristy or in some appointed place, and walked slowly into church in procession, the choir singing the Introit as they came. They did this so that all might be at the altar at the appointed time, with no stragglers hastening in a minute or two late. If one is indulging in a ritualistic service, with the verger, the altar boys, the thurifer, the book-boy, and everybody else in solemn procession, then it is quite the thing to do as the Introit is being chanted. But to dress two score women and half a dozen men in priest's garments, and then step and jerk one's way altarward, while a youth in white carries a processional cross, his right elbow extending sidewise at right angles to his shoulder, palm toward the altar, and fingers about the standard of

<sup>1</sup> Some of the celebrant's traditional preparatory prayers in the sacristy are given in Paul Zellar Strodach, *Oremus* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1925), and in Adalbert R. Kretzmann, *The Pastor at Prayer* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1957). Traditional prayers said while washing and vesting are given in *The English Missal* (London: W. Knott & Son Ltd., 1933), and in R. F. Littledale and J. E. Vaux, *Priest's Prayer Book* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1906).



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the cross, while the choir and congregation sing, 'Fling out the Banner, let it float' — none of this constitutes a liturgical procession. It is cheap and tawdry, and a vulgar burlesque of what was, in more devout days, a dignified ceremony. Anything that smacks of swagger and the exalting of the individual is in bad taste. In some of the most extreme of the ritualistic churches in England and on the Continent, the procession of clergy enters quietly, each man with downcast eyes, and humility of bearing."<sup>2</sup>

The officiant may hold a procession in order to heighten the solemnity of certain days and occasions. Processions are appropriate on Christmas, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, St. Mark the Evangelist's Day, Rogation Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the Anniversary of Church Dedication, and the local church's Festival of Title.

The hymn ended, the celebrant may go to the lowest step of the chancel or the altar predella facing the center or the south horn of the altar, stand and make a bow or, if he crosses before the altar on the way, he stops at the center of the altar and makes the bow to the altar there. When the congregation has stood up, he says the Trinitarian Invocation facing the altar (TLL, p. 417) and, according to a general rubric on page 4 of *The Lutheran Hymnal*, he may cross himself. The Trinitarian Invocation is not said facing the congregation because it is an invocation addressed to God and not to the people. Some people argue that it is an announcement or proclamation stating that the service is to be conducted in the name of the Triune God. But this interpretation has no foundation in fact or in tradition. Traditionally the Invocation precedes prayers and divine services (see the Morning and Evening Prayers in Luther's Small Catechism) as an affirmation or profession of faith and a calling on the name of the Lord.

After the Invocation, the celebrant turns left to face the congregation and says, "Beloved . . ." or he may continue to face the altar, since this part may be interpreted as a cohortative admonition in which he includes himself in the first person plural. If he has said it facing the congregation, he turns right to the altar and kneels to the end of the confession. Then he rises, turns left to the congregation and says the absolution, making the sign of the cross over the congregation at the end.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> F. R. Webber, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> The celebrant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

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He makes the sign of the cross by placing his left hand flat against his breast and raising his right hand no higher than his face, fingers together and palm toward the people; he turns his right hand so that the open palm faces the south side of the church; then he moves it down to the level of his waist, raises it again to the height of his breast, moves it horizontally to a point in front of his left shoulder, then horizontally to a point in front of his right shoulder, then back before his breast, and rejoins his hands before his breast.

The celebrant may now say silently, "I will go to the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness," as he goes to the center and up to the altar where he makes a bow and then goes to the missal on the epistle side facing the altar. Meanwhile, the choir or congregation chants or speaks the Introit and he may cross himself at its antiphon, because this is the real beginning of the service; but he does not cross himself again when the antiphon is repeated. He bows, however, during the words, "Glory be . . . Holy Ghost."

After the Introit, he goes to the center of the altar and faces it during the Kyrie and Gloria in Excelsis. He intones the Gloria in Excelsis by opening and elevating his hands slightly, saying, "Glory be to God on high." Folding his hands again, he may bow at the words, "We worship Thee," "give thanks," "Jesus" (always), "receive our prayer," and he may cross himself at, "with the Holy Ghost," for the same reason that the crossing is done at the Trinitarian Invocation.

Turning right, he faces the congregation, opens his hands and says, "The Lord be with you," and closes his hands. He may bow to the congregation at their response. He may remain facing the congregation as he says, "Let us pray," or he may make a quarter turn left, go to the missal on the epistle side of the altar, face it and say, "Let us pray." Then he reads the Collect(s). He may separate his hands the width of his body when he begins the Collect and join them again for the termination.

After the Collect(s) he takes the book containing the Old Testament lessons from the back of the altar and turns to the left to the congregation, announces and says the lesson. If the Old Testament lesson is not used, he takes the lectionary from the missal stand in both hands, turns left to the congregation and says, "The Epistle for \_\_\_\_\_ is

written in the \_\_\_\_\_ chapter of \_\_\_\_\_ beginning at the \_\_\_\_\_ verse." The Epistle ended, he speaks, but does not chant, even when the Epistle is chanted, the words, "Here endeth the Epistle." Then he turns right to the altar, places the book on the missal stand and carries it to the Gospel side of the altar. During this time the choir or congregation chants or speaks the chant appointed for between the Epistle and Gospel. If a choir number follows the chant, he makes a quarter turn right, goes to the middle of the altar, turns left to bow to it, and then turns right and goes to the sedilia, where he remains seated with his hands flat on or near his knees while the choir sings.<sup>4</sup>

While the choir finishes its number, he may prepare himself for the proclamation of the Gospel by praying silently, "Almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaiah with a burning coal, so of Thy mercy cleanse my heart and my lips that I may worthily proclaim Thy Gospel; through Christ, our Lord. Amen." Then he goes to read the Gospel, which, as we have said, may be attended with many ceremonies. But the simple manner of doing the Gospel is this: From the sedilia the celebrant goes to the missal on the north horn of the altar. He takes the missal in both hands, turns right to the congregation and says, "The holy Gospel is written in the \_\_\_\_\_ chapter of St. \_\_\_\_\_ beginning at the \_\_\_\_\_ verse." While saying this, he may make the small sign of the cross, which is done with the thumb of the closed right hand. He first signs the opening word of the printed Gospel in the book, then his forehead, lips, and breast. The significance of this ceremony we have already explained. When he has finished reading the Gospel, he says, "Here endeth the Gospel." He may then put the book to his lips in the reverent act of kissing it, turn left, and place it on the missal stand. If he is using two books, a lectionary and a missal, he will have to lay the lectionary on the altar and place the missal on the missal stand.

He takes the missal stand in both hands, makes a quarter turn right, and carries it to the center of the altar. Then he places it to the left of the corporal, on which the veiled chalice and paten are standing, in such a position that he can read from the missal. He then joins his hands and, facing the altar, begins the Nicene Creed, and in doing so,

<sup>4</sup> The celebrant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

he raises and rejoins his hands. During the Creed he may bow at "God," "Jesus Christ," bow deeply or kneel at "and was made man," bow at "is worshiped," and make the sign of the cross at "and the life of the world to come." Then he turns right and goes down from the altar to the sedilia for the singing of the hymn.

At the close of the hymn, he goes to the pulpit, bowing to the altar at the center if he crosses it, and begins the sermon with "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc." or the Trinitarian Invocation. At the end of the sermon, he says, "The peace of God, etc." and, while saying it, he may raise his hand in blessing and make the sign of the cross, although it is better not to do this. Then he goes to the midst of the altar and carries out the following actions while the congregation sings the Offertory chant: If it is the custom of the congregation for the celebrant to hand the alms bags or offering plates to those appointed to gather the offerings, he goes by the shortest way to the credence where these items are kept and gives them to the collectors at the chancel step. Then he goes to the altar to prepare the elements for the Blessed Sacrament. But if it is the custom to proceed with the collection without any action on the part of the celebrant, then he begins immediately to prepare the elements.

The preparation of the elements during the gathering of the offerings may be done as follows: If the sacred elements were placed on the altar before the beginning of the service, he goes to the altar and takes off the chalice veil, folds it and lays it on the epistle side next to the corporal. He places the pall against the gradine on the epistle side. Then he arranges the sacred vessels on the corporal so that the chalice is on the right side and the paten on the left, with the flagon behind the chalice and the ciborium or pyx behind the paten; or the paten in front, the chalice behind it, and the ciborium and flagon on the rear of the corporal. Taking a host from the ciborium, he places it on the paten and covers it with the purificator which was over the chalice. He pours wine into the chalice and, if this is customary, a little water from a water cruet, and covers the chalice with the pall.

If only the veiled chalice and paten were placed on the altar before the service and the sacred elements were placed on the credence, then he will go through the same actions, except that he will go back and

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forth from the altar to the credence in the shortest way, and will carry the flagon and ciborium (and water cruet) from the credence to the altar.

The lavabo ceremony, if used, follows here. The celebrant goes to the credence, pours water into the lavabo bowl from a water cruet, and washes his fingers while silently praying Psalm 26 or at least verses 6 to 8, "I will wash my hands in innocency, etc." with the Gloria Patri. Meanwhile, he dries his hands with the lavabo towel and returns to the midst of the altar.

Then he turns right and goes down to the chancel step, receives the offerings from those who have gathered them, goes back and places them on the epistle side of the altar. He will not at any time place them on the credence or elsewhere, except that the offerings may be removed to the credence after the General Prayer, because the offerings represent the people who offer themselves to God and place themselves in this token of money, as it were, on the altar in grateful response to His grace. Neither does the celebrant say any offertory prayer, verse, or sentence before or after the gathering of the offerings, for the offertory prayer in our rite is included in the General Prayer in the words: "Receive, O God, our bodies and souls and all our talents, together with the offerings we bring before Thee."

If the church has been asked to include special intercessions or thanksgivings in the General Prayer, the celebrant will turn by his right to the congregation after he has placed the offerings on the altar to make the announcement. If not, he will remain facing the altar and, standing in the midst, will read the General Prayer. He may do so, as in all prayers, with the traditional posture of hands parted and held open shoulder-high at his sides.

At the conclusion of the General Prayer, if no hymn is sung, he will turn right to the congregation and say, "The Lord be with you." Then he may turn left to the altar and continue the Preface, or he may turn to the altar after the verse, "Let us give thanks. . . ." At "Lift up your hearts," he may raise and extend his hands as in the ancient prayer posture, only a little higher. At "Let us give thanks . . .," he may join his hands and make a deep bow. After the response, he may lift up his hands again while saying the Proper Preface. During the Sanctus, he may bow deeply with hands folded and resting on the altar. At "Blessed

is He . . . ,” he may stand erect, cross himself, and uncover the sacred vessels so that they will be ready for the consecration.

Then he will say the Lord’s Prayer and the Words of Institution. During the Words of Institution, he may take the host from the paten in the thumb and forefinger of both hands and elevate it. (The elevation may be done following the words over each element.) At “brake it,” he may make a rent in the bottom of the host or break it in two on the paten, at “Take, eat,” he may touch the paten and ciborium containing the hosts with his left hand, and at “this is My body” or at “when He had given thanks” he may make the sign of the cross over them with his right hand. He may elevate the chalice in the same way at “took the cup” and make the sign of the cross over the chalice and flagon at “this cup is the new testament in My blood” or at “when He had given thanks.” The use of the sign of the cross at “when He had given thanks” recalls our Lord’s blessing upon the elements. Then he places the pall over the chalice, turns right to the congregation, and says, “The peace of the Lord be with you alway,” while separating and joining his hands or making the sign of the cross. Then he turns left to the altar and, if it is the practice to communicate himself, he will do it after the *Agnus Dei* has been sung by the congregation. If he does not communicate himself, he begins the Distribution at once.<sup>5</sup>

The celebrant may communicate himself in the following way: He takes the host between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand and holds it over the paten. He strikes his breast three times with his right hand and says silently, “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed.” Then he places the host in his mouth with his right hand, crosses himself and says, “The body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve

■ The service books of the Synodical Conference are silent on the matter of self-communion. The *Service Book and Hymnal* of the Lutheran Church in America, while not recommending it expressly, leaves an opening for it in the rubric (p. 275): “The Minister himself may first receive the Bread and Wine and shall then administer the same to the people.” Luther D. Reed in *Worship*, p. 110, says: “The officiant makes his Communion first, thus formally completing the ceremonial action. If there is an assistant minister, he may administer the elements to the officiant and then receive the same from the latter. Self-communion of the minister was favored by Luther and is defended in the Confessions as the natural completion of a liturgical action which has more than purely personal values, and which expresses the fellowship of pastor and people in a spiritual transaction. Certainly, a Communion in which the minister does not receive the elements himself is an anomaly unknown in Greek, Roman, Anglican, or other Protestant churches.”

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my soul unto everlasting life. Amen." Then he takes hold of the chalice and prays silently, "What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Lord. I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised, and so shall I be safe from mine enemies." He drinks of the cup and then signs himself, saying, "The blood of Christ preserve my soul unto everlasting life. Amen."

For the Distribution, the celebrant at the altar turns right and goes down to the communicants' rail. He keeps his eyes on the sacred elements and holds them reverently. By every action he shows that he is not "serving" ordinary food. He is very careful not to let the elements fall to the ground or be spilled. He begins the Distribution on the epistle side. With the host, he may make a small sign of the cross as he gives it to the communicant and speaks the words of Distribution. Then he returns to the center of the altar, takes the pall from the chalice and places it on the paten or ciborium, whichever he uses for the Distribution. He takes the chalice in both hands, having a purificator in his right hand, turns right and goes to the epistle side of the communicants' rail. He says the words of Distribution and turns the chalice and, if necessary, wipes the rim as he distributes. At the end, he goes to the center of the rail, holds the chalice in his left hand and makes the sign of the cross over the communicants with his right hand, saying, "Depart in peace." Then he turns left, goes to the altar, wipes the rim of the chalice with the purificator, takes the pall from the paten or ciborium and places it on the chalice, continuing the Distribution. When all have communicated, he covers the chalice with a purificator, places the paten and the pall on it, and covers it with the chalice veil or all the sacred vessels with a Post-Communion veil.

He stands in the midst of the altar with folded hands during the singing of the Nunc Dimittis, bowing as usual at "Glory be . . . Holy Ghost." To avoid turning his back to the consecrated elements lying in the midst of the altar, he may say all the rest of the service at the epistle side. This is a matter of reverence and good taste. Even in polite society we do not turn our back to a person without begging his pardon. Therefore, he may now take the missal stand and missal in both hands, turn right and carry it to the epistle horn of the altar and, facing it,

say, "O give thanks. . . ." After the response, he prays the Post-Communion Collect and then turns left to the congregation.<sup>6</sup> He separates his hands and joins them again as he says, "The Lord be with you," making the usual bows. He separates and closes his hands again, saying, "Bless we the Lord," bowing at "Lord." Then he raises his hands to give the Benediction. With his hands open and shoulder-high, he bows each time at the word, "Lord." When he says, "And give thee peace," he puts his left hand on his breast and with the right hand makes the sign of the cross over the congregation. He folds his hands again, goes down to the altar step, turns left to the altar, and, facing it, bows or kneels. After silent prayer, he goes to the sacristy or to the west entrance of the church.<sup>7</sup>

■ The celebrant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

<sup>7</sup> In a mimeographed, unpublished paper, Arthur Carl Piepkorn gives the following more detailed description of the celebrant's self-communion:

"In accordance with the best Lutheran precedent, the celebrant administers the Holy Communion to himself. In accordance with the Church's historic practice, he would do this even though there may be another clergyman present who might administer the Holy Communion to him. (If he celebrates twice on a given day, he normally receives the Holy Communion only at the first service of the day.)

"By way of private preparation, the celebrant may say the following Prayer: 'O Lord Jesus Christ, Who saidest unto Thine Apostles, Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you; regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant unto her that Peace and Unity which is according to Thy will, Who livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.' 'O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, Who according to the will of the Father, and by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, hast by Thy death given life to the world; deliver me by this Thine Most Holy Body and Blood from all mine iniquities and from every evil, and make me ever to cleave unto Thy Commandments, and suffer me never to be separated from Thee, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.' 'Let the partaking of Thy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, do presume to receive, according to Thy lovingkindness be profitable to me for the receiving of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest one God, world without end. Amen.' 'I will receive the bread of Heaven and call upon the Name of the Lord.' 'Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed.' (Anciently, this prayer, 'Domine non sum dignus,' was said three times, the celebrant striking his breast each time with the extremities of the last three fingers of his right hand.)

"If the celebrant is using a large host, the accepted procedure is this: He should break it reverently twice across. (It will be remembered that a rent had been made in the Host at the Words of Institution.) Then taking the parts, one upon another, in his right hand, and holding the paten in his left hand under the host as he conveys it to his lips, he says in a low voice: 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for me, preserve my body and soul unto everlasting life. Amen.' Then bending forward moderately, he reverently places the host upon his tongue. He replaces the paten on the corporal and rubs his thumb and forefingers over it to remove any fragments of the consecrated bread. Head erect, he joins both hands together before his face, and remains for a brief space in meditation on the Holy Eucharist.

"Then he places the ends of the last three fingers of his left hand on the foot



*The Deacon's or Server's Parts*

The server vests in cassock and surplice, an ordained deacon also wears a stole, or he may wear an amice, girded alb, and a tunicle. He prepares himself for the celebration with the celebrant in the sacristy. At the appointed time for entrance into the chancel, he precedes the celebrant and does not walk behind him or side by side with him. His place in the chancel when seated is on the sedilia next to the celebrant, sitting nearest the altar, or on the sedilia on the opposite side of the chancel from the celebrant and facing him.

At the place where the Preparatory Service is conducted, his position is on the left side of the celebrant. He crosses himself with the celebrant at the Trinitarian Invocation and remains standing while the celebrant says, "Beloved in the Lord . . ." He kneels when the celebrant kneels and remains kneeling until after the absolution. He may cross himself when the celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the congregation. If he has been called by the congregation and is not just a visiting assistant, he may conduct the Preparatory Service instead of the celebrant.

After the Preparatory Service, his place is at the foot of the altar step on the gospel side of the altar where he stands reverently with his hands folded. In fact, he always keeps his hands folded when standing or kneeling, except when he crosses himself or holds or carries something. He may make the sign of the cross with the celebrant at the first saying of the antiphon of the Introit and may bow at "Glory be . . . Holy Ghost." He remains in the same place for the Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, and Collect, or walks to the center after the Introit and stands at the foot of the altar step behind the celebrant. When the celebrant bows and crosses himself, he may do likewise.

If the Old Testament Lesson is read, the assistant goes to the of the chalice and removes the pall with his right. He places both hands on the corporal, bows reverently from the waist, and says: 'What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord. I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from all mine enemies.'

"Then, still standing, the celebrant reverently raises the chalice as high as his breast and says: 'The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for me, preserve my body and my soul unto everlasting life. Amen.' Thereupon he places the chalice up to his lips and receives the precious Blood. He replaces the chalice on the corporal and bows profoundly. Thereafter he remains for a short space meditating on the Gift which he has received."

## CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION

credence where the book containing the Old Testament Lessons was placed before the service, and brings the book to the celebrant. If the assistant himself reads the Old Testament Lesson, he goes to the credence to get the book and then proceeds to a point on the chancel level in front of the epistle horn of the altar, turns left, faces the congregation and reads the Lesson. After he has read the Lesson, he turns right to the altar and then returns the book to the credence. From the credence he goes to his place on the gospel side.<sup>8</sup>

If the assistant reads the Epistle, he goes up to the missal stand on the epistle side, takes the book in both hands, turns left to the congregation and reads the Epistle. After he has said, "Here endeth the Epistle," he turns right to the altar, replaces the book on the missal stand and carries it to the gospel side where he places it on the altar. If the celebrant reads the Epistle himself, the assistant goes to the sedilia and is seated. After the reading, he waits for the celebrant to come down from the altar and then he goes up to the altar in the center and over to the epistle side and carries the missal stand with the book on it to the gospel side. Then he walks to the center of the altar, turns right, and goes down the center and over to the foot of the altar step on the epistle side where he remains standing and facing the altar while the celebrant reads the Gospel.<sup>9</sup>

If the Gospel is read by an ordained deacon or minister who assists the celebrant, the reader may kneel on the altar step at the middle of the altar. The celebrant stands at the center of the altar, facing the reader. The reader says, "Command, sir, a blessing." The celebrant says, "The Lord be in thy heart and upon thy lips that thou mayest worthily and competently proclaim His Gospel, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen," signing him with the cross. The celebrant then goes to the gospel corner of the altar and the reader goes up to the altar, takes the book containing the Gospel and goes to a point in the chancel before the gospel horn of the altar and reads the Gospel. If other assistants participate in the gospel procession, the clergyman reading the Gospel may have the book held before him by a server. The server holds the bottom edges of the book in his hands waist high with the back of the book resting against his chest. The reader then

<sup>8</sup> The assistant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

■ The assistant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

*Part II. The Celebrant's, Deacon's, and Layman's Parts*

announces and reads the Gospel in the same way as described under "The Celebrant's Parts."

After the reading of the Gospel, the assistant stands at the foot of the altar step on the epistle side for the Creed, bowing and crossing himself with the celebrant. Then he goes to the sedilia for the hymn and remains there during the sermon, unless he is the preacher. In that case, see the chapter on the celebrant's part regarding the sermon.

Following the sermon, he goes up by the center to the altar to assist the celebrant in preparing the elements for the Sacrament. If, however, it is the custom of the church to give the alms bags or offering plates to the ushers, he goes by the shortest way to the credence, takes the alms bags or offerings plates in both hands, goes to the center, bows to the altar and, turning right, goes to the chancel step and gives them to the ushers. Then he turns left and goes to the altar to assist the celebrant.

At the altar, he stands at the celebrant's right. He receives the chalice veil from the celebrant, folds it, and places it to the right of the corporal. Then he goes to the credence by the shortest way, takes the ciborium in both hands and brings it to the celebrant. He goes back to the credence and takes the flagon in one hand and the water cruet (if used for the mixed chalice) in the other and brings these to the celebrant. If the lavabo ceremony is carried out, he returns to the credence, puts the towel on his left arm, takes the lavabo bowl in the left hand and the water cruet in the right hand and brings these to the celebrant at the epistle horn of the altar. When the celebrant holds his hands over the lavabo bowl, he pours water over his fingers from the cruet. After the celebrant has dried his hands and replaced the towel, he takes the towel, cruet, and bowl back to the credence. Then he goes to the chancel step, receives the offerings and brings them to the celebrant. Returning to the foot of the altar step, he stands facing the altar either at the center or at the epistle side, while the celebrant reads the General Prayer or the Prayer of the Church.

He remains at the same place during the Preface, Lord's Prayer, and Words of Institution or the Prayer of Thanksgiving. He kneels on the altar step to receive the Blessed Sacrament. If he is an ordained minister and has been authorized to assist with the Distribution, he goes

up to the altar and to the right of the celebrant to receive the chalice from him. Following by about three communicants the celebrant, who distributes the consecrated bread, he reverently distributes the chalice, turning it as he goes along and wiping the rim with a purificator in an inconspicuous manner. At the end of the Distribution, when all have communicated, he hands the chalice back to the celebrant at the center of the altar, standing to the right of the celebrant. Turning left, he goes to the foot of the altar step and over to the gospel side, where he turns right to face the altar.<sup>10</sup>

He stands in this place for the Nunc Dimittis, Post-Communion Collect, Salutation, Benedicamus, and Benediction, making the proper bows and crossings with the celebrant. After the Benediction, he may go to the center and stand or kneel with the celebrant on his left side at the foot of the altar step for a moment of silent prayer. Then he turns right and precedes the celebrant to the sacristy or to the west entrance door of the church.

NOTE. To celebrate the Holy Communion service facing the people at a free-standing altar, see *Before the Holy Table, A Guide to the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People, According to the Book of Common Prayer*, edited by Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., and members of the Associated Parishes, Inc., Seabury Press, Greenwich, Conn., 1956. The ceremonies suggested in this booklet can easily be adapted to the Order of the Holy Communion Service.

### *The Layman's Parts*

The layman, including everyone who participates in the service outside the chancel, will prepare himself devoutly for the service. He will do so, if possible, in a family devotion on the evening before, that is, on the eve of the Sunday or feast day. In this devotion the name of the Sunday or feast and its significance in relation to the church year may be discussed. The Introit antiphon, together with the entire Introit Psalm, the Collect, Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia Verse, Tract, and Gospel for the day may be explained briefly. The Christian Questions with their Answers in Luther's Small Catechism (available in tract form) may be read prayerfully. All the members of the family may participate in this devotion. Certain parts may be assigned to individuals, or they may be

<sup>10</sup> The assistant may turn the opposite way. See p. 78.

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read responsively, or in unison. But if the preparation cannot be carried out in a family circle, it can still be done privately by everyone.

Preparation is important. It is just as impossible for a layman to do his part of the service properly without adequate preparation as it is for a clergyman to do his part without preparation. Some laymen seem to think that they need not prepare themselves because the service is done for them by others and all they have to do is just go to church and get as much out of it as they can. But such an idea reveals a basic misunderstanding of what the worship service of the church is. It is not a lecture or show or entertainment to which one goes to let people do something for you. On the contrary, the church service is something a Christian performs together with his fellow Christians, clergymen, and laymen. The chief service of the church, the Holy Communion Service, which Christ gave His disciples to do, requires the joint activity of the whole congregation and all have their parts to do. And everyone's part is important. All parts are done to worship God and they involve the salvation of men. Therefore, everyone should be prepared to do his part to the best of his ability. In doing the church's worship, something is also done for everyone who does his part in it. By the proclamation of the Word of God and the administration of the Blessed Sacrament, God in His mercy conveys to all believers His gifts of grace. It should be borne in mind, however, that God's activity in the service does not devalue or make unnecessary the individual's activity, for He uses the activities of Christians, also the activity of the individual Christian as he does his part in the church's worship, performed together with clergymen and laymen, to bestow this grace and blessing.

After the layman has prepared himself at home, he will, unless prevented by necessity, go to church on time. This is the first step on his part in doing the service. For the service is an assembly, a gathering together of Christ's disciples, not only with their fellow Christians, but with Christ. The layman does his part to make up this assembly. If he does not go, so far as he is concerned, the assembly was not held at all. It is just as important for him to be there, and on time, as it is for the pastor to be there and on time.

Therefore, the church service is not something we attend only when we feel like going and miss when we do not feel like it. It is

not merely a matter of attending, but, as we have said before, of doing. We have a duty to do, a duty prescribed by God in the first three commandments, a duty commanded by Christ when He said, "This do" and "Preach the Gospel," a duty required by the admonition of the apostle, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Let us not take this duty lightly. Let the love of Christ constrain us. He called us out of darkness into His marvelous light and made us members of the royal priesthood to show forth His praises in the church. For that reason we do not miss church if we cannot justify it in our conscience on the basis of the Word of God.

The layman enters the house of God quietly and reverently bows to the altar, the emblem of God's presence. Having entered his pew, he silently prays for God's blessings on the service and on all who participate in it. In doing this, he may kneel and cross himself. Then seated, he looks up the propers of the service in the service book, including the hymns, and marks them. If he is an elder, organist, choir member, usher, or altar boy, he has additional parts to do, for which he will prepare himself and which he will carry out at the proper time.

He does not talk or whisper with people after he has entered the church unless it is absolutely necessary. Even after he has finished his silent prayer, he will be considerate of others who are praying. He will avoid everything that may disturb the atmosphere of reverence and devotion in the house of God.

When the organist plays the prelude, he will thank God for the gift of music, by means of which we can worship Him and be stimulated in our devotions. Then he will join heartily in singing the opening hymn and, if he does not know the tune, he will still read the words prayerfully and will try to sing along softly until he learns to know it. He never shows his feelings if he is critical, displeased, or disturbed about anything during the church service. If he has constructive criticism to make, he will do it in a private conversation with the pastor before he speaks to others about it.

After the opening hymn, he will stand up without waiting for others to do so and without making it necessary for the celebrant to turn around and motion at the congregation to rise. He knows the rubrics and follows them promptly without ostentation, but humbly and

reverently. He holds the service book in his hands, open at the page where the order of service begins. When the minister says, "In the name . . ." he may cross himself, and at the end he responds, "Amen." He may bow when the holy name of Jesus is spoken in the words, "beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." After this he may kneel for everything up to (but not including) the Introit. Kneeling is the most desirable posture for confession. If he does not kneel, he remains standing. He says the responses and the confession quietly but firmly. He may cross himself at the end of the Absolution.

The Preparatory Service ended, he stands, looks up the Introit and reads it aloud, or, if the choir chants it, silently, and he may cross himself during the opening words. The Gloria Patri is a part of the Introit after which the antiphon of the Introit is repeated. The reason the choir or he does the Introit is that it belongs to the congregation and not to the celebrant. Then he may bow reverently to say the Kyrie, after which he stands erect and says the Gloria in Excelsis (except when omitted). During the Gloria in Excelsis, he may bow at "worship Thee," "give thanks," "Jesus Christ," and "hear our prayer." At the words, "with the Holy Ghost," he may cross himself. When the celebrant says, "The Lord be with you," he may bow his head to him and say the response in the spirit of wishing him, too, Christ's presence. He looks up the Collect (or Collects) and prays it silently as the celebrant says it, reverencing the name of Jesus and responding loudly with Amen after each Collect.

Now he sits down and listens devoutly to the reading of the Old Testament Lesson, if it is used, and says the Gradual chant (or the choir does it) which follows it. Likewise, he sits for the reading of the Epistle and the Alleluia Verse chant or whatever is appointed to be said following the Epistle. He also remains seated for other choir music that may be sung at this time.

Just before the Gospel is announced, he rises, and he may make the three little crosses during the announcement. These are made with the thumb of the closed right hand on the forehead, lips, and breast, praying silently that the holy Gospel may be received in the mind, professed with the lips, and believed with the heart. He bows when he says the versicles which precede and follow the Gospel in reverence to

Christ, who in the liturgical sense says the Gospel, as these versicles indicate.

Then he says the Nicene Creed, and in doing so, he may bow his head at the words, "God," "Jesus Christ," and "worshipped and glorified." For the words, "and was made man," he may bow or kneel. He may cross himself at the words, "and the life of the world to come." Then he sits down for the hymn which follows and for the sermon, but he rises for the words at the end of the sermon, "The peace of God . . ."

During the sermon he is mindful of the fact that the sermon belongs to him as well as the preacher, for through the sermon the church, including himself, proclaims, explains, and applies the Word of God to the world of today. He is involved as a layman, not only in hearing the sermon, but also in proclaiming it. Therefore, he does not only go to church to hear a sermon, but he goes to do his part in the church's worship. The sermon is a part of this worship, and a very important part. Other parts, however, are also very important, as for instance, the Sacrament of the Altar.

The Offertory which follows the sermon is the beginning of the second part of the service and does not belong to the sermon but to the Ministry of the Sacrament. The layman's part in the Offertory is to stand for the saying of the Offertory chant and to be seated for the giving and gathering of the offerings. To understand these actions and their meaning, it is helpful to know something about the history of the Offertory. Originally, the Offertory chant was a processional chant like the Introit. It was sung while the people brought their gifts of bread, wine, and other things to the chancel to be placed on the altar. These gifts were a token of the offerings of themselves to Christ who gave Himself for them.

The token has a meaning similar to that of the bouquet of flowers which a young man brings to his sweetheart. The flowers represent himself and his love for her. So the Offertory gifts represent the believers and their love for Christ. Part of the bread and wine that had been brought to the altar was used for the consecration. In this way Christ gave Himself, His holy body and precious blood, to the believers in the material offerings which they had brought to Him.

Today the people no longer bring up bread and wine, except by



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proxy, and there is no procession. Instead, they bring money which is gathered or collected. But the Offertory chant, or part of it, is still sung. To make it meaningful, the ushers may stand at the chancel step ready to gather the offerings while the Offertory chant is sung, and the bread and wine may be brought to the altar from the credence during the gathering of the offerings. For the money and bread and wine are tokens which belong together. They are placed on the altar and may remain there for the rest of the service.

The General Prayer or the Prayer of the Church is said by the celebrant, all standing, and the layman's part is to say the responses, if any, and the Amen at the end. In it the whole church prays for the things that need to be prayed for every Sunday and feast day. If a layman wants the church to include in it a special thanksgiving, intercession, or supplication, he should notify the pastor as early as possible before the service.

If a hymn is sung after the General Prayer, all are seated. Otherwise the layman's part is to remain standing and to express thanks and praise to God by responding joyfully to the versicles of the Preface and by singing loudly the Sanctus, the doxology of the Lord's Prayer, and the Amen or "And with thy spirit" after the Pax Domini. He may bow deeply at "Let us give thanks . . .," "Holy, holy, holy . . .," and the Words of Institution. He may cross himself as a prayer in action for Christ's coming to him at "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

He remains standing for the Agnus Dei, which is the first Communion hymn, and then is seated. If he has time before it is his turn to go to the communicant's rail, he says a preparatory prayer, for which he may kneel. When he goes to the rail, while he is there and when he returns, he keeps his hands folded, except when he makes the sign of the cross at the rail. During the Distribution he will hold his head so as to receive the sacred elements naturally and reverently and he may cross himself when he receives Christ's holy body with the bread, when he receives His precious blood with the cup, and when he receives the blessing, "Depart in peace." After he has returned to his pew, he may say a silent prayer kneeling. While the others communicate, he will participate in singing a Communion hymn if other hymns are sung.

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After the Distribution he stands and joins in the singing of the Nunc Dimittis. Then he responds joyfully to the versicle of the Thanksgiving, the post-Communion Collect, the Benedicamus, and the Benediction. He may bow deeply throughout the Benediction or three times at the word "Lord." At the end of the Benediction he may cross himself and then say a silent prayer.

When he leaves the church, he does so quietly and cheerfully, first bowing to the altar. He does not speak loudly or start a long and noisy conversation on his way out of church. He waits until he is outside before he engages in social visitations and discussions with visitors and friends.

## The Ceremonies of Matins and Vespers

**A**S was the custom among Christians at the time of the apostles, it should still be now, namely, that the people come together every day in the morning . . . and that lessons are read. . . .

“When the lessons and exposition have lasted a half hour or so, then united thanksgiving, praise, and prayer shall be made. . . . For this Psalms should be used and some good responsories and antiphons. . . .

“The people should also come together again in the evening. . . . They should read, expound, praise, sing, and pray as in the morning. . . . For this is to be done for the sake of God’s Word, so that it will come into full swing, constantly uplifting and quickening souls, and keeping them from becoming slack. . . .

“Even if the entire congregation cannot attend such daily services, the priests and students . . . should hold them. And the people should be admonished to attend them willingly, not by force, nor with dislike, nor to earn either a temporal or eternal reward, but only to glorify God and to benefit others. . . .

“The singing in the Sunday Masses and Vespers should be retained. These chants are good and are taken from the Scriptures. . . . It shall be the duty of the pastors and ministers to appoint songs and Psalms for daily morning and evening prayer. For every morning they shall appoint a Psalm a good responsory or antiphon, and a collect. Likewise for every evening. . . .

“One thing is needful, namely, that Mary sit at the feet of Christ

and hear His Word daily. This is the best 'portion' which we are to choose, and which will never pass away. It is an eternal Word. All else will perish, no matter how much cause for work it gives Martha. God help us to choose it. Amen." (Martin Luther, *Concerning the Ordering of Divine Worship in the Congregation*, A. D. 1523, translated by the author.)

In view of the above statement by Luther, is it not amazing that we have permitted the daily morning and evening services to fall into disuse in our churches, that the doors of most of our churches are closed on weekdays, and that our pastors and congregations are still not doing very much about restoring the universal church's practice of conducting Matins and Vespers every day?

The Lutheran Church is a liturgical church. This means that her worship centers in the Holy Communion Service (TLH, pp. 15—31 and the rubrics and propers on pp. 3, 4, 53—59, 102—119, 159—161, 168—851; SBH, pp. 1—14 and the rubrics and propers on pp. 15—128, 156—241, 274—279, and the Hymnal). Her official daily prayers are Matins and Vespers (TLH, pp. 32—45 and the other rubrics and propers on pp. 3, 4, 53, 95—851; SBH, pp. 129—148 and the rubrics and propers on pp. 149—237, 274—285, and the Hymnal). These daily services and the Holy Communion Service belong together. One can compare them to the sun and the planets. The Holy Communion Service is the sun around which the church's daily prayers revolve. Matins and Vespers prepare for the Holy Communion Service and they also carry the meaning of the particular Sunday or feast day Holy Communion Service over into the following weekdays attached to it. For example, the Collect for a Sunday is prayed in the first Vespers of the evening before and this Collect is repeated in Matins and Vespers on the following weekdays attached to this Sunday. Also parts of the Sunday Gospel are used as the antiphons to the canticles of the Matins and Vespers. Thus the Holy Communion Service does not begin with the Introit nor does it end with the Benediction. It begins with the first Vespers of the evening before and continues in Matins and Vespers to sanctify the weekdays following the Sunday or feast.

From what we have just said about Matins and Vespers, one can understand why it is important to use the terms Matins and Vespers

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only when the church's officially prescribed orders for the morning and evening services are meant. An inaccurate use of these terms, for example, for a different kind of morning and evening service or devotion, is not desirable. Private prayers and group devotions are not liturgical, because they do not express the church's worship. Such services are more correctly called morning and evening devotions or services. It is also unbecoming to call devotions exercises, as for instance, chapel exercises.

For Matins and Vespers an officiating clergyman will be vested in cassock and surplice and, when it is a solemn festival service, he may also wear a cope.

Matins and Vespers may be conducted at the altar, but it is also proper to conduct them from beginning to end at the sedilia in the chancel, facing south or north, or to go to the altar for the Cantic and the concluding prayer section.

Since Matins and Vespers are minor services, they may be conducted by a layman. But it is becoming for the purpose of conducting the service that he be vested in cassock and surplice. A layman will also observe the rubric, "Matins and Vespers end with the Benedicamus if the Minister is not conducting the Service" (TLH, p. 4). What this rubric prescribes about a layman not saying the Benediction also applies to the Salutation.

Other rubrics which apply both to Matins and Vespers are: "The Collect for the Sunday is said at Matins throughout the week. It is also said at Vespers daily except on Saturday, when the Collect for the following Sunday is said" (SBH, p. 274). The "except" clause here also includes the eve of a feast day.

"Whenever the Collect for the Day is said, the full termination as appointed shall be used. If other Collects are said after it, as at Matins and Vespers, the full termination shall be used with the Collect for the Day and the last Collect only. The last Collect in Matins is the Collect for Grace, the last in Vespers the Collect for Peace" (TLL, p. 418). Traditionally, an uneven number of Collects is prayed in Matins and Vespers: three, five, or seven. One of the middle Collects may be a prayer of intercession. A good schedule to follow is this: On Sundays, pray for the local parish, its members, officers, boards, and

agencies; on Mondays, pray for workers or special undertakings or the family or friends; on Tuesdays (the day Christ disputed the last time with His enemies), for our enemies, the schismatics, and the heathen; on Wednesdays (the day Judas bargained to betray our Lord), for sinners and all who neglect to worship and serve Christ; on Thursdays (institution of the Holy Communion Service), for the church, missions, officers, pastors and teachers of the church, seminaries and schools; on Fridays (Christ's crucifixion), for sufferers, the sick, the persecuted, and the dying; on Saturdays, for our country, nation, rulers, and world peace.

"The Collect for Ash Wednesday is said in every Lenten Service after the Collect for the Day" (TLL, p. 418). Likewise, the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent is said in every service during Advent after the Collect for the Day. "A Versicle may be used before any Collect after the first" (TLL, p. 423). Every Collect starts with the words, "Let us pray" or "Let us pray for -----," and the response Amen is said after every Collect.

At both Matins and Vespers, "An Antiphon may be said or chanted with each Psalm. When an Antiphon is used with a Psalm, it shall be sung before the Psalm and repeated after the Gloria Patri by the entire Choir. The Psalm is sung to the tone of the Antiphon" (TLL, p. 423). One or more Psalms may be said, traditionally, an uneven number. Psalms appointed for Sundays and feast days are given in *The Lutheran Hymnal* on pages 159—160 and 164—166, and in the *Service Book and Hymnal* on pages 282—283. On other days, according to Lutheran practice, Psalms 1—109 are prayed in Matins and Psalms 110—150 in Vespers. One or more of these may be prayed in each service, beginning with the first Vespers of Advent. At Matins begin with Ps. 1 and, when Ps. 109 has been prayed, start with Ps. 1 again. At Vespers begin with Ps. 110 and, after Ps. 150, start with Ps. 110 again. The longer Psalms may be divided as follows: Ps. 18:1-24 and 25-50; Ps. 57:1-22 and 23-40; Ps. 78:1-16 and 17-39 and 40-72; Ps. 89:1-18 and 19-37 and 38-52; Ps. 104:1-12 and 13-23 and 24-35; Ps. 105:1-15 and 16-27 and 28-45; Ps. 106:1-31 and 32-48; Ps. 107:1-22 and 23-43; Ps. 109:1-20 and 21-31; Ps. 118:1-13 and 14-28; Ps. 119: parts 1-2 and 3-4, etc.; Ps. 136:1-9 and 10-26; Ps. 139:1-12 and 13-24; Ps. 147:1-11 and 12-20. Ps. 95, the Venite used in Matins, is omitted.

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Antiphons for the seasons of the church year and some other days are given in *The Lutheran Hymnal* on pages 95—101, and in the *Service Book and Hymnal* on pages 149—152. On weekdays when no special antiphon is appointed, one of the verses of the Psalm is used as the antiphon. The following schedule lists the traditional antiphon verse in parenthesis after each Psalm (verse numbers are according to the King James Bible): 1(7); 2(11); 3(5); 4(9); 5(1); 6(1); 7(1a); 8(1); 9(9); 10(17a); 11(7); 12(7); 13(3); 14(6b); 15(6); 16(1); 17(6b); 18:1-24(1); 18:25-50(33); 19(8); 20(9); 21(13); 22(25); 23(2); 24(7); 25(14); 26(12); 27(1); 28(9); 29(2); 30(1); 31(1); 32(12); 33(11); 35(1); 36(5); 37:1-22(5); 37:23-40(23); 38(1); 39(4); 40(11); 41(12); 42(14); 43(3); 44(26); 45(1); 46(11); 47(1); 48(1); 49(1); 50(1); 51(1); 52(9); 53(7b); 54(1); 55(1); 56(11); 57(5); 58(1); 59(1); 60(11); 61(8); 62(1); 63(1); 64(1); 65(1); 66(7); 67(3); 68(26); 69(1); 70(1); 72(17); 73(24); 74(22a); 75(11b); 76(1); 77(14); 78:1-16(1); 78:17-39(25); 78:40-72(68); 79(9); 80(2b); 81(1); 82(8); 83(16); 84(4); 85(11); 86(7); 87(1); 88(1); 89:1-18(1); 89:19-37(34); 89:38-52(67); 90(1); 91(1); 92(1); 93(1); 94(22); 96(1); 97(9); 98(1); 99(5); 100(1); 101(1); 102(1); 103(2); 104:1-12(1a); 104:13-23(13); 104:24-35(35); 105:1-15(1); 105:16-27(1); 105:28-45(1); 106:1-31(4); 106:32-48(48); 107:1-22(21); 107:23-43(31); 108(5); 109:1-20(1); 109:21-31(29); 110(1); 111(7); 112(1); 113(2); 114(1); 115(3); 116:1-9(9); 116:10-19(17); 118:1-13(1); 118:14-28(14); 119:1-16(13); 119:17-32(27); 119:33-48(34); 119:49-64(57); 119:65-80(77); 119:81-96(89); 119:97-112(104); 119:113-128(116); 119:129-144(132); 119:145-160(152); 119:161-176(175); 120(1); 121(2); 122(1); 123(1); 124(9); 125(4); 126(1); 127(6); 128(1); 129(5); 130(1); 131(3); 132(14); 133(1); 134(1); 135(1); 136:1-9(1); 136:10-26(26); 137(6a); 138(1); 139:1-12(1); 139:13-24(13); 140(1); 141(1); 142(5); 143(1); 144(1); 145(13); 146(1); 147:1-11(5); 147:12-20(12); 148(1); 149(2); 150(1).

The introduction of Matins and that of Vespers (TLH, pp. 32 and 4; SBH, pp. 126 and 141 f.) are identical: "The congregation shall

rise. Then shall be said or chanted the Versicles here following. During the Penitential Season the Hallelujah shall be omitted." If Matins has been said on the same day, the first Versicle may be omitted in Vespers. The Alleluia is silenced on the eve of Septuagesima Sunday and is not said until Easter. In its place the words, "Praise be to Thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory," may be said. During Passiontide the Gloria Patri may also be omitted. All may cross themselves at "Make haste . . . deliver me" and bow at "Glory be . . . Holy Ghost."

*Matins*

The Invitatory. "The Invitatory always precedes the Venite, Psalm 95. It varies with the Season. See pages 216-224. Other appropriate Invitatories may be used. After the Venite and the Gloria Patri the whole Invitatory shall be repeated" (TLL, p.422). Notice the "shall" about repeating the Invitatory. For the words of the Venite, "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker," all may bow or kneel.

The Hymn. This is the important Office hymn. Some of the traditional ones are: TLH 60, 63, 68, 98, 104, 550, 101, 212; SBH 1, 4, 3, 17, 206, 220, 110.

The Psalmody. Except for the antiphons and the Gloria Patri, all may be seated for the Psalms. "On Trinity Sunday, the Athanasian Creed may replace a Psalm" TLL, p.422). When the Athanasian Creed is so used, the Gloria Patri is added. It may also be preceded and followed by an antiphon.

The Lection. "One Lesson shall, more may, be read. On Sundays or Festivals one Lesson shall be read from the Epistles and one from the Gospels. A Lesson from the Old Testament may precede the Lesson from the Epistle. See page 438. Lessons shall not be chosen from the Psalter. The Epistle and the Gospel for the Day shall not be used as Lessons at Matins. In announcing the Lesson the Officiant shall say: The First (or Second or Third) Lesson is written in the \_\_\_\_\_ chapter of \_\_\_\_\_ beginning at the \_\_\_\_\_ verse. The Lesson ended, he shall say: Here endeth the First (or Second or Third) Lesson. After that, facing the altar, he may say or chant: "But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us" (TLL, p.422). Notice that the term Lesson, not Lection, is



## *The Ceremonies of Matins and Vespers*

used in announcing the Scripture reading. Lection means one or more lessons. The congregation is seated for the Lection, but rises for the Response.

The Responsory. "The Responsory varies with the Season and may be sung by the Choir after the last Lesson. See pages 216 to 227. Other appropriate Responsories may also be used." (TLL, p. 422)

The Sermon. "The Sermon or Address may follow the Lesson and Responsory as appointed. Or it may follow the Benedicamus; the Sermon shall then be followed by a Hymn, a Collect, and the Benediction" (SBH, p. 275). If offerings are gathered, this may be done after the sermon.

The Canticle. This is the joyful song of redemption in Matins and Vespers and may be highlighted with special ceremonies. Regarding the Canticles for Matins, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, page 423, gives the following rubrics: "The *Te Deum*. Proper at Matins on all Sundays except in Advent and from Septuagesima to Good Friday; also proper on Feasts and Festivals and during their Seasons. The *Benedictus*. Proper on all Sundays in Advent and from Septuagesima to Good Friday; also proper for daily use. The *Benedicite*. Proper on Feasts and Festivals and during Eastertide when the *Te Deum* is not used. See page 282. The *Dignus Est Agnus*. Proper during Eastertide and Ascensiontide. May also be used during the Trinity Season. See page 289. The *Beatitudes*. Proper during Trinity Season, but may be used any other time except Sundays. See page 288. Any of the other Canticles, except the Magnificat and the Nunc Dimittis, may be used at Matins on any Day except a Sunday or Feast or Festival. See page 282. *Confitebor Tibi* is traditionally associated with Monday, *Ego dixi* with Tuesday, *Exultavit cor meum* with Wednesday, *Cantemus Domino* with Thursday, *Domine audivi* with Friday, and *Audite coeli* with Saturday. An Antiphon may be sung with any of the Canticles except the *Te Deum*. It should be sung before the Canticle and repeated after the Canticle by the entire Choir. See pages 216—227."

The Canticle is always said standing and all may cross themselves when it is begun. In the *Te Deum*, all may bow at "Holy, holy, holy," and "Thou didst humble Thyself to be born of a virgin," and bow or kneel at "We therefore pray Thee . . . with Thy precious blood."

The Prayers. Prayers are not inserted between the Canticle and the Kyrie. "The Prayers" is a title for the prayer section which closes the Office. All that follows this title or heading is called The Prayers. "Instead of the Prayers appointed, the Suffrages, the Litany, or other Prayers may be used. The Bidding Prayer may be used in the same manner on any Wednesday or Friday in Lent and on Good Friday" (TLL, p. 423). The Prayers may be said kneeling, except on Sundays, feast days, and in Eastertide, and except for the *Benedicamus* and *Benediction*, at the end of the prayer section, which are always said standing.

For the sake of accuracy, the term "litany" should be applied only to that type of liturgical prayer in which the people respond to prayer phrases with a form of response repeated after each prayer phrase or a number of succeeding phrases. Litanies have a penitential character and have assumed the classical structure of Kyrie, petitions and intercessions based on our Lord and His work, deprecations, supplications and intercessions, climaxed in the *Agnus Dei*. To apply the term "litany" to the suffrage or *preces* type of prayer or any kind of responsive prayer is unfortunate. Suffrages are quite different from litanies. They are made up of versicles and responses and are more general in character than litanies. Many of the responsive prayers composed today and called litanies, especially those of the Reformed church's type, are not litanies at all.

### *Vespers*

Everything that has been said about Matins and Vespers in general and about Matins in particular applies to Vespers, except the following:

The Hymn. Some of the traditional Office hymns for Vespers given in *The Lutheran Hymnal* are: No. 78, 168, 212, 564, and 559; in the *Service Book and Hymnal*: No. 75, 110, 133, and 223.

The Versicle between the Hymn and the Canticle. This versicle is variable. Proper versicles for Seasons and other days are given in *The Lutheran Hymnal* on pages 95 to 101.

The Canticles. "The *Magnificat*. The proper Canticle at Vespers at all times. The *Nunc Dimittis*. A proper substitute for the *Magnificat* only when Vespers are said or sung as a late Office. The *Dignus Est Agnus*. Proper during Eastertide and Ascensiontide. May also be used

### *The Ceremonies of Matins and Vespers*

during the Trinity Season. See page 289. On Festivals a special Versicle, see pages 216—229, may be used before the Canticle. An Antiphon may be sung with the Canticle. See page 216.” (TLL, p. 424)

Attention needs to be drawn to the restrictive use of the Nunc Dimittis: “Proper . . . only when Vespers are said or sung as a late Office.” The Nunc Dimittis is really the Canticle for the Office of Compline, the last service of the day or the going-to-bed service. Our service books do not give an Order of Compline, but they provide the essential features of that service in the Canticle, the Nunc Dimittis, and in the Evening Suffrages.

### *The Litany*

In addition to the use of the Litany as a substitute for The Prayers in Matins and Vespers, the *Common Service Book and Hymnal* provides for its use as a special Office. The rubric on page 156 says: “It may be used alone on Days of Humiliation and Prayer, or as a Penitential Office, or at specially appointed times; the ancient litany days being Wednesday and Friday.” This is followed by the rubric: “When used as a special Office, the Order shall be: The Minister shall say: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *R̄*. Amen. Then shall be said one or more of the Psalms with the Gloria Patri. A brief Lesson with the Response and a Hymn may follow. Then shall the Litany follow, and after the last Collect shall follow this Benediction: The Blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with you all. *R̄*. Amen.” In this Litany Office, all may cross themselves at the Invocation and the Blessing. The Psalm(s) may be said standing. The congregation would be seated for the Lesson, but stand for the response. All would kneel for the Litany.

## The Ceremonial of Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Reception of Converts, and of Private Confession and Absolution

SINCE Holy Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration or the new birth by water and the Spirit, and of incorporation into the mystical body of Christ; and since it bestows upon the believer forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and eternal salvation; and since it has a vitally important meaning in the daily life and experiences of a Christian for time and eternity, the ancient church made much more of Holy Baptism than is generally done in our churches today. Certainly it is most becoming to its administration that Holy Baptism be given great solemnity, dignity, and reverence, and that it be made as impressive as possible with meaningful signs and ceremonies.

*The Lutheran Agenda* (TLA) provides four rites for the administration of Holy Baptism: The Order of Holy Baptism, The Baptism of Infants (with Sponsors); The Order of Holy Baptism, The Baptism of Infants (without Sponsors); The Order of Holy Baptism, The Ratification of Lay Baptism; and The Order of Holy Baptism, The Baptism of Adults.<sup>1</sup> *The Occasional Services* (TOS) provides three rites: Order for the Baptism of Infants, Order for the Baptism of Adults, and Order for Lay Baptism.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Lutheran Agenda* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House (no dates), pp. 1—20.

<sup>2</sup> *The Occasional Services* (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1962), pp. 1—11.

*The Ceremonial of Holy Baptism, Confirmation, etc.*

The general rubrics prescribe that the administration of Holy Baptism should ordinarily take place in church at one of the regular services in which the congregation is present. If necessary, it may be administered in a specially appointed service. The administration may take place after the opening hymn of the service, in which case that hymn may well be a baptismal hymn. Or it may follow the Sermon in "The Service" or the Lessons or Sermon in Matins and Vespers. Under certain circumstances, it may also be administered privately, but then a public announcement of the baptism should be made soon after the administration.

Infants should be brought to church for Holy Baptism as soon as possible after birth. Only members of the church should be accepted as sponsors, and these should be instructed as to their spiritual responsibility to the child.

Unbaptized adults who desire Holy Baptism should first be instructed in the Christian faith as it is set forth in the Small Catechism. Their baptism should likewise take place in the presence of the congregation, but in case of urgent necessity, it may take place in private and should then be announced to the congregation later. Such adults may also have one or more members of the church as sponsors. When an adult is baptized, however, it is not necessary for him to receive Confirmation, for he has already received instruction in the Christian faith.

If an infant was baptized in an emergency by a Christian lay person, this should be reported to the minister. And if the infant so baptized survives, it may be brought to church when the congregation is present, together with the person who baptized the child and the witnesses of the baptism. The minister will then use the form for the Ratification of a Lay Baptism (TLA, p. 12 f.) or Order for Lay Baptism (TOS, p. 10 f.).

Except in cases of sickness or other hindrances, it is becoming to the administration of the water in Holy Baptism to "pour" from the palm of the hand or a vessel a generous amount of water and not to apply only a few drops.

The Baptism of Infants (with Sponsors), (TLA, p. 1 ff.)

*Part One* of this order is read at the lowest chancel step. The minister may trace the sign of the cross on the forehead and on the breast of the child when he says: "Receive the sign of the holy cross,

both upon the forehead and upon the breast, in token that thou hast been redeemed by Christ the Crucified." He may lay his right hand on the head of the child for the Lord's Prayer, which the sponsors and all present may say with him. He may make the sign of the cross when he says: "The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth and even forevermore."

*Part Two* of the order is read at the font. The procession from the chancel step to the font may be led by the minister, preceded by the acolyte and server (if any). At the font all may stand on the west side of the font, except the acolyte and server (if any), who may stand on the east side. The minister may sign the child with the cross at the end of the words: "N., I baptize thee . . . Holy Ghost," and he may lay his right hand on the child's head when he says: "Almighty God . . . unto life everlasting. Amen." He may sign the child again when he says: "Peace be with thee." The final rubric directs: "The Minister, having proceeded to the altar, may add: Let us pray, Almighty and most merciful God and Father . . ." During this action all may remain standing at the font, except the acolyte and server (if any), who may precede the minister into the chancel, but would remain standing at the lowest altar step.

The Baptism of Infants (without Sponsors), (TLA, p. 8 ff.)

This entire order may be conducted at the font. The minister may sign the child with the cross at: "Receive the sign of the holy cross . . . the crucified," "The Lord preserve . . . forevermore," "N., I baptize thee . . . Amen," and "Peace be with thee."

The Ratification of Lay Baptism (TLH, p. 12 ff.)

This entire order may be conducted at the lowest chancel step. The sign of the cross may be made by the minister when he says: "Peace be with thee."

The Baptism of Adults (TLA, p. 17 ff.)

Like the order with sponsors, this order is divided into two parts. *Part One*, extending to the Profession of Faith, may be conducted at the lowest chancel step; *Part Two*, from the baptizing to the end of the service, at the font. The minister may make the sign of the cross

at: "The Lord preserve . . . forevermore," "N., I baptize thee . . . Holy Ghost. Amen," and "Peace be with thee."

The Order for the Baptism of Infants, Order for the Baptism of Adults, Order for Lay Baptism (TOS, pp. 1—11)

All these orders, except the last one, may be conducted at the font. Provisions are made for congregational participation in the rubrics which direct the people's standing and sitting, joining in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, and responding with Amen at the end of each prayer. The sign of the cross may be made at the words, "Receive the sign of the cross . . . sufferings." The minister shall lay his hand on the head of the child when he says: "Almighty God . . . life everlasting. Amen."

#### *Additional Ceremonies*

In his *Taufbüchlein* of 1523 (Baptism Booklet), Luther retained most of the ceremonies for the administration of Holy Baptism which had become traditional in the Western church. Especially two such laudable ceremonies, presently not included in our Lutheran orders, may well be considered here. Wherever they can be used, they may help to enhance the dignity of Holy Baptism and may emphasize its significance and ongoing meaning. One of these is the laying of the chrisom (a white, oblong, linen cloth) on the child "when it comes out of the font," that is, when it has been baptized, while the minister says: "As thou art now clothed with this pure, white, and unspotted garment, so mayest thou evermore be clothed with the innocence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for whose sake God has made thee His child and received thee as an heir of eternal life." Or he may say: "Receive this clean, white, and unspotted garment which symbolizes the innocence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on whose account God has accepted and received thee as a child and heir of everlasting life."

The other ceremony is the giving of a lighted candle to the baptized person (if an infant, the candle is given into the hand of a sponsor), while the minister says: "Receive this lighted candle and keep your Baptism without blame; obey the commandments of God, so that when our Lord shall come to His marriage feast, thou mayest enter with Him and all His saints into the heavenly courts and there live forever and

ever." A baptismal candle given to the child and lighted every year on the anniversary day of its baptism (baptism day) can be a valuable aid in teaching the child the ongoing meaning of Holy Baptism throughout life.

### *Vestments*

The minister may be vested in surplice and white stole. For a solemn baptism, he may also wear a white cope. The acolyte and server (if any) may wear a cassock and surplice.

### *Confirmation*

One who is being instructed for Holy Baptism or Confirmation is called a catechumen. A class of such persons is a catechumen or a catechism class.

*The Lutheran Agenda* prescribes a public examination of the catechumens to precede the Rite of Confirmation. This examination may be held in a service previous to that in which Confirmation is administered. It may take place in the regular Morning Service after the singing of a hymn following the Apostles' Creed or in Vespers after the singing of a hymn following the Lection.

Regarding the time in the service for the Confirmation, the rubric directs: "The Order of Confirmation shall follow the General Prayer in the Morning Service; in Vespers the Hymn after the Sermon."

If any of the catechumens have not been baptized, "they shall receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism according to the Order for the Baptism of Adults."

After the catechumens have formally professed their faith and have made their promises, the ceremony of the laying on of hands is carried out as follows: "Then shall the Catechumens come forward — one by one, or in groups, as the Minister may have appointed — and giving the Minister their right hand, kneel before the altar. Then shall the Minister, laying his hands upon each one separately, pronounce the name of the Catechumen and the Benediction, adding a Scripture passage as a memorial of Confirmation, saying: . . ."

The Minister may make the sign of the cross at the Benediction after the laying on of hands, and again at the Benediction following



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the words: "Upon this (these) your voluntary profession(s) and promise(s) . . ."

*The Occasional Services* does not require a public examination of the catechumens, but it implies or at least allows such an examination in the rubric: "Candidates for Adult Baptism and for Confirmation shall be instructed in the Christian Faith as it is set forth in the Small Catechism, and be approved in such manner as may be deemed satisfactory by the Pastor and the Church Council."

The administration is ordered to take place in a public service of the congregation, except that "in case of serious illness or pressing necessity, it may be administered privately in the presence of members of the Church."

As to the time for the administration in the service, the rubrics direct: "When Confirmation is administered at The Service, and there be no Communion, this Order shall follow the Prayer of the Church." "If the Holy Communion be administered, this Order shall follow the Sermon; and at the conclusion of this Order, the Service shall be continued with the Offering, the Offertory, and the Prayer of the Church."

Another rubric permits the reading (before the Epistle and Gospel of the Day) of one or more of the following lessons: Acts 8:14-17; Rom. 10:8-11; Eph. 2:13-22; Eccl. 12:1-7; John 15:1-16.

After the prayer for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the candidates for confirmation are directed to kneel. Then the minister "shall lay his hand, or hands, on the head of each and say the Prayer of Blessing."

*The Reception of Converts*

The Order for the Reception of Converts may take place at the altar. In the Morning Service, it may be conducted immediately before the General Prayer, and in Matins or Vespers after the Canticle.

The sign of the cross may be made at the words: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" and "Peace be with thee. Amen."

*The Order of Private Confession and Absolution*

*The Lutheran Agenda* does not give an order for the administration of Private Confession and Absolution or what the Lutheran Confessions

call the Sacrament of Repentance or Penance, Confession, Holy Absolution, the Power of the Keys, and the Keys. But this omission certainly cannot be interpreted to mean that Private Confession and Absolution is not to be administered in our churches. For the Lutheran Confessions state again and again that "we retain" Private Confession and Absolution. They even go so far as to say: "It would be impious to take private absolution out of the Church" (Apology VI, 3).<sup>3</sup> What the omission of an order for Private Confession in the Lutheran Agenda probably means is that an order of Private Confession and Absolution is contained in Luther's Small Catechism, Part V, under the heading, "Pray, Propose to Me a Brief Form of Confession," and it is assumed that all ministers and lay members of the Lutheran church learned this order in their catechumenate and committed it to memory, thus making it unnecessary to include it in *The Lutheran Agenda*.

*The Occasional Services* contains an order for Private Confession and Absolution (p. 31 f.), but it is very sketchy and not at all like the one in the Small Catechism.

The Small Catechism requires that a penitent (one who makes a Private Confession) examine himself in the light of the Ten Commandments according to his vocation and station in life; that he confess his sins to the confessor (pastor or minister) even if no specific sins are mentioned; that he affirm his faith in the effectiveness of the Absolution; and that he receive individual absolution from the confessor as from God Himself. The Lutheran Confessions do not say how often one should go to Confession. They leave this matter up to the individual. All they say is that it should be "frequently in a year." (Apology, Art. XI)

Assuming, then, that the Order of Private Confession and Absolution is the one given in the Small Catechism, the following ceremonies may be laudably observed:

1. Private Confession shall be conducted in the church building at the communicants' rail, except when it is administered to one who is so sick that he cannot come to church. If other persons besides the penitent and the confessor are in the church building, they shall be required

<sup>3</sup> For a summary statement on what the Lutheran Confessions have to say about Private Confession and Absolution, see Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Worship and the Sacraments* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), pp. 39—41.

to stay far enough away from the communicants' rail that they cannot overhear the Confession.

2. Confessions shall be made by appointment with the confessor. Such appointments may be made for any suitable time throughout the year. If the necessity for making an appointment should discourage anyone from receiving Holy Absolution, the pastor may make a public announcement that he will be in church for Confession at stated times.

3. At the appointed time the penitent shall appear in church and examine himself according to the Ten Commandments. The confessor shall put on a cassock, surplice, and violet stole. He shall then enter the chancel and seat himself on a bench east of the communicant's rail, facing north or south. When the confessor is seated, the penitent shall come up and kneel at the rail on the opposite side to the confessor. If he does not know the Order of Confession by heart, the confessor shall hand him a printed copy.

4. The Confession shall then proceed as follows:

Penitent: Reverend and dear Sir, I beseech you to hear my confession and to pronounce forgiveness to me for God's sake.

Confessor: Proceed!

Penitent: I, a poor sinner, confess myself before God guilty of all sins; especially I confess before you that . . . (Here he confesses those sins which he knows and feels in his heart). For all this I am sorry, and pray for grace; I want to do better.

(Here the confessor may give comfort and assurance to the penitent from the Holy Scriptures.)

Confessor: God be merciful to thee and strengthen thy faith. Amen.

Dost thou believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?

Penitent: Yes, dear Sir.

Confessor: As thou believest, so be it done unto thee. And by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive thee thy sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Depart in peace.

5. The confessor shall lay his right hand on the head of the penitent when he says, "As thou believest . . . thy sins." He may make the sign of the cross when he says, "In the name . . . Holy Ghost" and

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"Depart in peace." The penitent may cross himself at the words, "In the name . . . Holy Ghost" and "Depart in peace."

6. The confessor shall then return to the sacristy and the penitent may remain kneeling for a silent prayer of thanksgiving and then depart.

## The Ceremonial of The Order of Marriage, The Order for the Ordination of a Minister, and The Order for the Burial of the Dead

**T**HE *Lutheran Agenda* provides three orders for the solemnization of a marriage, plus one for the consecration of a civil marriage and another for the celebration of the anniversary of a marriage. *The Occasional Services* has two: the Order for Marriage and the Blessing of a Civil Marriage. No order is given in either service book for a Nuptial Eucharist, but this service, which has precedent in the ancient church and in some 16th-century Lutheran church orders, is allowed in current practice if both parties are communicant members and if it is understood that all communicants present who desire it may partake of the Blessed Sacrament.

A wedding in church is a church service as solemn and reverent as any other church service. It is not held to glorify any persons, but to ask for and receive the blessings of God on the ordinance of matrimony which He ordained. Therefore, all the ceremonies connected with a wedding service, including the music, flower decorations, and all actions, should be becoming to a worship service held in church.

The candles are lit before the service, also the eucharistic lights if it is a Nuptial Eucharist, and two cushions may be laid before the altar for the couple. The minister is vested in surplice and stole, and for a solemn service he may also wear a cope. The bride should wear a veil

even if she is dressed in a suit, because the veil is the traditional head-dress of a woman in church who is a bride. The altar and clerical vestments are of the color of the Day.

We may consider the ceremonies of the wedding service under the following headings: the entrance procession; the espousal and giving in marriage; the procession to the altar; the solemnization and blessing; the kiss; and the recessional.

#### *The Entrance Procession*

"The persons to be married having presented themselves at the entrance to the chancel, the man to the right of the woman, a suitable Hymn may be sung" (TLA, p. 35). In order to "present themselves," the wedding party has to come into the church, and that is the one and only purpose of the entrance procession. It should, therefore, be done as simply, as solemnly, and as reverently as possible. It may, of course, be a formal procession, but anything that resembles the actions common to a musical opera or that is done merely for show is unbecoming.

The words "at the entrance to the chancel" mean that the first part of the service, which corresponds to the ancient espousal, is to be carried out in the nave and not in the chancel.

#### *The Espousal and Giving Away in Marriage*

"The Minister shall then receive her at the hands of her father (guardian or any friend), the Woman placing her right hand in the hand of the Minister. Then shall the Minister place the right hand of the Woman in the right hand of the Man" (TOS, p. 80). This ceremony is based on the phrase frequently used in the Holy Scriptures, "giving a daughter to wife." A more meaningful way to carry it out is for the father to take the right hand of the bride and to place it into the hand of the minister, who then gives it into the hand of the bridegroom. This action signifies more clearly that the father gives his daughter to wife, and that the man receives her as a gift from God Himself, the minister acting in God's stead.

#### *The Procession to the Altar*

"Then shall the Minister precede the man and the woman to the altar. The veil of the woman shall be lifted. The man, facing the woman,

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shall take the right hand of the woman, facing him, and say after the Minister . . ." (TLA, p. 38). The joining of the hands here and again later is the ancient and Biblical sign of making a covenant.

### *The Wedding Ring*

"If the wedding ring be used, the Minister shall now receive it and deliver it to the man to be put on the fourth finger of the woman's left hand. . . . Then shall the man say, or if two rings be used, the man and the woman, in turn, shall say, after the Minister . . ." (TLA, p. 38)

A ring was anciently used in sealing orders and valuable things and is therefore used in the wedding service to seal the marriage vow. The circular shape of the ring signifies the unending love which is to grace the marriage.

In the section on Forms of Blessings, *The Occasional Services* (p. 215) provides a form for the blessing of the wedding ring.

### *The Solemnization and Blessing*

"Then shall the Minister say: Join your right hands. Then shall the Minister lay his right hand upon their hands and say . . ." (TLA, p. 39)

The Biblical ceremony of the laying on of hands signifies the bestowal of grace. Therefore, when the minister lays his hand on their clasped hands, this is a ceremonial way of saying, "May the grace and blessings of God be bestowed on your marriage covenant."

The minister may make the sign of the cross at the words, "In the Name . . . Holy Ghost."

"Then shall they turn to face the altar and kneel, and the Minister shall bless them, saying . . ." (TLA, p. 39). During this blessing, the minister may hold his right hand or both his hands over them and make the sign of the cross at the word "bless." He may also make the sign of the cross at the Benediction.

### *The Kiss*

Some churches forbid the married couple to kiss before leaving the altar. It is true that the kiss is objectionable if it is made in such a manner as to portray human passion; but the kiss may be made in a reverent and solemn way, and then it expresses ceremonially the love

of the married couple for each other. If the minister instructs the couple beforehand to perform the kiss reverently so that it will not offend against proper decorum in church, then there is little that can be said against it. In fact, the kiss has the sanction of ancient church tradition, as the following quotations testify.

F. E. Warren writes: "The kiss of peace (*Osculum Pacis*) . . . formed part of the ritual of every Eucharistic celebration. . . . But the kiss was not only Eucharistic in its association." Here he refers to the kiss at Baptism, Ordination, and Marriage, and says: "Tertullian mentions the kiss at marriage."<sup>1</sup>

Percy Dearmer says: "The clergy are sometimes a little scandalized by the bridegroom kissing the bride before they leave the chancel. Yet he is following a good old custom: the bridegroom was ordered to kiss the bride at the Pax in the old rite ('*Osculans eam*,' *Missa Sarum*)." <sup>2</sup>

### *The Recessional*

After the Benediction, the married couple turns around in such a manner as to turn toward each other and that the woman is now at the right side of the man. From now on, she is his helpmeet, she is his right hand person. Then they lead the recessional out of church, being followed by their attendants and then the congregation. The recessional is the orderly and reverent way of going from one place to another. It should, therefore, be performed in a simple, dignified manner without undue haste and without any greetings or conversation on the way. The giving of greetings and best wishes and the reception should take place outside of the church building.

### *The Nuptial Eucharist*

If the Nuptial Eucharist is celebrated, it may follow the Blessing of the couple: "May the Almighty and Eternal God look down." Then the couple may remain in the chancel or return to the nave at the entrance to the chancel, facing the altar, the woman on the right side of the man.

If the eucharistic candles were not lit before the marriage service,

<sup>1</sup> F. E. Warren, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Anse-Nicene Church* (New York: E. S. Gorham, 1912), pp. 119—125.

<sup>2</sup> Percy Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook* (London: Henry Frowde, 1909), p. 471.



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they should be lit now. The celebrant may be vested in surplice and stole or the Eucharistic vestments, but not in a cope. The assistants to the celebrant (if any) may be vested as they usually are for the celebration of the Holy Communion Service.

The usual Order of the Holy Communion Service or The Service is used with the following propers:

*Introit.* Antiphon: Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Ps. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord: that walketh in His ways. Gloria Patri. (Antiphon repeated.)

*Collect.* Almighty God, who didst create man and woman and didst join them together in marriage, thereby signifying the mystical union between Thy Son Jesus Christ and His Bride, the Church, we beseech Thee, let not this Thy blessed work and ordinance be set aside or brought to naught, but graciously protect and preserve it; through the same Jesus Christ, etc.

*The Epistle.* Ephesians 5:22-30.

*The Gradual and Alleluia Verse.* Thy wife shall be by the side of thine house: thy children as olive plants round about thy table.

The Lord send thee help from the sanctuary: and strengthen thee out of Zion.

Alleluia, alleluia. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. Alleluia.

(From Septuagesima to Ash Wednesday, Ps. 136:8 is used as the Gradual and Ps. 126:4-6 as Tract. During Eastertide, Ps. 20:2 and Ps. 134:2 are used, without Gradual, the first verse preceded by two alleluias and the second verse preceded and ended with one alleluia.)

*The Gospel.* St. Matthew 19:3-6.

*The Offertory.* I trust in Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in Thy hand. (Add alleluia during Eastertide.)

*Special Intercession* for the General Prayer or Prayer of the Church. Almighty God our heavenly Father, who hast united this man and this woman in the holy estate of matrimony, grant them the grace to live therein according to Thy holy Word, strengthen them in constant faithfulness and true love toward each other, sustain and defend them amidst

all trials and temptations, and help them to so pass through this world in faith toward Thee, in communion with Thy Church, and in loving service one to the other, that they may ever enjoy Thy heavenly benediction.

*Proper Preface.* Because Thou didst create at the beginning our first parents, Adam and Eve, sanctifying and joining them together in marriage, and didst consecrate the holy estate of matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage between Christ and His Bride, the Church, therefore . . .

*Blessing of the Couple.* (This Blessing is said over the couple at the end of the service before the Benediction, the couple kneeling at the epistle side of the altar step. After this Blessing, the couple may stand for the blessing of the congregation with the Benediction. Then they may start the recessional.)

The almighty and merciful God, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, be with you evermore and fulfill His promised blessing (sign of the cross) in you and keep you unto everlasting life through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

### *Ceremonies*

The couple may give their offerings during the Offertory to the celebrant or his assistant. He places them on the altar together with the bread and wine and any other offerings.

During the Distribution, the Blessed Sacrament may be administered to the couple first and then to any other communicants who desire it.

After the Distribution, the couple goes to the altar step on the epistle side and kneels for the Blessing given above.

Otherwise, all the usual ceremonies of the Holy Communion Service are observed.

### *The Order for the Ordination of a Minister*

*The Lutheran Agenda* (p. 104 ff.) orders the rite of Ordination to be inserted in the Morning Service after the General Prayer or in Vespers following the Hymn after the Sermon.

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*The Occasional Services* (p. 90 ff.) prescribes that the Ordination be included in the celebration of The Service and provides special propers for this service when the rite of Ordination is administered.

At the beginning of the service, the clergy may enter the church in procession, the ordinand and the ordinator coming in last. The ordinand and the clergy who assist in the laying on of hands take their places in the nave before the chancel and the others go into the chancel.

The principal ceremonies in the Ordination are the laying on of hands and, if it is the custom, the presentation of a stole or a Bible.

The ordinator may make the sign of the cross in the formula of Ordination at the words, "In the name . . . Holy Ghost." *The Lutheran Agenda* provides for the additional laying on of hands by assisting ministers who may stand in a semicircle behind the ordinand.

If the ceremony is used, the ordinator then places a stole on the ordinand or gives him a Bible as a further sign of ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

At the end of the rite, the ordinator may give the ordinand his right hand and charge him with the faithful performance of the office of the holy ministry.

*The Order for the Burial of the Dead*

Although the following rubrics do not pertain to the ceremonies of the rite, attention needs to be drawn to them:

"The death of a member of the Church should be reported immediately to the Pastor, and no arrangements for the burial should be made without consultation with him." (TOS, p. 63)

"The service should be held in the Church whenever possible." (TOS, p. 63)

"It is not in the best Christian tradition to eulogize the departed; or to have the funeral services interrupted by the exercises of any secular organization." (TLL, p. 80)

*At the House or at the Funeral Home*

The custom of holding a brief service at the house or the funeral home serves several good purposes. First, it gives non-Lutheran friends of the deceased, who do not care to attend the service in the church, the opportunity to pay their respects to the family. Secondly, it helps

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solve the problem of the closed casket in church, for the casket may remain open at the house and funeral home so that all who wish to view the body may do so at this time. No one can then complain that "he could not even say a final farewell to the departed."

At the opening words, "Grace to you . . ." and at the Benediction, the officiant may make the sign of the cross.

### *At the Church*

The color of the vestments is that of the proper color for the Day. (See rubric in TLA, p. 426.)

"Before the service, the altar candles shall be lighted. Only flowers of the immediate family should be permitted in the Chancel." (TOS, p. 63)

If a funeral pall is used, it should be on hand in the narthex of the church so that it can be placed on the casket before it is brought into the nave.

"The Minister in his customary vestments shall go before the body as it is brought into the Church. The Congregation shall stand. The coffin shall be placed before the Chancel in a lengthwise position. During the burial service the coffin shall remain closed. The Congregation may provide a funeral pall." (TOS, p. 63)

The procession into the church may be in the following order: (The crucifer, the acolytes bearing candles), the pallbearers, the coffin, the mourners.

The officiant may read the Sentences (TLA, p. 80 f.) during the procession into the church.

Arriving at the chancel, all go to their proper places while the coffin is being placed in position at the chancel step. If the body is that of an ordained minister, the head will be toward the altar; if that of a layman, the feet will be toward the altar. The funeral candles (in churches where they are used) are then arranged on the floor at the sides of the coffin and lighted.

All stand and all may cross themselves at the Invocation. They may be seated for the Psalmody, but will stand for the antiphon and Gloria Patri of the Psalms. The congregation is seated for the Lesson, but will stand if a Responsory is said (TOS, p. 73). The Canticle is

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said standing. During the Prayer Section, the congregation shall stand or kneel. At the Benediction, the officiant may make the sign of the cross and all may cross themselves.

The procession out of the church may be in the same order as that of the entrance. The funeral pall will be removed from the coffin in the narthex.

#### *At the Grave*

When the cortege has arrived at the cemetery, the same order of procession from the hearse to the grave may be followed as in church. The officiant stands at the head of the body until the committal. Then he goes to the side of the coffin. At the words, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," earth may be placed on the coffin in the form of a cross, beginning at the head, down the center, and then left to right. The officiant may make the sign of the cross at the words, "keep these remains unto the day of the resurrection of all flesh. Amen" (TLA, p. 95) and at the Benediction.

## The Ceremonies of the Church Year

### Part I. The Christmas Section

THE church year is a very valuable and important part of the ceremonial of the Lutheran liturgy. Without the church year the church's worship, the liturgy, is almost unthinkable. It would be easier to think of the liturgy to exist without church buildings than without the church year. All the Sundays, feast days, and seasons with their yearly round of celebrations and commemorations, as well as their Lessons and other propers, are an integral part of the liturgy.

How the church year came to be what it is today, in other words, the history of its development, is not only very interesting, but very helpful for the understanding of its meaning for our life in the church. But a discussion of this history does not belong in a book on the ceremonial of the liturgy. We shall, therefore, limit ourselves to the ceremonies of the church year and refer to the historical background only when a ceremony cannot be understood without a reference to history.

In its present structure, the church year is a yearly cycle which centers in Easter or rather the old *Pascha*, which included not only our Lord's resurrection, but also His passion and death. The cycle contains two sections, the Easter section and the Christmas section. Both sections are built up in the same way. Both begin with a season of preparation, followed by the celebration of its central and related feasts, and ending with a period of extension. Thus the Christmas section, with which the church year now begins, starts with the preparatory season of Advent, centers in the feasts of Christmas and Epiphany, and closes with the

extended Epiphany period. The Easter section begins with Septuagesima, the preparatory season of Lent and Passiontide, centers in the feasts of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost, and ends with the extension of the period after Pentecost or Trinity. These sections are again divided into seasons, such as the season of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and so on, and throughout the whole cycle occur feast days of apostles, martyrs, and saints, as well as commemorations of events in the life of the church.

The yearly cycle, however, is not a separated entity which exists by and of itself. It is connected with the cycle of the year before and the year which follows it. Therefore the church year is like the circle of a spiral which is connected with the preceding and following circles in the spiral. The cycles of the church year are the yearly round of life lived in and with Christ and His church, leading us year by year upward and heavenward, as well as connecting our life in the church on earth with the lives of all the Christians that lived before and shall follow after us.

The smallest unit in the church year is the day. Each day is sanctified in our Lutheran rite by the church's daily services of Matins and Vespers. The Lutheran reformers expected these to be conducted openly in the parish churches every day. This custom fell into decline in the 18th and 19th centuries, but fortunately it is being restored more and more today. Even if not many parishioners can or will go to church daily for Matins and Vespers, they can be present in spirit and by associating themselves in their home devotions with the church services, and in that way participate in the church's manner of offering the day to God.

The second unit is the week. The week is hallowed in the church year by keeping the first day, Sunday, as the Lord's Day. Each Sunday celebrates some phase of the mystery of our redemption. Therefore it has its own name and objective or purpose which should not be lightly disregarded and set aside for the observance of other things, such as Loyalty Sunday, Stewardship Sunday, Mother's Day, and the like. The remembrance of our Lord's resurrection always dominates this first day of the week, fills it with joy, and makes the other days of the week attached to it days of grace. In Christian tradition, the fourth and sixth

days of the week are station days, because our Lord's betrayal was negotiated on Wednesday and He was crucified on Friday. To keep station means to stand guard against temptation to sin by exercises of self-denial and self-discipline as acts of faith and devotion.

The third and largest unit is the year itself. This, as we have stated, is the church year cycle or circle in the spiral of church years which goes onward to Christ's Second Advent.

The month is not regarded as a unit of time in the church year. Therefore, such programs which divide the year into months with special emphasis of certain church work or of hymns for each month are unliturgical and militate against the structure and rhythm of the church year. The church year units are the day, the week, and the year, except that the sacred seasons connected with the great feasts may be considered as units.

At the same time, however, the rhythm of the natural year is not disregarded by the church year. That is true north of the equator especially in regard to the natural seasons. Easter coincides with spring, the springing forth of new life and growth; the end of the church year with its emphasis on the "last things," with fall and winter; Christmas and Epiphany, which center in Christ's Advent, with the increase of light and the lengthening of daytime after the winter darkness.

Another way in which the church year is integrated with the seasons of the natural year is the observance of the ember days. The ember days are the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after December 13, after the First Sunday in Lent, after Whitsunday or Pentecost, and after September 14. They refer to the quarters of the natural year in which the fruits of the earth are planted, are grown, are harvested, and are stored. The church refers the observance of the ember days allegorically to the sowing and the resulting harvest of the Seed of the Word. That is the reason for the tradition of ordaining ministers as sowers of the Word on the ember days or the Sundays connected with them.

### *Church Year Rubrics*

*The Lutheran Hymnal* gives The Calendar for the Church Year on page 3 and the *Service Book and Hymnal* on pages XI and XII. It will not be necessary to discuss all the church year rubrics, since most of them are well known. We shall call attention only to the following



*The Ceremonies of the Church Year. Part I. The Christmas Section*

rubrics, which regulate the order of rank and the order of occurrence of feasts and days:

"Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday are designated as the Feasts of the Church Year; all other Festival Days are designated as the Festivals of the Church Year." (TLL, p. 418)

"Precedence of Festivals and Days. I. The following days shall be observed invariably as appointed in the Calendar. A Day or Festival concurring with any of these here noted may be observed the first open day thereafter.

*Greater Festival Days*

The Sundays of Advent	The Days of Holy Week
The Nativity	Easter Day and the Day following
The Circumcision	The Sunday after Easter
The Epiphany	The Ascension and the Sunday following
Septuagesima	Pentecost and the Day following
Sexagesima	Trinity Sunday
Quinquagesima	Reformation Day
Ash Wednesday	All Saints' Day
The Sundays in Lent	

"II. When a Lesser Festival falls on a Sunday not noted in Rubric I, the Introit, Collect, Epistle, Gradual, and Gospel for the Festival shall be used, and the Collect for the Sunday shall be said after the Collect for the Day.

"The Propers for a Lesser Festival may be used on the Sunday following the Festival provided that the Sunday be not noted in Rubric I.

"Lesser Festivals: All Apostles', Evangelists', and Martyrs' Days. The Presentation, the Visitation, and the Annunciation. The Transfiguration. St. Michael and All Angels." (SBH, p. 278)

*Advent*

The church year begins with Advent, the preparatory season before Christmas, starting with the Sunday nearest St. Andrew's Day, November 30, or the fourth Sunday before Christmas. This First Sunday in Advent does not give way to any other feast, but the other Sundays in Advent may be superseded by a greater feast, such as the feast of Church Dedication.

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All three "advents" of Christ are referred to in the propers of Advent: His advent in "the fullness of time," in His Word and Sacraments, and His advent at the end of time.

While this season is penitential, it is not as austere as the Lenten season. During the season, the Benedictus is said instead of the Te Deum as the Sunday canticle in Matins; the Gloria in Excelsis is omitted, except on feast days; flowers are not placed on the altar, except on the third Sunday, Gaudete, and on feast days; and the organ is only used to accompany the congregation and the choir. The Collect for the First Sunday in Advent is said after the Collect for the Day in every service. On saints' days, the Collect for the preceding Sunday is added as a memorial. Beginning with December 17, the great "O Antiphons" are said before and after the Magnificat at Vespers, and the Vesper suffrages are omitted. On Gaudete Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, rose-colored vestments may be used instead of the violet vestments. Suggested Office hymns for Matins and Vespers are: TLH 60, 63, 68; SBH 1, 3, 4.

### *Extraliturgical Ceremonies*

The Advent Wreath. The lighting of an Advent wreath during the Advent Season is a Christian ceremony which has come down to us from about the time of Martin Luther. As before the birth of Christ the light of prophecy concerning His advent and His redemptive work became brighter and brighter, so the nearer we come in the church year to the feast of His Nativity the greater the amount of light from the Advent wreath. This ceremony is helpful for recalling, discussing, and teaching the significance of Advent.

An Advent wreath can be made by tying evergreen branches to a metal or wooden hoop, thus making a wreath. The wreath can be hung from the ceiling or from a stand. In the church an appropriate place for it is before the altar if it is hung from the ceiling and high enough to walk under it. Otherwise, it can be placed on the north or south side of the chancel, preferably on the north side.

At Vespers on the Saturday before the First Sunday in Advent and in all the services throughout the week until the eve of the next Sunday, one candle is lighted. The next week two, the third week three, and the fourth week until Christmas Eve four. It is removed before the First

Vespers of Christmas. An appropriate Messianic prophecy may be read at the lighting of the wreath or as one of the Lessons in the daily services.

The Advent Litany. Instead of the Preparatory Service of the Morning Service and the Holy Communion Service or as the prayer section of Matins and Vespers, the Advent Litany may be prayed. For those who do not have this litany available, its form is given here.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

O God the Father, who didst so love the world, as to give Thine only-begotten Son to save us;

*R.* Have mercy upon us.

O God the Son, who didst once come in the likeness of sinful flesh to suffer for us, and wilt come again to be our Judge;

*R.* Have mercy upon us.

O God the Holy Ghost, who dost mercifully visit the souls of Thine elect, to abide with us forever;

*R.* Have mercy upon us.

Holy Trinity, Blessed forevermore,

*R.* Be favorable to us, and bless us.

From the snares of the world, the flesh, and the devil;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

From impenitence, unbelief, and neglect of Thy holy commandments;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

From all carelessness, and forgetfulness of Thee;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

From Thy wrath, whether in this world, or in the world to come;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

From a slumbering conscience, and from an unprepared death;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

By the compassion, and long-suffering of God the Father;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thy first Coming in lowliness;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION

By Thy Passion, and most precious Death;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thy mediatorial Intercession for us before the Father;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thy second Coming in Thy glorious majesty;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

By the mercies and consolations of God the Holy Spirit;

*R.* Good Lord, deliver us.

In our days of sorrow, weakness, and tribulation,

*R.* Succor and defend us, O Lord.

In our last sickness, and in the hour of death,

*R.* Succor and defend us, O Lord.

In Thy awful Judgment, when the last sentence is pronounced,

*R.* Deliver us, O holy and merciful Savior.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to us true repentance and a pure conscience;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest enable us to bear all our trials patiently, and to glorify Thee in our daily life;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest defend and govern Thy holy church, especially in this land;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to all our brethren, especially those most dear to us, unity, peace, and true concord;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to the afflicted and suffering in soul or body Thy merciful aid and deliverance;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest vouchsafe to all Thy faithful departed, perpetual light, and hasten the consummation of their bliss;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That Thou wouldest continually exalt our minds to heavenly desires;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

*The Ceremonies of the Church Year. Part I. The Christmas Section*

That we may be more and more perfected in the fruits of the Spirit, and more entirely conformed to Thy most holy will;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That being uncertain of the hour of our death, we may study to be watchful, and prepared to give an account of our stewardship;

*R.* We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

*R.* Hear us, O Lord.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

*R.* Spare us, O Lord.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

*R.* Have mercy upon us.

Our Father.

Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sudden coming to Judgment Thy church looks and waits, come now to us in Thy quickening love, and plant Thy holy fear and love within our hearts. Establish us in Thy truth and righteousness, endue us with such boldness to confess Thee before men, that Thou mayest at the Last Day confess us before Thy Father and all the elect angels in heaven, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *R.* Amen. May the God of peace sanctify us wholly, and may our whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *R.* Amen.

*Christmas*

The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord, December 25, ranks as one of the feasts or highest festivals in the church year, and has an octave, that is, it is celebrated for eight days. The festivals of St. Stephen, Protomartyr (Dec. 26), St. John, Apostle and Evangelist (Dec. 27), and Holy Innocents, Martyrs (Dec. 28) are closely connected with Christmas Day, but we shall consider these in the section on Saints' Days. *The Lutheran Hymnal* provides propers on December 26 both for Second Christmas Day and St. Stephen's Day. But the propers given for Second Christmas Day are the same as those for the second Christmas service if three Christmas services are celebrated: one at midnight, the second early

on Christmas morning, and the third later on Christmas morning. In other words, the propers for the three traditional Christmas services are as follows:

The Midnight Service. Introit: "The Lord hath said unto me." Collect: "O God, who hast made." Lesson: Isaiah 9:11-14. Gradual: "Thy people shall be willing." Epistle: Titus 2:11-14. Alleluia Verse: "The Lord hath said unto me." Gospel: Luke 2:1-14.

Early Christmas Morning. Introit: "Unto us a Child is born" or Isaiah 9:6 and Psalm 98:1. Collect: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God." Lesson: Micah 5:2-4. Gradual: "Blessed is He that cometh." Epistle: Titus 3:4-7. Alleluia Verse: "The Lord reigneth." Gospel: Luke 2:15-20.

Late Christmas Morning. Introit: "Unto us a Child is born." Collect: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God." Lesson: Isaiah 45:1-8. Gradual: "All the ends of the earth." Epistle: Heb. 1:1-12. Alleluia Verse: "O come, let us sing." Gospel: John 1:1-14.

The Sequence Hymn may be: "All praise to Thee, eternal God" (TLH 80; SBH 21). The Collect: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God," is said after the Collect for the Day throughout the octave. Suggested Office hymns for Christmas are: TLH 95, 98, 104; SBH 17; for the festival of the Circumcision and the Name of Jesus: TLH 104, 115, 350, 361; SBH 381, 468.

#### *Extraliturgical Ceremonies*

The Christmas Crib or Manger. It is a laudable and widespread custom at Christmas to place a Christmas crib (but without the wise men) in church at the foot of the chancel, preferably on the Gospel side. But it should not be put up before Christmas Eve. Candles and flowers may be placed near it. Devotions at the crib may be said by individuals and groups until the end of the octave of the Epiphany, when it is removed. On Epiphany, figures of the wise men may be added.

The Christmas Tree. The Christmas tree is a symbol of "the Tree of Life" and of Christ "the Light of the World." Evergreen, of course, symbolizes eternity or eternal life. The traditional ornaments of the tree are in harmony with these symbols: apples, oranges, glass balls, lights, and tinsel.

*The Circumcision and the Name of Jesus*

The Festival of the Circumcision and the Name of Jesus (New Year's Day) is the octave day of Christmas. The propers make no reference to the beginning of the civil year, but our service books provide a Collect for New Year's Day which may be added to that of the festival. December 31st is still celebrated in some Lutheran churches as St. Sylvester's Day or as a memorial day for the faithful departed. But a "watch night" service is nonliturgical. Suitable Office hymns for Matins and Vespers are: TLH 95, 104, 115, 350, 361; SBH 481, 468.

*Epiphany*

Like Christmas, the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord occurs on a fixed day (January 6.) and has an octave. When the words of the Gospel, "fell down and worshiped Him," are read, a genuflection or a deep bow may be made. After the reading of the Gospel, the traditional announcement of the movable holy days of the church year may be made in the following form:

"Dearly beloved brethren, ye shall know that as we have rejoiced in the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, so there is announced to you by the mercy of God the joyous observance of the Resurrection of the same our Savior:

..... is Septuagesima Sunday.

On ..... Ash Wednesday begins the most holy season of Lent.

On ..... we shall celebrate with great rejoicing the holy Easter Festival of our Lord Jesus Christ.

..... is the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

..... is the Feast of Pentecost.

..... is the First Sunday in the Advent of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory, world without end. Amen."

Suggested Office hymn: TLH 131.

According to *The Lutheran Hymnal*, the festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord shall be celebrated on the last Sunday after the Epiphany in each year, except when there is only one Sunday after the Epiphany. The *Service Book and Hymnal* has restored the Transfiguration to the

traditional day, August 6th, but permits its celebration on the last Sunday after the Epiphany.

Epiphany Procession. A meaningful ceremony of Epiphany is the procession of the parish children to the manger or the altar, three of the children bearing gifts to the holy Child. These gifts, as those of the Magi, may be gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The gift of gold might be gold jewelry or ornaments which can be sold or made into sacred vessels, or it could be money to be given for foreign missions. Incense can be used in worship. Myrrh is sometimes used in hospitals for compounding medicine. This gift might be given to a local hospital as a work of mercy, or money for medical missions can be substituted.

Since the holy Child was probably more than a year old when the wise men came and was no longer in a manger but in a "house," the Epiphany procession may be made to the altar instead of the manger. When the procession reaches the manger or the altar, the processional chant or hymn is stopped and a "station prayer" is made. After the prayer, the procession continues until all are again in their places for the service which follows. This ceremony may also be used for an Offertory procession of the children in the Epiphany Eucharist. In this case the offerings of the people and the bread and wine could be included in the gifts. Any suitable Epiphany Collect may be used for the station prayer, preceded by the versicles:

℣. The Lord be with you.

℞. And with thy spirit.

℣. All they from Sheba shall come. Alleluia.

℞. They shall bring gold and incense. Alleluia.

*The Presentation of Our Lord and the  
Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Candlemas)*

The Festival of the Presentation of Our Lord and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Candlemas) is celebrated on February 2d. The name Candlemas comes from the procession with lighted candles traditionally held before the service and from the holding of lighted candles by the worshipers during the holy Gospel and from the Sanctus to the end of the Communion.

In some churches, all the candles to be used for worship during



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the year are blessed, that is, set apart for sacred use, before the festival service. After the blessing, the candles are distributed to all the clergy and people, and during the Distribution the canticle *Nunc Dimittis* is sung with the antiphon, "A Light to lighten the Gentiles," repeated after every verse of the canticle. This antiphon expresses the symbolism of the light-procession which follows. The traditional antiphons or a suitable hymn for the festival of the Presentation is sung during the procession.

*The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Two other fixed festivals belong to the Christmas section of the church year, even though they occur in the Easter section: The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 25) and The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (July 2). They come in the Easter section, because the church usually, though not always, observes the chronological order when celebrating historical events. If either of the festivals falls on a privileged Sunday or day, such as a Sunday in Lent or a day in Holy Week, it is transferred to the next open date. Neither festival has any special liturgical ceremonies, except that when the Nicene Creed is said in the Holy Eucharist, it is a laudable custom for all to fall on their knees at the words, "And was made man." A suitable Office hymn at Matins and Vespers is TLH 104.

## The Ceremonies of the Church Year Part II. The Easter Section

THE church prepares for the greatest feast of the church year, the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord, or Easter, in four steps of a penitential character. As the steps progress, the penitential tone becomes increasingly deeper. The first step is Pre-Lent, the second comprises the period from Ash Wednesday to Passion Sunday, the third step is Passion Week, and the fourth step is Holy Week.

The three Sundays of Pre-Lent preceding Ash Wednesday are called Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima. All three Sundays are privileged, that is, if a minor festival falls on them that festival is transferred to the next day. From Vespers on the Eve of Septuagesima through Shrove Tuesday, the Alleluia is omitted, the Gloria in Excelsis is not sung, except on festivals, and the Benedictus replaces the Te Deum Laudamus in Sunday Matins. Flowers may still be used and the organ played as usual.

Farewell to the Alleluia. At Vespers on the Eve of Septuagesima the Alleluia, the ancient acclamation of joy and praise, is officially silenced and is not heard again until Vespers on the Eve of Easter. The Alleluia is bidden farewell by singing it twice after the prayer section in Vespers on the Eve of Septuagesima, thus: *V̄*. Bless we the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia. *R̄*. Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia. Hereafter, the acclamation, "Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, King of eternal glory," may be substituted for the Alleluia in Matins and Vespers.

Private Confession and Absolution. Pre-Lent affords a special op-

portunity to impress on our people the blessing which can be theirs through the privilege of the Confessional. While this "sacrament" can and should be administered at any time throughout the year, this is a good time to emphasize it and to instruct the people in the Fifth Chief Part of Christian Doctrine of Luther's Small Catechism, which is probably the least known and used part of the Catechism in our churches. The blessings of holy Absolution imparted in this sacred ordinance are a great comfort and help to troubled hearts and minds. We have already described the ceremonies of Private Confession and Absolution in a previous chapter.

In Pre-Lent, if no other Office hymn is appointed, proper ones are: TLH 550, 564; SBH 206, 133.

*From Ash Wednesday to Passion Sunday*

In the liturgy, Ash Wednesday is the first day of the penitential season of Lent, which includes Passion Week and Holy Week. The forty fast days of Lent, however, known as the Quadragesima, do not include the Sundays. The six Sundays within the season of Lent are not fast days but feast days; they are not *of* Lent but *in* Lent. These Sundays, plus Ash Wednesday and the days of Holy Week, are all privileged. No other feast whatsoever is celebrated on them.

Throughout the season of Lent, the following traditional customs may be observed: the Collect for Ash Wednesday is said after the Collect for the Day in every service of the season. The Alleluia is omitted in all services. The Gloria in Excelsis is omitted, except on festivals and Maundy Thursday. The Benedictus replaces the Te Deum in Sunday Matins. No flowers are placed on the altar or anywhere in church. The organ is not played except for the support of the congregation and choir. Throughout the season or beginning with Passion Week, triptychs are closed, crucifixes, crosses, statues, and pictures (if they cannot be removed) are covered with unbleached linen or violet cloth. Wooden crucifixes, crosses, missal stands, and candlesticks replace those made of brass or other metal. Metal processional crucifixes and crosses are replaced by wooden ones or they are veiled with unbleached linen or opaque violet cloth.

Until Vespers of the Eve of Passion Sunday, suitable Office hymns, unless appointed otherwise, are: TLH 550, 564; SBH 206, 133. The

Suffrages are added to the prayer section in Matins and Vespers throughout Lent. From First Vespers of *Invocavit* to the Friday Vespers before Passion Sunday, the Vesper office hymn may be TLH 559. On *Laetare*, the Fourth Sunday in Lent, rose-colored vestments may be used instead of the violet ones.

### *Extraliturgical Ceremonies*

**The Blessing and Imposition of Ashes.** The name Ash Wednesday comes from the ceremonial blessing and imposition of ashes previous to the service on that day. Ashes are prepared from palm branches used on Palm Sunday. The ashes are powdered and put in a comely bowl or dish. The bowl is placed on the epistle side of the altar. If the bowl has no cover, it may be veiled with a violet cloth. The celebrant, standing at the epistle horn of the altar, says the prayer of blessing. If another clergyman is present at the altar, he places ashes on the head of the celebrant. If not, the celebrant himself kneels before the altar and places ashes on his own head. The choir chants the Antiphons and the Responsory. While the Antiphon and Responsory are said, the celebrant places ashes on the heads of any other clergymen present and upon the people kneeling at the communicants' rail. He imposes the ashes with his thumb on the forehead, saying: Remember, O man, that dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. After the imposition of ashes is ended, the ceremony closes with a prayer and the service of the day follows.

**Midweek Lenten Services.** Lutherans are renowned for their midweek Lenten services and their preaching on the Lord's Passion. The order of service for the midweek services is prescribed in the following rubric: "The Order of Vespers may be used for midweek evening Services. In place of the Lection during Lent, a portion of the History of our Lord's Passion may be read" (TLA, p.419). For the last part of Vespers, the prayer section, the Litany (TLH, p.110; SBH, p.156) may be prayed, all devoutly kneeling.

**The Way of the Cross.** This devotion, limited to the ten Biblical stations of the cross, is gaining in popularity among Lutherans. It may be prayed throughout Lent, but it is especially appropriate during Passion Week and Holy Week.

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*Passion Week*

Judica, the Fifth Sunday in Lent (Passion Sunday) is the beginning of Passion Week which extends to the Eve of Palm Sunday. When the term Passiontide is used, it describes not only Passion Week but the last two weeks of Lent, Passion Week and Holy Week. From Passion Sunday until the end of Lent, the Gloria Patri may be omitted in all services, except in the Holy Communion Service on Maundy Thursday. The proper Vesper Office hymn for Passion Week and Holy Week is TLH 168, SBH 75.

*Holy Week*

*Palm Sunday.* This name for the Sixth Sunday in Lent is derived from the Palm Sunday procession which originated in Jerusalem in the fourth century and the blessing of palm branches originating in the Middle Ages. These ceremonies preceded the Palm Sunday Mass in which the Gospel of Christ's entry into Jerusalem was read. Lutheran service books still prescribe this Gospel for the Holy Communion Service on Palm Sunday, but the *Service Book and Hymnal* gives as an alternate Matt. 26:1—27:66.

The Palm Sunday Procession and the Blessing of Palm Branches. This ceremony precedes the Holy Eucharist on Palm Sunday. Palm and other branches or strips of palm branches (often fashioned into crosses) are placed in the chancel on a table near the epistle horn of the altar. After the introductory versicle and the Lesson (Exodus 15:27—16:7), the celebrant says the prayer of blessing. Then the branches are distributed, either by the people coming to the chancel to receive them or by acolytes giving them to the people in the pews. A procession of the clergy and the choir is then made, all bearing palms and singing, "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" (TLH 160, SBH 74), the congregation joining in the refrain. The procession may begin at the chancel, proceed to the west entrance door of the church, and conclude by returning to the altar up the center aisle where a station prayer is said. Then the clergy and choir return to their places, and the Holy Communion Service follows.

The Reading of Our Lord's Passion. An ancient ceremony of Holy Week is the reading of the Passion according to St. Matthew (chapters

26 and 27) on Palm Sunday, the Passion according to St. Mark (chapters 14 and 15) on Tuesday, the Passion according to St. Luke (chapters 22—24) on Wednesday, and the Passion according to St. John (chapters 18 and 19) on Good Friday. The sacred text is said by three clergymen, properly vested, the one saying the parts of the narrator, another the parts in the text of individual speakers or crowds, and the third the parts in the text spoken by our Lord.

The ceremonial reading of the Passion was replaced in the Lutheran church for a while by the use of a synthesis of the four Gospel accounts of the Passion into one account. Parts of this synthesis were read at various services during Lent, and especially in Holy Week. But the *Service Book and Hymnal* has restored the custom of reading the separate accounts of the Passion on the four traditional days of Holy Week by assigning them as alternate Gospels for Palm Sunday, Holy Tuesday, Holy Wednesday, and Good Friday.

Tenebrae, the Service of Darkness. On the last three days of Holy Week, the church anticipates Matins and Lauds by saying them in the evenings of Holy Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday, and by the use of certain ceremonies from which these services have received the name Tenebrae. A floor candelabra with a triangular candleholder and containing fifteen lighted candles is placed on the epistle side of the chancel. At intervals during the recitation of Psalms, all candles in turn are extinguished, except the one at the peak of the candlestick. The acolyte or server appointed to put out the candles extinguishes the last candle of the triangle at the Gospel side; the second candle put out is the last candle of the triangle at the epistle side; and thus the candles are put out alternately, leaving lighted only the candle at the top of the triangle. At the repetition of the antiphon after the Benedictus, the server carries the lighted candle to the middle of the altar, where he holds it in such a way that it can be seen by the entire congregation until the antiphon has been completely recited. He then hides it behind the altar or carries it into the sacristy. Meanwhile the Psalm *Miserere* is recited by the congregation. When it is ended, all the lights in the church are put out and the officiant says aloud the prayer *Respice* at the altar. A noise is then made by clapping two books together and the server brings in the lighted candle and places it at the top of the tri-

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angular candlestick. The people then make their usual reverence to the altar and depart in silence.

These ceremonies symbolize the following: the extinguishing of the candles signifies the falling away from Christ; even His apostles and disciples deserted Him in the hour of His Passion. Christ's light alone remains. It rests for a moment on the altar, the Calvary of Sacrifice where He suffered and died. To signify His burial, the lighted candle is carried away. Darkness covers the earth. The Light of the World is gone but not extinguished. A noise is heard. It signifies the quaking of the earth and the opening of the graves at the death of Christ. Suddenly the light of Christ appears, and all render homage in silence to the Conqueror of the darkness of sin and death.

*Maundy Thursday.* For the celebration of the Holy Communion Service on this day (not, however, the rest of the day), flowers may be placed on the altar, the white vestments are used, a white veil is placed on the altar crucifix (but not on any crucifixes elsewhere), the Gloria in Excelsis is sung, the organ is played, and the bells are rung.

After the Holy Communion Service, the organ remains silent, the bells are not rung, and the altar is stripped (if vested at all again, only for Ante-Communion or Holy Communion) until the First Vesper of Easter. Matins and Vespers are spoken throughout and, according to ancient custom, are begun with the Psalms (everything before is omitted). They are concluded after the Canticle with the Kyrie, Our Father, Psalm 51, and the Good Friday Collect (nothing else is added).

*The Stripping of the Altar.* This ceremony usually follows the Holy Communion Service. The officiating minister, vested in surplice and violet stole, goes to the altar with his assistants and there they recite Psalm 22 with the antiphon, "They parted my garments among them." Then they remove everything from the altar so that it is completely bare. The altar itself is then cleansed, the sacred vessels and ornaments are washed and polished, and the sacred linens and vestments are cleansed and made ready for Easter.

*Good Friday.* The liturgical services and service materials for this day are: Matins, Ante-Communion (Order of Morning Service without Communion), Vespers, the Litany, the reading of the Passion according to St. John, and the Bidding Prayer. The Holy Communion Service is

traditionally not celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The Tre Ore devotion from noon to three o'clock in the afternoon, based on the Seven Last Words, or the Stations of the Cross, or the Adoration of the Cross and the Reproaches, or some other devotional material, is not liturgical. This is not to say that such a Tre Ore is not fitting and good, but simply to emphasize the fact that it is a devotion and not a part of the liturgical material for Good Friday. Unless the liturgical services for Good Friday are recited in addition to this devotion, consideration might be given to the use of the liturgical material for the Tre Ore. This could be done as follows:

Matins is said at a convenient time in the morning.

The Tre Ore, composed of the Litany, the Ante-Communion, the reading of the Passion according to St. John, sermons on the Passion or the Seven Last Words, the Bidding Prayer, the Adoration of the Cross and the Reproaches, is said at twelve noon. The officiant and the assisting ministers are vested in cassock and surplice or black gown and go to the lowest altar step. They and the congregation kneel and recite the Litany. All rise for the speaking of the Introit, Kyrie, and Collect. The congregation is seated and one of the ministers reads the Epistle. The congregation stands and reads the Tract. Then the officiant and two assisting ministers read the Passion according to St. John. This may be done straight through or it may be interspersed with the singing of parts of Hymn No. 172 (TLH); No. 88 (SBH) and sermons on the Passion. If read straight through, the Creed may be said, followed by the Hymn on the Seven Words (TLH 180—186, SBH 81), interspersed with sermons on the Seven Last Words. Following the Offertory, the Bidding Prayer is said. One of the assisting ministers may read the exhortations and "Let us bow the knee," and another may say, "Arise," and the officiant says the Collects. (Before each Collect all kneel for a moment of silent prayer if the Bidding Prayer is done in this manner.) Having finished the Bidding Prayer, the officiant goes to the veiled crucifix on the altar. He removes the veil in three stages, saying each time, "Behold the wood of the Cross whereon hung the Savior of the World." All kneeling respond each time, "O come, let us worship Him." Then all remain kneeling and say the Reproaches. After the Reproaches, all rise and sing the hymn *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* (TLH 168, SBH 75).



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This concludes the service. Reverencing the altar, all depart in silence.<sup>1</sup>

Vespers is said at a suitable time in the evening without chant and without any altar vestments.

*Holy Saturday.* Matins and the Ante-Communion may be said. For the Ante-Communion, black altar and clerical vestments may be used.

*Easter and Eastertide*

Easter, the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord, is the oldest and highest feast of the church year. Its celebration begins on Easter Eve (Holy Saturday evening) with the First Vesper of Easter. Just before this service, the altar is vested in white and adorned with candles and flowers. The ceremony of the blessing and lighting of the Paschal Candle may be carried out. The bells may be rung. During the service the Alleluia is sung again with great joy and the Easter baptisms may be administered. The celebration is then resumed on Easter morning with the festival celebration of the Holy Communion Service, for which the traditional Sequence hymn is the *Victimae Paschali*. It is fitting that this feast be adorned with the highest ceremonies. The church celebrates Easter, not only on one day and not only for an octave, but for seven weeks, extending to Pentecost. This extended celebration of Easter is called Eastertide.

The Easter Vigil. In place of or in addition to Vespers on the Eve of Easter, the traditional Easter Vigil may be celebrated. This liturgical rite really consists of three services: the Service of the Light, the Baptismal Service, and the Holy Communion Service. If the rite is held so early that the last service, the Holy Communion Service, would come before "very early in the morning," it ends with the Baptismal Service. In that case, the third service, the Holy Communion Service, is celebrated separately in the morning of Easter Day.

"In the rite of the Easter Vigil, we have the modern adaptation of the ancient Night Watch in which the faithful would gather in the churches in the night of Easter awaiting that hour toward sunrise when Christ arose from the tomb. This service is the story of God's dealing with mankind from beginning to end. It takes us back to the creation of the world, to the Exodus of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage; it

<sup>1</sup> See "Good Friday," *Una Sancta*, XX, 2 (1963).

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takes us forward to our Lord's Second Coming in glory at the end of the age; it reminds us of God's present activity in the Word and Sacraments. All of these are different chapters of the same story of God's gracious activity and all find their center and deeper meaning in the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we celebrate tonight."<sup>2</sup>

The first part of the Easter Vigil, the Service of the Light, consists of three ceremonies: A. The blessing of the new fire, which takes place in the entrance of the church and in which the Paschal Candle, symbolic of the new "Pillar of Fire" who leads the redeemed out of the bondage of sin, is lit. B. The procession into the chancel, in which the light of the Paschal Candle is gradually distributed to the people in church. C. The saying of the Exultet, the paschal proclamation or the hymn in praise of the risen Christ.

The second part, the Service of Holy Baptism, is made up of four ceremonies: A. The reading of the Lessons, which recount the Old Testament events which foreshadowed the transformation that takes place in Holy Baptism. B. The blessing of the baptismal font, which teaches the significance of Holy Baptism. C. The administration of Holy Baptism to the children and adults registered for the Easter baptisms. (In some churches an annual effort is made before Easter through the Sunday school and by other means to find out which children have not yet been baptized and to arrange for their baptism in the Easter Vigil.) D. The renewal of baptismal vows, in which all worshipers in church recall their baptismal covenant with God and are reminded that the light of Christ which lives in them through regeneration in Holy Baptism must constantly be renewed by daily dying to sin and daily rising to newness of life.

The third part of the Easter Vigil is the celebration of the Holy Communion. This is the climax of the Easter liturgy, in which the life of Christ into which we were born in Holy Baptism is nourished and sustained, and in which we bring our Eucharistic sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ for all His great blessings.

As we said above, the celebration of Easter is extended throughout

<sup>2</sup> "The Easter Vigil," *Una Sancta*, XIV, 2 (1957), p. 5. This issue gives the rite and the ceremonies of the Easter Vigil in detail for use in the Lutheran church. See also Vol. XX, No. 2 (1963).

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Easter tide, in which fasting, kneeling, and all signs of sorrow are banished. For we rejoice in the triumph of our future life in heaven, where we shall reign with the Lamb as kings and priests forever. Everything expresses holy joy and praise. The alleluia is sounded and resounded. The Sundays and weekdays all proclaim and celebrate our new life in the risen Christ.

*Rogation Days.* The Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in the week of Rogate, the Fifth Sunday after Easter, are traditionally days of special prayers and supplications for God's blessings on the fruits of the earth. The custom may laudably be continued to chant the Litany in procession, ending with Psalm 70 and appropriate prayers.

*Ascension.* The Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord is one of the oldest and highest feasts of the church year. It is very closely related to Easter, however, and falls within Eastertide. Many special ceremonies were formerly connected with the celebration, but about the only one that has been retained in many Lutheran churches is the extinguishing and removing of the Paschal Candle after the reading of the words of the Holy Gospel: "He was received up into heaven." An appropriate Office hymn from the Feast of the Ascension to the Feast of Pentecost, in addition to those already mentioned for Eastertide, is TLH 212; SBH 110.

*Pentecost.* The Feast of Pentecost or Whitsunday marks the fiftieth day after Easter and the conclusion of Eastertide. It is celebrated with great festivity and rejoicing over the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The ancient and great Sequence hymn, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, is sung after the Alleluia Chant in the Holy Communion Service (TLH 227, SBH 121). Like Easter, Pentecost is a special time for Baptism and Confirmation. Proper Office hymns for Whitsunweek are: TLH 227, 223; SBH 124.

*Trinity Sunday and the Trinity Season.* The Feast of the Holy Trinity is one of the later additions to the annual great festivals of the church year. A rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* prescribes: "On Trinity Sunday, the Athanasian Creed may be used after the Gradual" (p. 421). On this Sunday it is also proper to pray the Athanasian Creed as one of the Psalms at Matins. Proper Office hymns during the Trinity Octave are: TLH 240, 564; SBH 134, 133.

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Throughout the Trinity Season, when no other Office hymns are prescribed for festivals and saints' days, the appropriate Office hymn at Matins is TLH 550, SBH 206, and at Vespers TLH 564, SBH 133.

## The Ceremonies of the Church Year

### Part III. Additional Festivals and Saints' Days

**W**E shall include in this and the following section a few festivals which are not in the calendars of *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*, but which have Lutheran precedent and are listed in at least one Lutheran worship calendar in the United States. For the convenience of those who wish to celebrate these festivals, we shall either give the traditional propers in full or suggest propers for them from our service books.

#### *The Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, June 25*

The propers of the Festival of the Reformation may appropriately be used for this festival. The sermon may incorporate the reading of a part or all of the Augsburg Confession.

#### *Holy Cross Day, September 14 (The Exaltation of the Cross)*

Traditional propers:

Introit: God forbid that I should glory: save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Him is life and resurrection from the dead: by Him we are redeemed and set at liberty.

Ps. God be merciful unto us and bless us: and cause His face to shine upon us. Gloria Patri. Antiphon repeated.

Collect: O God, who didst will that Thy Son should suffer for us upon the Tree of the Cross, that Thou mightest drive far from us the power of the enemy, grant unto us, Thy servants, that as we have known

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on earth the mysteries of our redemption, so we may be accounted worthy to receive the fruits thereof in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11.

Gradual: Christ hath humbled Himself and become obedient unto death: even the death of the cross.

V. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him: and given Him a name that is above every name.

Gospel: St. John 12:31-36.

Proper Preface for Lent.

Office hymn: TLH 168, SBH 75.

*St. Michael and All Angels' Day* (Michaelmas), September 29

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

Office hymn: TLH 267.

*The Festival of the Reformation*, October 31

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*Commemoration of the Faithful Departed*

If no other day has been assigned, All Souls' Day, November 2, is appropriate for the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed. The propers for Matins and Vespers are given in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. For the chief service we suggest: Introit, For Good Friday; Collect, For a happy death; Epistle, 1 Cor. 15:51-57; Gradual and Tract, For Judica; Sequence hymn, *Dies irae*, TLH 607; Gospel, St. John 5:25-29.

*Day of Humiliation and Prayer*

A Day of Humiliation and Prayer may be observed at any time. If it is to be observed yearly and no other day has been assigned, the last Wednesday in the church year is appropriate. Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*. The Litany may be said before the Introit in place of the Preparatory Service. The Litany may conclude with Psalm 70 and appropriate Collects. The Gloria Patri and the Gloria in Excelsis may be omitted.

*The Ceremonies of the Church Year. Part III. Additional Festivals, etc.*

*The Festival of Harvest*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*Thanksgiving Day*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal* for A Day of General and Special Thanksgiving.

*Church Dedication (and Anniversary)*

The Anniversary of Church Dedication is not determined by the civil year but by the church year, for example, XV Trinity, Advent II. If it occurs on a privileged day, it is transferred to the following Sunday; if the day of dedication is unknown, the festival may be celebrated on the first Sunday in October.

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

Matins and Vespers Office hymn, TLH 466.

*Festival of Title*

The Festival of Title is the annual celebration of the name given the local church, whether it be the name of a saint, a Christian doctrine, grace, virtue, or Biblical location. It has no proper of its own. The Festival of Title is simply the ordinary festival of the saint or Christian doctrine, etc., celebrated with special reverence and solemnity in its own particular church.

*St. Andrew the Apostle's Day, November 30*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Nicholas, Bishop and Confessor's Day, December 6*

Traditional proper:

Introit: The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment: the law of God is in his heart.

Ps. Fret not thyself because of evildoers: neither be thou anxious against the workers of iniquity. Gloria Patri. Antiphon repeated.

Collect: O God, who didst singularly endow blessed Nicholas, Thy bishop with the gift of charity, enable us all who here celebrate his

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virtue to imitate his faith, that trusting in Thy salvation, we may be delivered from the flames of hell; through Jesus Chrst, etc. Amen.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

Gradual: The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon in the courts of our God.

V. To show forth Thy lovingkindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness every night. Alleluia Verse. Alleluia. Alleluia. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life. Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 12:35-40.

*St. Thomas the Apostle's Day, December 21*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Stephen the First Martyr's Day, December 26*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. John the Apostle's Day, December 27*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*Holy Innocents the Martyrs' Day, December 28*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

Even though violet vestments are used and the Gloria in Excelsis may be omitted, this is not a penitential day but a Festival of Martyrs' Day closely connected with the Feast of Christmas.

*The Conversion of St. Paul, January 25*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Matthias the Apostle's Day, February 24*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Gregory the Great, Bishop and Confessor's Day, March 14*

Suggested propers:

Introit: "I know whom I have believed" (TLH, p. 87).

Collect: O God, who through Thy servant Gregory didst bestow



*The Ceremonies of the Church Year. Part III. Additional Festivals, etc.*

great blessings on Thy church, grant that through Thy mercy we may be enabled to accomplish those things which Thou commandest us to do; through Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: 1 Peter 5:1-4, 13-14.

Gradual: "The mouth of the righteous" (TLH, p.88). Omit Alleluia Verse.

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19.

*St. Mark the Evangelist's Day, April 25*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.  
The Cantic for Matins may be the Benedicite.

It is a laudable custom to pray the Litany on this day for the blessing of the fruits of the earth. The Litany may be concluded with Psalm 70 and appropriate Collects.

*St. Philip and St. James the Less the Apostles' Day, May 1*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*The Nativity of St. John the Baptist, June 24*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Peter and St. Paul the Apostles' Day, June 29*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Mary Magdalene's Day, July 22*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

*St. James the Elder the Apostle's Day, July 15*

Proper in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Lawrence the Martyr's Day, August 10*

Traditional proper:

Introit: Honor and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Ps. O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth. Gloria Patri. Antiphon repeated.

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Collect: O God, who didst give to blessed Lawrence grace to withstand his fiery torture, quench, we beseech Thee, the flames of our sins; through Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-10.

Gradual: Thou hast proved my heart: Thou hast visited me in the night.

V. Thou hast tried me and shalt find nothing.

Alleluia Verse. Alleluia. Alleluia. O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth. Alleluia.

Gospel: John 12:24-26.

*St. Bartholomew the Apostle's Day, August 24*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*The Beheading of St. John the Baptist, August 29*

Traditional propers:

Introit: I will speak of Thy testimonies even before kings, and I will not be ashamed: and my delight shall be in Thy commandments, which I have loved exceedingly.

Ps. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord: and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High. Gloria Patri. Antiphon repeated.

Collect: O God, who didst enable Thy forerunner, St. John the Baptist, to recognize in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world; grant, we beseech Thee, that Him whom we now see in a glass darkly, we may hereafter see face to face: through the same Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: Jeremiah 1:17-19.

Gradual: The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Lebanon in the house of the Lord.

V. To tell of Thy lovingkindness early in the morning, and of Thy truth in the night season.

Alleluia Verse. Alleluia. Alleluia. The righteous shall grow as the lily: and shall flourish forever before the Lord. Alleluia.

Gospel: St. Mark 6:17-29.

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*The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8*

Suggested propers:

Introit: For the Annunciation.

Collect: For the Visitation. "Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord."

Epistle: Ecclesiasticus 24:22-31 or Proverbs 8:22-25.

Gradual and Alleluia Verse: For the Annunciation.

Gospel: St. Matthew 1:1-10.

*St. Matthew the Apostle's Day, September 21*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Luke the Evangelist's Day, October 18*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Simon and St. Jude the Apostles' Day, October 28*

Propers in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

*St. Martin the Bishop and Confessor's Day, November 11*

Suggested propers:

Introit: "They that be wise" (TLH, p. 87).

Collect: O God, who seest that we stand not in our own strength, mercifully grant, that as Thou didst enable blessed Martin the Confessor and Bishop to stand upright, we may be defended against all adversities: through Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: Acts 20:17-35.

Gradual and Alleluia Verse: "The mouth of the righteous" (TLH, p. 88).

Gospel: St. Luke 12:35-40.

*St. Catherine the Virgin and Martyr's Day, November 25*

Traditional propers:

Introit: I will speak of Thy testimonies even before kings, and will not be ashamed: and my delight shall be in Thy commandments, which I have loved exceedingly.

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Ps. Blessed are they that are undefiled in the way: that walk in the law of the Lord. Gloria Patri. Antiphon repeated.

Collect: O God, who among the manifold works of Thy power hast bestowed even upon the weakness of women the victory of martyrdom; mercifully grant that we who commemorate blessed Catherine, Thy virgin and martyr, may by her example be drawn near unto Thee; through Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: Ecclesiasticus 51:1-7 or 2 Timothy 2:1-13.

Gradual: Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

V. Wherefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness.

Alleluia Verse. Alleluia. Alleluia. The virgins that be her fellows shall be brought unto the King: they that be her company shall be brought unto Thee with joy. Alleluia.

Gospel: St. Matthew 25:1-13.

## The Color Use of the Lutheran Liturgy and Miscellaneous Matters

**T**HE Lutheran liturgy follows the color use which became fixed in the Western church after the 16th-century Reformation. Five colors are prescribed by the rubrics of the Lutheran service books to express the spirit of the days and seasons of the church year. These colors are white, red, green, violet, and black. Rose-colored vestments may be used instead of violet on Gaudete, the Third Sunday in Advent, and on Laetare, the Fourth Sunday in Lent. Cloth of gold, but no imitations, or gold-textured woven material may be substituted for white. But blue and yellow vestments are not authorized in the Western church.

### *Significance*

The significance of the liturgical colors is explained in the service books as follows:

*White* is the color of the Godhead, the glorified Christ, eternity, and the holy angels. It symbolizes perfection, joy, and purity.

*Red* is the color of fire, fervor, blood, martyrdom, love, victorious truth of Christian teaching based on the blood and righteousness of Christ.

*Green* is the color of abiding life, nourishment, and rest. It is the dominant color of nature.

*Violet* is the color of royal mourning and repentance.

*Black* is the absence of color, symbolical of death.

*Use of White*

White is used during Christmastide, that is, from and with the Vespers of Christmas Eve through the Epiphany octave, except on feasts occurring within that period. White may also be used instead of green from the Eve of the Second Sunday after the Epiphany to the Eve of Septuagesima Sunday.

It is used during Eastertide, that is, from the Eve of Easter to the Eve of Rogate, and from the Eve of the Ascension to the Eve of Pentecost.

It is used on the Feast of the Holy Trinity.

It is used in the Holy Communion Service on Maundy Thursday.

It is used on the festival of the Presentation of Our Lord and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

the festival of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

the festival of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

the festival of the Transfiguration,

the festival of St. Michael and All Angels,

the festival of Harvest, (SBH, red),

the festival of General or Special Thanksgiving (SBH, red),

the festival of the Dedication of a Church and its Anniversary (SBH, red),

the festival of St. Nicholas, Bishop and Confessor,

the festival of St. John the Apostle,

the festival of the Conversion of St. Paul,

the festival of St. Gregory the Great, Bishop and Confessor,

the festival of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist,

the festival of St. Mary Magdalene,

the festival of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

the festival of All Saints (SBH, red),

the festival of St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor,

the festival of All Souls, and

the commemoration of all Saints not martyrs.

*Use of Red*

Red is used during Whitsuntide, that is, from the Vespers on the Eve of Pentecost to the Eve of the Holy Trinity.

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It is used on the Festival of the Reformation and on the Octave of the Reformation,

the festival of the Presentation of the Augsburg Confession,  
the festival of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist,  
the festival of the Holy Cross or the Adoration of the Cross,  
the festival of St. Andrew the Apostle,  
the festival of St. Thomas the Apostle,  
the festival of St. Stephen the First Martyr,  
the festival of St. Matthias the Apostle,  
the festival of St. Mark the Evangelist,  
the festival of St. Philip and St. James the Apostles,  
the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul the Apostles,  
the festival of St. James the Elder the Apostle,  
the festival of St. Lawrence the Martyr,  
the festival of St. Bartholomew the Apostle,  
the festival of St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist,  
the festival of St. Luke the Evangelist,  
the festival of St. Simon and St. Jude the Apostles,  
the festival of St. Catherine the Virgin and Martyr,  
the festival of the Commemoration of the Death of a Martyr, and  
the Commemoration of the Death of Martyrs.

Red may also be used in divine services for the ordination, installation, and commissioning of ministers of the Gospel and in the divine services of church conventions and synodical meetings, except in the Holy Communion Service on days of privilege.

*Use of Green*

Green is used from and with Matins on January 14 to Vespers of the Eve of Septuagesima (TLL also permits white for this period) and from the Second Sunday after Trinity through the Trinity Season to the Vespers on the Eve of Advent, except on festivals and days for which another color is appointed.

The *Service Book and Hymnal* also prescribes green for Pre-Lent, that is, from and with Vespers of the Eve of Septuagesima to, but not including, Vespers of the day before Ash Wednesday.

*Use of Violet*

Violet is used from and with the Vespers on the Eve of Advent to the Vespers on the Eve of Christmas and from and with the Vespers on the Saturday before Septuagesima and through Pre-Lent and Lent to Vespers on the Eve of Easter, except on festivals and days for which another color is appointed.

Violet is used on the festival of the Holy Innocents the Martyrs, when it falls during the week,

Rogation Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday,  
the commemoration of the Faithful Departed, and  
the Day of Humiliation and Prayer.

*Use of Black*

Black is used on Good Friday only (SBH prescribes black for a Day of Humiliation).

*Occasional Services*

A rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* (p.426) prescribes that "The Solemnization of Holy Matrimony and the Order for the Burial of the Dead shall not affect the proper color for the Day or Season in use when these Services are held." In some church denominations a color different from the day or season is prescribed for occasional services; for example, black for funerals and white for weddings. But in the Lutheran church the general rule for occasional services is that the color of the day or season is retained.

*Flowers*

Flower decorations are expressive of joy, beauty, and hope. They are especially appropriate on feast days and in festival seasons. The tendency today is to overemphasize the use of flowers and to overdecorate the altar and chancel with them. This is not desirable, because it is contrary to the principle of simplicity. The loss of simplicity always means the destruction of dignity. The use of artificial flowers destroys another principle, namely, that of genuineness. Since our worship of God must be genuine, the things employed in connection with our worship should also be genuine.



## *The Color Use of the Lutheran Liturgy and Miscellaneous Matters*

Because flowers express a spirit of joy and festivity, they are not used in the penitential seasons, that is, when the color of the vestments is violet. Exceptions to this rule are Gaudete, the Third Sunday in Advent, and Laetare, the Fourth Sunday in Lent. When the festival of the Holy Innocents falls on a weekday, the color is violet, but it is not a penitential day.

As a symbol of the Christian faith and hope in the resurrection of the body to eternal life, flowers are appropriate in funeral parlors, cemeteries, and, restrictedly, in church. But at funeral services which are held in church, the use of many flowers is to be discouraged in every possible way, short of hurting anyone's feelings. This fact can be made known in church bulletins and letters from time to time when it will not apply to a particular case. If the congregation does not own a funeral pall, a simple spray of flowers may be placed on the casket. But it is most desirable to cover the coffin with a funeral pall while it is in church, and when this is done, flowers are not needed.

Flowers should be removed as soon as possible after they have fulfilled their purpose. They are not becoming in church when they show signs of decay.

Potted plants may be placed on the chancel floor, but only cut flowers are used for altar decorations. Care needs to be exercised in placing flowers so that they do not obscure the crucifix and candles and do not interfere with the movements of those who officiate in the chancel.

### *Flags and Banners*

Flags and banners may be admitted into the church and the chancel, but to place them in the sanctuary next to or near the altar or to lay the colors of Scouts or any society or organization on or near the altar is contrary to the dignity and purpose of the altar.

When both the United States flag and the so-called Christian flag are displayed in church, the most appropriate place to locate them is at the foot of the chancel. The United States flag should stand on the right of the people facing the chancel and the church flag on the left.

If flags and banners are carried in procession, they may precede or follow the clergy, but traditionally they are not placed within the ranks of the clergy.

*Decorations*

The word *decorate* means to make beautiful, to adorn. Decorations in the church by means of painting, metalwork, textiles, stained glass, and sculpture, play an important and meaningful part in the ceremonial of the liturgy. They help to create an atmosphere of worship and to declare that this is the house of God and the place where His honor dwells. They also help to recall and teach the great truths of the Christian faith and life. To do this, however, the decorations should be beautiful, reverent, restrained, contemplative, and devotional. They should also be expressive of the purpose of the object which is decorated.

It is of the greatest importance, therefore, not to decorate the church haphazardly, but to plan the decorations with great care and in minute detail. Two factors must be combined in the planning and execution of church decorations: theological knowledge and artistic sense. Theological knowledge will determine what kind of decoration is fitting for the object to be decorated and what is to be emphasized. Artistic sense will determine how the decoration is to be made, its proportions, order, and harmony. If, for example, an altar is to be decorated, theological knowledge of the significance of the altar will decide what kind of decoration is fitting and what needs to be emphasized. The skill and sense of the artist will then decide the shape, the colors, and the composition of the decoration, will see to it that the decoration remains subordinate to the altar itself, and will make the decoration dignified, reverent, and devotional.

Decorating a church can be done gradually. If the funds are not available to do all the decorating as it should be done at one time, a few simple, well-planned, and well-executed adornments will suffice for the time being. Further decorations of good quality can be added later. Under no circumstances should cheap, ugly, worldly, and theatrical decorations be allowed. Neither are sham and imitation to be tolerated.

The use of the traditional Christian symbols in the adornment of a church is very becoming, but care needs to be exercised in using them. If such symbols are employed exclusively of other forms of decoration, they have little value and may create a cold and undevotional atmosphere. We must remember that most people today no longer appreciate these symbols because they have not learned to understand their significance.

Until this condition changes, they need to be used with restraint. By no means should sacred symbols be multiplied unnecessarily or placed on the floor where people will walk on them.

It is better to use decorations which declare what is going on in the church's worship here and now than to depict historical scenes. Conventional illustrations are also more devotional than realistic ones. These considerations are especially important in the adornment of the chancel. For example, a picture of Christ standing as the Lamb which was slain but triumphed is more devotional than a historical presentation of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, especially if it is too realistic. The great redemptive truths stated in the creeds provide excellent subject matters for decorations which evoke the contemplation of things that go on in our worship today.

### *Conclusion*

The Lutheran liturgy expresses itself ceremonially, that is, in material objects, in signs, in symbols, and in other art forms. These forms of expression are important. They are a language which many Christians no longer understand, because they think that words and more words are the only form of communication. But there are many other forms. What is the meaning of bowing, standing, kneeling, making the sign of the cross? What does the altar say to us, the ceremonies of gestures and movements, the music, the vestments, the colors, the building and its furnishings? Here the ceremonial of the liturgy opens up to us a whole new world, a world filled with truth and beauty. To appreciate this world, we must learn to realize again that there are non-verbal forms of communication and that these are often more effective than the verbal kind.

Sometimes the church services are burlesqued without forms of beauty. For example, profane music is played, the chanting is off-key, the organist plays wrong notes, the choir sings badly, the language and deportment of the minister is crude, the structure of the church building and its furnishings and decorations are unattractive and ugly or even suggest unchristian ideas, the ushers behave irreverently, and the authorized services with the rubrics are changed to suit the whims of the pastor and some members of the congregation. All of this is contrary to the ceremonial of the liturgy. For ceremonial demands harmony and

proportion. One of the divine and basic principles is, "Let everything be done decently and in order." (1 Cor. 14:40)

The ceremonial of the liturgy prescribes and suggests proper forms of art for the houses of worship, for the furnishings, for the decoration of altars, pulpits, lecterns, baptistries, candlesticks, crucifixes, sacred vessels and instruments, paraments, vestments, linens, windows, and walls. It provides rubrics for bodily movements of standing, sitting, kneeling, walking, genuflecting, bowing, folding hands, and making the sign of the cross. Its most important art forms are those of speech, poetry, and music. In these it reaches the highest forms of expressing thoughts and feelings and of filling heaven and earth with the praise of God.

The traditional Lutheran ceremonial of the liturgy provides a way of worship that centers in faith in the Triune God through Jesus Christ and the fruits of that faith. Traditional ceremonial does not center in itself. It is not just "playing church" or going through the motions. The objective of ceremonial is the glorification of God in the salvation and sanctification of man.

The ceremonial of the liturgy is nothing new or strange. It has been in existence as long as the church. It is concerned, in view of the needs of our times, with the great concern of the church of all times—the worship of God "in spirit and in truth."

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