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### Principles to Assist the Introduction of Change in Congregational Worship

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PRINCIPLES TO ASSIST THE INTRODUCTION  
OF CHANGE IN CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

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MAY 1995

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CONCORDIA SEMINARY

PRINCIPLES TO ASSIST THE INTRODUCTION  
OF CHANGE IN CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

A MAJOR APPLIED PROJECT  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

THE PRACTICAL DEPARTMENT

BY

PAUL BORGMAN

OCONOMOWOC, WISCONSIN

MAY 1995

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## ABSTRACT

Change affects people, which is also evident in worship. Helping them to assimilate change in worship is this project's purpose.

Two examples of change were considered. The first was quality improvement. This addressed those responsible for the conduct of worship. While significant changes did not result, it did prove that people are more responsive when interest is shown in them.

The second was introducing a new setting of the Divine Service. The results indicated that, with proper planning, change can be introduced positively.

Change does not have to be disruptive. It can be spiritually beneficial if handled sensitively.

## INTRODUCTION

Change is inevitable. It is evident in the lives of all people everywhere. Some people look forward to it, while others hide from it. There are those who accept it and adjust to it quite easily, and there are those who balk at it and never adjust. The purpose of this paper is to look at change and determine how to assimilate it positively. Jesus Christ is the stability of the Christian, and he makes it possible for Christians to digest even drastic change in their lives.

If change is inevitable, then, naturally, there will be changes in worship as well. Therefore, this paper is written to examine the process of making changes in worship that will strengthen and edify those who come to worship and to explore ways to enhance worship that will minimize the disruption that change may cause in people's lives. Those responsible for leading worship must be sensitive both to the needs of the worshiper and to the effects that change may cause.

This concern for change in worship demands more sensitivity than in other areas of life because, in worship, the needs of sinful people and God's answer to those needs

meet in Law and Gospel. In that meeting, God brings forgiveness and salvation to his repentant people. There is nothing more critical for people than this meeting and what God accomplishes for people through this meeting. Because worship is the setting in which this meeting occurs, what is done in worship--everything done in worship--must center in Jesus Christ, who is God's revelation of forgiveness and salvation in human flesh and blood. This is the Lutheran hermeneutical principle of justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith.

Changes in worship must be evaluated critically with Jesus Christ as the center. Any change that might detract from Law and Gospel must be set aside. The first chapter, "Change and Some Pastoral Considerations," focuses on principles by which to evaluate change. This chapter begins with the centrality of Jesus Christ in worship and ends with concern for the certainty of faith for the worshiper.

Change in itself is neutral; it is neither positive nor negative. So change is then considered from a biblical perspective. Both negative and positive examples of change are considered, but the main focus of chapter two is the most dramatic form of change known as metanoia, which God causes in people. In metanoia, God provides miraculous change, a total change of mind and heart, by which he brings people to Jesus Christ for forgiveness and stability. Then the principle of adiaphora, which begins in the stability of Jesus Christ, is



applied to change in worship.

Chapter three discusses the recognition of the sinfulness that clings to all people and the impact that sin has on change. The pace of continual change and its universal scope are confirmed through examples. The effects of change on people are also identified. Therefore, this chapter helps to support the claim that change in worship must be handled sensitively. While some may react negatively to change in worship simply because that is the way they react to change anywhere, many are struggling to assimilate the rapid changes in their lives. They truly have difficulty with change, and that includes difficulty with change in worship.

Chapter four addresses a specific kind of change in worship, namely, that which can be called quality. While the conduct of worship (including the work of ushers, altar guild members, acolytes), is usually taken for granted, this is where change needs to be addressed sensitively, clearly, and consistently so that the quality of what is done in worship improves. Scripture speaks to quality in the choosing of material used for building Solomon's Temple and to the selection of expensive perfume used by the woman who anointed Jesus' feet.

Moving toward a practical application of change in worship, chapter five deals with the "Dimensions of Change." Drawing from industry and business, change is understood in its broadest application. These concerns, then, will be

applied to change in worship.

Chapter six addresses how to apply quality in worship at St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. With the cooperation of the Music Director, the members of the Board of Lay Ministry (formerly, Board of Elders), and the members of the Altar Guild at St. Paul's, forms were developed to help these individuals complete their responsibilities more competently. Then, with evaluation forms prepared especially for this task, these same individuals were able to critique both their own work and how worship itself flowed from their perspective.

Because the application of quality is usually behind the scenes, it was also necessary to introduce change that would directly and obviously affect the congregation. This was done through the introduction of a new setting for the Divine Service, called The Sacred Harp Setting. Chapter seven describes how the decision was made to introduce this new setting, the actual introduction of the setting, and the congregational response to the setting and how it was introduced.

Finally, the conclusion evaluates the changes that were implemented. It includes some recommendations and insights for the introduction of change. The conclusion demonstrates that, in the world today, change may be inevitable, but it does not necessarily have to be disruptive because of the stability which comes through Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER ONE

### CHANGE AND SOME PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

The hermeneutical principle which Lutherans apply to sacred Scripture is this: the justification of the sinner by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith. This principle, with its subsequent application of Law and Gospel, reveals that Jesus Christ is the unity of Scripture from beginning to end and that he is the one and only Savior of all people. Therefore, because all people are sinful, they are totally incapable of helping themselves spiritually. Jesus Christ, true God, became human, lived a typically human life in this world, on a cross suffered the penalty that all humanity deserved for its sins, and finally died there alone and crushed. Through his faithful and perfect obedience in life and in death, Jesus Christ did for all people what they could not do for themselves. He made it possible for them to stand before God justified.

This hermeneutical principle explains God's ultimate attitude toward humanity. While he abhors sin, his love for those he created is immense and humanly unexplainable. It was a love which he did not merely express in words. Rather, he

willingly offered his own Son and sacrificed him on a cross to prove his love. His Son, perfect and holy, assumed the responsibility of the sin of all people. In confirmation and acceptance of this perfect sacrifice, God raised his Son from death to verify that justification is authentic and available to all people.

### The Gift of Faith

The Holy Spirit gives faith as a gift so that God's people are able to receive the benefits of justification in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's gift of grace, freely given, to all who believe (Ephesians 2:8-9). Martin Luther rejoiced in the miracle of justification by grace through Jesus Christ, a gift given to the sinner; and he recognized the importance of Spirit-given faith. The gospel became the basis of reform, which he used concerning worship:

Luther recognized that the Christian is not only a righteous man, but also a sinner. His faith is not a static, but a growing, struggling thing. Therefore, he needs the daily nurture and exercise in the Word as provided in the church's liturgy, and even though he might not need it for himself, he must provide it for others.<sup>1</sup>

While it is necessary for each person to receive the gift of faith individually, yet once that faith is given by the Holy Spirit, no one is ever left alone as an individual. Every person baptized is immediately incorporated into the family of

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<sup>1</sup>Martin Luther, Luther's Works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), trans. and ed., Ulrich S. Leupold, 53:xvi, hereafter referred to as LW.

Christ, the church. Within that family, each person shares responsibility for every other member of the family. Even if one does not sense the need for daily nurture in the Word, as Martin Luther indicated, each does have the responsibility to provide that nurture for others.

As a confession of this principle of justification, the church regularly gathers around Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament. There God continually affirms and mediates his gift of grace. The various members of the church humbly receive that gift through faith, and by faith they affirm the relationship that exists between God and the church created by the Mediator, Jesus Christ. In his book Gathered to Pray, Louis Weil, speaking about prayer, affirms that that relationship is also true concerning worship in general:

Faith is the fundamental gift, not as a private bridge between the individual and God, but as the disposition of the Church, its way of being in regard to God. Without this foundation of faith, all prayer, whether liturgical or not, is vain.<sup>2</sup>

While worship is primarily the gathering of God's people to receive God's gracious ministrations, worship is also the way in which God's people respond to God's grace in Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the "one faith" (Ephesians 4:5). Louis Weil explains:

As a whole, the heavy didacticism which had characterized a rationalist approach to Christian faith has now given way to an understanding of liturgy as the focus of the Church's proclamation of its faith in the signs of

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<sup>2</sup>Louis Weil, Gathered to Pray (Cambridge, MN: Cowley Publications Forward Movement, 1986), 11.

redemption.

...The liturgy lifts up the faith in the common celebration of that faith by God's people gathered together, using words and signs in a corporate action which both expresses the faith into which all have been baptized, and at the same time nourishes that faith in each member of the assembly. In proclaiming the faith, the primary purpose of the rites is not a narrow didacticism. It is rather the formation of the common identity which all the baptized share, and which is the point of origin for their mission in the world as "other christ" through whom God's purposes are made tangible.<sup>3</sup>

The liturgy always gives expression to the faith of the church, which is the people of Christ. If that liturgy and the identity of the baptized are separated, worship disintegrates into formalism.<sup>4</sup>

The role of liturgy for the worship of Christ's people must not be underestimated. The liturgy provides words, consistent with the principle of justification by faith, which the people, as the church, use to proclaim the faith. At the same time, the words and proclamation of the people's faith gives life to the liturgy while it serves as a vehicle for God's grace in Jesus Christ. Again, speaking about prayer, Louis Weil states:

This concern for the role of the liturgy as the primary focus for the proclamation of the Church's faith is no peripheral matter. If the texts which we pray are indeed the faith which we share, then their proclamation in the midst of the assembly of baptized people has a formative impact upon the people gathered. The proclamation through word and sacrament becomes the foundation of the common memory shared by all believers of God's work of redemption in Christ of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit as the life-principle of the

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<sup>3</sup>Weil, 124-125.

<sup>4</sup>Weil, 13.

Church. What we acknowledge by faith in our corporate prayer is the basis of what we are becoming through the grace of God: what we pray is a manifestation of what we believe.<sup>5</sup>

### The Principle Behind Change

Because the liturgy is so important both as a means of God's grace to the church and as a vehicle to unify Christ's people as the confessors of the faith, it would seem logical to solidify one liturgy to be used at all times and in all places, without change or variation in text or ceremony. In fact, the Lutheran reformers recognized the subtle changes in the liturgy over the centuries, which resulted in heresies that misled Christ's people. Despite that, they concluded that it was "not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that ceremonies, instituted by men, should be observed uniformly in all places."<sup>6</sup> Because abuses had crept into the church and its worship, the reformers recognized that it was necessary to initiate change:

It is lawful for bishops or pastors to make regulations so that things in the church may be done in good order, but not that by means of these we make satisfaction for sins, nor that consciences are bound so as to regard these as necessary services....

It is proper that the churches comply with such ordinances for the sake of love and tranquility and that they keep them, in so far as one does not offend another, so that everything in the churches may be done in order and without confusion. However, consciences should not be burdened by suggesting that they are necessary for salvation....

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<sup>5</sup>Weil, 128.

<sup>6</sup>Theodore G. Tappert, ed., Book of Concord, The Augsburg Confession, VII (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 32.

Of the same sort is the observance of Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, and similar festivals and rites.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the Formula of Concord concluded:

We further believe, teach, and confess that the community of God in every place and at every time has the right, authority, and power to change, to reduce, or to increase ceremonies according to its circumstances, as long as it does so without frivolity and offense but in an orderly and appropriate way, as at any time may seem to be most profitable, beneficial, and salutary for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the edification of the church.<sup>8</sup>

During the period in which the Lutheran Confessions were written and adopted, beginning with Martin Luther, the principle concerning change in worship was formulated and applied.

In this spirit of liberty and with this concern for the man in the pew, Luther planned the reformation of the cultus. Like a good doctor who is as careful in protecting and building up the healthy organs in his patient as he is ruthless in removing the diseased, Luther preserved and strengthened every vital feature in the traditional liturgy and deleted all corrupt intrusions.<sup>9</sup>

It was a fine line that Martin Luther proposed. In "A Christian Exhortation to the Livonians," that fine line was demonstrated:

Now when your people are confused and offended by your lack of uniform order, you cannot plead, "Externals are free. Here in my own place I am going to do as I please." But you are bound to consider the effect of your attitude on others. By faith be free in your conscience toward God, but by love be bound to serve your

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<sup>7</sup>Tappert, ed., The Augsburg Confession, XXVIII, 90-91.

<sup>8</sup>Tappert, ed. Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, X, 9, 612.

<sup>9</sup>LW, 53:xvi.



neighbor's edification, as also St. Paul says, Romans 14 [15:2], "Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him." For we should not please ourselves, since Christ also pleased not himself, but us all.

But at the same time a preacher must watch and diligently instruct the people lest they take such uniform practices as divinely appointed and absolutely binding laws.<sup>10</sup>

Luther went on to emphasize that ceremonies are not needed for salvation; yet they are useful and even necessary to lead people externally. They should not be legislated, nor should anyone be forced to accept them for any other reason than to maintain peace and unity among people.<sup>11</sup>

Martin Luther understood how easily Satan may disrupt the unity of faith by causing divisions in external things, such as ceremonies.<sup>12</sup> The church's councils were convened to legislate uniformity, but, in the end, those rulings became pitfalls for the faith of Christ's people. To this Luther concluded, "And we need good spiritual teachers who will know how to lead the people with wisdom and discretion."<sup>13</sup> Peter Brunner warned against taking one of two "devious paths": "The one is the archaization of the artistic style; the other is the complete surrender of the artistic style to the cultural situation of the day."<sup>14</sup> Finally, it is easy not to

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<sup>10</sup>LW, 53:48.

<sup>11</sup>LW, 53:48.

<sup>12</sup>LW, 53:46.

<sup>13</sup>LW, 53:46.

<sup>14</sup>Peter Brunner, Worship in the Name of Jesus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 267.

walk the fine line but to create an alternate path. Arthur Just, in an article titled, "Liturgical Renewal in the Parish," described the tension in this way:

Concerned liturgical scholars are well aware of the consequences of lost liturgy and are equally aware of the sad state of biblical knowledge and traditional awareness in our congregations. They recognize that it is disastrous to leave the liturgy in the hands of people who know little of liturgy, theology, or Scripture. Thus, liturgy cannot be an exclusive enterprise from below, from congregations who are not in touch with their historical roots. We still need liturgical scholars to give us liturgy from above. The challenge for liturgical renewal today is to mediate between the two. How do we resolve this tension between the scholars and the people who actually do the liturgy?<sup>15</sup>

Just subsequently explained what happens when this tension is lost:

Liturgies catering to individuals will at times be exciting, entertaining, and edifying. Their responses will at most give immediate satisfaction. Liturgy as "education of surface memory" reduces worship to pedantry. This has been described as "the abstract character of Protestant worship today," which is the direct result of the loss of a sacramental understanding of the Bible that sees the real presence of Christ moving into the lives of people and changing them through the Gospel. Preaching and sacramental piety are separated and the Gospel is ultimately lost. When our concern is education of surface memory, then our basis for any liturgy becomes superficial, and our theology is destroyed.<sup>16</sup>

To state the principle in another way, John T. Pless described how ceremonies must be judged against the biblical doctrine of worship:

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<sup>15</sup>Arthur A. Just, "Liturgical Renewal in the Parish," Lutheran Worship: History and Practice (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 24.

<sup>16</sup>Just, 28-29.

Ceremonies must be viewed in light of their integral relationship to the doctrine of worship (Gottesdienst). This immediately exposes the conflict that exists between the theology of worship held by Luther and confessed in the Lutheran Confessions and that theology articulated by the many adherents of the contemporary Liturgical Movement.<sup>17</sup>

Understanding worship primarily as Gottesdienst, God's service to his people, is to understand Scripture (and therefore worship) as sacramental. In a secondary sense, Gottesdienst is also the response of God's people in words and actions, as sacrificial thanksgiving.

In the Introduction to Luther's Works, volume 53, Ulrich S. Leupold explained what he believed Martin Luther would say today concerning change:

Luther would have been somewhat nonplused by the plaudits of those who pay tribute to his conservatism, as though the preservation of ancient forms was a liturgical mark of merit. Neither Old nor New were ultimate values to him. He approached the tangled problem of tradition versus innovation with the freedom of the Christian man.<sup>18</sup>

That Luther exercised this principle is clear. When "The German Mass and Order of Service" was first published Luther most seriously requested that it not be used rigidly or become a binding law; rather, it was to be used "in Christian liberty as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful."<sup>19</sup> Ultimately, this was Luther's concern:

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<sup>17</sup>John T. Pless, "The Leaders of Worship," Lutheran Worship: History and Practice (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 228.

<sup>18</sup>LW, 53:xv.

<sup>19</sup>LW, 53:61.

But while the exercise of this freedom is up to everyone's conscience and must not be cramped or forbidden, nevertheless, we must make sure that freedom shall be and remain a servant of love and of our fellow-man.

Where the people are perplexed and offended by these differences in liturgical usage, however, we are certainly bound to forego our freedom and seek, if possible, to better rather than to offend them by what we do or leave undone.<sup>20</sup>

In "Concerning the Order of Public Worship," Luther recognized a corruption in the practice of priests celebrating mass daily. Yet he also added that, "if any should desire the sacrament during the week, let mass be held as inclination and time dictate; for in this matter one cannot make hard and fast rules."<sup>21</sup>

Martin Luther was concerned that the young and the uneducated would learn through the repetition of the liturgy; therefore, there was the necessity of using a consistent order. At the same time, no one was to be forced to do something that was disliked or not understood. Luther simply explained that: "God is not pleased with unwilling services; they are futile and vain."<sup>22</sup> Speaking of any liturgy, including his own, Luther concluded that any order can become an abuse. When it does, Luther said, "it shall be straightway abolished and replaced by another," citing the example of King

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<sup>20</sup>LW, 53:61.

<sup>21</sup>LW, 53:13.

<sup>22</sup>LW, 53:90.

Hezekiah and the brazen serpent in 2 Kings 18:4.<sup>23</sup> A liturgy, no matter how good, can be abused. Therefore, Luther concluded that no order is valid in and of itself. "The validity, value, power, and virtue of any order is in its proper use."<sup>24</sup>

With this said concerning change in worship, Gordon Lathrop asked a valuable question in Holy Things: "Is Christian experience to be closed to diversity?"<sup>25</sup> To this he adds several more questions:

What is a healthy balance of unity and diversity among the churches in their practice of liturgy? As a special case of that question, what principles should guide the exercise of the liturgy in diverse new cultural situations, should guide inculturation? Finally, what really is renewal?<sup>26</sup>

Admitting that that was not within the scope of his topic in Holy Things, Lathrop, however, begins to formulate an answer:

These questions press urgently upon us, especially if we mean to assert that worship is the churches' common and principal resource for proposing meaning in our world.... We can suggest ways in which the ordo of Christian worship, the pattern of liturgical juxtapositions, enables us freshly and freely to approach a response. As well, we can demonstrate how renewal, the cultural situation of the local assembly, and diversity-in-unity might be part of the "hole" in the social fabric rather than part of its occlusion.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>LW, 53:90.

<sup>24</sup>LW, 53:90.

<sup>25</sup>Gordon Lathrop, Holy Things (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 181.

<sup>26</sup>Lathrop, 219.

<sup>27</sup>Lathrop, 219.

Lathrop indicated the correctness of Luther's position, that change should not be introduced if it is going to cause pain. "Liturgical change needs always to go paired with teaching and love."<sup>28</sup>

### Applying the Principle

It is known that, long before Martin Luther, different geographical areas of the Christian Church, as Leupold says,

Preserved regional differences in their forms of worship. Luther refused to sanction a Lutheran common order and encouraged each principality to strive for uniformity within its own borders without imposing these orders on others.<sup>29</sup>

Luther had such a way of firmly grasping the essentials and boldly expressing them that he "set forth principles that are as valid today as they were in Luther's time."<sup>30</sup> As ironic as it sounds, "the forms he (Luther) designed were at once more conservative and more creative than those of any of his contemporaries."<sup>31</sup>

Peter Brunner, building on Martin Luther's principle, discussed variation in worship:

But not only the differences in the spiritual and the natural gifts effect differences in the formation, distinguishing a high developed form from one reduced to its basic elements and from an abundance of intermediate possibilities. The same variation of forms may be

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<sup>28</sup>Lathrop, 224-225.

<sup>29</sup>LW, 53:xvi.

<sup>30</sup>LW, 53:xiv.

<sup>31</sup>LW, 53:xiv.

produced by special occasions and by the nature of particular days.<sup>32</sup>

Identifying two principles, Brunner concludes that variation in worship forms can be controlled by "(1) abridgment and expansion by several parts; (2) variation in the execution of individual parts."<sup>33</sup> These make movement between simplicity and richness possible.

Therefore, in the construction of the order of service a certain scope should be reserved for free choice, so that more festive and less festive forms, richer and simpler forms, forms more exacting in their mode of execution, also more exacting artistically, and forms that are feasible under the most difficult and poorest circumstances, may alternate.

However, here, too, the principle of alternation and of multiplicity must be restrained.<sup>34</sup>

Brunner concluded: "The basic outline of this service is always the same, even though its execution may at one time resemble a lowly cottage and at another a richly furnished mansion."<sup>35</sup>

While Martin Luther was not resistant to change, as was evidenced in "The German Mass and Order of Service, 1526," yet there he also expressed why change must be conservative:

I would, however, like to ask that this paraphrase or admonition follow a prescribed wording or be formulated in a definite manner for the sake of the common people. We cannot have one do it one way today, and another, another way tomorrow, and let everybody parade his talents and confuse the people so that they

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<sup>32</sup>Brunner, 239.

<sup>33</sup>Brunner, 240.

<sup>34</sup>Brunner, 240.

<sup>35</sup>Brunner, 240.

can neither learn or retain anything. What chiefly matters is the teaching and guiding of the people. That is why here we must limit our freedom and keep to one form of paraphrase or admonition, particularly in a given church or congregation--if for the sake of freedom it does not wish to use another.<sup>36</sup>

Originally this chapter was to be titled, "Change and Some Theological Considerations." While there are theological considerations involved, the concern about change is finally pastoral. Martin Luther, fully aware of the theology of worship, stated the concern in one sentence: "What chiefly matters is the teaching and guiding of the people."<sup>37</sup> Theology is not theology if it is not expressed in spiritual terms that will facilitate growth in faith and life for the people of Christ. This explains why change in worship must be treated seriously for the church, for it is in worship that theology and life meet for the Christian. It is in worship that theological concerns are translated into pastoral concerns. Therefore, whatever is done in worship, whatever changes are proposed, those responsible must be sure that Jesus Christ is revealed as the real and personal Savior for those in worship.

#### Adiaphora as a Principle

#### Applied When Initiating Changes

Adiaphora, most clearly defined by the Stoics in ancient Greece, took on a specific meaning in Christian history. It

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<sup>36</sup>LW, 53:80.

<sup>37</sup>LW, 53:80.



addressed the question "whether there are certain areas of belief or conduct in which differences are of no consequence so far as the Christian character of the belief or conduct is concerned."<sup>38</sup> This principle, which begins with the certainty and stability of Jesus Christ, was applied to actions that were neither forbidden nor commanded by Scripture. Such actions included the use and practice of certain rites or ceremonies of the Christian Church.

Though the word itself is not used in Scripture, both Jesus and St. Paul clearly demonstrated the principle, which the Christian Church later called "adiaphora." Jesus, for example, asserted his independence from the legalistic rules of the Pharisees concerning Sabbath observance (St. Mark 2:27-28; St. Luke 6:5; 13:15; St. John 5:18). St. Paul asserted the irrelevance of such things as dietary preferences or holding one day to be more important than another (Romans 14:1-8). He stated emphatically that food offered to idols meant nothing and could be eaten with a clear conscience, but he also said that Christians were to set limits when exercising their freedom because of their love for a weaker brother or sister. "Christians should be careful not to cause the weak to stumble (1 Corinthians 8:4-13). There are things which are lawful but do not edify (1 Corinthians 10:23) and

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<sup>38</sup>Julius Bodensieck, ed. The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), 6.

are not helpful (1 Corinthians 6:12)."<sup>39</sup> Finally, St. Paul concluded that, in everything, "follow the way of love" (1 Corinthians 14:1).

At the time of the Lutheran Reformation, Martin Luther applied this principle to Christian worship. The false doctrine which he saw in the Mass had to be removed, but, exercising St. Paul's concern, Luther did not abolish the Mass itself or its ceremonies. St. Paul told the Corinthians to "follow the way of love" (1 Corinthians 14:1). Luther knew that in the Gospel he was free to worship without the form of the Mass or its ceremonies, but, out of concern for weaker brothers and sisters, he continued to use both the Mass and its ceremonies and even extolled their value for edifying the people.

In Luther on Worship, Vilmos Vajta affirms that this truly was Martin Luther's approach to worship:

Luther defines the Christian faith as freedom and the Christian as a man set free. Faith implies liberty in all the works of man, of the law, and therewith of liturgical forms too. The believer need not give anything to God, but lives by the gifts he receives from him. His freedom is based on God's coming to him and on his own conformity with Christ.<sup>40</sup>

As long as this freedom is understood not to be freedom from God or from Christ and what Christ has done for all people, then the Christian is free even from liturgical forms:

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<sup>39</sup>Bodensieck, 6.

<sup>40</sup>Vilmos Vajta. Luther on Worship (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), 171.

But in the faith he is independent of human forms and rites, of holy places, seasons, vestments, and all the like. The gospel and faith are his worship. Liturgical forms and rites cannot affect his conscience, for his faith does not rest on outward things. It is an inward trust in the redeeming work of Christ.

Of course, this applies only to the rites introduced by men. Man-made orders of service must never be held essential for salvation, for in matters of the kingdom men are apt to err.<sup>41</sup>

Luther understood human nature very well. He knew that, living in this world, order and form were necessary. He recognized that this was true for worship too. While "the inner man is free and subject to none," the "outer man is bound and subject to all."<sup>42</sup> Before God, the Christian is passive, always assuming a receptive stance; but he is active toward other people, assuming the role of a servant and following "the way of love" (1 Corinthians 14:1).

For the sake of love, the Christian gladly binds himself to order and form:

Love constrains us to worship according to stated forms, but it does not prescribe any particular set of rites. The need for forms cannot be disputed, but their choice must be allowed to vary. To absolutize any single rite would be to jeopardize the freedom not only of Christian love, but also of Christian conscience.

The choice of forms is however not a matter of personal preference, but must depend on the need of our fellows. The liturgical choice of the "outer man," his decision for or against certain forms, should be dictated by the need of others.<sup>43</sup>

Luther's view was radical. He wanted nothing more to do with

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<sup>41</sup>Vajta, 172.

<sup>42</sup>Vajta, 174.

<sup>43</sup>Vajta, 177.

legalism "on the street as well as in the sanctuary. The neighbor's actual needs should dictate liturgical decisions as well as the response in all other ethical questions."<sup>44</sup>

The Augsburg Confession continued this same understanding of adiaphora. It states:

What, then, are we to think about Sunday and about rites in our churches? To this our teachers reply that it is lawful for bishops or pastors to make regulations so that things in the church may be done in good order, but not that by means of these we make satisfaction for sins, nor that consciences are bound so as to regard these as necessary services. So Paul ordained that women should cover their heads in the assembly and that interpreters in the church should be heard one after another.

It is proper that the churches comply with such ordinances for the sake of love and tranquility and that they keep them, in so far as one does not offend another, so that everything in the churches may be done in order and without confusion. However, consciences should not be burdened by suggesting that they are necessary for salvation or by judging that those who omit them without offense to others commit a sin, any more than one would say a woman sins by going out in public with her head uncovered, provided no offense is given.<sup>45</sup>

After the death of Martin Luther, a disagreement arose among the Lutherans in Germany as a result of the Leipzig Interim; it became known as the Adiaphorist Controversy:

This was a provisional agreement between the theologians of Wittenberg, especially Melancthon, and the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Saxony. It declared certain Roman Catholic practices such as confirmation, extreme unction, the mass without transubstantiation, and the veneration of the saints as "adiaphora." All were to accept justification by faith,

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<sup>44</sup>Vajta, 178.

<sup>45</sup>Tappert, 89-90.

relegating the words "by faith alone" to the category of adiaphora.<sup>46</sup>

In response to this controversy and in an attempt to settle it, the Formula of Concord was prepared in 1577. Article X was titled, "Church Usages, Called Adiaphora or Indifferent Things."<sup>47</sup> In response to the division among the Lutheran theologians concerning ceremonies and church usages neither forbidden nor commanded in Scripture but introduced for the sake of order and the welfare of people in general, this question was asked:

The chief question has been, In times of persecution, when a confession is called for, and when the enemies of the Gospel have not come to an agreement with us in doctrine, may we with an inviolate conscience yield to their pressure and demands, reintroduce some ceremonies that have fallen into disuse and that in themselves are indifferent things and are neither commanded nor forbidden by God, and thus come to an understanding with them in such ceremonies and indifferent things?<sup>48</sup>

The fact that it was necessary to ask the question shows that there were theologians on both sides of the issue.

The Formula of Concord answered the question with five affirmative theses with unanimous agreement: first, "the ceremonies or church usages which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God, which have been introduced solely for the sake of good order and the general welfare"<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Bodensieck, 7.

<sup>47</sup>Tappert, 492.

<sup>48</sup>Tappert, 492-493.

<sup>49</sup>Tappert, 493.

are not in and of themselves worship. Second, each congregation "in every locality and every age has authority to change such ceremonies according to circumstances."<sup>50</sup> Third, the principle of love and concern for a brother or sister, who might be weak in faith, was always to be observed. In addition, nothing frivolous or offensive should be done.<sup>51</sup>

Fourth, citing St. Paul in Galatians 2:5, 5:11, and 2 Corinthians 6:14, these theologians confessed that "in time of persecution, when a clear-cut confession of faith is demanded, we dare not yield to the enemies in such indifferent things."<sup>52</sup> Under these circumstances it is no longer a matter of adiaphora but a matter of the truth of the Gospel and Christian liberty. Therefore, they were convinced that they dared not make any concessions and were ready to suffer whatever consequences God might send and their enemies might inflict on them. Fifth, no one should judge a church by ceremonies neither forbidden nor commanded by God; if there is agreement in doctrine and the right use of the sacraments, that is sufficient.<sup>53</sup>

Historically in The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, adiaphora as a principle was not applied as much to worship as it had been during the time of Martin Luther, but more

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<sup>50</sup>Tappert, 493.

<sup>51</sup>Tappert, 493.

<sup>52</sup>Tappert, 493.

<sup>53</sup>Tappert, 493-494.

frequently it was applied to "the so-called 'laws of the Church' "<sup>54</sup> not instituted by Christ. Only the Word of God is binding; all other concerns "are regulated by the Christians through mutual agreement."<sup>55</sup>

Francis Pieper did address a question concerning ceremonies used when baptizing. He referred to Martin Luther and others to show that the ceremonies themselves fell under adiaphora. The pastors and congregations of the Synod could use these ceremonies, such as the exorcism, with a clear conscience as long as the people understood that Baptism's validity did not depend on these ceremonies.<sup>56</sup>

J. T. Mueller, in Christian Dogmatics, also affirmed that "in all matters where no special divine laws obtain, decisions should be reached by Christians through mutual agreement on the basis of Christian love, 1 Corinthians 16:14."<sup>57</sup> Later, in discussing the power of the public ministry, he asserts that it is not up to the pastor to decide these questions of adiaphora; the entire congregation is to decide by common consent.<sup>58</sup> He also asserted in an article on congregational rights and duties:

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<sup>54</sup>Francis Pieper. Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 3:530; also 3:412, 430, 459.

<sup>55</sup>Pieper, 2:392; 3:430, 459.

<sup>56</sup>Pieper, 3:282-283.

<sup>57</sup>John Theodore Mueller. Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1934), 212.

<sup>58</sup>Mueller, 578.

As said before, all matters pertaining to Christian doctrine and conscience must be adjudicated unanimously, according to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions (Isaiah 8:20), while matters pertaining to adiaphora, that is to say, to things neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, are to be adjudged according to the principles of love and equity, after thorough deliberation in Christian order, by a majority vote (1 Corinthians 16:14; 14:40; Colossians 2:5).<sup>59</sup>

Mueller also emphasized that adiaphora were never to be enforced by command or imposed on any conscience. Rather, because they serve the cause of Christian order, they should be initiated "by free and willing submission."<sup>60</sup>

In A Summary of Christian Doctrine, Edward Koehler addressed adiaphora under his discussion of sin, that "things which God neither forbids nor commands are in themselves indifferent (Mitteldinge, Adiaphora), and it is no sin either to do or not to do them."<sup>61</sup> Then he adds a concern about the motive for doing something that is neither forbidden nor commanded; whatever the Christian does, it is to be done to the glory of God and for the welfare of the neighbor (1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 14:6).<sup>62</sup>

In 1938, Theodore Graebner prepared his fourth and enlarged edition of The Borderland of Right and Wrong. He

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<sup>59</sup>John Theodore Mueller. "The Christian Congregation: Its Rights and Duties," Concordia Theological Monthly (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, May, 1939), 337.

<sup>60</sup>Mueller, "The Christian Congregation," 337.

<sup>61</sup>Edward W. A. Koehler. A Summary of Christian Doctrine (River Forest, Illinois: Koehler Publishing Company, 1939), 57.

<sup>62</sup>Koehler, 57 (also 147).



addressed the subject of Christian liberty with a thesis of C. F. W. Walther: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church makes a strict distinction between those things which God has commanded in his Word and those things which are free (adiaphora; the organization of the Church)."<sup>63</sup> Most of Graebner's comments on this thesis are an English translation of the evening lectures which Francis Pieper presented to seminary students. In part he told those seminarians:

God has reserved to himself the right to command to Christians anything that is to be binding on conscience.... A church-body which restricts evangelical liberty by laws of its own misleads its people into idolatry; for inasmuch as a Christian in ecclesiastical, spiritual, matters accepts any command from men, he apostasizes from God. Such a Church commits grand larceny on her members, who have all received Christian liberty from their Lord, freedom from human commandments....

I charge you therefore to adhere to the principles of our dear Church also in this matter--under no conditions to allow liberty where Scripture commands and, on the other hand, never to command anything where Scripture is silent.<sup>64</sup>

Graebner again quotes Pieper concerning Article VII of the Augsburg Confession: "With regard to doctrine this passage demands full agreement. With regard to church ceremonies it concedes complete liberty."<sup>65</sup> Pieper admitted that uniformity in religious custom was to be sought, but uniformity has

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<sup>63</sup>Theodore Graebner. The Borderland of Right and Wrong (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), 52.

<sup>64</sup>Graebner, 53-54.

<sup>65</sup>Graebner, 55.

nothing to do with "the essence of church unity."<sup>66</sup>

Though adiaphora has, at times, been defined as matters that are indifferent, they are indifferent only in so far as they are neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture. Because the worship of the church, with its rites and ceremonies, has a distinct influence on the faith and life of Christ's people, the leaders of the church do not have carte blanche to add to, modify, or delete from the liturgies of the church.<sup>67</sup> Realizing the importance of this and striving for uniformity even in ceremonies, Roger Pittelko, quoting from the original constitution of The Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod states:

All pastors and congregations that wish to be recognized as orthodox by Synod are prohibited from adopting or retaining any ceremony which might weaken the confession of the truth or condone or strengthen a heresy.<sup>68</sup>

In other words, indifferent matters are not absolutely indifferent but are relatively indifferent. Matters of adiaphora, though not divinely prescribed, are still important because of the influence and impact they have on Christian people and on their faith and life.<sup>69</sup>

This is not merely a concern for variety; variety is not

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<sup>66</sup>Graebner, 55.

<sup>67</sup>Roger D. Pittelko. "Corporate Worship of the Church," Lutheran Worship: History and Practice (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 64.

<sup>68</sup>Pittelko, 62.

<sup>69</sup>Pittelko, 62-63.

the issue because a certain amount of variety has been built into the liturgy through the church year<sup>70</sup> and in stated options for the conduct of the service. The concern is for the wrong kind of variety, as Pittelko concludes quoting Martin Luther:

(I am hesitant about change) more so because of the fickle and fastidious spirits who rush in like unclean swine without faith or reason, and who delight only in novelty and tire of it as quickly, when it has worn off. Such people are a nuisance even in other affairs, but in spiritual matters, they are absolutely unbearable.<sup>71</sup>

Even concerning architecture as another example, an area in which the Christian Church is free to use whatever form it chooses, yet it has an "obligation to establish principles on the basis of which (it is) to shape ecclesiastical architecture and guide architectural decision making. A regard for edification" is the prime consideration.<sup>72</sup>

Since change in worship is a matter of adiaphora, change itself and the results of implementing change will be examined in the next chapters. There are two questions that need to be asked and answered: first, are these changes consistent with the hermeneutical principle of justification by faith? Second, are these changes introduced according to the principle of edification, that is, out of concern for the

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<sup>70</sup>Pittelko, 65.

<sup>71</sup>Pittelko, 65.

<sup>72</sup>Wayne Schmidt. "The Setting of the Liturgy and the Decorum of Its Leaders," Lutheran Worship: History and Practice (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 186.

brother and sister who come to worship to receive God's gracious ministrations in Jesus Christ and then to offer him the very sacrifice of their lives because of all that he has done for them?

## CHAPTER TWO

### CHANGE FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Scripture, as God's message to his people living in this world, addresses their problems, even the most radical. Today, for many, change is one of those radical problems. This chapter will look at change as Scripture addresses it from the perspective of justification by faith, recognizing Jesus Christ as the source of constancy which makes it possible for the Christian to assimilate change. In addition, this discussion will serve as a foundation for understanding change in worship as it is presented in subsequent chapters.

In the English language, the word "change" is both dramatic and neutral at the same time. In Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, change is defined in this way in its first definition:

"a. to make different in some particular : **modify**; b. to make radically different : **transform**; c. to give a different position, course, or direction to; d. : **reverse**.<sup>1</sup>

In this definition change is identified as something dramatic in words such as "modify," "transform," and

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<sup>1</sup>Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA, G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1969), 139.

"reverse." It denotes something that is more than casual. "To give a different...direction to," as stated in the definition, speaks to the radical nature of change. Yet, at the same time, change is neutral; it is not identified as either positive or negative. The source of the change may be good or evil.

When Israel demanded to be like the other nations and wanted a king, the Lord granted their request. Saul, the son of Abiel, was God's choice for Israel's first king, and Scripture notes his physical prowess as "an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites--a head taller than any of the others" (1 Samuel 9:1-2). However, for Saul to be worthy of ruling over God's chosen people, something more was necessary. "God changed Saul's heart" (1 Samuel 10:9). As a sign that now God's favor truly rested on Saul, all of the signs that Samuel promised Saul, that he was truly God's choice for king, were fulfilled. Since God does not judge by outward appearance, it was necessary for Saul's heart to be changed to make him worthy of so great an honor.

In the Synoptic Gospels of the New Testament, Jesus is dramatically changed, transfigured, before Peter, James, and John. All three accounts of the transfiguration (St. Matthew 17:1-9; St. Mark 9:2-10; St. Luke 9:28-36) suggest change in an apocalyptic context.<sup>2</sup> In other words, this was an occasion

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<sup>2</sup>Gerhard Kittel, ed. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. IV (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 758.

when God intervened on earth to reveal his glory in his Son and to continue to prepare for his ultimate act of rescue for his people in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

According to St. Paul, the change that visibly occurred in Jesus at the transfiguration is the same kind of change that occurs within Christians as they grow here on earth into the image of Christ. From 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Romans 12:2, one author concludes that St. Paul asserts the following:

To the Christians the Spirit has granted free vision of the heavenly glory of the Lord, Christ. In this vision they undergo an increasing and progressive change into the image of the One whose glory they see. It is the Lord Himself, present and active by the Spirit, who brings about this change.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, according to St. Paul a change such as this is not exclusive to certain Christians only; all Christians participate in the miracle of change, which begins in Holy Baptism. This is not to be understood as an autonomous or mystical event. Rather, baptismal change unites the reality of salvation with the earthly lives of Christians.<sup>4</sup>

Because the reality of salvation has changed the earthly life of the Christian, the Christian's conduct is also changed to resemble conduct in the life to come. Jesus Christ accomplishes this change; and it begins in the Christian's thinking and willing, and echoes Jesus' call for repentance. In this sense, the Christian is changed by Christ; then shares

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<sup>3</sup>Kittel, ed., 758.

<sup>4</sup>Kittel, ed., 759.

the responsibility with the Holy Spirit for this change to grow to full maturity.<sup>5</sup>

Metanoia is the most significant word for change in the New Testament. In discussing change (metanoia) for the Greeks prior to biblical times, the following has been said:

In pre-biblical and extra-biblical usage metanoeo and metanoia are not firmly related to any specific concepts. At the first stage they bear the intellectual sense of "subsequent knowledge." With further development both verb and noun then come to mean "change of mind," "repentance," in an emotional and volitional sense as well. The change of opinion or decision, the alteration in mood or feeling, which finds expression in the terms, is not in any sense ethical. It may be for the bad as well as the good.<sup>6</sup>

In the Old Testament, there was no specific word that corresponded to metanoia in the New Testament, but the concept was present in the phrase, "to go back again."<sup>7</sup> It was present in rituals surrounding worship at the Tabernacle and Temple. The prophets questioned the sincerity of the people in cultic penitence;<sup>8</sup> and, using the same concept from Tabernacle and Temple worship, "to go back again" expressed a personal view of sin that separated God from his people. Repentance was the turning back to God. Therefore change included turning from everything ungodly, a conscious

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<sup>5</sup>Kittel, 759.

<sup>6</sup>Kittel, 979.

<sup>7</sup>Kittel, 980.

<sup>8</sup>Kittel, 982-983.



intention to obey God's will which included a new and unquestioning trust in him.<sup>9</sup>

The concept of change remained dramatic. In the New Testament it is described as change initiated by God, who caused a person's movement from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:10-14), from the devil to Christ, from death to life (Ephesians 2:1-7). The preaching of repentance, of change, is therefore radical. The Gospel accomplishes the impossible, for through it Jesus Christ seeks out and converts a slave who had lived in the kingdom of darkness.

Jesus Christ uses change to perform a miracle. That is the meaning and purpose of change (metanoia) in the New Testament. The miracle is evident by the Holy Spirit's work through Peter's sermon on Pentecost. His message was clearly Law, but the Gospel produced the change in the people with the reality of God's work through Jesus' death and resurrection.

(The people) were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38).

Immediately we are told that "about three thousand were added to their number that day" (Acts 2:41).

Next the changes that Christ produced through the repentance of these people were also described. They devoutly

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<sup>9</sup>Kittel, 984-986.

listened to the teachings of the apostles, enjoyed fellowship with each other, broke bread together, and prayed. Miracles were performed by the apostles, and the people marveled at these signs. They shared everything in common, selling their possessions and giving to those in need. Joy and sincerity marked their lives (Acts 2:42-47).

Allasso is another New Testament word which means "to alter or change."<sup>10</sup> Its use in the New Testament is negative. In Acts 6:14, when Stephen appeared before the Sanhedrin, the religious leaders accuse Stephen of promoting the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth who wanted to destroy the Temple and "change the customs Moses handed down to us."

When writing to the Galatians, St. Paul wished that he could change his tone toward the Galatians; he wished it could be different (Galatians 4:20). It could not change until these Christians returned to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which they had so quickly deserted after St. Paul had left them.

Metallasso, a form of allasso, is used by St. Paul in writing to the Romans. He describes how unbelievers "exchange the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). Here, change was evident even in sexual morality: "Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged

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<sup>10</sup>Gerhard Kittel, ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. I (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), 251.

natural relations for unnatural ones" (Romans 1:26).<sup>11</sup>

St. Paul uses another word for change, metaschematizo, in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. It is used negatively to describe a sense of masquerading. His argument is concise. The false prophets, probably Judaising agitators, change themselves into "apostles of Christ"; but that is not surprising because Satan himself, whom they serve, is a deceiver and changes himself into "an angel of light." St. Paul concludes, therefore, that the followers will act like their master, masquerading as "servants of righteousness."<sup>12</sup>

In a world filled with change, much of it drastic, many today equate "change and decay."<sup>13</sup> While the search for stability in life leads people in many different directions, Scripture offers a simple answer in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

The stability of the God whom Christians confess is revealed in his faithfulness to his people. Central to this revelation is God's willingness to offer his own Son as the sacrifice for the sins of all people--a sacrifice offered once and for all on the cross.

As stated earlier, this is known as the doctrine of

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<sup>11</sup>Kittel, ed., 259.

<sup>12</sup>Gerhard Kittel, ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. VII (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 957-958.

<sup>13</sup>Henry F. Lyte, "Abide with Me," Lutheran Worship (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), Hymn 490, stanza 3.

justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith. All that Jesus Christ accomplished for a world enslaved by sin reached its climax in his death, resurrection, and ascension to his Father's right hand. There he reigns supreme as Lord of all. Nothing escapes his just and gracious rule, not in the events of history nor in the individual lives of his people.

Because of his faithfulness in life and in death, Jesus Christ extends his invitation to all people and chooses to embrace them with his love. In this, he does not change; he "is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus Christ is the one, stable point in the midst of change, simple or dramatic, and love is the primary attribute (1 John 4:7-10) which he reveals to his people in the midst of this change, making it possible for them to express and apply the principle of Christian love to others when considering change.

In the certainty of his faithfulness revealed in the cross of Christ, God assures his people of his purpose for them. Because of Christ's death and victory in resurrection, "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). While change often causes doubt and instability even in Christ's people, his promise is given to restore confidence and stability.

St. Paul emphasizes something more: the Christ, whose attitude remains the same towards his people and who defeated

sin, death, and Satan for his people, is "head over everything for the church" (Ephesians 1:22). Even when it appears that all hell is breaking loose and the church is powerless, Jesus Christ in his love still controls life and history, working everything for the good of his people, the church.

The Garden of Eden was perfect and idyllic. Change toward evil, as it is recorded in Scripture, was introduced by the serpent whose purpose was to alienate and to destroy (Genesis 3:1-7). Since that day, everyone and everything naturally changed; in this situation, everyone and everything deteriorated. The infection of sin blinded Adam and Eve and their descendants so that they continually chose evil, bringing demonic change upon themselves and the world. This reality was affirmed by God in the curse of Genesis 3:14-19.

In the midst of this curse, however, God held out hope and paved the way that would lead to ultimate victory: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Genesis 3:15). This messianic prophecy acknowledged the conflict that would escalate until the Messiah and Satan would do battle. The Messiah would be victorious, though die in the fray.

Because of sin's infection, God's plan was no longer understood by his creation. Evil was the norm. God's salvation through the Messiah was not the norm. Whenever the message of salvation was proclaimed, it was an intrusion into

this sinful world. The message was the announcement of change, necessary change initiated by God, by which God would restore his creation once and for all. This would happen through the death and resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Today, the norm is still marked by deterioration due to sin. Change--godly change--will be met with resistance naturally (1 Corinthians 2:14). Yet God will relentlessly speak his message of salvation in Jesus Christ, conveyed through Word and Sacraments, liturgy and hymnody. The message remains the same, though it may be phrased differently in every generation.

The Gospel is the ultimate and necessary word from God, centering in Jesus Christ who died and rose again. Because the norm is sin for the world, the Gospel is God's message of change, necessary to reverse sin and restore God's original purpose. Therefore, change that is truly godly will proclaim and celebrate the radical nature of the Gospel in Jesus Christ. It necessitates change in those who are God's own through faith in Jesus Christ.

So Jesus Christ is the one stable point in the universe and the most dramatic change necessary for the world. Because his love, recorded in death, will not change for his people, the Gospel is the only change that can save this sin-infected world from itself.

At the same time, it is this stability of Jesus Christ

that makes it possible for his people to confront changes in the world today and digest them. Because of the dramatic change that God has worked in them to make them his own people through Jesus Christ, they are free from the deceptions that Satan would use to enslave them to change. Now, through the cross of Christ, change becomes a tool for Christians to use and through which they are able to serve Christ and build up and encourage their brothers and sisters in love.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CHANGE, ITS SCOPE AND ITS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE

This chapter will deal with change in general to show the impact that it is having on the lives of everyone today, including Christians. How are Christians to assimilate these changes in their lives? This, in turn, paves the way to show why changes in worship must be met with sensitivity. To introduce changes in worship, it must first be understood that through worship the Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ is affected.

#### The Rapidity of Change

There is little question that people today realize that change is occurring rapidly, but, because they have nothing to which they can compare it, they are not able to measure how quickly change is occurring. For that reason, some may feel that the problem is with themselves. Alvin Toffler, in Future Shock, attempted to assure people that they are not becoming senile; "they are experiencing super-normal rates of change."<sup>1</sup>

Some professionals, such as doctors and executives, do

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<sup>1</sup>Alvin Toffler, Future Shock (New York: Random House, 1970), 20.



see the challenge of change, though they find it difficult to "keep up with the latest developments in their fields."<sup>2</sup> Among many of them "there is an uneasy mood--a suspicion that change is out of control."<sup>3</sup> Feelings toward change are mixed with positive and negative attitudes, though some, described by Alvin Toffler, prefer to ignore it:

Not everyone...shares this anxiety. Millions sleepwalk their way through their lives as if nothing had changed since the 1930's, and as if nothing ever will.<sup>4</sup>

Change is occurring with the proportions of an avalanche, and, generally, people are not prepared to cope with it.<sup>5</sup> James L. Adams concurs that changes may be overwhelming to people, including Christians, and to companies unprepared to receive them, and he cites how quickly companies are replaced on the Fortune 500 list because "they are surpassed by companies who move more skillfully in a changing environment."<sup>6</sup>

Alvin Toffler gave this kind of change a name, "future shock":

Future shock is a time phenomenon, a product of the greatly accelerated rate of change in society. It arises from the super-imposition of a new culture on an old one. It is culture shock in one's own society. But its impact

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<sup>2</sup>Toffler, Future Shock, 20.

<sup>3</sup>Toffler, Future Shock, 20.

<sup>4</sup>Toffler, Future Shock, 20.

<sup>5</sup>Toffler, Future Shock, 14.

<sup>6</sup>James L. Adams, The Care and Feeding of Ideas (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1986), 5.

is far worse. For most Peace Corps men, in fact most travelers, have the comforting knowledge that the culture they left behind will be there to return to. The victim of future shock does not.<sup>7</sup>

In Shifting Gears: Finding Security in a Changing World, Nena and George O'Neill described, not only the rapidity of change, but its extensive effect on all of life. Staggered by how quickly change keeps occurring, people have also discovered that "the rules of the game were being changed practically every time they turned on the television set or opened the newspaper."<sup>8</sup> Change has caused the revision of moral standards and paralyzed people with the constant modification of social rules. People are forced to make choices which are often in conflict with each other.<sup>9</sup>

#### The Result of Change

Though people do not generally like change and are afraid of it, the consequences for them are deep and lasting, as Eric Hoffer has pointed out. No matter how much preparation is involved, no one is "really prepared for that which is wholly new."<sup>10</sup> There is something more. People are not faced with too many choices today but with "tough choices," Ellen Goodman explained; the results are "inevitable conflicts even in the

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<sup>7</sup>Toffler, Future Shock, 13.

<sup>8</sup>Nena O'Neill and George O'Neill, Shifting Gears (New York: M. Evans and Company, Inc., 1974), 13.

<sup>9</sup>O'Neill, 13-14.

<sup>10</sup>Eric Hoffer, The Ordeal of Change (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963), 1.

most 'liberated' life-styles and psyches."<sup>11</sup>

The rate of change only increases anxiety. Changes seem to have taken on a life of their own. Each person must manage it in his or her own way. As change is experienced, people feel disoriented and question where they fit in today. Society's answer, as unsatisfactory as it is, seems to be, change some more.<sup>12</sup> It is no wonder that fear and anxiety overwhelm anticipation.<sup>13</sup> "Fear of loss is clearly at the crux of change."<sup>14</sup>

Of course, there is more. Change, especially when it is rapid, means chance. In Powershift, Alvin Toffler explained:

(Rapid change, chance,) means uncertainty.... It means big projects that collapse and small ones that stun one with their success. It means new technologies, new kinds of skills and workers, and wholly unprecedented economic conditions.<sup>15</sup>

Change not only affects the technological and economic areas, but in the area of religion clergy are challenging their superiors, ritual, and the teachings of religious institutions. Political ideals are crushed as political leaders betray public trust. Divorce increases, and families

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<sup>11</sup>Ellen Goodman, Turning Points (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1979), 288.

<sup>12</sup>O'Neill, 20.

<sup>13</sup>Sandra Lee Smith, Coping with Changing Schools (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc., 1993), 20.

<sup>14</sup>Goodman, 163.

<sup>15</sup>Alvin Toffler, Powershift (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 152.

are separated or split. The list is endless.<sup>16</sup>

In this crisis of change, there is still the need for human commitment and love. People need to be challenged and given the opportunity to be creative for life to have meaning. Yet this becomes more and more difficult as change pushes people further apart.<sup>17</sup> There is a hunger for faith today, for a positive attitude about self, for unity. Without these needs being met, Eric Hoffer stated:

...Drastic change, under certain conditions, creates a proclivity for fanatical attitudes, united action, and spectacular manifestations of flouting and defiance; it creates an atmosphere of revolution.<sup>18</sup>

#### The Scope of Change

People are confused about change today. They know that it is significant, but they have not come to grips with the fact that change is all-inclusive. This confusion is especially evident in the way in which the older generation deals with change as compared with the way the younger generation deals with it. This comparison not only helps to reveal the scope of change today; it also helps to explain why dealing with change is so difficult.

Margaret Mead explained that there has always been a generation gap between one generation and another. Today, however, change must "be spelled with capital letters, as

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<sup>16</sup>O'Neill, 21.

<sup>17</sup>O'Neill, 21.

<sup>18</sup>Hoffer, 4.

unique events are--THE Generation Gap--worldwide, something that had never occurred before simultaneously and on such a scale."<sup>19</sup>

Identifying everyone born before World War II as immigrants in time,<sup>20</sup> Margaret Mead also described them as bearers of their own cultures which have no similarity with the culture they have entered. Not merely true of several cultures today, this cultural change is a worldwide phenomenon occurring between the older generation and young people.<sup>21</sup>

The reason change of this magnitude is possible is because virtually every society in the world today is linked to every other society by an "electronically based, intercommunicating network."<sup>22</sup> On the one hand, the young are sharing experiences that none of their elders had or will have. They see the older generation trying to solve new problems with old techniques, making the results very uncertain. The young feel that there is a better way to do things, but they don't how to do them.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, "the older generation will never see repeated in the lives of young people their own unprecedented experience of

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<sup>19</sup>Margaret Mead, Culture and Commitment (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1978), xvii.

<sup>20</sup>Mead, 70.

<sup>21</sup>Mead, 71.

<sup>22</sup>Mead, 64.

<sup>23</sup>Mead, 74.

sequentially emerging change."<sup>24</sup> This break between generations is new, completely new, and it is universal.

It is this that has placed the "gap" in THE Generation Gap. Until the reality of this unprecedented separation is fixed in the minds of both generations, communication will not be established between them.

...As long as adults think that they, like the parents and teachers of old, need only to become introspective, to invoke their own youth, to understand the youth before them, communication is impossible.<sup>25</sup>

#### Dealing with Change

While it is impossible to address every aspect of change, the question must be asked, and the beginning of an answer must be offered, "How can people deal with change today?" Recognition is the first step in dealing with change. For example, once older adults worldwide realize that all of the experiences of youth are different from their own, communication may begin.<sup>26</sup> As difficult as that may be, the next step is not easy either. It involves finding a set of principles both sides will accept and apply to change. Peter Marris, in Loss and Change, described the difficulty like this:

A system of values, by its nature, offers a stable frame of reference by which to interpret events. Wherever it claims to apply, it assigns a consistent ethical meaning.

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<sup>24</sup>Mead, 64.

<sup>25</sup>Mead, 77.

<sup>26</sup>Mead, 77-78.

But a set of principles can only be applied to regular happenings, since their interpretation depends upon recognizing the category into which events fall, and this recognition rests in turn on assimilating the present to past experience.<sup>27</sup>

The difficulty in accomplishing this is evident in two different ways. First, will it be possible to find a set of principles that both the older generation and the younger generation will accept? Second, how can change be interpreted in a way that is understandable and agreeable to both generations? The younger generation has no experience of the past in the same sense that the older generation has. The older generation does not grasp how global change has shaped the younger generation.

There is another problem, especially for Christians. Since change has caused people to question every institution of society, including the religious, Christians have to determine how to reconcile the absolutes of Christian values with other ethical systems with which they may have to deal in life every day. This may prove to be the most difficult aspect of dealing with change. While some are not yet asking the question, it must be asked and addressed to be able to recognize change and to begin communication with those holding a different set of values.

Peter Marris also suggested that conservatism offered important help concerning change. He said:

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<sup>27</sup>Peter Marris, Loss and Change (New York: Random House, 1974), 119.

[Defined fundamentally, conservatism] is a condition of survival in any situation, even for the most radical innovator. We cannot act without some interpretation of what is going on about us, and to interpret it we must first match it with an experience which is familiar.<sup>28</sup>

While the younger generation may balk at the suggestion of anything conservative concerning change because it is so drastic, there is a more significant problem: matching an experience with something familiar. While the older generation may be able to do that, the younger generation has nothing familiar with which to match an experience. Change occurs so quickly today that the young have no storehouse from which to draw experiences which will help them with this challenge.

#### Change and Stability

Because of the rapidity and pervasiveness of change today, it is difficult for people to assimilate change in their lives. It is often superficial, at best.

Change is a fact of life in all cultures.... But whether the change is peaceful or tumultuous, time is needed for stability to be maintained or reasserted. We, as a culture, are at a point where the contact rate and the superficial absorption rate are so rapid that we go from one change to another without real integration, without finding out how to live emotionally, as individual people, with the changes around us.<sup>29</sup>

What is true concerning culture in general as exemplified between generations is also true in individual lives as well. Ellen Goodman noted that most intense conflicts center in the

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<sup>28</sup>Marris, 7-8.

<sup>29</sup>O'Neill, 41.



personal lives of people. It is there that people find the most difficulty integrating the values of their past with a future that is very different. She concluded that no one is immune to those problems relating to change.<sup>30</sup> Though it sounds simplistic, Sandra Lee Smith was correct in saying that "the best way [to adjust to change] is to keep your attitude positive and have an open mind."<sup>31</sup> This is important because "our attitudes affect our behavior, and they also affect what we say."<sup>32</sup> Ellen Goodman pointed out the difficulty in this: "It is easier to change behavior than feelings about that behavior."<sup>33</sup> Because change affects an individual so deeply and in such a critical way, it comes as no surprise that the rapid change being experienced today is traumatic. Stating it in ultimate terms, Margaret Mead said: "We are without an image of the future that can rally our loyalties beyond all question of whether anything is worth dying for."<sup>34</sup>

Stability is needed. Stability is possible, though it might be discovered in new terms and forms. Margaret Mead suggested the following as a way to develop acceptance and, ultimately, stability:

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<sup>30</sup>Goodman, 97.

<sup>31</sup>Smith, 112.

<sup>32</sup>Smith, 33.

<sup>33</sup>Goodman, 85.

<sup>34</sup>Mead, 130.

Here again we can take a cue from the young who seem to want instant utopias. They say: "The future is now." This seems unreasonable and impetuous, and in some of the demands they make it is unrealizable in concrete detail; but here again, I think that they give us the way to reshape our thinking. We must place the future, like the unborn child in the womb of a woman, within a community of men, women, and children, among us, already here, already to be nourished and succored and protected, already in need of things for which, if they are not prepared before it is born, will come too late. So, as the young say, THE FUTURE IS NOW.<sup>35</sup>

One final point: Edwin H. Friedman offered sound advice to the person initiating change and to the person experiencing change. He said that "many, if not most, problems go away if they are not inflamed by reaction..., and reducing or lessening anxiety increases the potential for objective solutions."<sup>36</sup>

### Conclusion

There is no question about the rapidity of change worldwide and its impact on the individual, most dramatically exemplified by how people from different generations understand and deal with change and with each other.

How to deal with change and assimilate it are perhaps only now beginning to be addressed because the problem is so complex. To be sure, an open mind is a necessary beginning. The attitude with which a person looks at change is very important. These are reasonable sounding suggestions, but

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<sup>35</sup>Mead, 91.

<sup>36</sup>Edwin H. Friedman, "Emotional Process in the Marketplace," The Family Therapist as Consultant (New York: Guilford Publications, 1988), 402.

they are superficial. No one can be sure how successfully they will work or how to apply them. Building on these suggestions in the midst of tumultuous change is also uncharted. The role of the leader, which will be discussed in the next several chapters, is very important.

Realizing how sensitive this issue is with people who plead for a moment's peace and stability in their lives, the effort to introduce change and help people to cope with it presents a complex challenge today. For the Christian, however, the solution is not superficial. Jesus Christ is the answer, who offers stability. The Christian is able to see that life in this world is always uncertain, but change, no matter how drastic, does not have the power to undermine faith that is firmly grounded in Jesus Christ. Even changes in worship are able to be assimilated and used to enhance the Christian's relationship with Christ as long as they are introduced in Christian love.

In the next chapters the discussion turns to a consideration of quality, specifically, quality in worship.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### QUALITY IN WORSHIP: A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Turning specifically to change in worship, the first subject under consideration is how to improve quality in worship, because it necessitates change. The question to be addressed in this chapter is this: Is there "a theology of quality" that can be derived from sacred Scripture? Exploration of quality within the context of change, along with the previous discussion of a theology of change, will be especially helpful when initiating change within the congregation.

#### Lutheran Theology and Quality

Quality may be defined in terms of perfection. If it is, is the quest for quality an impossible task for human beings? Jesus, in speaking about the Christian life in the Sermon on the Mount, reinforced this impossibility: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (St. Matthew 5:48). Of course, this is no different from what the Lord told the people of Israel through Moses: "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy'" (Leviticus 19:2).

The Lutheran hermeneutic, that the sinner is justified by grace for Christ's sake through faith, begins with the understanding that all people are imperfect because of their sinfulness. In fact, this hermeneutic affirms with sacred Scripture that, because of that sinful imperfection, no one is able to attain perfection personally in any way or at any time.

Being justified by grace for Christ's sake through faith specifically addresses humanity's imperfect condition and includes it in the gracious action of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. By his vicarious atonement of all people, Jesus Christ takes their imperfections upon himself, carries them to the cross, and pays the complete penalty they incur. At the same time he takes their sinfulness from them and gives them his own righteousness and holiness. St. Paul declared this great exchange:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

In this way, Christians find themselves in two worlds at the same time. On the one hand, they are perfect and holy in Jesus Christ and are perfect in the present reality. On the other hand, they are daily aware of their own inadequacies and

imperfections. They strive for quality, always conscious of the fact that, while they may improve, they will never reach total perfection on this side of eternity.

Therefore, Philip B. Crosby in Quality Without Tears: The Art of Hassle-Free Management offers a more realistic definition of quality for the work place: "Quality has to be defined as conformance to requirements, not as goodness."<sup>1</sup> When addressed to the work place where conformance is necessary, this is a valid definition. However, quality as conformance to requirements is not the way of salvation for Christians. Salvation is a gift; it is given--a positive action of God through Jesus Christ. The change within a person is metanoia, as previously stated.

Quality for the Christian, as it is defined here, is part of sanctification where a person is continually growing into "maturity, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

A helpful biblical example concerning quality is the building of the Temple in Jerusalem by Solomon. In preparation for building, Solomon wrote to Hiram, the King of Tyre, and said, "The Temple I am going to build will be great, because our God is greater than all other gods" (2 Chronicles 2:5). Immediately, however, Solomon admitted his own inadequacies for this undertaking: "But who is able to build

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<sup>1</sup>Philip B. Crosby, Quality Without Tears: The Art of Hassle-Free Management (New York: Penguin Books, A Plume Book, 1985), 64.

a Temple for him, since the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain him? Who then am I to build a Temple for him, except as a place to burn sacrifices before him?" (2 Chronicles 2:6) Solomon was confessing something more than a Temple not being big enough for God. Solomon, a sinner, was not capable of building a Temple that was adequate or worthy of the God who had rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt, given it a land of promise, and placed a king like Solomon on David's throne.

Then, in detail, the dimensions of the Temple and its foundation are measured out. The main hall and the Most Holy Place are paneled with gold. A pair of sculptured cherubim, overlaid with gold, spanned the width of the Temple in the Most Holy Place (2 Chronicles 3:1-17; parallel in 1 Kings 6:1-38). Then the Temple furnishings are described: each piece was made by a craftsman, the best materials were used, and no cost was spared because this was the Temple of the Lord God of heaven (2 Chronicles 4:1-22; parallel in 1 Kings 7:13-51).

The final action before the official dedication of the Temple was to bring the ark of the covenant to the Temple. This was such a triumphant occasion that "King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted" (2 Chronicles 5:6; parallel in 1 Kings 8:5).

The dedication of the Temple must have been most

spectacular: the cloud covering the Temple so that the priests could not enter or carry out their functions (2 Chronicles 5:13), Solomon's blessing of the people (2 Chronicles 6:4-11), and his dedicatory prayer offered humbly before God (2 Chronicles 6:14-42). The dedication concluded with Solomon offering "a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand head of cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats" (2 Chronicles 7:5; parallel in 1 Kings 8:63). Having celebrated for fourteen days, Solomon sent the people home (2 Chronicles 7:9, 10).

The scope of building and dedicating this Temple staggers the imagination. God gave Solomon the desire to undertake this project. God gave people the abilities to work with stone, wood, gold, silver, bronze, and so much more, so that their craftsmanship would make this Temple a fitting place for God's glory to dwell.

Yet the reality that this Temple would never be adequate for God or a perfect offering to him could be seen in the necessity of so many sacrifices offered. Solomon's dedicatory prayer repeatedly acknowledged the sins of the Israelites and the consequences they would experience because of their sins.

Therefore, the tension exists: the quality of what people want to give to God is marred by sin, making perfection impossible. Yet they strive, knowing that in Jesus Christ they are perfect, and, conforming their lives to him, they offer the very best they have to give.



A New Testament example demonstrates the same point: Jesus and his disciples had arrived in Bethany at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus the day before Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. A dinner was given in Jesus' honor. While the men were reclining around the table, "Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair" (St. John 12:3). Judas Iscariot objected to this action, indicating that this perfume was worth about a year's wages. Jesus told him, "Leave her alone. It was meant that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial" (St. John 12:7).

This was an extravagant gesture, as was the building of the Temple. Setting aside Judas' motives, a year's wages was a significant gift. In addition, the role of women in society at that time was not publicly significant. Mary was limited in what she could do for Jesus: either she could sit at his feet and listen, or she could serve in some way as Martha did. The practicality of Judas, which sounds so contemporary (St. John 12:5, "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor?"), becomes an uncomfortable contrast with Jesus' reply (St. John 12:7-8, "It was meant that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.")

Having saved this perfume for Jesus' burial, Mary was confessing what only Jesus and the chief priests would acknowledge, that Jesus would die soon (St. John 12:7, 10).

On the one hand, Mary's gift for Jesus' burial was extravagant, a year's wages. On the other hand, it was a small and inadequate gift for burying him who died to redeem the whole human race on the cross.

It is fitting, therefore, that praise in heaven will focus on the Lamb, Jesus Christ, because he died for all. His blood has erased every sign of sin and imperfection in his people. He has made them worthy to serve him day and night. They will live under the protection of his throne; they will not hunger nor thirst. The sun will not scorch them. The Lamb will be their Shepherd, and he will lead them to springs of living water. God himself will wipe every tear from their eyes (Revelation 7:14-17).

Jesus Christ went on to give St. John a vision of a new heaven and a new earth. In the new Jerusalem, God promised to make his dwelling among his people, the eternal fulfillment of God made flesh, dwelling among them (St. John 1:14). Every evidence of imperfection and sin will be removed, a sign that sin itself will be gone; for, Jesus says, "the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

God the Father "who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new'" (Revelation 21:5). Once again God could look at all that he had made new through Jesus Christ, "and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31); the quality had returned with absolute perfection. For all eternity his servants would not only conform to requirements; their very

best would be to offer God perfect sacrifices of themselves forever in heaven.

Lutheran theology and quality meet in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross. He took humanity's sinfulness from them and suffered death on the cross because of it, and he gave humanity his holiness. They struggle with the perfection that is theirs in Christ and the sin that continues to plague them daily. They struggle, wanting to offer the highest quality and perfection to Christ, knowing that they will never be able to reach that perfection on this side of the grave. So they offer the best they have to give, the quality they are able to offer, always returning to Christ and his cross for mercy and forgiveness.

Therefore, understanding the Lutheran hermeneutic as the starting point, the quest for quality in worship is reasonable and appropriate. Worship is to be the very best that God's people have to offer him in and through Jesus Christ. Though they will not reach perfection here, there are always ways in which they can improve their worship of him. Those, who are responsible for leading worship and coordinating the efforts of all who assist in worship, need to examine all of the details that must be addressed for worship to run smoothly. They need to correct those things that are not working well. They need to find ways to make the various details work even better. To do this, changes will have to be introduced. Some of them may be subtle; some may be dramatic. To be able to

offer God the very best in worship, his people must be concerned about quality; to achieve quality, it will be necessary to introduce change. The question to be addressed in the next chapter is, "How is change to be introduced in a positive way so that it will be helpful?"

CHAPTER FIVE  
THE DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE

Continuing the discussion of quality, these questions will be addressed in this chapter: What are the components of quality? To promote quality in worship, how are changes to be introduced, using the principle of adiaphora? Who is the agent of change within the congregation?

Careful preparations must be made to determine the specific areas in which quality is to be examined. The people who influence those areas must be involved. They must understand why quality is being addressed, how they themselves will be involved, and why their involvement is necessary.

Once this is complete, the process of education continues by looking at what is presently being done and how to monitor the quality of what is being done. How to evaluate and how to report are both part of this educational process.

The public worship (Saturdays, 6:30 p.m., and Sundays, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.) at St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, was the subject of the quality study. The Senior Associate Pastor initiated the study; and, with the help of the Associate Pastor, the Music Director, the

members of the Board of Lay Ministry (formerly, Board of Elders), the members of the Worship Committee, and the members of the Altar Guild, the study was introduced, monitored, and evaluated.

There were three phases to this study with the goal of quality improvement in worship: preparation and education, monitoring and reporting, and evaluation.

It was important for the participants to understand that evaluating quality is an ongoing process. Formal reports may not continue indefinitely (though they did continue beyond the duration of this study), but the concern for quality does not end.

#### Quality: A Win-Win Perspective

In the previous chapter, a definition of quality was stated by Philip B. Crosby: "conformance to requirements, not as goodness."<sup>1</sup> In another place, Crosby says that quality improvement "is built on getting everyone to do it right the first time."<sup>2</sup> He expands on the definition: "Getting people to do better all the worthwhile things they ought to be doing anyway."<sup>3</sup> Crosby admits that this seems to be a reasonable definition, but two things must be remembered: first, "people" includes everyone involved; he applied this to

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<sup>1</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 64.

<sup>2</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 59.

<sup>3</sup>Philip B. Crosby, Quality Is Free: The Art of Making Quality Certain (New York: A Mentor Book, 1980), 3.

business and said that this includes every level of the business, including top management. Second, this definition subtly implies that the person responsible for quality improvement must be a motivator.

There are different forms of motivation. Some, because they are forced, are temporarily effective; but, because more people have not taken ownership, its effects are often grudging and limited. Others, while taking more time to accomplish, ultimately involve more people in taking ownership, and they prove to be more effective and more permanent. In other words, "quality is ballet, not hockey."<sup>4</sup>

Seifert and Clinebell studied the role of church leaders as agents of change and concluded that motivation is the first step in successful change. Their five-step process includes:

(1) Motivation and preparation, (2) diagnosis of the problem and consideration of alternative courses of action, (3) the formulation of a strategy and of day-to-day tactics, (4) carrying out the plan of action, and finally (5) review, evaluation, and the stabilization of change.<sup>5</sup>

The reason for addressing quality, whether at work or in worship, must be made clear. "The innovator is not an opponent of the old; he is a proponent of the new."<sup>6</sup> The distinction is important, and those involved in the process must understand it. Several problems may be evident;

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<sup>4</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 13.

<sup>5</sup>Lyle E. Schaller, The Change Agent (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972), 87.

<sup>6</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 55.

addressing quality is important as a starting point to solve the problems. Yet it is never the purpose to solve one problem by creating several others. In Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge, Bennis and Nanus state that a basic operating principle for any company is to strive for excellence out of a win-win perspective.<sup>7</sup>

Applied to worship, the goal is striving for excellence without alienating anyone, especially those who assist in planning and leading worship. Those areas in which improvement is necessary must be discussed without accusing or pointing blame. All who are involved in this process need to see that they are important, that their contributions are valuable, and that they will not merely be required "to learn how to obey."<sup>8</sup> Through the process, they must see that they have nothing to lose and everything to gain by open and willing participation. When each participant understands that, a win-win situation has been created.

For the Christian this is significant because it is built on the understanding that there are "ethical, moral, and religious dimensions.... Christians have been given some absolutes which they accept by definition."<sup>9</sup> Confessing the presence of Jesus Christ in life every day, living the

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<sup>7</sup>Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge (New York: Harper Perennial, 1985), 119.

<sup>8</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 95.

<sup>9</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 158.



certainty of Christ's forgiveness, and knowing that they are accountable for their lives, Christians are careful about what they do and how they do it. They are concerned about imitating Jesus Christ, which means that they love other people, consider them valuable, and want only the best for them. They know that life and work cannot be lived out by "increasing the number of simple, rigid, and external rules"<sup>10</sup> because the issues are people-oriented and the problems complex.

#### The Pareto Principle

Since several problems may have to be addressed when striving to improve quality, "The Pareto Principle" is important. Stated simply, this principle is a universal: "the vital few and the trivial many."<sup>11</sup> J. M. Juran explained that managers are usually aware that the problems and situations they face are not of equal importance. He cites an example from marketing where 20% of the customers account for over 80% of the sales. Juran then applied this to quality control:

A major use of the Pareto principle is in the design of quality improvement programs. Here the principle has so wide an application that no intelligent approach to quality improvement is possible without it. Improvement can be justified only for the vital few projects. It is these projects which contain the bulk of the opportunity

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<sup>10</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 158.

<sup>11</sup>J. M. Juran, Quality Control Handbook, Section 2, "Basic Concepts," (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979), 2-16.

for improvement in failure rates, quality costs, downtime, process yields, etc.<sup>12</sup>

In other words, first it is necessary to list and prioritize the problems. Then work should always begin on the most significant problem first and proceed from there.

### Anticipation

Ultimately, those responsible for quality and for necessary changes in worship to make quality a reality will demonstrate their effectiveness, at least in part, by their expectations.<sup>13</sup> They will begin to anticipate where problems might occur, rather than wait and react to problems when they occur. This anticipation works to reduce frustration, not to mention time and effort, when something goes wrong.<sup>14</sup>

An anticipatory style of leadership is especially important today because there is such rapid social change; in fact, it is "one of the few constants."<sup>15</sup> "Good anticipation is the result of good strategic exploration,"<sup>16</sup> Joel Barker said. Discovering the possible futures, he claims, means that a person can anticipate those futures. Strategic exploration includes those things that influence one's own perceptions and

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<sup>12</sup>Juran, Section 2, "Basic Concepts," 2-17.

<sup>13</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 67.

<sup>14</sup>Joel Arthur Barker, Paradigms: The Business of Discovering the Future (New York: Harper Business, 1992), 26.

<sup>15</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 12.

<sup>16</sup>Barker, 28.

learning that more than one right answer is possible. Then it is necessary to digest what has been gathered and prioritize what has been learned. This prepares the way for mapping out a path from the present to the future. Finally, it is necessary to paint a picture in words or drawings of what was discovered about the future.<sup>17</sup> Knowing that they cannot know the future, Christians are free to do this because Jesus Christ holds both the present and the future securely in his hands.

The reason for including anticipation here is because this is the ultimate goal for quality, including quality in worship. Rather than reacting to what has happened, it is refreshing to know that there is a way to anticipate where things might go wrong and correct them before they do go wrong.

A word needs to be added here concerning the anticipation of conflicts specifically. This is not the same as "looking forward to conflict."<sup>18</sup> Knowing the reality of conflict and anticipating it as a normal part of the process of change, may help to alleviate some of the fear and avoidance. In addition, anticipating conflict may help to remove it as a diversion, which blocks planning and improvement. Because the symptoms of conflict often have high visibility, the leader

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<sup>17</sup>Barker, 29.

<sup>18</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 166.

who anticipates conflict is better prepared to distinguish between surface symptoms and real hurts.<sup>19</sup> In other words, because conflict seems to be occurring more frequently because of change, the wise leader anticipates it, rather than waits and reacts to it.

Because conflict is part of the process of change and of trying to improve quality, those initiating changes must always recognize the possibility of polarization. Because it is a barrier that impedes progress, polarization should obviously be prevented if possible. This prevention may take on several facets. Keeping the lines of communication open is fundamental. It is also necessary to keep the focus on the issues, not personalities. Because of concern for people which should always be the Christian's response because of Christ, trying to understand another person's opinion and attitude helps, though this is not easy to accomplish.

Paralysis is destructive; it is, therefore, important when planning change to take the initiative and open new avenues for discussion, as well as new opportunities for people to minister and to serve. First Corinthians 12 emphasizes that the Christian recognizes and appreciates the diversity of gifts with which the Holy Spirit has blessed the members of the Christian Church. Building a sense of trust in the midst of diversity makes it possible to confront and

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<sup>19</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 167.

discuss dissent creatively.<sup>20</sup>

### The Responsibility of the Leader

When Yen Ho was about to take up his duties as tutor to the heir of Long, Duke of Wei, he went to Ch'u Po Yu for advice. "I have to deal," he said, "with a man of depraved and murderous disposition.... How is one to deal with a man of this sort?" "I am glad," said Ch'u Po Yu, "that you asked this question.... The first thing you must do is not to improve him, but to improve yourself." (Taoist Story of Ancient China)<sup>21</sup>

We are living at a time when, not only followers are reluctant, but leaders are scarce. Economic and job insecurity have infected all levels of competency. In the 1970's, when President Jimmy Carter made his "Malaise Speech," people responded with bumper stickers that said simply, "Impeach Someone." During a more recent election, bumper stickers read, "Don't Vote. It Will Only Encourage Them." It is in this kind of atmosphere that the leader must work today.<sup>22</sup>

As part of this change, there has been a shift from bestowed to earned authority. There was a time when the parish pastor was given a degree of authority by ordination and level of education as a pastor. "Today few pastors can depend on ordination, title, and office as sources of authority," Lyle Schaller concludes. "Today authority must be

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<sup>20</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 169-171.

<sup>21</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 55.

<sup>22</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 12.

earned."<sup>23</sup> In part, this is true because many within a congregation may have received more and higher degrees than the pastor.

No leader, no pastor, can ever assume that he himself does not need improvement. With the people he serves, he too must stand at the foot of the cross and seek forgiveness from Christ. In addition, continuing education for leaders at all levels is necessary. When a leader sees the need for his own improvement, he is better able to lead others toward improvement. It means that he understands his own strengths, and he is able to nurture and develop those strengths. Even more important is his ability to see the difference between the organization's needs and his own strengths and weaknesses.<sup>24</sup>

In a similar way, Theodore Friend III, the past president of Swarthmore College, defined leadership. He referred to it as "heading into the wind with such knowledge of oneself and such collaborative energy as to move others to wish to follow."<sup>25</sup> He adds the interesting thought that the angle into the wind is less important than choosing an angle and sticking reasonably to it. This means, of course, that

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<sup>23</sup>Lyle C. Schaller, Strategies of Change (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 64.

<sup>24</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 61-62.

<sup>25</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 44.

"leading requires that one know where one is taking oneself."<sup>26</sup>

Calvin Coolidge added another dimension to leadership: persistence; he penned the following:

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with great talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence, determination alone are omnipotent.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the attributes listed above for a good leader, it is also important to realize that, whoever has the responsibility of leading where quality improvement is concerned, begins his task with certain presuppositions. Lyle Schaller in The Change Agent identifies "a few" of them, fifteen in all.<sup>28</sup>

While not all of them are pertinent here, several need to be discussed. The leader responsible for quality improvement must be inside the organization; an outsider does not understand the ramifications of a given problem and, therefore, is not capable of offering reasonable solutions. The previous experiences of the leader, if used as a guide, will be a great asset in helping to solve present problems. When a leader concerned with quality improvement becomes more sensitive to the concerns and needs of people, the

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<sup>26</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 44.

<sup>27</sup>Bennis and Nanus, 45.

<sup>28</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 136-138.

organization's "operation increases in complexity and the intuitive response tends to be counterproductive."<sup>29</sup> In other words, the quick and ready response is not adequate when trying to formulate comprehensive solutions. The danger is that many are looking and pressing for quick answers and solutions.

Again, someone from the inside is able to grasp the unwritten policies by which every organization is governed. The leader is able to help others see, understand, evaluate, and possibly change these traditions when necessary. Schaller maintains that "especially nonprofit organizations, which do not have easy-to-read evaluations of the fulfillment of purpose, tend to move survival and institutional maintenance to the top of the priority list."<sup>30</sup> This tolls a death-knell, especially for the Christian Church, whose primary purpose is mission. While difficult to change and more difficult when confronted head-on, this becomes the most serious problem to be addressed concerning quality improvement.

In quoting Steve Allen, Lyle Schaller offers a final, but important, suggestion: "Humor is a social lubricant that helps us get over some of the bad spots.... Humor is a humanizing agent."<sup>31</sup> Humor, offered in good taste, helps the

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<sup>29</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 137.

<sup>30</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 138.

<sup>31</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 138.



leader to relax and be more human with those with whom he is working to improve quality. It also helps those, who will hopefully accept the proposed changes, to relax and see these changes more positively.

To summarize, God offered the very best in sacrifice on the cross for our salvation. Because of all that Jesus Christ continues to do for us, the church responds in worship with the very best it has to give. Because of sin, the best is often tarnished, and it is necessary for the leaders in the church to initiate changes that will help to improve the quality of the church's work and worship. Because change is difficult for people today, even those changes that are to help and be beneficial must be introduced sensitively so that the relationship between Christ and his people is not jeopardized.

CHAPTER SIX  
INITIATING CHANGE

The recognition of the biblical foundation for change, its dimensions, and its impact on people's relationship with Christ in their lives is of first importance when initiating change. Then the person, responsible for initiating change that will help to improve the quality in worship, must plan and organize how best to produce change so that they will be comfortable and positive for those who are to assimilate the change in their lives.

Few Christian authors have addressed the issues of change and quality. A number of the authors quoted in this chapter are from the world of business and industry where these issues have been taken very seriously in recent years. For the purpose of this paper, it is necessary to take their findings and shape them for use in the Christian Church.

Organizing for Improvement

The effective leader, as stated above, needs to be an insider, which means that knowing where the organization has been is necessary before being able to lead it in the right direction. If the leader does not understand how the

organization functions officially and unofficially, it is impossible to know when tasks are complete or if they have been successful.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning worship, the pastor is the logical person responsible for initiating quality improvement, forming a committee of and soliciting help from those who lead worship with him. For this steering committee to be most effective, Juran concludes, "membership...should be based on capacity to assist the team in making these essential contributions."<sup>2</sup> For quality improvement with the least amount of resistance, the steering committee should consist of members involved with the problem at all levels.

When the committee first meets, it would be wise for the members to evaluate how open to innovation this organization is. There are certain questions, offered by Lyle Schaller in The Change Agent, which help with this evaluation. For instance, is this organization only concerned about yesterday and perpetuating itself, or is it open to the contemporary social scene? Do the members recognize that problems exist? Is the focus of the organization on people, rather than products or things? Is the leadership ready to use relevant and available information from a variety of disciplines to accomplish its goal? Is there a built-in monitor that helps the organization to evaluate itself against its purpose? When

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<sup>1</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 86.

<sup>2</sup>Juran, Section 16, "Quality Improvement," 16-10.

new ideas are proposed, does the organization know how to maximize its potential and where a person would function most effectively in the life of the organization?<sup>3</sup> This will help the steering committee know, at least in part, what to anticipate when it initiates changes in the organization.

The major concern of the steering committee must then be to establish "unity of purpose."<sup>4</sup> This is accomplished by identifying the problems that need to be addressed and then by prioritizing them. Then it is time to begin with the most serious concern, discussing it thoroughly and respecting the contributions of each member, identifying the possible solutions, and determining who will be affected by these possible solutions. Basically, there are three levels of change. The first level of change means continuing to do what has been done, only better. The second level of change is more complicated because it may involve changing a system by which an organization has been functioning for some time. A third level of change means a major departure from what had gone before.<sup>5</sup>

When the level of change has been determined, then the steering committee must formulate how to introduce the most thorough and effective solution for the good of the

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<sup>3</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 58-60.

<sup>4</sup>Juran, Section 16, "Quality Improvement," 16-9.

<sup>5</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 91.

organization.<sup>6</sup> Introducing the solution, which is to improve quality, must be done with care. Explanation and education are very important, so as not to alienate anyone effected by this change. As the solution is in the process of working, it is necessary to analyze its effectiveness. This diagnosis must be done at all levels of participation.

If, for example, a steering committee wants to expand the number and variety of worship experiences in the congregation, the committee needs to be prepared to address several concerns. Many of the people who regularly attend worship will be affected by this proposal. No one argument will persuade everyone to support this change. Normally people need time in which to convince themselves that this change is good and necessary. While everyone protects his own self-interests, no two people have the same self-interests; therefore, each will respond to this change differently. Unless people are convinced that this change addresses a pressing need, they will generally decide to support the status quo. If a steering committee is going to err, therefore, it is better to err on the side of too much education and support, rather than too little. Finally, the only safe assumption is that people will support the status quo, rather than a change.<sup>7</sup>

Lyle Schaller concludes that, when internal conflict is

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<sup>6</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 96.

<sup>7</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 30.

involved in an organization, such as the church, it is extremely difficult to secure a broad base of support to implement change. Sometimes the answer is not acceptance or rejection of the proposed change; it may be a compromise that evades the factor that motivated the proposal. For the greatest good, it is usually best to postpone any proposals for change until the conflict is resolved.<sup>8</sup>

Realizing that this is not an easy task, the steering committee needs to work quietly, but persistently, to create a climate for quality improvement. The committee should use every tradition and custom of the organization that would help to build plans for quality. Those people who are respected and influential should be consulted. What they say and do will help legitimize the proposed plans if they are in support. The grapevine, more often than not, will be harmful --unless it can be tapped positively.<sup>9</sup>

It is a known fact that there are people within a congregation who hold a great deal of power,<sup>10</sup> though they do not serve on any board or committee. Obviously, it is important to know who these people are. When plans for quality improvement are being made, whether these will involve major changes or not, these people need to be made aware of what is happening and why it is happening. If they are able

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<sup>8</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 33.

<sup>9</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 43-47.

<sup>10</sup>Schaller, The Change Agent, 150-151.

to understand this and agree with it, their support will be invaluable. What's more, these people could help immensely to make the grapevine more positive.

In Strategies for Change, Lyle Schaller offers "A Checklist for Change Agents." While it is an extensive list, twenty-five items, it is included here because of its importance and relevance:

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| 1. Earn trust.                           | 14. Give people time.                                 |
| 2. Life is relational.                   | 15. Avoid surprises!                                  |
| 3. Ask questions.                        | 16. Decide between permission and approval.           |
| 4. Define the issue.                     | 17. Define the level.                                 |
| 5. Count only the yes votes.             | 18. Create <u>ad hoc</u> study committees.            |
| 6. Affirm tradition.                     | 19. Emphasize redundant communications.               |
| 7. Build on strengths.                   | 20. Begin with winners.                               |
| 8. Concentrate on one-at-a-time.         | 21. Use temporary systems.                            |
| 9. Use addition, not subtraction.        | 22. Affirm stability zones.                           |
| 10. Identify legitimizers.               | 23. Mandated change is different.                     |
| 11. Identify potential support groups.   | 24. Do not accept a defeat as final.                  |
| 12. Identify potential opponents groups. | 25. When necessary, change the players. <sup>11</sup> |
| 13. Rally the cheerleaders.              |   |

The extensiveness of this list demonstrates several things: change is an extremely complex issue. To try to take a shortcut suggests almost certain disaster. To effect change, plans must be carefully made and followed, evaluating each step along the way. The checklist (above) implies honesty and integrity at each step. There can be no hidden agendas; nothing is held back. Finally, it is openness and trust that will make it possible for change to occur and

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<sup>11</sup>Schaller, Strategies for Change, 100-106.

quality to be improved.

### Motivation

J. M. Juran defines motivation as "the process of stimulating people to act in ways which serve the needs of the organization which is providing the stimulus."<sup>12</sup> Juran goes on to explain that quality is not limited to reducing willful errors but includes the whole spectrum of activities in which fitness for use are addressed.<sup>13</sup> To motivate, it is necessary to recognize that both attitude, a state of mind, and behavior, a state of action, must be addressed. One without the other will definitely hinder quality improvement.

The hierarchy of human needs, made famous by Maslow and expanded by McGregor,<sup>14</sup> emphasizes that, if certain basic human needs are not met, it is difficult for a person to be concerned about issues, such as quality. For motivation to be effective, therefore, it is necessary to show concern for the people in the organization, which means being sensitive to their needs.

Studies concerning human needs have also shown that job satisfactions and dissatisfactions are not opposites. Those concerns that indicate job dissatisfactions include wages, job security, and working conditions. When these needs are met,

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<sup>12</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-14.

<sup>13</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-14.

<sup>14</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-15.



"they become accepted as normal and provide no stimulus to superior performance."<sup>15</sup>

Juran concluded that the following are the central purposes common to motivation:

To make each employee aware that the company's quality performance is important to his well-being; e.g., quality makes sales, sales make jobs

To convince each that there is something he can do, in his daily work, to contribute to this quality performance

To show each one just what it is he can do to make this contribution on his regular job

To establish and record the best way of doing each job, as a reference for future training and audit

To provide means for receiving and acting on employee ideas and suggestions for improving quality

To provide a scoreboard for measuring performance and progress<sup>16</sup>

Juran also adds a warning that the shape of the motivational program must not imitate that of another organization. Each organization is unique, and any motivational program must be shaped to the needs of that organization.<sup>17</sup>

Obviously, the steering committee is very important for the initiation and ultimate success of motivation. The members must be prepared through the motivational process to help those at every level of the organization implement and diagnose quality improvement. A realistic time schedule, which is considerate of the people involved, must be adopted; this, too, is a sign of concern for people and will help the

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<sup>15</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-15.

<sup>16</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-24 to 18-25.

<sup>17</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-25.

plan to be successful. Advance publicity and information also give those involved opportunity to prepare for all that will be necessary to make quality improvements.<sup>18</sup>

#### The On-Going Process of Education

The effective leader knows that "changing mind sets is the hardest of management jobs."<sup>19</sup> Therefore, he also knows the importance of education as an on-going process. He understands the importance of his position, that concern for quality and improvement must begin with him. The standards for quality, which he initiates, must be seen as serious standards from which there is to be no deviation. It is because he knows the importance of each person in the organization, encouraging that responsibility be fulfilled correctly the first time. Accuracy and completeness are equally important, and each person's commitment to quality contribute to the success of the organization.<sup>20</sup>

To educate the organization concerning quality, the requirements must be clear, conformance to those requirements must be measurable, and reporting differences accurately must be seen as necessary. This means that all people in the organization must see that they, along with everyone else, are responsible for making quality routine. Because this is the

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<sup>18</sup>Juran, Section 18, "Motivation," 18-26.

<sup>19</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 24.

<sup>20</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 8 (expanded on pages 155-171).

way the organization approaches quality, continual review and planning become a way of life so that problems and defects do not occur.<sup>21</sup>

For this concern about quality to be effective continually, those in the organization need to know what progress is being made. Those, who are especially helpful, need to be recognized by the organization. This helps to emphasize the importance of each person, that each person is capable of identifying error, waste, and opportunity. Therefore, training is a routine activity for all tasks, and policies on quality have to be reviewed regularly to be sure that they are clear.<sup>22</sup>

#### Continuous Improvement

The Japanese call it kaizen, continuous improvement. This begins with the belief that everyone can be inventive and innovative. It is asking people to do it better tomorrow than they did today.<sup>23</sup> Joel Barker explains that kaizen is "the ability to make very small improvements...every day. Every day you are expected to find some way to get just one tenth of 1 percent improvement in what you do or make."<sup>24</sup>

Behind this is the belief that, if people are given the

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<sup>21</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 8-9 (expanded at pages 155-171).

<sup>22</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 9 (expanded at pages 155-171).

<sup>23</sup>Barker, 113.

<sup>24</sup>Barker, 80.

opportunity to have an investment in the change-process, the results will be more dramatic and, probably, more immediate. The people will believe that they are making a difference and that they are competent to do so. They will feel a part of the organization, a community or a family where each person is important and valuable. They will enjoy what they are doing, and working together will be fun.<sup>25</sup>

To make this a reality, quality control needs to be defined carefully and applied at every level of the organization. One definition offered by Juran is this: "Quality control is the regulatory process through which we measure actual quality performance, compare it with standards, and act on the difference."<sup>26</sup> Philip Crosby spoke about this as "zero defects"<sup>27</sup>: "The performance standard must be zero defects, not 'That's close enough.'"

In another book by Philip Crosby, he stresses that quality is not elegance; it is conformance. He says that "there is no such thing as the economics of quality; it is always cheaper to do the job right the first time.... The only performance standard is zero defects."<sup>28</sup>

Crosby maintains that quality is measurable "by the

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<sup>25</sup>Bennis and Nanus. 82-83.

<sup>26</sup>Juran, Section 2, "Quality Control," 2-11.

<sup>27</sup>Crosby, Quality Without Tears, 84.

<sup>28</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free. 111-112.

oldest and most respected of measurements -- cold hard cash,"<sup>29</sup> but what does that have to do with the Christian Church? While it may be possible to measure the quality of a congregation's ministry by the amount of its offerings each week, that is not biblical. Besides, there are too many variables for that to be accurate consistently. What the congregation had been taught in the past concerning stewardship, its economic make-up, the breakdown by age of the congregation, and whether the members are recent converts or have a long tradition in Lutheranism-- these, and more, will have an impact on the weekly offering.

There is another problem concerning the attitudes of some, who believe that, because the Christian Church is primarily an organization made up of volunteers, something less than quality should be acceptable. Concerning worship, zero defect means setting a standard by which each aspect of worship is to be evaluated and judged. This becomes "a systematic way of guaranteeing that organized activities happen the way they are planned."<sup>30</sup> There are no "cash incentives" in this; hopefully, there is the desire to offer God the best there is to give and to work together as a community, striving for improvement in quality.

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<sup>29</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 15.

<sup>30</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 19.

Implementation of Quality Improvement in Worship  
at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oconomowoc

Discussion about quality improvement in worship at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oconomowoc, began with the Worship Committee, which includes representation from its governing board, the Board of Lay Ministry. The "why" and the "how" of quality improvement were discussed at length. The members of the committee immediately grasped the significance, unanimously agreeing that quality should always be a high priority.

The "how," while also important, was more difficult to undertake. Various options were discussed, including the possibility of detailed instructions and evaluations for each Service. It was finally decided that simple, but pointed, instructions were more practical. Among other concerns was the amount of time people had before a service to accomplish their responsibilities. At the same time, any evaluation after the service needed to be brief, reasonable, and pointed. (If there were a special Service which demanded intricate instructions, the people involved should be contacted prior to the day of the service. This would give opportunity for discussion and questions to be answered.)

Therefore, the instruction forms (Appendix A, Figures 1 and 2, pages 126-128) were planned simply and flexibly. They were easy to read and to fill out. If something needed to be added, it could be done. The evaluation forms (Appendix A,

Figures 3, 4, and 5, pages 129-132) contained "yes" or "no," questions, which could be circled by the person doing the evaluation. When "no" was circled, a comment or explanation was requested.

Since the Worship Committee is responsible to the Board of Lay Ministry, the pastors and the Lay Ministry representative on the Worship Committee presented the plans for quality improvement. It was pointed out that, for this to be effective, each Lay Minister would have to agree to participate and cooperate. It was explained that there would be an instruction form (Appendix A, Figure 1, page 126-127) prepared for each Service, and the Lay Minister should study that carefully because it will help him prepare for the Service. Immediately after the Service, the Lay Minister was asked to take three-to-five minutes to fill out the evaluation form (Appendix A, Figure 3, pages 129-130). (There were several questions concerning the Ushers because that was one area presenting repeated problems.) There was unanimous agreement to cooperate.

The same type of forms, pre-service instruction and evaluation after the Service (Appendix A, Figures 2 and 4, pages 128, 131), were prepared for the Altar Guild. The pastors felt that the Altar Guild had been taken for granted. While there had been a few discrepancies when setting up for Holy Communion, the Altar Guild was efficient, prompt. It was felt that better communication would help the Altar Guild to

know that it was appreciated, and it would help to make something good even better.

Therefore, the pre-service instruction form (Appendix A, Figure 2, page 128) was simple to fill out and use by the Altar Guild members. The evaluation form (Appendix A, Figure 4, page 131) included a question concerning equipment and supplies, giving an Altar Guild member the opportunity to identify a problem or concern immediately. In the past, some of these problems and concerns did not surface for weeks or months.

Because the Music Director is a full-time member of the staff, it was decided that a pre-service instruction form was not necessary. The pastors and the Music Director meet weekly and discuss the needs and concerns for each Service. However, the evaluation form (Appendix A, Figure 5, page 132) was developed because the Music Director is at the organ in the balcony and, literally, is able to observe what the pastors, the Lay Ministers, the Ushers, the Acolytes, and the Altar Guild members do or do not do. From the balcony, it was felt that the Music Director had the opportunity to see worship from a wider perspective than anyone else. That evaluation could, therefore, be especially helpful.

In addition, while no forms were planned, the pastors agreed to meet weekly. First, they would evaluate their conduct of the service the previous weekend with its strengths and weaknesses. A positive working relationship needs to



exist between the pastors because there may be times when the evaluation is pointed and critical of one or both. This evaluation often continues when the pastors and the Music Director meet together.

Second, the pastors would also discuss in detail the plans for worship on the coming weekend. This would also be part of the discussion when the Music Director met with the pastors. This discussion concerns improvement in quality. It addresses the immediate present. Planning for worship in general needs to be done weeks and months in advance by the Music Director and the pastors. Only with advanced planning is it possible for the Worship Committee to be effective.

#### The Next Steps

With careful instruction, the appropriate people were included in these plans for quality in worship. As the responses were evaluated, the pastors reviewed them first; then they were taken to the Worship Committee for further evaluation and discussion. There, the problems were discussed and appropriate actions planned and executed. From the Worship Committee, the concerns and all plans of action were reported to the Board of Lay Ministry, at which point suggestions and/or revisions were made.

The Worship Committee has indicated that it would be flexible, revising forms when expedient, adding to the forms as necessary. Once every three months the committee would evaluate quality improvement and then determine what steps

should be taken, if the forms should continue to be used, if another method of evaluation should be tried. The Worship Committee agreed that improvement in quality would be an on-going concern which never ends.

#### Concerning the Altar Guild

The forms that were developed for the Altar Guild, both as instruction before services and as evaluation after services, have proven helpful. While they were not revolutionary in their impact, they helped to give the members of the Altar Guild confidence about their work. It was clear to them what work needed to be done prior to worship concerning preparation for the Lord's Supper, paraments, and banners. While it did not eliminate all of the questions, it helped the members to see that their involvement and time are important to the worship of the congregation.

This importance was also evident by the evaluations the Altar Guild members filled out. It has begun to show them that what they do has an impact on how smoothly worship flows, and it also means that someone is taking the time to listen to their concerns as they are expressed on the evaluation forms. One example was the suggestion by one Altar Guild member to have wooden matches available for the acolytes to use. This suggestion, which came from an acolyte to this member of the Altar Guild, would not have been addressed so quickly, possibly for several months. Because it was reported on the evaluation form, it was addressed much more quickly.

While it was evident that the members of the Altar Guild did not refer to either of these forms immediately or consistently, gentle reminders were made so that now their usage is almost unanimous. These forms will continue to be made available because quality continues to be a concern.

Concerning the form with instructions, several members of the Altar Guild have indicated that this is extremely helpful to them and requested that this be continued beyond the scope of this study. The form was also changed to include a listing of any services that were scheduled for the coming week, such as, midweek worship and weddings. Because there is a Saturday evening service with the Lord's Supper every week, it is important for a member of the Altar Guild to know if there is a wedding on Saturday and at what time the Lord's Supper may be prepared for worship.

Concerning the evaluation forms, the members of the Altar Guild felt that these were important for reporting problems or damaged items. While the forms requested an evaluation of how worship went in general, it was discovered that some Altar Guild members were not necessarily in worship, though they had prepared Holy Communion for that service. As a result, they were asked to evaluate the service that they did attend.

One difficulty that became evident for the members of the Altar Guild was communicating questions or problems to the appropriate places. While the evaluation form was helping with that, it initially places the problem in the hands of the

pastor, who receives the evaluation and, in turn, must pass it on. This will continue to be refined.

#### Concerning the Board of Lay Ministry

While the forms for instruction and evaluation for members of the Board of Lay Ministry were not revolutionary, yet, in a quiet and simple way, they have proved helpful. Like the members of the Altar Guild, the Lay Ministers are more confident about their responsibilities. When they arrive prior to the service, there are standard things for them to do, and the instructional form alerts them to any unusual aspects of that service.

Most of the Lay Ministers are consistent in using the evaluation forms, as well. There is some question, however, about how effectively they are using the form.

Concerning the form of instruction, Lay Ministers have asked when a form had not been posted. (For each of three midweek services in Advent, the pastor did not prepare a form and has since decided that one will be prepared in the future.)

Concerning the evaluation forms, several questions address the work of the ushers. Because the ushering teams have been a problem since some arrive at the last minute or not at all, this form was to help address this concern. Out of thirty-four evaluation forms returned (covering as many services), eight indicated some kind of problem with the ushers. That is a little less than 24% of all the services.

This suggests one of two things: either the Lay Ministers are not using the evaluation forms properly, or the problems with the ushers may not be as severe as had been thought. This will have be addressed specifically.

#### Concerning the Music Director

While an evaluation form was prepared for the Music Director to use, this practice was modified very quickly. The one evaluation that the Music Director prepared was extremely detailed and five pages long. While some of her concerns were valid, her comments on her own playing were not helpful or necessary.

Therefore, it was decided that, when the pastors and the Music Director meet weekly, some time would be spent evaluating worship from the previous weekend. They have promised to be open and honest with each other about all aspects of those services. This, rather than a written evaluation, has proven much more productive and helpful.

#### General Considerations

First, there is a feeling that worship is running more smoothly, with fewer problems. These forms are not in any way unusual, but those involved in worship preparation better understand what they are to be doing. They also know that their concerns will be heard and acted on.

Second, while the members in general may not even realize that this experiment had been going on for over three months,

quality concerns are usually behind the scenes. Quality may generally be taken for granted--until it isn't there.

Third, preparing these forms and using the evaluations are worth the effort. They help to prove that worship is important, that time and effort must be taken if worship is to have quality.

### Conclusion

Improvement in quality, wherever the concern shows itself, offers something positive to the participants. How they see themselves improves, and they begin to recognize how important they are because they are able to be more effective.<sup>31</sup> They discover that they are sharing in an organization, which depends on them for efficiency and getting things done.<sup>32</sup> Here, the importance of motivation is seen.

When members of an organization realize this, they are also motivated to do the best they are able to do. This is the result of caring. The members know that the organization is concerned for them, and, in turn, they care about what they are doing. Joel Barker said, "Without caring there can be no quality."<sup>33</sup> When people care, the organization is revived, and it is immediately evident to anyone entering the organization for the first time.

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<sup>31</sup>Barker, 135.

<sup>32</sup>Barker, 135.

<sup>33</sup>Barker, 136.

Those who lead where quality is concerned can pay the members of the organization no greater honor than to listen to what the members have to say. Of course, this cannot be superficial. It must be sincere, with all the leaders demonstrating that they have listened.<sup>34</sup> Nor can this be limited to one or two conversations; the leader must be ready to listen repeatedly. This also points to the need to concentrate on quality consistently.

More than that, when the leaders and the members cooperate with each other so that a task is accomplished, the organization begins to see the power of synergism, that the whole organization working together is greater than the sum of its parts.<sup>35</sup> Helping makes the way easier for others. It means being available, putting in a good word for someone else, not saying a bad word for someone who deserves it. It is telling someone the truth, though it is painful to do. Genuine interest in people produces results. To do this a person cannot be selfish, and it takes a great deal of patience.<sup>36</sup>

Joel Barker offers a startling conclusion:

All the major religions of the world--Confucianism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam--have some variation on the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

The Total Quality movement operationalizes that

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<sup>34</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 125.

<sup>35</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 126.

<sup>36</sup>Crosby, Quality Is Free, 127.

rule. Do it right the first time. Do better tomorrow than you did today. Those imperatives sound very much like what is being asked by the major religions.

The quest for excellence is a way, without a compromise, to bring the spirit of God back into the workplace. This creates an entirely different validation of work, and it is something the Western world has not had at any time in this century.

**To not quest [*sic*] for excellence might be considered sacrilege.<sup>37</sup>**

Barker believes that the concern for quality has restored a direct connection between the religion people practice and the work they do. This makes it possible for people to live what they believe. He sees the following results: everything works right the first time, everyone strives to do his work better tomorrow than today, products work better and longer, waste disappears, and people love what they do.<sup>38</sup> Finally, quality opens the door for innovation for the future.<sup>39</sup>

St. Paul offers this reminder to the Christian Church, that from Christ "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:16). From this he concludes:

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.... He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your

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<sup>37</sup>Barker, 137-138.

<sup>38</sup>Barker, 138.

<sup>39</sup>Barker, 139.



mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen... Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you (Ephesians 4:25, 28-29, 32).

A specific example of initiating change will be described in the next chapter. In this example the whole congregation is involved, learning a new musical setting to the Divine Service.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### INTRODUCING THE SACRED HARP SETTING

#### Introduction

The pastoral staff at St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, decided, as an example of introducing change that would affect the whole congregation, to introduce a setting of the Divine Service called the Sacred Harp Setting (Appendix B, pages 133-144). That is a nineteenth and twentieth century American vocal tradition using a shaped-note tune-book first published in 1844.<sup>1</sup> Melodies from Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Southern region of the United States were combined to form this setting. Singable melodies, combined with poignant texts, offered a very useable setting for this version of the Divine Service.

This setting was brought to St. Paul's by the Music Director, who had experienced it at a national campus pastors' conference held at the United States Air Force Academy in Boulder, Colorado, in the summer of 1993. The copyright is

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<sup>1</sup>This is an explanation of Sacred Harp Singing, given by Diane Bleke, Music Director, St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

held by Jeffrey Snedeker, who explained:

This liturgy was born out of a desire for a truly sing-able organ liturgy that was not satisfied by the new liturgies in the LBW [sic]. The shape-note tunes of the southern hymn-books seemed a natural place to turn, as these are derived from the folk songs and sea chanteys of the British Isles (most notably from Scotland), that had been passed down by oral tradition for centuries.<sup>2</sup>

#### Initial Plans

Once the decision had been made to recommend the introduction of the Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service, discussions ensued between the Music Director, the Associate Pastor, and the Senior Pastor. The following questions were discussed: Whose permission must be secured before this setting is introduced? In what way should this setting be introduced? What are the necessary steps so that the introduction would be smooth and comfortable for the congregation?

The following steps were adopted:

1. The Worship Committee at St. Paul's must be informed of the plan. The setting needed to be heard and discussed thoroughly, adopted, and sent to the Board of Lay Ministry for final approval. Since the direct help of the Worship Committee was being solicited, it was important for the committee members to understand and agree with the proposed plans. The Worship Committee approved, raising

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<sup>2</sup>Jeffrey Snedeker, Unpublished Introduction to the Sacred Harp Setting, ND.

pertinent questions concerning the process.

2. Since the Board of Lay Ministry is responsible for all that happens in worship, it was necessary that its members understood what was intended and that they approved the necessary steps for introducing this new setting of the Divine Service. The Board of Lay Ministry also had questions. Satisfied with the answers, approval was given.
3. With both the Worship Committee and the Board of Lay Ministry, certain concerns were expressed. Knowing that people find change difficult, a reasonable setting of the Divine Service was necessary. It needed to challenge the congregation, and, at the same time, it could not be too difficult. This was a concern both for the music and the text. It was also decided that learning one portion of the liturgy each week was enough for the congregation to handle. Learning a new portion every other week would expand the time of learning unreasonably. Learning more than one portion each week might be too much for the congregation to handle.
4. The initial introduction of the Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service began on the last weekend of September, 1994. (St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School has three services each weekend: one on

Saturday evening at 6:30 p.m. and two on Sunday morning at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.) The newsletter of the congregation for the month of September included an introduction and explanation. Both a brief history of the setting was included as well as an answer to why this setting was being introduced.

5. In the weekends immediately preceding the introduction of the Sacred Harp Setting, the bulletin included an article explaining how the setting would be introduced. It stated that one segment of the liturgy would be learned each week, and practice for that would begin five minutes before the time of each service. In this way, the ordinary of the liturgy would be learned in five weeks.
6. Contemporaneous with these announcements, the different portions of the liturgy were being taught to the children in the Day School and the Senior Choir. Therefore both the children of the Day School and the members of the Senior Choir would know the parts of the service when they were taught to the congregation, and they would be able to give support to the congregation as it learned a new portion.
7. The congregation would then be taught one portion

of the Sacred Harp Setting each week until the whole liturgy was learned. Each portion learned would be sung in the services that week, as well as those segments that had been learned previously.

8. After the entire Sacred Harp Setting had been learned and used in its entirety for two weeks, the congregation would be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Basically, two concerns would be addressed by this questionnaire: first, was the training adequate so that the members felt comfortable using this setting? Second, is this a setting with which the members would be comfortable, using it on a regular basis (once a month or once every six weeks)?
9. It was understood from the beginning that some would not like the new setting. Some members would misunderstand and think that the familiar services in Lutheran Worship would not be used any longer. Some would not like it because it involved a change, and change is often difficult to digest. Patience and understanding, with explanations repeated often, would be needed throughout this process. The purpose for introducing the Sacred Harp Setting was to enrich the congregational members, assist spiritual growth, and broaden the variety in their worship life. Because change is

difficult for people, each step would have to be taken with sensitivity so that the relationship people have with Jesus Christ would be strengthened.

### The Weekly Introduction and Evaluation

The introduction of the Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service began on the weekend of September 24 and 25, 1994, and concluded the weekend of October 22 and 23, 1994. Between five and seven minutes before each service were needed to explain and introduce each portion of the new liturgy being learned.

One portion, the Lord's Prayer, was used from the beginning without introduction (Appendix B, page 142). Since the tune, "Consolation," was already known to the congregation, it was not necessary to practice it.

Two things became immediately evident: first, because these hymn tunes were very singable, the congregation learned them quite easily. Second, the subtle support from the children in the Day School and the Senior Choir, both of whom were sitting among the members of the congregation, was extremely valuable, giving support and direction as the congregation learned.

#### Week 1

"The Confession and Forgiveness" (Appendix B, page 134) was introduced. Because the first, second and fourth lines of

each stanza are identical musically,<sup>3</sup> the congregation learned it and retained it very well. The third line of each stanza introduced variety and climax both musically and textually.

Because this served as the confession of sins, it was played at a dignified tempo, giving the congregation opportunity to focus and meditate.

Normally the Saturday evening service has a smaller attendance. Spread throughout the nave as the people usually are, the sung response of the congregation is also weaker. However, the congregation's response to learning "The Confession and Forgiveness" was strong even on Saturday evening. The verbal comments after the service were also positive.

## Week 2

Because the congregational response to the "Lord, Have Mercy" is brief, it was decided to introduce "The Hymn of Praise" as well (Appendix B, pages 135-136). First, the Music Director played and sang "Lord, have mercy" twice; then the congregation sang it twice. The final step was to have the Pastor sing two of his parts to which the congregation responded. Therefore, the congregation heard "Lord, have mercy" twice and sang it four times.

"The Hymn of Praise" was introduced in the same way: the Music Director played and sang the first two lines twice, and

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<sup>3</sup>The leading notes to the fourth line are different from the first two lines.



the congregation sang them twice. The third and fourth lines were introduced in the same way. Then the congregation sang through the entire first stanza.

A word of explanation was also given concerning the singing of "The Hymn of Praise" in its entirety. The congregation was told to follow the numbers carefully and to note that the fourth stanza ended in the middle intentionally.

One comment received after worship indicated an appreciation for what had been learned so far. The person added that it was musically "up-beat" and enjoyable.

### Week 3

The Offertory was learned next (Appendix B, page 139). The Music Director and the pastors agreed that the method of teaching being used with the congregation was the most effective. The Music Director would play and sing each phrase, the pastor would repeat the same phrase, and the third time the congregation would also sing. While this might appear to be tedious, it was important for the congregation to hear each phrase twice, especially with someone singing it, before trying to sing it. This did not take a great amount of time; so it was possible to have the congregation sing the entire Offertory before beginning the service.

Again, as more of the service was learned, members of the congregation commented about how much they appreciated this setting. However, one person was critical about the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer, making the point that

it should not be titled the Lord's Prayer because it is not the Lord's Prayer as is normally prayed by the congregation. It should be noted that he was not hostile or angry, simply emphatic; and he asked that his concern be discussed at the Board of Lay Ministry meeting. He also indicated that, if he were the only person concerned, then no change should be made.

Since this member requested that his concern be brought before the Board of Lay Ministry, it was important to do so. One of the Lay Ministers indicated that he did not like singing the Lord's Prayer but understood the intent in this order of service. At this time no one fully grasped the concern this member was making. One of the pastors explained that it did not always have to be sung; instead of singing it, it could be spoken, and we should plan to do that in the near future. The Board felt that a fuller explanation should be made about praying the Lord's Prayer in this hymn-like form, hoping that this would be sufficient.

#### Week 4

In preparation for this weekend, the Music Director and the pastors discussed the length of the service, noting that it ran between sixty-five and seventy-five minutes, depending on the number of people communing. The decision was made that the opening hymn would be omitted, and the service would begin, after a few directions, with the Invocation, Salutation, and Collect of the Day.

This was not difficult to implement. In Divine Service

I and Divine Service II from Lutheran Worship, these services were not begun with a hymn but with the Invocation after the initial directions. In this congregation the first hymn is sung after the Confession and Absolution and before the Kyrie.

What impact the omission of the opening hymn had on the length of the services is difficult to determine. The attendance was lower this fourth week, and it was difficult trying to determine why that was so. Since it was planned to omit the opening hymn on the next three weekends, it might be easier to judge.

"The Lamb of God" (Appendix B, page 142) was introduced in a similar way to previous weekends. Once again, the response of the congregation was positive and evident by how they sang. Generally the comments about the liturgy have been positive to this point. In fact, two different people asked if this liturgy was going to be kept in the pews along with Lutheran Worship. It was explained that this was not the plan; though, if the congregation's response remained positive, the Sacred Harp Setting would be used regularly in the future and at appropriate times.

Within minutes before the practice at the 8:00 a.m. service, another member expressed her upset with the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer. It was apparent that this was a serious concern for her. It was difficult, with the brief time available, to explain the plan to her.

After introducing "the Lamb of God," the Pastor explained

that the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer certainly was not what is usually prayed but that this is an expanded explanation of the meaning of the words of Jesus. While the service was prepared with a sung version of the Lord's Prayer, that did not mean that we would always sing it; but we would speak it at times also.

In the 8:00 a.m. service, the Pastor wondered if the woman who expressed her concerns might leave because the Lord's Prayer was sung. She did not leave, however, but communed with her husband. Briefly discussing this with the Associate Pastor and the Music Director, it was decided that the next week the Lord's Prayer would be spoken intentionally.

When the Pastor had the opportunity to speak with those expressing dislike for the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer, three things became apparent. First, these people felt very strongly that the sung version of the Lord's Prayer was not the Lord's Prayer for them, and they did not like singing it. Second, while they felt strongly, they were not angry or upset enough to stay away from worship. Third, while they felt passionately about this, they had difficulty expressing their feelings in words. The Lord's Prayer, as it is normally prayed in English, has deep, emotional strings attached to it for some.

This was an interesting lesson. While it may be difficult to grasp the argument, it was a reminder that change must be met with sensitivity and understanding, especially

when dealing with significant parts of the liturgy, such as the Lord's Prayer.

#### Week 5

The final portion of the liturgy was introduced this weekend, "The Departing Hymn" (Appendix B, page 143). This melody, four phrases long, proved to be more difficult for the congregation. It was not as melodic as the previous sections learned.

Because of comments concerning the singing of the Lord's Prayer, it was decided that the Lord's Prayer would be spoken at all three services. Only one comment from a congregational member was received. A man, who had not commented previously, indicated that he preferred speaking the Lord's Prayer to singing it.

#### Week 6

The Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service was used in its entirety, including the singing of the Lord's Prayer. Because of concern for the length of the service, the Opening Hymn was again omitted. With the able leadership of the Music Director and the Senior Choir, the service ran smoothly, the pastors were comfortable leading the liturgy, and the participation of the congregation was strong and enthusiastic.

This setting was again scheduled for the next week, and the congregation would be asked to fill out a questionnaire, in which they would be asked to respond to learning the

setting and using the setting in the future.

#### Week 7

The questionnaire was handed out to the congregation. The questionnaires were explained prior to each service, and the members were asked to return them at the end of the service. With 712 people in worship at three services (adults, children, and with fifty-seven guests), 257 questionnaires were returned.

It was decided by the Music Director and the pastors that, as of this weekend, depending on the response of the congregation, discussion with the Worship Committee, and the Board of Lay Ministry, the Sacred Harp Setting would be set aside for two months (until after Advent, Christmas, and New Year). Beginning with Epiphany, this setting would be included regularly in worship, as are the Divine Services in Lutheran Worship.

#### The Results of the Congregational Questionnaire

The questionnaire was intentionally brief, hoping that many in the congregation would then respond. Responses from 257 people were considered reasonable and positive. Six of the seven questions could be answered by circling a number or a word. Some people did include a written comment on some of these six questions. Only one question involved writing an answer. One-hundred-eight replied to that question. People

were also given the opportunity to add additional comments; sixty-two people took advantage of that.

Question 1: Have you found The Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service to be helpful and inspirational in your worship?

NEGATIVE 1 2 3 4 5 POSITIVE

Thirteen percent (13%) responded negatively (circling one or two). Sixty-eight percent (68%) responded positively (circling four or five). The remaining 18% did not commit one way or the other (circling three). There were three questionnaires without an answer (approximately 1%).

Two written comments were included: one member was impressed with the words of the liturgy, especially noting the Confession and Forgiveness. Another comment also expressed appreciation for the Confession and Forgiveness but found singing the Lord's Prayer distracting.

Question 2: What have you found helpful about this Setting? OR, What was not helpful about this Setting?

Because they were similar in content, the answers to Question 2 and the Additional Comments were considered together in the following discussion. The comments are divided into two categories: positive responses and negative responses.

Considering the difficulty that most people have with change, it was surprising to find that 14% (or thirty-six respondents) indicated that they enjoyed trying something new and different, that they found variety helpful because it

forced them to focus their attention on what they were doing. One person simply used the adjective, "Neat." Another said that the added singing was enjoyable.

Tied to that were the comments about the texts in the liturgy (eleven respondents), especially the Confession and Forgiveness (seven respondents). One response indicated that the words were especially helpful in self-examination, while another indicated that the Lord felt closer. People found the melodies singable (twenty-four respondents), and that the congregation responded with energy and enthusiasm (six respondents).

The comments also indicated that the liturgy was easy to follow (eleven respondents); having the order of service in booklet form was helpful to another respondent. One parent commented, "My children participate instead of sitting."

The negative comments were also instructive. The most negative response concerned the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer, as was expected. Fourteen respondents indicated that they would prefer to speak it, with one parent expressing concern for her child who has now learned the Lord's Prayer and speaks it with the congregation.

Concerning the music, some (five respondents) felt that it was too much singing, and four respondents indicated that the melodies were too hard to sing. Four people did not feel that the music for the Hymn of Praise was appropriate and fitting for the words. One person indicated that it was "too



drab."

In a more general sense, a few felt that the service was too long (six respondents); three people indicated that there was too much standing (from the Invocation through the Hymn of Praise). Because it was necessary for the congregation to use both the Sacred Harp Setting booklet and Lutheran Worship, it was indicated by four respondents that the shuffling between the two was awkward. Ten respondents indicated that they prefer the hymnal, and one offered the reminder not to forget the other services, including Matins. Two people indicated that they like both this new setting and the Divine Services in Lutheran Worship, especially "This Is the Feast." One person indicated that the Absolution "missed the mark" because the Pastor did not say, "I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

One person offered a very thoughtful comment: "Too many changes cause people to lose a feeling of belonging and being at ease." Five others indicated something similar. Apparently in the mind of one person, the Sacred Harp Setting gave the impression of being entertaining; the comment was, "I do not come to worship to be entertained."

Question 3: Was this Setting easy or hard to learn?

HARD 1 2 3 4 5 EASY

Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents felt that this Setting was hard to learn (circling one or two), while 69% indicated that it was easy (circling four or five). Nineteen

percent (19%) indicated that some parts were easy, and some were not. There were two questionnaires without an answer to this question. No special comments were made, though a couple of the additional comments addressed this question.

Question 4: Concerning the practice sessions before worship, were they helpful to you or not?

NOT HELPFUL    1   2   3   4   5    HELPFUL

On this question, there were ten without an answer (4%) --the highest number for any of the questions where answers could be circled. Eleven percent (11%) did not find these practice sessions helpful (circling one or two). Twenty-three percent (23%) did not commit one way or the other (circling three), and 62% indicated that the practice sessions were helpful (circling four or five). One member commented that he/she did not feel the practice sessions were necessary.

Though it was not the purpose of the questionnaire to ask people's responses to having practice sessions, there were comments, indicating that some did not appreciate those sessions. Twice the practice sessions did go beyond the time when worship was to begin, but that was not more than three minutes at the most. We anticipated that and planned for it.

Question 5: Do you now feel comfortable using The Sacred Harp Setting?

YES            NO

Eighty-five percent (85%) responded with "YES." Thirteen percent (13%) said "NO." There were six questionnaires with no answers (2%).

Two members indicated that they were comfortable with the service but would prefer speaking the Lord's Prayer. One person said, "I know it, but I don't like it"; another person indicated a preference for the hymnal.

Question 6: The Senior Choir and the children in the Day School learned this Setting before the congregation. Did this help you learn the Setting?

YES NO NOT SURE

Thirty-five percent (35%) indicated that the Senior Choir and children did help them in learning the Setting. Twenty-three percent (23%) said "NO." It did not come as a surprise that 37% of the respondents were not sure. Four per cent (4%) of the questionnaires did not have an answer circled.

One respondent, a choir member, found the support helpful. Two people said that it made no difference. There was one reply which indicated that the member did not realize the support of the Senior Choir. Since the support of the Senior Choir and the children of the Day School was accomplished by having them sing in the midst of the congregation, this response was understandable.

Question 7: In the future, would you like us to use this method to teach new hymns or Settings?

YES NO

Seventy-five per cent (75%) responded with "YES." Eighteen percent (18%) said "NO." Two percent (2%) did not reply.

There were thirteen written comments to this question --

more than any other. Seven respondents indicated that it did not matter if this method was used in the future. One person suggested that it be done only once a month, and one person said that this method was acceptable for new settings but not for hymns.

Two written responses indicated that the learning process was too long, that the congregation can and does learn quite quickly. Another individual asked why so many new settings are necessary. It was also suggested by one person that the children in the Day School and the Senior Choir should learn new settings and hymns first to help the congregation learn them more easily.

#### Some Weaknesses

Having compiled the questionnaire, some weaknesses became evident. The most noticeable concerned the second question. Two questions should not have been asked together because it was not always clear which question the respondents were answering. The questions should have been separated, giving people the opportunity to respond to both with what was helpful and with what was not helpful.

Since no one was asked to sign the questionnaire, it would have been helpful to have the respondents indicate their age and gender. It would have been interesting to study the responses to this change in worship according to age and gender.

It was difficult to determine what should and what should

not have been included in a questionnaire of this kind. It was important to keep it brief, but the proper concerns also had to be addressed. For the most part, it appeared to be reasonable and a positive experience.

Evaluation of the Responses  
to the Congregational Questionnaire

The questionnaire clearly demonstrated that the congregation responded positively both to the Sacred Harp Setting and to learning the setting. It was a surprise that so many (14%) appreciated learning something new and different and that they were able to see how positively it affected their worship.

At the same time, respondents indicated certain weaknesses: for instance, the sense of not belonging or discomfort with too much change. It was also apparent that what is included in Lutheran Worship is appreciated and must not be lost. It was also positive to have one respondent offer the reminder that worship is not entertainment.

Worship, including changes in worship, must be planned carefully. Even though it may not always be evident, people have developed a spirituality in their public worship. Changes, if not carefully planned, may disrupt that spirituality. In some cases, it may actually hurt it. Because many people do come to worship to strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ, different words (the hymn-like version of the Lord's Prayer) or a different style of music

(the Sacred Harp Setting) may create roadblocks.

The response to the Sacred Harp Setting was positive in this congregation, and a major reason that was true was because of the kind of preparation utilized. There were negative responses, which was expected; but there were no angry demands, indicating that members would not come back to worship or that they were ready to leave the congregation. Problems were addressed when they became evident; they were dealt with openly and honestly, sensitively listening to people and responding.

The Music Director and the Pastors agreed that the Sacred Harp Setting should continue to be used in the future, not neglecting the liturgies in Lutheran Worship. The Worship Committee agreed and sent that recommendation to the Board of Lay Ministry. The Board of Lay Ministry concurred.

## CONCLUSION

The value of this study is ongoing because change is inevitable and ongoing. People are confronted with change in all areas of life, including worship. Therefore, the assimilation of change in all areas of life must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively.

As Lutherans, the point at which the challenge concerning change begins is the hermeneutical principle of justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith. While this is a formal theological statement, it is also the practical starting point. Finding positive ways to deal with change is necessary at a time when change is inclusive in all of life. The principle of justification by faith affirms the foundation of life because it recognizes that sin is the controlling force of everyone and everything in the world today. Therefore, because all people are controlled by sin and incapable of extricating themselves from sin's control, either the situation is hopeless and out of control or divine intervention is the only solution. There is no intermediate answer.

Justification by faith proclaims that divine intervention is possible, and it affirms that divine intervention has already

occurred in the person and work of Jesus Christ. In fact, he is the only answer to humanity's problem. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the answer to the problems that people have with change. In other words, if Jesus Christ is the answer to the most basic need that people have, he is also the answer to the problems that people face daily concerning change.

This study makes no sense and offers nothing of value if it is not understood within the context of justification through faith. Even change, as difficult as it may be for some, is comprehensible within justification by faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, it is possible to offer stability and hope to those hassled by change.

Worship, therefore, is to be understood, first of all, as God's gracious ministry to people through the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. The Christian's worship is then a response to all that God has done in Jesus Christ. This two-fold action--first, God-to-us; then, we-to-God--is always the essence of worship.

Because the Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ is primary, what happens in worship must nurture and sustain this relationship. Because change has the potential to affect a person's relationship with Jesus Christ, it must be introduced with the utmost care and love. Change in worship must consider the relationship with Jesus Christ as the one stable point amidst change. Change in worship must never be initiated merely for the sake of change or for the sake of novelty. Change has the potential ability to hurt or to help. While it may be legitimate



to define adiaphora as "matters of indifference," adiaphora is indifferent only in so far as it is neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture. Worship, its forms, and its ceremonies fall under adiaphora. However, when worship forms or ceremonies offend the weak, Christian love dictates that they should not be continued. The Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ is paramount.

There is no question that change is drastic today. It occurs with uncontrollable speed, often paralyzing those it touches. Like it or not, change is something with which the Christian must work. While change is inevitable, Jesus Christ is the only stability to whom Christians may cling with certainty.

The Christian confesses that Jesus Christ does not change toward his people; his love is constant. Therefore, it is possible for the Christian to accept and digest change every day. Not all change is bad. In fact, some change is good, beneficial, even necessary. One example of change that is helpful centers in the desire to improve worship and how it is conducted. This study proved that it is possible to address the issue of quality in worship and improve it. While it was not evident to the members of the congregation generally because it occurred behind the scenes, those responsible for the various aspects of worship cooperated and helped to improve quality in worship.

The members of the Altar Guild and the Lay Ministers carried out their work diligently and helped to identify problems that hindered the smooth flow of worship. In addition, because interest was shown in what they were doing, they became more self-confident.

Because of that interest in them and in what they were doing, they also realized that what they were doing was important to the event of worship.

The results of this experiment were easily identified. First, when people realize that what they do is important, they take greater interest in what they are doing; they attempt to do it better. Second, this experiment demonstrated that this kind of concern should have been happening before the experiment began. Therefore, because the concern for quality in worship never ends, the instructions for worship, the evaluation of worship, and the opportunity to respond by the Lay Ministers and the members of the Altar Guild must continue. New and better methods of instruction and evaluation must be devised.

The next step of this study, involving the whole congregation in the process of change, was to introduce a new musical setting of the Divine Service. Addressing change is not easy because there are multiple facets to be considered. Business and industry have recognized the importance of initiating change effectively. The Christian Church has responded slowly. The person responsible for change is the most crucial figure, but this does not ignore the importance of those who also assist in the process.

Every conceivable facet and alternative concerning change must be considered; every potential question must be asked and addressed. This is why there must be sufficient time to prepare for the proposed changes. While it may seem tedious, the plan must be rehearsed over and over again before implementing it. Thorough

preparations will be rewarded in the end. The plan of execution must be clear. The process of evaluation after the changes have been introduced must be in place before introducing the changes. All of this is necessary to reduce the possibility of unexpected problems.

All of this was done before introducing the Sacred Harp Setting of the Divine Service. The result was a very positive experience, reinforced by the members of the congregation when they responded to a questionnaire. Of course, not everyone responded favorably; that was expected from the outset. Yet even the negative responses were instructive and helpful for understanding the process of change.

Change may be inevitable today, even in the Christian Church. When change is confronted and considered calmly and rationally, it is possible for people to assimilate it. In fact, it is possible to use change positively for nurture and growth for Christians who want to offer Jesus Christ the very best they have to give and, at the same time, build up and encourage the brother and sister in love.

APPENDIX A

Fig. 1

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORSHIP: PRE-SERVICE

FOR THE LAY MINISTER

DAY, DATE, TIME

---

\_\_\_\_\_ Procession In with:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cross only  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cross and Candle  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

\_\_\_\_\_ Reserve Pews(s) for:                      How many? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Baptism  
\_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation  
\_\_\_\_\_ Holy Communion  
\_\_\_\_\_ Wedding  
\_\_\_\_\_ Funeral  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other:

\_\_\_\_\_ Baptism  
\_\_\_\_\_ Drama  
\_\_\_\_\_ Holy Communion  
\_\_\_\_\_ At the Communion Rail  
\_\_\_\_\_ Single Walking Line  
\_\_\_\_\_ Double Walking Line

\_\_\_\_\_ Procession Out

\_\_\_\_\_ Special Offering at the Door  
\_\_\_\_\_ Designated for:

\_\_\_\_\_ Order of Service:

---

Special Instructions

1. Lay Minister:
2. Acolytes:
3. Lectors:
4. Ushers:

Fig. 2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WORSHIP: PRE-SERVICE

ALTAR GUILD

DAY, DATE, TIME

---

The Service:

- With Holy Communion  
 Without Holy Communion

Where Will the Service Be Held?

- In Church  
 By the Lake  
 Other:

What Will Be Needed for Holy Communion?

- Number of Pyxes Filled with Bread  
 Number of Flagons Filled with Wine  
 Number of Chalices  
 Number of Patens

Should Extra Supplies Be Set Out in Reserve? YES NO

Which of the Following Linens Will Be Required?

- |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Corporal | <input type="checkbox"/> Purificators |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Veil     | <input type="checkbox"/> The Purse    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other:       |                                       |

Paraments

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blue  | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Green | <input type="checkbox"/> Red   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gold  | <input type="checkbox"/> Black |

Banners:

Candles:

Decorations:

Fig. 3

EVALUATION OF WORSHIP: POST-SERVICE

FOR THE LAY MINISTER

DAY, DATE, TIME

---

1. Were the instructions clear for this Service? YES NO  
1a. If "no," please explain:
2. Were the ushers ready fifteen (15) minutes before the Service? YES NO  
2a. If "no," please explain:
3. Were the ushers courteous and friendly? Were they especially friendly to guests? YES NO  
3a. Comment:
4. Were there enough ushers for the Service and to help with Holy Communion? YES NO
5. Did the ushers help to clean up in the Balcony, the Nave and the Narthex after the Service? YES NO  
5a. Comment:

6. Were the acolytes ready to light the candles ten (10) minutes before the Service?      YES      NO
- 6a. If "no," please explain:
- 6b. Did they do their work in a dignified and efficient way?      YES      NO
- 6c. Comment:
7. Did the Altar Guild have their work complete at least fifteen (15) minutes before the service began?
- YES      NO
- 7a. If "no," please explain:
- 7b. Were enough bread and wine prepared for the Service?      YES      NO
8. Were there enough Lay Ministers to help with the Service and Communion distribution?      YES      NO
- 8a. Were the Lay Ministers, who were scheduled to help with this Service, present?      YES      NO
- 8b. If "no" to either question, please explain:
9. From your perspective, did the Service run smoothly?
- YES      NO
- 9a. If "no," what problem(s) did you observe?
- 9b. How can we work to correct this?



Fig. 4

EVALUATION OF WORSHIP: POST-SERVICE

ALTAR GUILD

DAY, DATE, TIME

---

1. Were the directions clear about what was needed for this Service:

1a. Communion Ware and Communion Supplies? YES NO

1b. Banners? YES NO

1c. Paraments? YES NO

1d. Candles? YES NO

1e. Decorations? YES NO

1f. If "no," to any of these questions, please explain:

2. Did you notice a problem with any of the following:

_____ Communion Ware	_____ Candles
_____ Altar/Communion Linens	_____ Paraments
_____ Banners	_____ Acolyte Vestments
_____ Baptismal Napkins	_____ Flowers
_____ Tapers for Lighting Candles	
_____ Bread and Wine for Communion	
_____ Other:	

2a. Please Explain the Problem:

3. From your perspective, did the Service run smoothly?

YES NO

3a. If "no," what problem(s) did you observe?

3b. How can we work to correct this?

Fig. 5

EVALUATION OF WORSHIP: POST-SERVICE

MUSIC DIRECTOR

DAY, DATE, TIME

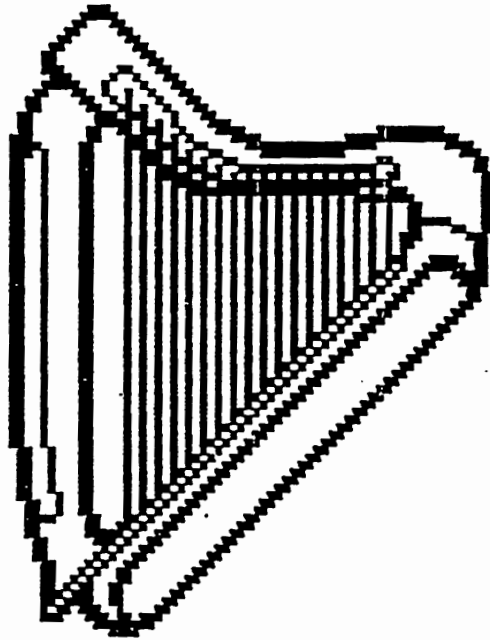
---

1. Were you clear on what was expected of you for this Service?      YES      NO
  - 1a. If "no," please explain:
  
2. Were you notified well in advance concerning the details of this Service?      YES      NO
  - 2a. Were you notified about any last minute changes?      YES      NO
  - 2b. If "no" to either of the above, please explain:
  
3. From your position in the Balcony, did you observe any problems with the conduct of the Service?

_____ Pastor(s)	_____ Reader(s)
_____ Lay Minister(s)	_____ Ushers
_____ Altar Guild	_____ Acolytes
_____ Other:	

  - 3a. Please explain:
  
  - 3b. How can we work to correct this?

APPENDIX B



**DIVINE SERVICE -  
SACRED HARP SETTING**

(c) 1980, Jeff Snedeker

**ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD  
**210 E. PLEASANT STREET**  
**OCONOMOWOC, WI**  
**53066**

# ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME



HYMN

THE INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

The Lord be with you!  
AND ALSO WITH YOU!

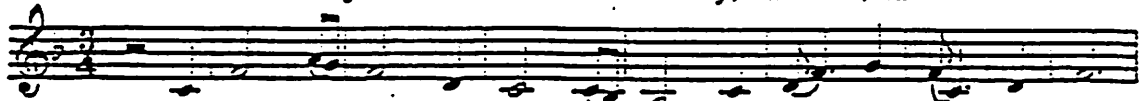
THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

...one God, now and forever.

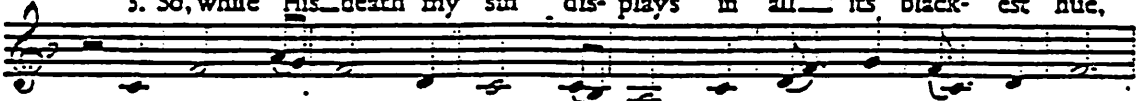
AMEN

## THE CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

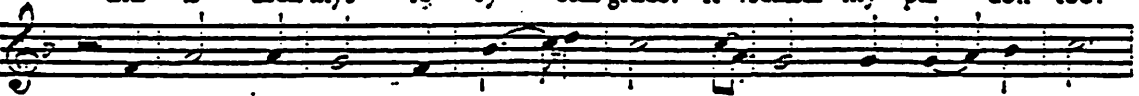
"Pardoning Love" from *The Southern Harmony*, Wm. Walker, etc.



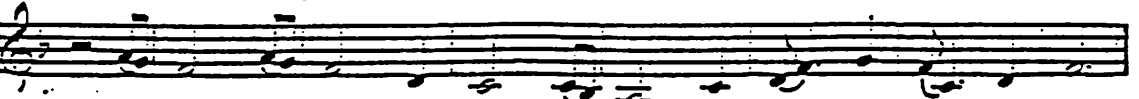
1. In e- vil I had wan-dered far, with-out the least re- morse,
2. Oh, nev- er 'til my dy- ing day shall I for- get that look;
3. *(A time for personal reflection and confession...)*
4. "I knew not what I did," I cried; but now my tears are vain.
5. So, while His death my sin dis- plays in all its black- est hue,



un- til this vi- sion struck my sight, and stopped my sin- ful course:  
 it seemed to charge me with His death, tho' not a word He spoke.  
 I sought my trem- bling soul to hide, for I the Lord had slain.  
 this is the mys- te- ry of grace: it seais my par- don too!



'twas Christ I saw up- on a tree, in ag- o- ny and blood,  
 My con- science felt and owned the guilt, and plunged me in des- pair;  
 A sec- ond look He gave, which said: "I free- ly all for- give,  
 With grate- ful grief and mourn- ful joy my spi- rit now is filled,



who fixed His mourn- ful eyes on me, as near His cross I stood.  
 I saw my sins His blood had spilled, and heiped to nail Him there.  
 this blood is for your ran- som paid; I die that you might live."  
 that I should such a life des- troy, yet live by Him I killed.

By the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you. For His sake, God forgives you all your sins, gives you renewal of life, and fills you with the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.

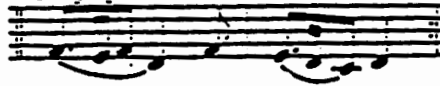
## **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

We have been brought back into fellowship with God through Jesus Christ. Let us now celebrate that fellowship which unites us all in his name, and share that peace of the Lord.

*(We offer one another a sign of God's peace.)*

### **LORD, HAVE MERCY**

Congregation:



LORD, — HAVE MER- CY!

In peace let us pray to the Lord, our God.

*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

For peace and salvation from above,

*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

For peace throughout the whole wide world,  
for wisdom in the Church of God, and for the unity of all.

*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

For this, God's holy house of prayer,

*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

For all who care and worship here,

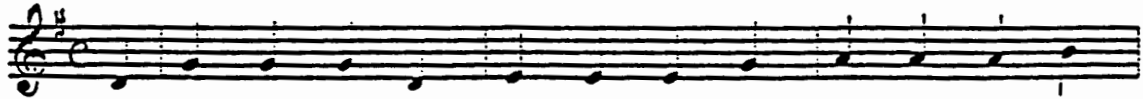
*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

For all these gifts we humbly pray;  
and from all evil, hate and fear defend us gracious Lord, this day.

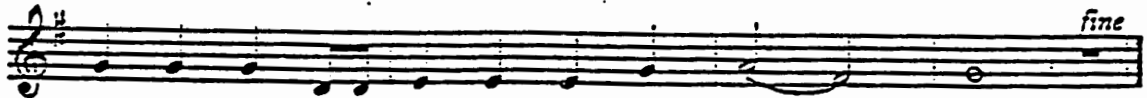
*(sung)* LORD, HAVE MERCY!

## THE HYMN OF PRAISE

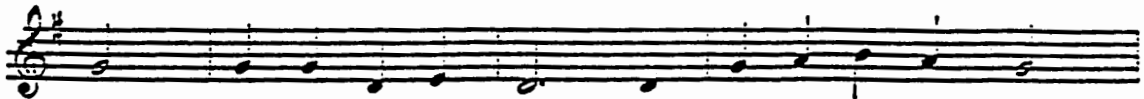
Tune, "Lenox", from *The Baptist Harmony*



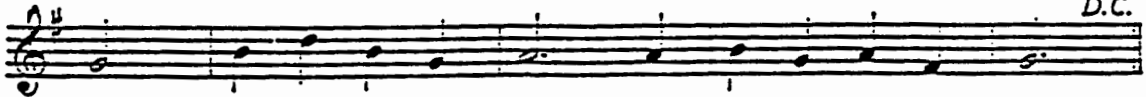
1. This is the feast of vic-to-ry, this is the feast of  
 2. This is the feast of vic-to-ry, for God, who sets His  
 3. This is the feast of vic-to-ry, O raise your voice in  
 4. This is the feast of vic-to-ry, this is the feast of



vic-to-ry! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!  
 peo-ple free! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!  
 har-mo-ny! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!  
 vic-to-ry! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!



The Lamb who once was slain has now been wor-thy found.  
 With all God's peo-ple join and sing cre-a-tion's hymn:  
 Let ev-'ry crea-ture praise the Lamb who once was slain,



His blood has set us free, from e-vil we're un-bound.  
 all bless-ing, hon-or, might and glo-ry be to Him  
 for He has con-quer'd death and now be-gins His reign.

**THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

The Old Testament Lesson - *(back of bulletin)*  
 The New Testament Lesson - *(back of bulletin)*  
 The Holy Gospel - *(back of bulletin)*

**THE SERMON****THE CREED**

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
 MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH  
 AND OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

AND IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
 THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD,  
 BEGOTTEN OF HIS FATHER BEFORE ALL WORLDS,  
 GOD OF GOD, LIGHT OF LIGHT,  
 VERY GOD OF VERY GOD, BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE,  
 BEING OF ONE SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER,  
 BY WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE;  
 WHO FOR US AND FOR OUR SALVATION  
 CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN  
 AND WAS INCARNATE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT  
 OF THE VIRGIN MARY AND WAS MADE MAN;  
 AND WAS CRUCIFIED ALSO FOR US  
 UNDER PONTIUS PILATE.  
 HE SUFFERED AND WAS BURIED.  
 AND THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN  
 ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES  
 AND ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN  
 AND SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER.  
 AND HE WILL COME AGAIN WITH GLORY  
 TO JUDGE BOTH THE LIVING AND THE DEAD,  
 WHOSE KINGDOM WILL HAVE NO END.



AND I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
THE LORD AND GIVER OF LIFE,  
WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON,  
WHO WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON TOGETHER  
IS WORSHIPED AND GLORIFIED,  
WHO SPOKE BY THE PROPHETS.  
AND I BELIEVE IN ONE HOLY CHRISTIAN  
AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH,  
I ACKNOWLEDGE ONE BAPTISM  
FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS,  
AND I LOOK FOR THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD  
AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME. AMEN.

### THE PRAYERS



### THE OFFERING

*Please place attendance cards into the offering plates as they are passed.*

*To all visitors:*

*You are not obligated to give an offering unless that is your desire.  
Your presence here with us is a pleasant gift to us and to the Lord.*

**THE OFFERTORY**Tune "Leander," from *The Sacred Harp*.

In vain we spend our earth-ly lives pur- su- ing earth- ly goals, though  
 all the wealth the earth could yield would starve our hun- gry souls; but  
 You, O Lord, have fed us with Your Spi- rit from a- bove, and  
 giv- en us the high- est gift: Your sac- ra- ment of love. Our  
 goods, our time, our lives, our hearts we lay be-fore Your throne; but  
 when we give, and give our best, we give You but Your own.

**THE COMMUNION PRAYER**

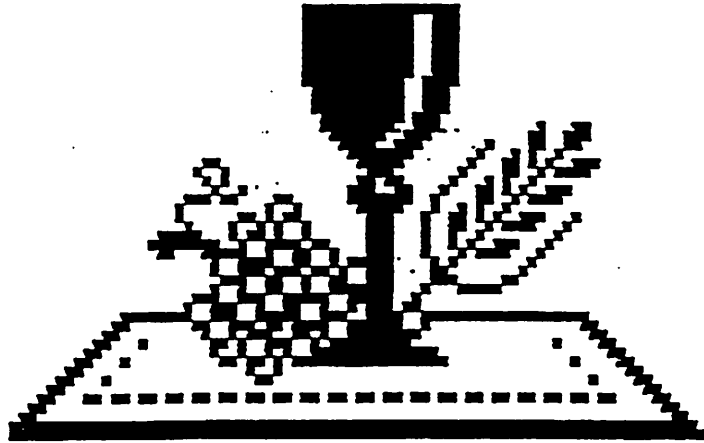
The Lord be with you.  
 AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Lift up your hearts.  
 WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD.

Let us bless the Lord our God.  
**IT IS RIGHT TO BLESS HIS HOLY NAME.**

Blessed are you, God of the universe, for you loved our fallen world so much that you gave your only Son, that all who believe in Him would not perish, but have eternal life. Open now our hearts and lives, that we may receive him with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper. **AMEN! COME, LORD JESUS!**

**THE WORDS OF CONSECRATION**

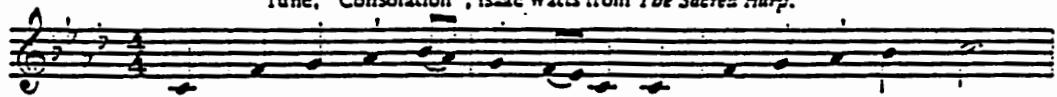


*(after consecrating the elements, the Pastor continues)*

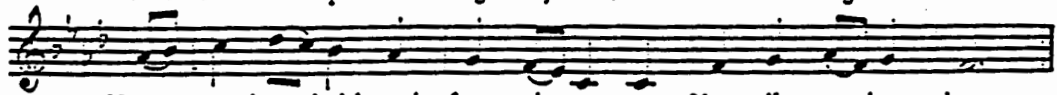
Heavenly Father, we pray that you would send your Holy Spirit upon us, that we who receive the Lord's body and blood may be his body in the world, and receive our inheritance with all your saints in heaven. **AMEN! COME, HOLY SPIRIT!**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Tune, "Consolation", Isaac Watts from *The Sacred Harp*.

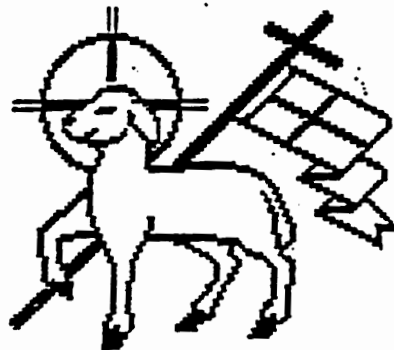


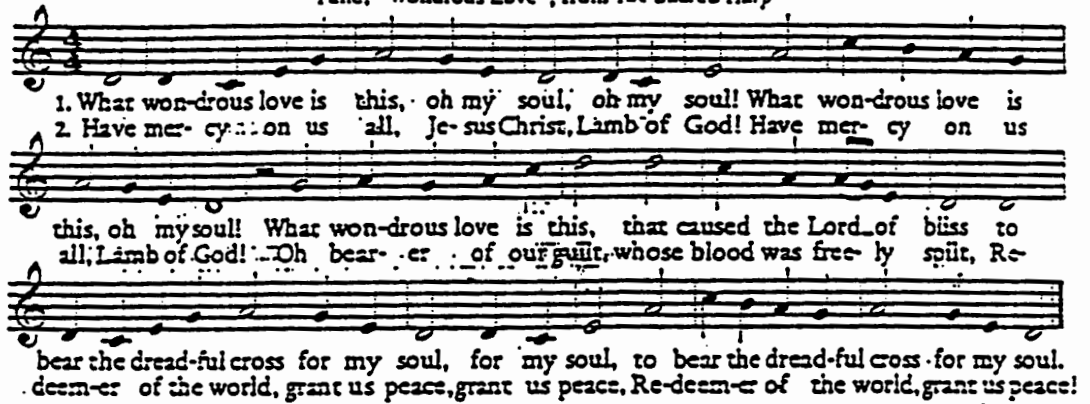
1. Our heav'n-ly Fa-ther, come and hear the pray'r we of-fer now:
2. Your king-dom come, and may Your will be done on earth in love,
3. Give us this day our dai-ly bread, while by Your word we live.
4. From dark temp-tation's e-vil pow'r, from Sa-tan's wiles de-fend;
5. Yours shall all pow'r and glo-ry be, and Yours the king-dom too:



Your name be hal-low'd far and near; to You all na-tions bow.  
 as all the heav'n-ly host ful-fill Your ho-ly will a-bove.  
 The guilt of all our sin re-move as oth-ers we for-give.  
 sus-tain us thru each test-ing hour, and guide us to the end.  
 for time and all e-ter-ni-ty, all praise be-longs to You.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death, until he comes again. Come, for all is now prepared.



**LAMB OF GOD**Tune, "Wondrous Love", from *The Sacred Harp*


1. What wondrous love is this, oh my soul, oh my soul! What wondrous love is  
 2. Have mercy on us all, Jesus Christ, Lamb of God! Have mercy on us  
 this, oh my soul! What wondrous love is this, that caused the Lord of bliss to  
 all, Lamb of God! Oh bearer of our guilt, whose blood was freely spilt, Re-  
 bear the dread-ful cross for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful cross for my soul.  
 deem-er of the world, grant us peace, grant us peace, Re-deem-er of the world, grant us peace!

*(Be seated for your own personal preparation.)***THE COMMUNION HYMNS****THE COMMUNION BLESSING**

**THE DEPARTING HYMN**Tune, "Paris", from *The Sacred Harp*

1. We thank you Fa- ther, for this feast, the sac- ri-  
 2. Dis- miss us with Your bles- sing, Lord. Print in our

-fice of our High Priest, who on the cross the  
 hearts Your liv- ing Word; with faith and joy our

vic- t'ry won: Lord Je- sus Christ, Your on- ly Son!  
 lives in- still. Send us in peace to do Your will!

**THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

...one God, now and forever.

AMEN

**THE BENEDICTION**The Lord be with you!  
AND ALSO WITH YOU!Let us bless the Lord!  
THANKS BE TO GOD!The Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you now and forever. Amen.  
Go in peace and joy to serve the Lord.

HYMN

POSTLUDE

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