

An answer to the LCR position paper titled “The Ministry and Auxiliary Offices with Respect to Legalism”.

Introduction

The topic under discussion in this paper is the question of the relationship between the one office which God has established for His Church on earth, and auxiliary offices, which men have, at various times and for various reasons, instituted. In particular, what are the practical bounds of such auxiliary offices as determined by Christ's institution of the Ministry? Furthermore, since it cannot be legalism to obey the boundaries which God himself has established, what are the limits of God's Word and institution, beyond which a congregation is free to set up such offices as it pleases?

This paper is a response to the position paper which the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation adopted at their 2006 special convention, held in Mt. Prospect, IL on April 21st and 22nd. Their paper, titled, *The Ministry and Auxiliary Offices with Respect to Legalism*, was written in answer to what certain men in the LCR perceived to be our position on this subject. As it was not our intention, in attending the Special Convention, to debate the doctrine of Church and Ministry, given that this question was superseded by far more serious matters, we spent no time defending our position. But as some have the impression that we were unwilling to answer the charges presented in their paper against our doctrine, we wholeheartedly take up the task of answering the LCR's position.

There is much in the LCR's position with which we agree. Namely, we are in complete agreement as regards the doctrine of the Church, and especially those parts addressing the rights and powers of the local congregation. However, as many charges have been leveled against us, and positions ascribed to us which we do not hold, we find it necessary to state explicitly our agreement with those doctrinal points addressed in the LCR's position paper, as well as to identify the points on which we disagree. In so doing, however, there are a number of points with which we can neither agree nor disagree, for we are unclear as to the author's intent. At times he seems to contradict himself. At best he is unclear. Rather than ascribe to him our own perception of his position, we will simply acknowledge our uncertainty as to his intent as such points present themselves.

And finally, we shall, with this paper, take the opportunity to present our doctrine in as clear a manner as we can, so that all may judge for themselves what we confess. May the Holy Spirit aid us in this task!

The ministry: God's gift to His Church on earth.

Our opponents write well that the holy ministry is given to the Church and belongs to the Church. So we confess in the Augsburg Confession, article V:

That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith; where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake.

And also in Article VII:

The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.

The power of the ministry is a power that the Church itself exercises. It is not a civil power, nor does it have the power to command obedience in civil matters. Rather it exercises spiritual power and au-

thority, when it forgives and retains sins, through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. So we confess in article XXVIII: (¶ 5–8):

... the power of the Keys, or the power of the bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer Sacraments. For with this commandment Christ sends forth His Apostles, John 20, 21 sqq.: *As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* Mark 16, 15: *Go preach the Gospel to every creature.*

This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, according to their calling either to many or to individuals. For thereby are granted, not bodily, but eternal things, as eternal righteousness, the Holy Ghost, eternal life.

Therefore the Church has no power to command obedience apart from the Word of God. We agree that no one in the Church may use scriptures such as “*Obey them that have the rule over you,*” (Heb. 13:17) to command obedience to any human rule or ordinance. He who so attempts to command obedience apart from the Word of God usurps the right of the civil authorities (ibid. ¶ 12–17):

Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the Commonwealth. As Christ says, John 18, 36: *My kingdom is not of this world;* also Luke 12, 14: *Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?* Paul also says, Phil. 3, 20: *Our citizenship is in heaven;* 2 Cor. 10, 4: *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.*

Apology, XVIII, ¶20:

They quote also Heb. 13, 17: *Obey them that have the rule over you.* This passage requires obedience to the Gospel. For it does not establish a dominion for the bishops apart from the Gospel. Neither should the bishops frame traditions contrary to the Gospel, or interpret their traditions contrary to the Gospel. And when they do this, obedience is prohibited, according to Gal. 1, 9: *If any man preach any other gospel, let him be accursed.*

Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, ¶31:

The second article is still clearer, that Christ gave to the apostles only spiritual power, i.e., the command to teach the Gospel to announce the forgiveness of sins, to administer the Sacraments, to excommunicate the godless without bodily force [by the Word], and that He did not give the power of the sword, or the right to establish, occupy or confer kingdoms of the world [to set up or depose kings]. For Christ says, Matt. 28, 19. 20: *Go ye, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* also John 20, 21: *As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.*

The exclusivity of the ministry in the exercise of spiritual power

The power of the ministry is exclusive. It is only the ministry that has the authority to publicly exercise the spiritual power of the Word and Sacraments. Thus Romans 10:14 declares, “*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*” And Titus 1:3: “[God] hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour.” 2 Cor. 5:19,20: “*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for*

Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Therefore we likewise confess in Article XVIII, ¶9,10:

These things cannot come but by the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments, as Paul says, Rom. 1, 16: The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Therefore, since the power of the Church grants eternal things, and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word, it does not interfere with civil government;

Therefore whenever and wherever the Church exercises its spiritual authority, it does so through the ministry of the Word and Sacraments which God has given to her, and not through some other earthly institution.

The manner in which the church exercises the ministry of the Word and Sacraments

But even as the ministry of the Word and Sacraments is God's gift to the whole church, it is not every Christian, but only those whom God has called, that have the right to exercise this office publicly in the Church. This we confess in Article XIV:

Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach [German: preach and teach] in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called.

And the Apology confirms in the same article:

The Fourteenth Article, in which we say that in the Church the administration of the Sacraments and Word ought to *be allowed no one unless he be rightly called*, they receive, but with the proviso that we employ canonical ordination.

Yet this is not a denial of the spiritual authority which Christ has given to His Church on earth. Rather it is a proviso that the Church is to exercise this authority through the Holy Ministry, by calling pastors and entrusting them with the public use of the Keys, so that when the pastor so exercises this spiritual power, it is the whole Church which thereby is exercising it.

It is unclear whether the LCR agrees with us on this point. For on the one hand they seem to confess it when they say:

While the Office of the Keys resides with the individual Christians, including women, children, the sick, the demented or retarded, and the newly baptized infants; and while the congregation is the divinely appointed agency in the public exercise of the Keys, the congregation elects and calls pastors to carry out this duty in Jesus' name and in their name. It transfers, or rather commits the authority of all to the pastor. Our Catechism asks, "Q. 275. How does the local congregation publicly administer the Office of the Keys? According to God's will the Christian congregation chooses and calls men as ministers, who in the name of Christ and in the name of the congregation publicly perform the functions of the Office of the Keys. (The Pastoral office a divine institution, Acts 20:28; Eph 4:10-12.) 1 Cor 4:1; Acts 20:28; 2 Cor 2:10; 1 Tim 2:11-12." A.L. Graebner puts it this way: "For the public performance of the privileges and duties of the Church in preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments Christ has instituted the ministerial office in the Church." (p. 212)

On the other hand, they seem to contradict this:

Only the believers in any congregation and throughout Christendom really hold the Keys and possess the promises and privileges and authority of Christ. Every single Christian has been made a royal priest before God and possesses all the authority and power God has distributed to all equally, and every Christian has the right and authority, and in fact the duty, to exercise this authority.

And when they quote Luther responding to Pelagius, they seem to be implying that every Christian has the right to the public exercise of the office:

Luther says, AE, XXXVI, 150, "Where are you now, Pelagius, with your proud, insolent, slanderous

tongue, daring with puffed up cheeks to say in your fleshly law: ‘Where the authority is, namely the spiritual authority, there is the right to command; upon the rest devolves of necessity the matter of obedience.’

“Christ has given to everyone the right and power to weigh and decide, to lecture and preach. Yet you venture on your own wicked authority to subjugate everything to yourself, and to exalt yourself above everyone, like Lucifer. You falsely allot to yourself alone the right to speak and judge, contrary to God and the Scriptures! Away, you villain, all Christians have a good and perfect right to lecture and preach from the Scriptures, even if you should burst.”

However, from the context of this work of Luther, it is clear that he does not thereby say that every Christian has the right to the public use of the keys, but rather he admonishes Pelagius, with much hyperbole, for abrogating to himself an authority apart from that of the Word, and apart from the call of the Church. Likewise he, with many scathing words, rebukes the Papists for keeping the ministry entirely to themselves alone, as if they were a special class above all other Christians. Now if they quote Luther to say that every Christian has the right himself, apart from the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, to “lecture and preach” in the Church, they quote Luther against himself, for *in this same work*, a few paragraphs later, he demonstrates that it is not apart from the public ministry, but through it that every Christian so lectures and preaches, for it is by calling and ordaining pastors that they exercise this right:

Although everyone has the right to preach, one should not use any person for this task, nor should anyone undertake it, unless he is better fitted than the others. To him the rest should yield and give place, so that the proper respect, discipline, and order may be maintained. Thus Paul charges Timothy to entrust the preaching of the Word of God to those who are fitted for it and who will be able to teach and instruct others. (Vol. 36: Luther’s works, Am. Ed. vol. 36: Word and Sacrament II, pp 151-152)

There is also no essential difference between bishops, elders, and priests on the one hand and laymen on the other, nothing to distinguish them from other Christians except that the one has a different office which is entrusted to him, namely, to preach the word of God and to administer the sacraments; (*ibid.*, p. 159)

All Christians are priests, but not all are pastors. For it is not sufficient that one is a Christian, but he must also have been invested with the office and supplied with a congregation. It is the call and the divine command which makes a man a pastor and a preacher.” (St. L. Ed. V, 722, as quoted by F. Pieper, “The Laymen’s Movement and the Bible,” *What is Christianity and Other Essays*, p. 107)

The Christian Church alone has the keys, no one else, although the bishop and the pope can use them, because they have been commanded by the congregation to do it. A pastor exercises the office of the keys, baptizes, preaches, administers the sacrament, and performs other duties, in order that he may serve the congregation, not for his own sake, but for the congregations’ sake (i.e., not on his own personal authority, but in the name, at the behest, and in the stead of the entire congregation), for he is a servant of the whole congregation to which the keys have been given, even though he should be a scoundrel. For if he does it in the stead of the congregation, then the church does it. However if the church does it, then God is doing it; for one must have a minister. (*Kirchenpostille*, Jena Ed. 1525 XI, 3070; as quoted by Walther, *The Congregations Right to Choose It’s Pastor*, p. 56)

Regarding the use of the keys by the congregation, the LCR states:

The individual Christians are the original possessors of the Office of the Keys. The public exercise of them belongs to the congregation, which is a divine institution. A. L. Graebner puts it this way in his *Doctrinal Theology*, p. 210, “The invisible Church of Christ is endowed with certain spiritual rights, privileges, and powers, all of which are vested in every local congregation of believers.”

It is uncertain whether they understand these words to mean that when the ministry exercises the

keys, every individual Christian is thereby exercising them, or if they are confessing that individual Christians have the right to the public exercise of the office of the keys apart from the call and ordination of the Church.

The public and private use of the keys

When the author quotes Pieper, his intent is unclear. To wit:

Pieper refers to "Luther in his comments on Col 3:16, 'What is meant by teaching and admonishing has been stated repeatedly, except that St. Paul here attributes the office of teaching to all Christians by saying 'teaching and admonishing one another,' which means that all Christians should teach and admonish one another, as well as themselves, so that, in addition to the public ministry, the Word of God should everywhere dwell richly among them, both publicly and privately, both generally and individually.'" (St. L, XII, 394) (F. Pieper, "The Laymen's Movement and the Bible," *What is Christianity and Other Essays*, p. 107.) Pieper also answers the question, "However, who is to proclaim the Word of God? It is the clear teaching of Scripture that in view of their calling all Christians have received the divine command to preach the Gospel and to administer the divinely instituted Sacraments. This truth is clearly expressed in Matt 28:19,20; 1 Pet 2:9; Matt 16:19; 18:18-20, as we shall demonstrate later." (*Ibid.*, p. 106)

Pieper makes the distinction between the public and private use of the keys. However, in their use of his quotation, the LCR does not seem to be making this distinction. Do they take Pieper's words to say that every Christian, without a call to the ministry, may exercise the right of public preaching in the Church? We are unclear as to their intention in quoting these passages so selectively, for Pieper himself dispels any such conclusion when he writes, *in the very same work*:

Those who are to administer the public ministerial office must be duly *called*. In other words, all Christians as such are not *eo ipso* (by this very fact) incumbents of the office of the public ministry, but only those Christians whom the congregation has commissioned with this sacred office by its special vocation or call. Holy Scripture tells us: "My brethren be not many masters," Jas. 3, 1; that is to say, let not many aspire to be teachers in the Church; again: "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as Aaron," Heb. 5, 4. We rightly maintain that every Christian has been appointed to be a teacher of his brethren as well as of the whole world; but if any one desires to be a bishop or paster, he must be placed into this office by a special act of the Holy Spirit, or by the *call*. (Cf. Acts 20, 28; Titus 1, 5.)

With respect to the preaching of the Word as this is carried on by the public ministry, Christians as such are not the subjects of such preaching, but its objects; in other words, the preaching of the Gospel through the public ministry has been ordained and instituted for their benefit. ...

The public ministry differs from the general teaching function of all Christians also in respect to its sphere and its nature. The sphere within which every Christian should teach is clearly designated in Scripture. The believer should teach in Christian assemblies, in voter's meetings, and in synodical conventions; the duty of feeding the whole flock, or congregation, however, does not belong to the ordinary church-member, but only to the called and ordained pastor, as this is shown Acts 20, 28; 1 Pet. 5, 2; 1 Tim. 3, 5, etc. From this it is obvious that the difference in teaching involves not only the sphere, but also the nature of that teaching. (F. Pieper, "The Laymen's Movement and the Bible," *What is Christianity and Other Essays*, p. 127.)

Furthermore, the author of the paper laid stress on this sentence:

When the office of the Keys is committed to a pastor, the congregation does not surrender it to him, but always retains it in full.

We admit to being perplexed at the reason for this emphasis, since this point regarding the surrendering of the office of the keys has never been in contention among us. Therefore we can only ask if the

LCR is making some other point. Do they thereby mean to confess that individual members of the congregation reserve to themselves the public exercise of the keys even when the office of the Keys is committed to a pastor? If so, we cannot agree. Or rather, are they answering someone other than ourselves? We have always confessed that the power which Christ has given to his Church on earth always remains a possession of the Church. To speak of “surrendering” this power is not possible, for as we confessed above, even when a pastor is exercising the office of the Keys, that is the Church itself exercising “the peculiar Church power which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of the penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent, as long as they do not repent.”

Therefore since we cannot determine the position of the LCR on this matter, we will state our own position, and let all judge: We confess that there is a two-fold use of the keys taught in Scripture. In the narrow sense, it is that power which the Church exercises through the office of the Ministry. Thus we call it the *office* of the keys, for the use of this word, “office” is nothing less than the office of the Ministry which Christ has established in the Church. This office, even when exercised in this narrow sense, is yet exercised by all, for the ministers who serve in this office, serve on behalf of the Church, and not by any authority of their own.

Likewise there is a wide use of the keys, which Pieper so confesses in citing Col. 3:16, 1 Pe. 2:9, and Matt. 18 above. All Christians should indeed exercise the power of the keys privately, that is, in making a good confession of the truth, in teaching and admonishing one another. They should show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. They should go to the brother who errs privately, and tell him of his error.

Yet the private use of the keys, and likewise the priesthood of all believers, does not grant every Christian the right to himself exercise the public office of the ministry, and the narrow use of the keys, apart from the call of the Church. Thusly we confess in article XIV of the Augsburg Confession and the Apology.

The obedience due ministers of the Gospel

It has already been said that the authority of the ministry is nothing other than the authority of God’s Word, and it is carried out by no other means than the preaching of that Word, and the administration of the Sacraments. The questions at issue are whether or not God has made pastors rulers in the church at all, and whether the ministers of the Gospel have the responsibility to compel their hearers to obey that Word.

Firstly, in regards to whether pastors have the rule in the church, this the Scriptures clearly teach, not only in Heb. 13:17, “*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you;*” but also in Acts 20:28: “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;*” in 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13: “*And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake;*” in 1 Timothy 5:17: “*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine;*” and in 1 Peter 5:1–3: “*The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*”

Nor are these passages in contradiction to Matthew 23:10, “*Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.*” As we have aforesaid, the pastor has no rule in the church other than that of

the Word of God, and when he so rules, it is Christ who is ruling. Therefore Jesus likewise says, Luke 10:16, *“He that heareth you, heareth me.”*

What then, does the LCR mean when they say, “While it is true that the pastor is the spiritual supervisor of the souls in the congregation, and their shepherd, he must not suppose that makes him the ruler in the church. The Church has one Ruler, and that is Jesus Christ.” Do they mean to say that the pastor has no rule in the church, not even that of the Word? That when the pastor speaks God’s Word, he is not ruling at all? Or rather, do they mean to lay stress on the word “the”, as in the exclusive ruler in the Church? If this is their intent, then we are in agreement with them. The question comes down, in the end, to this: Does the pastor have the rule of the Word in the Church, or does he not? We confess that he does, and that this rule is nothing less than Christ ruling.

In confessing this we do not deny the manifest admonition given in the above passages, that pastors are not to be lords over God’s heritage, but examples to the flock. Their rule is not coercive, for they can do nothing but speak God’s Word. They can only condemn unrepentant sinners, and pronounce the ban which God himself pronounces upon them. They can but declare the forgiveness of sins that God Himself declares. Nor should their rule be motivated by pride or greed, but rather love for those whom Christ has redeemed.

The other question is this: May the pastor, with the Word of God, remind his hearers of the obedience they owe the ministers of the Gospel? The LCR states, “Nor should pastors lay stress on passages like *‘Obey them that have the rule over you,’* (Heb 13:17) in hopes of compelling obedience to them.” Do they mean that a pastor should never lay stress on such words, even if it is only to remind the flock that God requires them to obey their pastor when He speaks to them the Word of God? Or are they rather laying stress on the words “to them”? It is evident from what we have written above that the only obedience which the pastor can compel is obedience to the Word, and furthermore the only manner in which he may compel it is by declaring the Word itself in their ears. If one or more members of a congregation deny the obedience which God requires of them to those who faithfully proclaim His Word, then is it not the duty of the pastor to remind them of the obedience which God requires? And if obedience to the Word of God may not be so urged upon the people, then where may it be urged at all, whether to parents or to the state? Therefore in such a case the pastor must indeed lay stress on such passages as Hebrews 13:17, and the others which are cited above. Yet in so doing, his sole motivation must be his love for the souls whom God has placed in his care, that his hearers would obey the Gospel.

Other offices in the church

We now come to the question of auxiliary offices. In discussing this portion of the paper, it is necessary to first lay down some ground work lest there be any confusion regarding our confession. Therefore, that none may falsely accuse us, or misunderstand our position, we state the following: God has established one office in the church, the office of preaching. This is the ruling office in the Church, and its rule is through the Word. When speaking of “other offices” a very careful distinction must be made between what God has ordained, and what the Church has chosen to do out of Christian liberty, without an express divine command.

God has instituted the office of preaching, which is the office of the keys in the narrow sense. God has not instituted other supporting offices in the Church, but neither has He forbidden them. They may be created or not at the will and pleasure of God’s people. We have an express divine command to ordain pastors. We have no such command to create supporting offices. Therefore the preaching office is by divine ordinance, the scope of whose authority is governed by God. Since He created the office, and bound the Church to that office, the Church may not mutilate the office contrary to God’s institution.

But when using the term “auxiliary offices” no distinction is made between that which God has es-

tablished, and that which is of human origin. Just as we cannot take what God has established and disregard it, so no congregation has the right to take what God has *not* established, and grant to it a divine prerogative and divine authority. Because of this, we must carefully distinguish among those “auxiliary” offices to which are entrusted the essence of the preaching office, and those “auxiliary” offices which exercise functions other than the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. It is unfortunate that in the recent history of the Lutheran church, this distinction was not made. The one term was appropriated to embrace both the branches of the ministry itself, and the supporting offices which were not in the ministry. In order to avoid this confusion, we employ the older terms: *branch offices* and *supporting offices*.

A branch office is a branch of the ministry itself. To it is entrusted the public teaching of God’s Word, and the administration of the Sacraments. They are called branch offices because for the purposes of order and the division of labor, the many functions of preaching, teaching, and the administration of the Sacraments, are divided up amongst such ministers of the Gospel. Thus assistant pastors, vicars (if properly understood), seminary professors, evangelists, and other teachers in the church are not “auxiliary” to the ministry itself, but are serving *in* the ministry, are themselves ministers, and are called and ordained as such by the local congregation, as Dannhauer testifies:

... No one may raise the accusation that the Lutherans often use certain scholars who are not yet ordained with the laying on of hands as vicars, permitting them to hear confession, feed the sick, and administer Holy Communion. (*Liber conscientiae*, p. 1005–06, as quoted in Walther’s *Church and Ministry*, p. 266).

The number and type of such offices are not commanded by God, but that such offices which have the public administration of Word and Sacrament are divine offices is taught in Ephesians 4:11–12: “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*”

Next to the branch offices, we have the supporting offices. A supporting office is an office which does not have the function of public teaching and the administration of the sacraments. As such it is not an office which God has established in the Church. Rather it is an office which the Church, out of liberty, has instituted by human right, to assist the public ministers in the performance of their duties. In so doing, they may not take over the duties of preaching, teaching, and the Sacraments, for they do not have a call from God to do so. They are not called and ordained servants of the Word. They do, however, make use of God-given gifts and talents. The distinction between the branch offices, and the gifts which God has given to be used in support of the office, is clearly made in 1 Corinthians 12:28: “*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*” Note especially the distinction in this passage. God has given both the office to the Church, and gifts. Some of the charismatic gifts, such as miracles, tongues, and prophecy have all but passed away (1 Cor. 13:8). Yet other gifts remain, such as helps and administrations, or governments. No one denies that the talents of Christians come from God, and should be put to use in the Church, for God has given such gifts for that purpose. Yet to say that he who has the gift of being a good helper is thereby given a divine office by God with the right to publicly preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, goes contrary to the passage itself, which makes a clear distinction between the offices and the gifts. After teachers (which embraces the whole teaching and preaching office) there are other gifts. To blend the two together, is to erase a distinction which God Himself has made.

Likewise, this distinction is clearly made in Acts 6:2–4: “*It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves contin-*

ually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” That the Apostles had the office by divine right is well proven, and the essence of their office is clear in their own words: “It is not right that we should leave the word of God and serve tables ... but we give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” Thus they make a clear distinction between the divine office which God has entrusted to them, and the supporting functions and labors of love such as the feeding of the widows, which required no call but the call of love given to every Christian. Therefore they did not say that the Holy Ghost would choose men for such tasks, rather they say, “You choose, so that we may turn this task over to them.”

We confess that this distinction between the office of the Word and Sacraments, including all its branches, and the supporting offices which do not have the public ministry, is a distinction which God Himself makes, and which therefore we are bound to make as well. With this in mind, we can examine the position of the LCR on auxiliary offices.

Is there a clear distinction between divine and human offices in the church?

Here the LCR clearly teaches a contrary position. They group the branch offices together with the supporting offices and leave them all to the whim of the congregation to establish in any way they see fit, so that in the end it is often not even possible to determine if an office is of divine or human origin. Some they would require calls to, others not, and the distinction between which do and which do not require divine calls, which are and which are not divine offices, is left to the imagination of the reader. This is evident from their use of the quotations of Luther:

Walther quotes Luther thus: “Therefore the one to whom the ministry is entrusted is entrusted with the highest office in Christendom. After that he may also baptize, administer the Sacrament (Mess halten), and minister to souls. Or if he does not desire these duties, he may adhere merely to preaching, letting others baptize and administer the minor offices, as did Christ and all apostles (Acts 6).” p. 292. (St.L. X, 1547-48) Various such minor offices are usually set up in congregations. That quotation from Luther shows that they are not merely a matter of serving tables, as does also his explanation of Ephesians 4:11 when it mentions Teachers: “These were not commanded to rule or watch over the congregation, but they only instructed the people in doctrine, as the catechists did later.”

It should be clearly noted that baptizing and teaching the people are a part of the pastoral office, and essential to it. The Apostles divided the labor of the Gospel amongst themselves and the other ministers of the Gospel such that they let other ministers baptize. To say that this thereby proves that pastors may turn over the essential functions of their office to others who are not in the office, and have no call and ordination goes well beyond both the quotations of Walther and Luther, as well as the Scriptures.

That the LCR is unwilling to make the distinction between branch and supporting offices is likewise clear from their inability to discern whether a specific auxiliary office requires a divine call to the ministry:

As to the auxiliary offices, we cannot be as sure. Where they are offices of the Word, such as a schoolteacher, we might well say they have a divine call, but there are no Bible passages referring to schoolteachers. The deacon also seems to have a divine call in Acts 6, because the congregation chose the seven, but there was no divine command to elect them. The church did so in its freedom. Deacons also are to have nearly the same qualifications as the pastors. Whether or not these are divinely called offices is a matter of casuistry. In questions of casuistry there are usually conflicting principles involved, and one must make the best judgment he can.

To say that we cannot be as sure which auxiliary offices have a divine call to the ministry and which do not makes no sense. If such auxiliary office performs an essential function of the ministry, namely laboring in the preaching and teaching of the Word, and the administration of the Sacraments, it is clear

that such an office requires a divine call, and is not a human office. It is a branch office of the ministry itself. If on the other hand such an auxiliary office is not engaged in those essential functions which God has entrusted to the ministry, it is not a divine office but a supporting office, and thus can have no divine call because it lacks the divine command and ordinance. Thus, contrary to the LCR's ambivalence regarding Acts 6, we can clearly see that the "deacons" do not have a divine call. Why the author says the deacon "seems to have a divine call in Acts 6" we cannot determine, for nowhere is there any indication that the Church was commanded to institute this office, nor that such men were chosen by God for this office.

The LCR further teaches:

In any case, no offices but that of additional pastors in a congregation are equal or parallel offices, nor are they independent or distinct offices alongside the pastorate; they are auxiliary offices, often designated as branch offices, subsumed under the pastor's office. The pastor, as overseer of the whole congregation, supervises them all.

It is certainly true that the supporting offices are subsumed under the pastor's office, as is manifestly proved in Acts 6. Since the supporting offices assist the office of the ministry in the proclamation of the Gospel by performing many praiseworthy and necessary tasks, and all that they do is done in support of the preaching of the Gospel, it can only be that the pastor governs these offices and their works as part of his calling to administer the means of grace to God's people. But by including all the branch offices, and saying that they are subsumed under his office as well, does the LCR mean to say that only the pastor is actually in the office of the ministry, and all other branch offices are not? What then are missionaries (evangelists) in Ephesians 4:11? Does the LCR mean to say that there are offices of the Word and Sacrament, which require divine calls, yet are subsumed under another office, the pastoral office? Such would be to set up a hierarchy in the church, which surely is not their intention. Nevertheless it is a consequence of their doctrine, if indeed this is what they confess.

Rather we confess that all such branch offices have the whole office in their own right, by virtue of the call and ordination of the Church, for there is only one office which God has established. The branches are human distinctions, and voluntary divisions of labor among divinely called ministers of the Word, that all things be done decently and in order. This is no different than the distinction between "head pastor" and "assistant pastor". Both have the same rights according to their office, yet by human arrangement they organize their duties according to a structure of accountability, at the behest and call of the local congregation.

May supporting offices take over essential functions of the pastoral office?

Concerning the office which God has established in the church, we confess, 1 Corinthians 14:33, "*God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*" The question of who may teach in the church is not a question which God has left unanswered, or concerning which He has given us muddy or unclear direction. Therefore we confess clearly concerning this matter that supporting offices may not take over the essential functions of the pastoral office, for God Himself has instituted the office of the ministry, and not men. God Himself has given it specific duties, and not men. God Himself has given it a concrete form which the Church is bound to follow until the end of time, and not men.

The LCR addresses the question in this way:

Now the second question: May such officers administer the Word and the Sacraments? Or in other words, may the congregation call them to do so ordinarily, or assign them to do so, or, may the pastor assign them to do so? Answer: In an assisting way, they may, so long as they do not infringe upon the pastor's office. Such people may serve under the pastor to assist him. There are not many offices where an actual call is employed. School teacher can be one of them. Others, such as Sunday-school teacher,

youth leader, and the like, are performing a service of love under the direction of the pastor and can be said to be called to that service only in a loose sense.

We have looked for the proof of this assertion which the author of the paper makes, but he gives no proof. He simply asserts “they may do so”, yet he does not explain how it is that they may do so and not run contrary to God’s own ordinance: “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Romans 10:14–15).

In keeping with this assertion, he likewise rejects any application of article XIV of the Augsburg Confession to the question of the supporting offices. The grounds for this dismissal is that one of Walther’s works, he made special application of this article to the enthusiasts, and therefore this article applies only to them, and thus the author contends:

From this you should be able to see that this article stands in opposition to such heretics as Luther referred to as “infiltrating and clandestine preachers” and self-appointed preachers, and other such, who pretended to be pastors. It was not written to oppose auxiliary or branch offices or functions. Neither Walther nor Pieper nor anyone else says it is. In fact, early Missouri Synod scholars specifically allow for schoolteachers being called, subject to the pastor.

There are two problems with this line of reasoning. The first is that the LCR again fails to grant that the branch offices are themselves in the ministry. It is of course true that neither Walther nor Pieper would use Article XIV to oppose branch offices, for branch offices have a divine call. The second problem is this: If Article XIV applies to the enthusiasts, it applies also to all who would take the office of the ministry without a divine call, even if they do so at the behest of the local congregation. For example, the local congregation cannot institute lay preaching simply because they want to, and on this point we have always been in agreement. The very essence of enthusiasm is the belief that all Christians, by virtue of their priesthood, may exercise the public office themselves without the call of the church. To say that the congregation may choose men to preach and administer the sacraments without such a call is still enthusiasm, even though it be sanctioned by the vote of the congregation.

Prior to this, the author writes:

This is sometimes taken to mean that only a called servant of the church can teach or administer the Sacraments; all others are but hearers. Pastor Wallace McLaughlin observed in his translation of Guenther's *Comparative Symbolics*, section 148, that “... Christ instituted only one ecclesiastical office with various functions: preaching, administering sacraments, loosing, binding, maintaining good order, caring for the poor, etc.. But nowhere did He command that these various functions should be performed by one person only. 1 Cor 1:17. Acts 6:2-4.”

Here the LCR again mixes two dissimilar things. Neither they, nor we have ever confessed that “one person only” must carry out all the functions of the ministry. Congregations may call several men to the ministry and divide the labor among them. They may also institute supporting offices to take over the non-essential functions of the office. That in the early church such was a universal practice is manifest throughout the epistles, where the churches had not just one, but many elders. Yet neither of these things proves that anyone other than called servants may teach or administer the Sacraments. Therefore what relevance the McLaughlin quote has to this matter is not clear.

Can the local congregation temporarily assign essential functions of the pastoral office to uncalled men on a casual and ordinary basis?

That the LCR clearly asserts that an essential part of the pastoral office, namely that of teaching, preaching, and administering the Sacraments, may be given without a call to the office of the ministry, ordinarily, that is, lacking any case of necessity, is evident in the following quotation:

There is also the proposition that has been urged, that when a part of the pastoral office is committed to anyone, that person is a holder of the whole office, although he may be limited by the congregation to act only in the designated sphere. (E.W. Kaehler.) So a school teacher is to stick to his teaching, though he has the power to act as a pastor when called upon to do so. But is he a possessor of the whole office? That cannot be proved from the Bible. It is, in fact, a fiction.

Here the author well summarizes the argument which we have made, and which was also taught in the early Missouri Synod, namely that when the office is given, it must be given whole and entire, and may not be mutilated by the congregation. Yet with this little phrase, "It is, in fact, a fiction" the author chooses to assign this position to the dustbin, and likewise to bury the entire paper of E. W. Kaehler which explicitly answers this question, so that the LCR need not deal with its historical implications and its Scriptural defense of this doctrine.

He chooses not to address the historical fact that this position was both taught by Kaehler, and accepted by the Missouri Synod theologians. He ignores the fact that it was published by C. F. W. Walther in *Lehre und Wehre* at a time when Walther, though indeed in declining health, was yet at the reins of the Synodical presidency, and was attending pastoral conferences. In other words, this is yet another assertion for which the author offers no proof.

The statement, "That cannot be proved from the Bible. It is, in fact, a fiction" is a dodge, and no answer, for the question is not "Prove that a school teacher doesn't have the whole office." but rather this: "Is one who teaches publicly in the church in the public ministry, and do they require a regular divine call to do so?" and this: "May the office which God Himself has established with an express command both as to its essence, and to its concrete form, be divided up and mutilated as the local congregation sees fit?" By calling our assertion, and the assertion of Kaehler, a fiction, the false impression is given that the assertion has no proof, and never did. Yet the Scripture proof has been given throughout Kaehler's paper, this present paper, as well as others which we have written. Space does not permit including the entire Scriptural argument of Kaehler's paper. Therefore we include it by reference, and commend the reader to its study. On this point, as at no other, we strongly urge the LCR to present their reason for disregarding this doctrine, rather than, as the modern academics do, disregarding proofs which are inconvenient with blithe judgments lacking foundation.

It is not possible to address this issue without also addressing a deficiency in the judgement of the early Missouri Synod regarding the question of the Christian schoolteacher. Walther and the early Missouri theologians can not be expected to have anticipated every doctrinal aberration which would some day present itself. Therefore we are only willing to say that their treatment of the question of the schoolteacher was an error not in doctrine, but in judgment. The problem, in a nutshell, is this: They were unwilling to say that the schoolteacher was clergy, but at the same time, would not call them laymen either. On the one hand, they confessed that, in the case of the men, they had a divine call to the office of the ministry, and were the associates of the pastor, yet at the same time they were not ministers in their own right. Whether the schoolteacher was or was not in the office was never answered. This ambivalence stuck out like a sore thumb in that it was the one office in the church which was not granted a seat at any Synodical convention. Why? Because they could not tell if the schoolteacher was laity or clergy. The issue was further complicated by their two-fold manner of filling vacancies. Since there were not enough men available to serve as schoolteachers, they began hiring women. They called the men, but they hired the women, for they would not grant a woman a call to the ministry, or even risk doing such were the office to be considered a part of the ministry. Over the years, this issue became a thorn in the side of the Missouri Synod. Space does not allow a full treatment of the subject. John Wohlrabe's doctoral thesis, *Ministry in Missouri until 1962* has a thorough treatment of the subject.

The answer to this question was before them, however, and was taught by Lindemann, by Reinhold Pieper, and by E. W. Kaehler, namely, that the school teacher was a human office, and served in the place of the parent. Yet because the school and the schoolteacher were provided by the congregation, and because the pastor always has the oversight of the spiritual instruction of the children, whether it be carried out by parents or tutors, he likewise oversees the instruction which takes place in the school. It is also true that a male schoolteacher, who is qualified for the ministry, may be given a divine call and ordained, and thus himself have the spiritual oversight of the children by virtue of his call. This was often the case in early Missouri and more-so in Saxony. Such schoolteachers were indeed ministers in their own right, by virtue of the divine call to the ministry.

To close this section, we quote and wholeheartedly agree with Pr. Marquardt as quoted by the author in direct contradiction to his own paper:

“The church has the evangelical freedom to create new auxiliary offices and to change old ones, to recognize and provide for specializations and concentrations within the one Gospel-ministry, to attach auxiliary functions to Gospel-ministers, or to detach them, and to ordain incumbents of auxiliary offices into the one Gospel-office, when they are qualified. *Only one thing the church may not do. She may not forget the difference between what God Himself has established in the church as His institution, and what men establish from time to time as fruits of faith and love.* (Kurt E. Marquart, *The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance*, p. 144) [emphasis added]

Legalism and the auxiliary offices

We are in agreement with the author’s definition of legalism, and in general, how it applies to the ministry and auxiliary offices, when he writes:

Legalism can be defined as subjection to the laws of men instead of God’s, or as an undue emphasis on the Law, or as the inclination to want to be justified by the works of the Law. What is fitting and proper can be turned into a law, a matter of conscience, when it is actually a free matter. With regard to the church and ministry, inferences are drawn from the doctrine that are not implied in the doctrine, and those inferences are turned into rules.

Missing, however, from a complete treatment on this subject, is a treatment of the reverse of legalism: antinomianism. Antinomianism may be defined as a refusal to teach the laws and ordinances of God, or a refusal to apply them to the Church, or a refusal to recognize the laws and ordinances of God entirely. Just as it is legalism to draw inferences from a doctrine that are not implied in the doctrine, and turn such inferences into rules, so it is antinomianism to refuse to acknowledge the divine ordinances of God, and the respective limitations He has established regarding such divine institutions as the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments.

Therefore when God himself has declared the words, “*How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?*” (Romans 10:15); “*Are all teachers?*” (1 Cor. 12:29); “*My brethren, be not many masters [teachers] knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation*” (James 3:1); “*No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*” (Heb. 5:4); it is clear that we confess rightly and plainly in Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession, “No one may preach or teach in the church and administer the Sacrament, except he be rightly called.” Likewise it is not legalism to insist that those who teach and preach the Word of God in Christ’s kingdom have a divine call to do so.

When Paul declares, “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1), God thereby makes a distinction between preachers who are given the administration of the Gospel, and hearers to whom they administer it. To ignore this distinction

is likewise antinomianism.

The LCMS edition of the Dieterich Catechism, which was the catechism of the Missouri Synod in Walther's day, likewise confesses this:

514. *May accordingly every Christian, without a call, presume to exercise the office of the keys?*

By no means; for "no man should publicly in the Church teach, or administer the sacraments, except he be rightly called."

Rom. 10, 15. How shall they preach except they be sent.

1 Cor. 12, 29. Are all teachers? 1 Cor. 4, 1.

James 3, 1. My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Jer. 23, 21. I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran.

Heb. 5, 4. No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

* 515. *Who are regular ministers of the Church?*

Those who, by a legitimate call, are appointed of God rightly to teach the Word of God and rightly to administer the sacraments.

It is in the spirit of antinomianism to ignore this divine ordinance, and grant those whom God has not sent, the right to preach in the Church. Antinomianism does not equal an evangelical spirit. Antinomianism is hostile to the Gospel, especially in regards to the Ministry, for God has instituted the Ministry for no other purpose than the distribution of the means of grace, that some might hear and be saved: "*Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour*" (Titus 1:1-3). "*To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God*" (2 Corinthians 5:19-20).

The LCR quotes Professor Marquart in defense of their position that no such divine ordinance exists which would limit the public teaching and administration of the sacraments to those who are rightly called:

"Purely assisting functions, such as reading printed sermons in the pastor's absence, or helping him with the distribution of the Sacrament (as distinct from consecrating or deciding who may be admitted to the Lord's Table), may of course be delegated to suitable laymen. And in a footnote (note 50), "'Vicars' in the North American Lutheran sense, do not, strictly speaking, 'preach,' but deliver sermons for which the properly called pastor takes responsibility. P. Brunner rightly says that assistance in the distribution of the Sacrament was 'an important liturgical function of the ancient deacon.'" (*The Ministry and the Ministry of Women*, 36)

Concerning what he says about the Sacrament and its distribution we agree. However as to the rest, Prof. Marquart, in common with the modern LCMS theologians, never explains why it is that even though one who reads a sermon, and in the case of a vicar, one who preaches his own sermon, are clearly teaching in the church, yet they themselves are not actually teaching. The Scriptures do not describe the ministry in terms of who is responsible for the content of sermons, but rather in these terms, that those who proclaim the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things, are sent by God to do so (Romans 10:15).

Rules governing specific situations

The question is raised by the LCR whether or not it is proper at all to pass rules governing the activities of the auxiliary offices without falling into legalism, that is, inventing human laws, and binding the

consciences of Christians to them. We answer that no human ordinance governing the life of the Church may bind the conscience, even as Jesus teaches, *“In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men”* (Matthew 15:9).

Yet Paul declares, *“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not”* (1 Corinthians 10:23). The Corinthian congregation, in their chaotic worship services, was a perfect example of what happens when Christians take the position that according to the Gospel they may do whatsoever they wish, so long as there is no law of God prohibiting it. Paul severely admonished them for this. God is a God of order, not of chaos. Therefore Paul says, *“Let all things be done decently and in order”* (1 Corinthians 14:40). Further, though a matter in itself may be completely free, so far as the conscience is concerned, yet for the sake of the Gospel, we often choose not to do it because it may give a wrong impression, or offend the conscience of a weaker brother. *“But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak”* (1 Corinthians 8:9). Thus in the public worship, not everything that is free may necessarily be done without giving offense. So Paul judges concerning the headcoverings of women in 1 Cor. 11. Since in those days, women with an uncovered head were in defiance of male authority, Paul tells the women to cover their heads.

So likewise it is with the preaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments. Many matters are adiaphora, yet not all of them are expedient. A layman may well assist the pastor in the distribution of the elements of the Lord’s Supper, even if only to the pastor himself. In itself, there is neither the command nor the prohibition of God, and many congregations have elders who distribute communion to their pastors, and none take offense because they are properly instructed regarding the difference between distribution and administration. Yet, if this practice, because of its abuse among the heterodox, is giving some the impression that an elder is administering the supper, though he has no call to the ministry, there is cause for offense. Therefore that the ministry be not blamed (2 Cor. 6:3) and the preaching of the Gospel thereby impeded, it may be necessary for a congregation to insist that a laymen not give such assistance.

A similar case presents itself with ordination. Here is a human custom, instituted in apostolic times, whereby a formal manner was adopted in the Church for the installation of a pastor. Ordination gives opportunity for other ministers of the Gospel to testify to the call of a pastor as he is installed in a congregation. So likewise it gives the congregation a public witness that this man has been called by God to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments in their midst. One may say, *“Since it is a human institution, we can dispense with it without giving offense.”* Yet such is not the case, for if one does so arbitrarily, and thus removes the opportunity for other pastors to testify to the call of God’s servant, and likewise the opportunity for the congregation in a concrete way, to recognize the call of their new pastor, much offense would be given. Thus, though ordination is a human institution, and not necessary so far as the call of a pastor is concerned (in that lacking ordination, a call is still valid), yet it is a necessary witness that can not ordinarily be omitted without giving offense, as Walther testifies:

Neither the examination which one who has been called to the preaching office passes before an appointed commission outside of the calling congregation, nor the ordination which he receives from appointed persons outside of the congregation, are what make the call valid. But both procedures are among the most beneficial ordinances of the church and have — especially the latter — among other things the important purpose of publicly confirming that the call is recognized by the whole church as legitimate and divine. Anyone who unnecessarily omits one or the other is acting schismatically and making it known that he is one of those whom congregations with itching ears heap up for themselves (2 Tim. 4:3). (*Pastoral Theology*, p. 44).

Emergency Situations

On the whole, we agree with the LCR's position on emergency situations. However we disagree with the manner in which they define them, or rather, in their refusal to define exactly in what an emergency situation consists:

The question is asked: May a layman or another officer carry out the functions of a pastor in an emergency? May he preach, read a sermon, baptize, distribute or administer communion, or teach? Well, what is an emergency? Martin Luther cited an old proverb that "Necessity knows no law."

In other words, the LCR would like to have Luther say that it is not possible to determine exactly what a case of necessity is. Yet this is not what Luther says. Rather, he cites the proverb in order to say that when a case of necessity presents itself, the normal laws which govern the church must be laid aside for the sake of love. This can clearly be seen from the context of the quote:

In the second place, it is not your fault that you are receiving only one kind and not observing Christ's institution. You would gladly receive both kinds, but the one element is now taken captive by the ordinance of the pope, with which weak consciences are ensnared. And you must not throw these weak consciences into confusion, but bear with them and instruct them until they also become strong. Just as St. Peter in prison was unable to preach the gospel, as he would have been in duty bound to do; for necessity knows no law.¹⁷ Therefore, in such a case, the law of love is far to be preferred above the institution of both kinds. For Christ is more concerned about love than about the elements in the sacrament. (*Luther's Works, Am. Ed., Vol. 36: Word and Sacrament II, Page 255*).

Footnote 17: According to this proverb, whatever one does out of unavoidable necessity, even though it contravene a law, is not considered a transgression. *Sprichwörter-Lexicon, op. cit., III, 1051*

In fact, though the LCR would like to leave the definition of an emergency case to the imagination, the Synodical Conference had no such qualms:

6. The only correct conception of an emergency involves the actual existence of a situation in which there is no pastor nor can there be one, or in which there is one who does not properly serve them or who propounds false doctrine or cannot serve them sufficiently but so inadequately that that they cannot thereby be led to faith or preserved therein and protected against error so that the Christians would perish spiritually from lack of supervision. (Norwegian Synod Theses on Lay Preaching, adopted 1862, as quoted in *Vivacious Daughter*, Herman Amberg Preus, p. 131).

Therefore we also confess that an emergency case is any situation in which, if the normal ordinances concerning the ministry are not laid aside, souls would be in danger. Thus there are certain circumstances where an emergency case clearly exists, such as in an extended pastoral absence. However, though we can clearly define what an emergency case is, it is not possible to pass a set of rules and ordinances, which by their very nature would be human, to determine *in specific cases* whether a state of emergency exists in any given place at any given time. Such are cases of casuistry, wherein God's people must with prayerful and careful consideration, apply the Scriptures and make this judgment for themselves.

We have presented our position on this subject more thoroughly in the paper written by Pr. Martin Diers, entitled, *Emergency Cases, or Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?* We include it here by reference.

MWD

Soli Deo Gloria