

# Lutheran Worship for the Not-Yet Christian: Can We Reclaim the *Missa Catechumenorum*?

Steve Zank

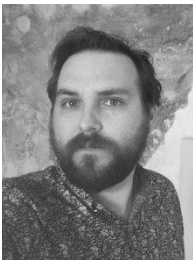
*Abstract:*

*In the face of post-Christendom<sup>1</sup>, many North American churches have chosen to either integrate with culture or isolate from it. Both choices often blur the connection between evangelism and faithful liturgical form. As a synod which values the historical practices of the Christian Church, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is in a unique position to revive Missa Catechumenorum, or service of the learners. Unfortunately, a common practice of general confession and absolution at the outset of a liturgical gathering can be seen as a problem for using Missa Catechumenorum. A deep understanding of Lutheran liturgical heritage, however, reassures that reshaping liturgy around the Missa Catechumenorum is not only a faithful Lutheran option but it reflects the practice of the very first LCMS liturgy.*

Of all the challenges the North American Church faced in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, perhaps none has proven to be as formidable as its move from cultural insider to cultural outsider. Many once-bustling churches closed their doors, church attendance steadily declined<sup>2</sup> and each successive generation became less and less likely to identify themselves as Christian. For many the growing gap between church and culture made it difficult to address the corresponding decline in church membership, as culture was less and less receptive to church as an institution. In his book *The Next Christians*, Gabe Lyons echoed the long-standing assessment that worship forms played a part in this departure:

If we fail to offer a different way forward, we risk losing entire generations to apathy and cynicism. Our friends will continue to drift away, meeting their need for spiritual transcendence through other forms of worship and communities of faith that may be less true but more authentic and appealing.<sup>3</sup>

One can read about the variety of ways in which the Christian church has attempted to bridge this cultural gap by reshaping worship forms in the second part of Lester Ruth and



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Lim Swee Hong's book, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church*.<sup>4</sup> There is certainly a lot there to evaluate and ponder. What is striking for our purposes, however, is that even in the midst of the church growth movement, through which Christian liturgies were being reshaped around evangelistic concerns, liturgical scholars noted an alarming need for "a more secure connection between liturgy and evangelism."<sup>5</sup> The lack of coordination between liturgical scholarship and missionary zeal enabled the church to pose a destructive false alternative: "Is worship for the Christian *or* the non-Christian?"

In many instances the church has accepted this either/or approach, splitting into rival factions. You know the caricature: one side shakes neon signs that read "reach the lost at any cost" while the other responds in full liturgical dress, chanting responsively: "holy things for holy people!" Schattauer defines these extremes as those for whom the "liturgy is understood and practiced as the quintessential activity for those inside the church community" and those for whom the liturgy is "a stage from which to present the gospel and reach out to the unchurched and irreligious."<sup>6</sup>

Neither of these alternatives, however, is able to provide the stable connection between evangelism and worship that we are seeking. On the one side, reaching the lost at any cost naturally comes at a great cost, namely, the loss of the church's ability to initiate disciples into the Christian faith.<sup>7</sup> Already in 1965, J-J. von Allmen warned that "[i]f living in the Christian period has made us largely forget the duty of evangelization ... the end of the Christian period must not lead us into the opposite error of forgetting the necessity of the cult for its own sake."<sup>8</sup> Moreover, reaching the lost at any cost works against the ideal of authenticity that Lyons argued is essential for our time.

On the other side, narrowing the liturgical gathering so exclusively as to shape it only for Christians rejects the witness of, among others, the Israelite temple, the early Church, and the Lutheran Reformation. There is ample evidence to show that the responsible liturgical adaptations enacted by Lutheran Reformers in the sixteenth century were motivated by the need to communicate the gospel in a way that the people would understand it. In his introduction to the 1526 *Deutsche Messe*, Martin Luther wrote the following in regard to the relationship between liturgical form and evangelism:

The ... German Mass and Order of Service ... should be arranged for the sake of the unlearned lay folk and with which we are now concerned. These two orders of service [Latin and German Mass] must be used publicly, in the churches, for all the people, among whom are many who do not believe and are not yet Christians. Most of them stand around and gape, hoping to see something new, just as if we were holding a service among the Turks or the heathen in a public square or out in a field. That is not yet a well-ordered and organized congregation, in which Christians could be ruled according to the gospel; on the contrary, the gospel must be publicly preached [to such people] to move them to believe and become Christians.<sup>9</sup>

Lutherans following in Luther's liturgical tradition, therefore, are in a remarkable position to offer another way forward through the false dichotomy. We are free to *conservatively* attend to the challenges associated with the rise of nominal Christianity and the establishment of post-Christendom because our tradition has always enjoyed a rich connection between worship and evangelism. We can answer the question "Is worship for the Christian or the not-yet Christian?" with a resounding "yes." Furthermore, rather than relying solely on the invention of new worship forms, we are also free to bring our heritage to bear on today's challenges, all the while meeting the contemporary felt need for authenticity and inclusion in worship. This is the approach for which Hermann Sasse advocated when he wrote: "Why has our divine service lost the power over men's spirits? . . . One answer . . . is the fact that we pastors no longer know and understand the liturgical treasures of our church and therefore are not in a position to introduce our congregations to them."<sup>10</sup>

It is worth noting that while there are examples of strict historical repristation and "anything goes" attitudes toward worship in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), its members walk a responsible and confessional middle ground through official publications and actions. It can even be said that the LCMS champions the importance of evangelism in liturgical choices. For example, in 2001 the LCMS in convention resolved to remind its pastors that their local liturgical choices have broader implications, and that there was a need to "continue to find ways to foster discussion among groups with diverse viewpoints for the purpose of building greater understanding of our theology of worship and fostering further discussion of worship practices that are consistent with this theology." They did so, however, with the following evangelistic caveat: "[t]hat all action taken in this resolution shall be used to help carry out 'The Great Commission' and shall not in any way detract or distract from the primary mission of God's kingdom here on earth."<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, in 2010 the synod in convention commended the "Council of Presidents for its leadership in striving to bring greater unity to the Synod in regard to worship practices *for the sake of common witness* [emphasis mine]" through its "Theses on Worship."<sup>12</sup> In the Theses, article IV confesses: "Imposing a certain form, rite, or ceremony on the Church burdens men's consciousness, *thereby militating against the gospel* [emphasis mine]."<sup>13</sup> This tensive, responsible and confessional middle ground<sup>14</sup> is home for the ecclesiology of the LCMS.

Rather than meeting the challenges of post-Christendom by removing the exclusive aspects of worship (such as the Lord's Supper or sharing of the peace), we are free to draw resources from another time in which the church lived as a cultural outsider. One such resource can be found in the liturgy of the church of the fourth and fifth centuries. In this era Christians did not omit aspects of their sacred gatherings for the sake of evangelism, they carefully initiated the unlearned, especially in regard to the sacraments. These ancestors of ours divided worship into two parts: the "*Missa Catechumenorum* (the Worship of the Learners)," and the "*Missa Fidelium* (The Worship of the Believers)."<sup>15</sup> For them this meant that the uninitiated would be blessed and excused before the worship of the faithful continued with the service of the Lord's Supper. Philip Schaff wrote that "the first motive [for this] must be sought ... in an opposition to heathenism; to wit, in the

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feeling of the necessity of guarding the sacred transactions of Christianity, the embodiment of its deepest truths, against profanation in the midst of a hostile world ...”<sup>16</sup> He continued that

[t]he secret discipline was therefore a temporary, educational and liturgical expedient of the ante-Nicene age. The catechumenate and the division of the acts of worship grew together and declined to, together. With the disappearance of adult catechumens, or with the general use of infant baptism and the union of church and state, disappeared also the secret discipline in the sixth century: ‘*cessante causa cessat effectus*.’<sup>17</sup>

As it grew the Early Church needed a way to welcome catechumens into worship while restricting them from Lord’s Supper until they had been initiated.<sup>18</sup> Hence, worship began with an inclusive portion of the service around the preaching of the Word and concluded with an exclusive portion of the service around the celebration of the Sacrament. While acknowledging that there will be significant differences in the ways we might apply this division in our own time, for example, we may not advocate for removing visitors before communion and barring the doors, there is no denying that idea of the *Missa Catechumenorum* is a potential tool to promote authenticity in missional contexts in which the church is a cultural outsider.

Crucially, for the church of the fourth and fifth centuries the *Missa Catechumenorum* was not only the appointed time for Christians to gather around the Word, as it appears in the English Hymnal heritage adopted by the LCMS for a century, (This claim will be further substantiated in the following section.) it was a service designed for a truly evangelical proclamation of the Word including those who were not-yet Christian. In this context Herman Sasse called the Service of the Word (*Wortgottesdienst*) “the great mission opportunity of the ancient church”<sup>19</sup> and J-J von Allmen wrote that “the worship of the Church is not without a deep and vital link with evangelism ... Church worship has an evangelistic aspect ... which appears in the first part of the service called the Mass of the catechumens.”<sup>20</sup>

Consider the following service, “reconstructed on the basis of references in the *Mystagogical Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem and the *Diary of Egeria*”<sup>21</sup> (351 CE):

The congregation assembles, men on one side, women on the other, clergy in the apse. Lessons read by readers interspersed with psalms sung by a cantor with the assembly responding to a refrain (antiphon). The series of readings ends with the Gospel read by a deacon or a presbyter. Homilies given by the presbyters and finally by the bishop. Blessing and dismissal of the catechumens. Blessing and dismissal of the candidates for baptism (*energumens* or *competentes*). Blessing and dismissal of the penitents. Prayers of the faithful in litany form led by the deacon, the people responding; Kyrie eleison; the bishop offers the concluding prayer. The kiss of peace exchanged by the clergy with each other and the people with each other. Loaves of bread and cups of wine brought to

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the altar. Apostolic greeting from the bishop and *Sursum corda*. Eucharistic prayer, including the *Sanctus* and institution narrative and concluding with intercessions and a doxology. The Lord's Prayer accompanied by another diaconal litany: "Holy things for the holy people" with the response "One alone is holy ..." Breaking of bread and communion administered by the bishop (bread) and a deacon (cup). Psalm 33 sung during communion. Episcopal blessing and diaconal dismissal.<sup>22</sup>

The *Missa Catechumenorum* of the service above includes lessons, Psalm singing by a cantor, a Gospel reading and a sermon, after which the uninitiated are blessed and excused. These rites could be participated in by peripheral attendees of all types. The rites and rituals reserved for the faithful were of a more committed nature, including prayers, responses, a kiss of peace, the Lord's Prayer, and Communion. Note that the liturgical phrase "holy things for holy people," which we used to caricaturize those who claim the liturgy should be understood exclusively for Christians, is spoken in the context of the *Missa Fidelium* and not the service

Finally, while it was the church's aim to evangelize, teach, and encourage catechumens into the full fellowship of the *Missa Fidelium*, it maintained an intentional place for the uninitiated within the worship of the church.

as a whole. Finally, while it was the church's aim to evangelize, teach, and encourage catechumens into the full fellowship of the *Missa Fidelium*, it maintained an intentional place for the uninitiated within the worship of the church. Rather than trying to make the service completely transparent to culture, the church portioned the liturgy in order to welcome the not-yet Christian while maintaining its authenticity. In other words, while the service would not necessarily attract not-yet Christians *per se*, there is a way in which the service would welcome every participant into deeper layers of commitment, understanding, and communion. This approach takes seriously Rodney Clapp's observations about evangelism:

[E]vangelism [must] be understood not simply as declaring a message to someone but as initiation into the world-changing kingdom of God. It is not enough to think of evangelism as proclamation. We must understand it once again as the earliest Christians did, as 'the persuading of people to become Christians and take their place as responsible members of the body of Christ.'<sup>23</sup>

While *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*, the most recent hymnal adopted by the LCMS, gives us a head start in reclaiming the division of worship into the *Missa Catechumenorum* and the *Missa Fidelium* through its division of the service into the "Service of the Word" and the "Service of the Sacrament,"<sup>24</sup> it also presents us with a startling impediment.

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Presumably through the influence of the 1888 *Common Service*, received through the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book (ELHB)*, the LCMS began to espouse the belief that an individual cannot properly enter the Divine Service without first ritually practicing confession/absolution. This essentially conceived of the Service of the Word as part of the *Missa Fidelium*, flattening the division between the service of the catechumens and the service of the faithful. This teaching is surprising because from 1847 until the addition of *ELHB* in 1912 general confession/absolution was *only* officially practiced *after* the sermon in the LCMS. Already in 1935, however, LCMS scholars and educators were teaching otherwise; in “Our Liturgical Chaos” (1935) Theodore Graebner, originally from the Norwegian Synod, wrote: “[t]he service opens most appropriately with the confession of sins. Having been given the first assurance of the forgiveness of God in absolution, the believer enters into the Lord’s presence.”<sup>25</sup> Since then similar statements have been made by many influential LCMS scholars. In *Heaven and Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* Arthur Just made a similar claim. While he helpfully introduced general confession and absolution with the assertion that “[p]ublic confession and absolution are not part of the Divine Service but preparation to enter Christ’s bodily presence and receive the gifts from that presence,”<sup>26</sup> he connected “entering Christ’s bodily presence” with the *invocation* at the top of the services, and not exclusively the Lord’s Supper: “Our services begin with the Invocation of the name of the triune God...Wherever the name of Jesus is, there is Jesus — present bodily with the gifts of salvation.”<sup>27</sup> The implication is that in order to properly begin the worship service a ritual confession of sin must be made and an absolution must be given. At the same time, he relied on a teaching on holiness in relationship to the Old Testament temple, which had “boundaries that kept those who were not worthy or prepared from entering God’s holiness; we today also enter God’s presence confessing our sins in repentance and faith and hearing God’s absolution.”<sup>28</sup>

This approach to worship, while new to the LCMS at the first half of the twentieth century, was clearly taught through the *Common Service*, a liturgy created in the latter half of the nineteenth century by the combined efforts of the General Council, the General Synod, and the General Synod of the South. *An Explanation of the Common Service*, the official guide to the liturgy published by the General Council in 1908, claims that “[w]ithout the sincere confession of sin God does not bestow His grace upon us; nor does He accept our sacrifices of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving.”<sup>29</sup> This claim is not made about confession/absolution generally, but is attached to the rite of confession as it appears in the *Common Service*. The adoption of this opinion makes it very difficult for the Service of the Word to function as a *Missa Catechumenorum* in the LCMS, and its reversal is needed if our synod is to consider meeting the challenges of post-Christendom with the category of *Missa Catechumenorum*. By making heartfelt ritual confession of sin a prerequisite to liturgical gathering we begin our services with the declaration that there is no place for the active participation of the not-yet Christian in our midst.

Fortunately, the testimony of our Lutheran history and doctrine speaks against the idea that the service *must* begin, or *most appropriately* begins, with general confession/absolution. Certainly, a Lutheran church *can* faithfully begin worship with ritual confession/absolution, and such a rite is certainly very common today, but that is

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simply a faithful and useful *choice* in particular contexts and should not hinder our ability to leverage the spirit of the *Missa Catechumenorum* as a resource to meet the unique challenges of post-Christendom.

While many sixteenth century Lutheran services would have begun with a general confession it was not considered the only or best option for all contexts. Specifically, Luther and the Wittenberg Reformers did not believe that a ritual confession/absolution was a prerequisite for the Service of the Word. In fact, the closer we get to the original sixteenth century liturgies of Lutheranism the more likely we are to find general confession and absolution celebrated after the sermon and not as a theological necessity for entrance into the Divine Service. Ronald Rittgers writes: “General confession typically took place after the sermon and before the celebration of the Eucharist, providing laypeople with a *final opportunity to prepare themselves for reception of the consecrated host* [emphasis mine].”<sup>30</sup> This is confirmed by Arthur Carl Piepkorn, who wrote that “[t]he majority of the orders in [the sixteenth century] that prescribe a confession at all put it after the sermon instead of the beginning of the Mass.”<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, we have also alluded to the fact that at the beginning of the LCMS and for its entire German-speaking era, ritual confession and absolution was practiced after the sermon and immediately preceding the service of the Sacrament. We find that in the *Kirchengesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden ungeänderter Augsburger Confession* (1847), the following rubric: “Having heard the Word of God, let us now humble ourselves before the supreme Majesty of God, and make confession of our sin, saying... .”<sup>32</sup>

Until relatively recently Lutherans have not believed, taught, or confessed that ritual confession/absolution is an essential entrance rite into the worship gathering. They practiced it as a prerequisite to receiving the sacrament and, as such, it just needed to take place sometime before the distribution.<sup>33</sup> Note that, in the paradigm of *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium*, confession/absolution is associated with the *Missa Fidelium*. Furthermore, many early Lutheran churches retained private confession and absolution and the worship service contained no public confession and absolution whatsoever. In these cases, congregants that wished to commune were to stop by the church the night before for Vespers, or, in the case of sixteenth century Nürnberg, earlier Sunday morning to register and participate in private confession/absolution. Critically, this practice was not considered an entrance rite for worship as a whole but for the Lord’s Supper in particular.

Now we must return to the original goal: to develop a more secure connection between liturgy and evangelism as we consider what the responsible adaptation of liturgical form looks like in post-Christendom. To this point it is noteworthy that while we tend to describe people as either “Christian” or “non-Christian,” in his preface to the *Deutsche Messe* Luther used the terms “Christian” and “not-yet Christian [*noch nicht Christen*].”<sup>34</sup> In fact, it could be argued that Luther thought we all had a little bit of not-yet Christian in us:

we prepare such orders not for those who already are Christians; for they need none of them. And we do not live [and work] for them; but *they live*

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*for us who are not yet Christians* [emphasis mine] so that they may make Christians out of us. Their worship is in the spirit. But such orders are needed for those who are still becoming Christians or need to be strengthened...<sup>35</sup>

More recently, Robert Webber suggested that evangelism “not only converts people, but also brings them into the full life of the church and keeps them there.”<sup>36</sup> In this context it naturally follows that the worshiping community will be made up of Christians and not-yet Christians alike.

The early church, rooted in a pre-Christian context, would have also seen the path of faith formation as non-binary initiation, again, making the division of the mass into *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium* an appealing approach for the continual making of Christians out of all who gather in worship. This is resonant with what is arguably the defining aspect of the modern Liturgical Theology movement:

I know that liturgy is the public ceremony of the church, but it does not exist for its own sake any more than does the gospel. They both have a mission orientation, because they are both charged with the power of transfiguration. Thus it was that my teacher, Aiden Kavanagh, used to regularly say in class that ‘liturgy is doing the world the way the world was meant to be done’<sup>37</sup>

In other words, evangelistic considerations in worship are not only for the sake of not-yet Christian, they are for the not-yet Christian in each of us. We have moved substantially beyond the cultural context that J.-J. von Allmen was addressing in 1965 and into a truly pre-church context and a severe decline in biblical literacy, nevertheless, his insights still have merit as we consider what it means to worship in post-Christendom:

Besides the central participants, that is, the baptized, there is also a place in Christian worship for what might be described as peripheral participants. We have notably forgotten this in the course of Christian civilization because — the whole population being, in fact if not in essence, composed of the baptized — the public nature of the cult came to the forefront instead of its exclusive nature. This public nature of worship has helped transform it (I am speaking very theoretically) into a spectacle, following the Catholic trend, or into a lecture following the Protestant trend, instead of allowing it to remain an encounter, in which the Lord and His church are committed to each other in mutual self-dedication. Hence, if there are peripheral worshippers among us, they are no longer the same as they were in the ancient Church; they are those baptized who have grown lukewarm through the cares and cupidities of the world.<sup>38</sup>

If evangelism is narrowly defined as churching the unchurched, then shaping worship around evangelistic considerations might mean gearing the service towards getting people

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to “make a decision for Jesus Christ.” If, however, evangelism is defined in terms of making Christians out of the not-yet Christian in all of us — liturgical adaptation around evangelistic concerns takes on the form of intentional initiation and invitation *into* the life of the church, and we have resources for such an approach! Insofar as we are Christians we are enlivened by the Holy Spirit and enter the door of the church ready to freely confess and receive forgiveness. Insofar as we are not-yet Christians, however, we are entrenched in self-promotion and need the law to convict us of our sin. In view of this, Frank Senn wrote:

In what sequence should things happen? We may think that we need to go through the confessional rite of purification at the beginning of worship. But Isaiah didn’t confess his unworthiness until *after* he was granted a vision of the Lord high and lifted up in the temple. Modern worshipers may be able to experience true contrition only after their defenses have been pierced by the word.<sup>39</sup>

Reincorporating this distinction back into the liturgy could be an ideal way for the church of the twenty-first century to allow evangelistic concerns to shape liturgical form. Our societal shift to post-Christendom has exposed the ways in which our current worship forms have been shaped by predominantly Christian cultural contexts. Those who meet this challenge by gratuitously accommodating worship to culture do so at the expense of authenticity, which, ironically, is a primary value for the generations such adaptations are designed to reach. Those who, on principle, refuse to consider evangelistic concerns in the shaping of worship do so at the expense of relatability, which of course, is of primary concern for Lutherans as they gather in worship.

It is safe to say that the cultural landscape in which we gather for worship has a significant impact on our rites and rituals; already in 1938 Richard Caemmerer warned us that the liturgical challenges of the future would not be the same as challenges of the past.<sup>40</sup> Lutherans, however, are supremely positioned to meet the shifting cultural landscape in worship because rather than jettisoning the heritage aspects of our worship for the sake of evangelism, Lutherans can work together to arrange, utilize, and responsibly amend our liturgical heritage in order to best serve the Church and world in our own time and place. Returning the confession of sins to its original placement for the LCMS and taking on the spirit of the *Missa Catechumenorum* for our own time is not a silver bullet to meet the challenges of post-Christendom, however, it might be one of the tools that helps. Of course, in the process “all frivolity and offense must be avoided, and special consideration must be given particularly to those who are weak in faith,”<sup>41</sup> educating our people as to the meaning and usefulness of this proposal.

In the long run, congregations still need to make a witness of their faith to the world and entrust God to send out workers for the harvest and build His church. We are free, however, to responsibly adapt our services to the context in which we live, and the subtle shift of the Service of the Word to the *Missa Catechumenorum* and the Service of the Sacrament to the *Missa Fidelium* provides one such strategy to responsibly do so.

## Endnotes

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### 43 Lutheran Worship for the Not-Yet Christian

<sup>1</sup> The influence of the institutional church has been profoundly diminished throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, but not across all contexts. For example, Leo Sanchez has observed that Christendom is alive and well in regions like Latin America and wherever the Roman Church remains a cultural insider. Here we refer to the rise of Post-Christendom that is experienced in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> In 2017 the official newspaper of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the *Reporter*, warned of a “45-plus-years membership decline in the Synod.” Paula Schlueter Ross, “Reversing the LCMS Membership Decline,” *Reporter*, February 28, 2017.

(<https://reporter.lcms.org/2017/reversing-lcms-membership-decline/>) (last accessed 1/24/2022).

<sup>3</sup> Gabe Lyons, *The Next Christians* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2016), 11.

<sup>4</sup> Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Frank C. Senn, *The Witness of the Worshiping Community* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas H. Schattauer, *Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 2.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Senn warned that “missionary success can result in a loss of the real mission of the church. It has happened many times, and it usually happens right under our noses.” Senn, *Witness*, 14.

<sup>8</sup> Jean-Jacques von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965), 79.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Luther, in *Luther's Works, Vol. 53: Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 53:63.

<sup>10</sup> Hermann Sasse, “*Ecclesia Orans*: Letters Addressed to Lutheran Pastors” (*Logia*, Eastertide/April 1993, Volume II, Number 2, *The Divine Service*), 33.

<sup>11</sup> Proceedings of the 2001 LCMS Convention, Resolution 2-05 “To Continue to Foster Discussion in Worship,” 129. Available on the LCMS website.

(<https://www.lcms.org/search?q=2010%20convention%20resolution#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=2010%20convention%20resolution&gsc.page=1>).

<sup>12</sup> Proceedings of the 2010 LCMS Convention, Resolution 2-05, “To Commend ‘Theses on Worship’ and Model Theological Conference on the Theology of Worship,” 110. Available on the LCMS website.

(<https://www.lcms.org/search?q=2010%20convention%20resolution#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=2010%20convention%20resolution&gsc.page=1>).

<sup>13</sup> LCMS Council of Presidents, “Theses on Worship,” 2010.

(<https://michigandistrict.org/resources/theses-on-worship/>) (last accessed 2/25/22).

<sup>14</sup> The Lutheran Confessions guides the church into this tension: “We believe, teach, and confess that the community of God in every place and at every time has the authority to alter such ceremonies according to its own situation, as may be most useful and edifying for the community of God.” This is not a blanket permission for change: “Of course, all frivolity and offense must be avoided, and special consideration must be given particularly to those who are weak in faith.” (Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 515. (FC Ep X, 4–5).

<sup>15</sup> Edward T. Horn, “Outlines of Liturgics - On the Basis of Harnack” in *Zöckler's Handbuch der theologischen Wissenschaften. Englished with additions from other sources* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1890), 11.

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- <sup>16</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, Volume II: Ante-Nicene Christianity. A.D. 100-325* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885), 225.
- <sup>17</sup> Schaff, 225.
- <sup>18</sup> Hospitality is only one of the reasons the early church divided its liturgy into *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium*. Another would be to curb the propagation of heresies or misunderstandings concerning the Sacrament of the Altar (The *Disciplina Arcani*).
- <sup>19</sup> Sasse, 30.
- <sup>20</sup> von Allmen, 78.
- <sup>21</sup> Frank C. Senn, *Introduction to Christian Liturgy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 44.
- <sup>22</sup> Senn, *Introduction*, 44–45.
- <sup>23</sup> Rodney Clapp, *Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 167. He quoted William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1989), 81.
- <sup>24</sup> *Lutheran Service Book: Pew Edition*, Prepared by The Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).
- <sup>25</sup> Theodore Graebner, *The Problem of Lutheran Union and Other Essays* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), 141.
- <sup>26</sup> Arthur Just, *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008) 184.
- <sup>27</sup> Just, 184.
- <sup>28</sup> Just, 184.
- <sup>29</sup> *An Explanation of the Common Service, 2nd Ed* (Philadelphia: General Council Publishing House, 1908), 21.
- <sup>30</sup> Ronald Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004) 84–85.
- <sup>31</sup> Arthur Carl Piepkorn, “Lutheran Rubrics of the Sixteenth Century,” *Pro Ecclesia Lutherana* Vol. 1, 1933, 72.
- <sup>32</sup> Trans. Matthew Carver, *Walther’s Hymnal: Church Hymnbook for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2012), 391.
- <sup>33</sup> This posture is most likely related to the deference sixteenth-century Lutherans paid the early church; in view are the 4th Lateran Council’s requirement of annual confession of sins and reception of the Supper, and the stance of the Didache: “Assemble on the Lord’s Day, and break bread and offer the Eucharist; but first make confession of your faults, so that your sacrifice may be a pure one. Anyone who has a difference with his fellow is not to take part with you until they have been reconciled, so as to avoid any profanation of your sacrifice. For this is the offering of which the Lord has said, ‘Everywhere and always bring me a sacrifice that is undefiled, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is the wonder of nations.’” (<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/didache-12503>, last accessed 4/13/2022).
- <sup>34</sup> Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Saemmtliche Schriften (The Complete Works of Dr. Martin Luther) Vol. 10*, Dr. Johannes Georg Walch, ed. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1892), 226.
- <sup>35</sup> Martin Luther, *Vol. 53*: 62.
- <sup>36</sup> Robert E. Webber, *Celebrating Our Faith: Evangelism through Worship* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), vii.

<sup>37</sup> David Fagerburg, *Consecrating the World* (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2016) 4. Compare Kavanagh quote to its appearance in print: “A liturgy of Christians is thus nothing less than the way a redeemed world is, so to speak, done.” in Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984), 100.

<sup>38</sup> von Allmen, 200–201.

<sup>39</sup> Senn, *Witness*, 24.

<sup>40</sup> “In one respect our twentieth-century problem is similar to Luther’s. We are confronted, as our problem of evangelization of the world comes close home to us, with a vast number of people, a small minority of whom we imagine, for sure, to be Christians. But there is a great difference, which is of importance in the approach to the liturgical problem: the great mass is not liturgically habituated. Our problem is not one of retention of liturgical forms but of introducing them to the individual. Each new worshiper in our church is a liturgical problem. He has been, we trust, grounded in the elemental considerations of the faith. Shall he be launched into a complete worship technique? a traditionally complicated service? There is sense to that, Luther would say, if the newcomer had always known the technique and the service. Then it would be a track for his wayward devotion. What would Luther say of a man without liturgical experience? That problem was not one of his.” (Richard Caemmerer, “On Liturgical Uniformity” *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Volume: 9, Nr. 6, 1938, 439.)

<sup>41</sup> Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 515. FC Ep X, 4–5.