

Twenty-Five Years of Crisis
within the
Synodical Conference

Compiled during my seminary training
For Prof. Edmund Reim
1964-1967
John K. Pfeiffer

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Part I. Emergence of the Controversy 1938-1952

LCMS Proceedings – June 15-24, 1938

Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Regular Convention of the Evangelical Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, etc. — St. Louis, Mo. June 15-24, 1938

pp.221-226 “Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church”

- “To this end He (God) also purposes to justify those who have come to faith . . . ” p.222
- “In regard to the Antichrist we accept the historical judgement of Luther in the Smalcald Articles that the Pope is the very Antichrist’ The answer to the question whether in the ‘future that is still before us.’ prior to the return of Christ, a social unfolding and personal concentration of the anti-Christian power already present now and thus a still comprehensive fulfillment of 2 Thess.2 may occur we leave to the Lord and Ruler of the Church and world history.” p.225
- “With reference to the question concerning the conversion of Israel, which some find indicated especially in Rom.11:25,26, we declare with Dr. Walther that to assume such a conversion ‘must not be regarded as a cause for division’ p.225 “With reference to the assumption of the physical resurrection of the martyrs, which some find indicated in Rev.20:4, we declare that we are not ready to deny church-fellowship to anyone who holds this view, merely on that account” p.225

Report of Committee 16, pp.228-233

- “As a result of these meetings(with ALC) the representatives of the American Lutheran Church accepted the doctrinal contents of the ‘Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod,’ but in order to supplement and emphasize their position, . . . made an official statement called ‘The Declaration’” pg.228 (JKP: Is this an acceptance?)
- “It is similarly gratifying that concerning the Holy Scriptures the ‘Declaration’ of the American Lutheran Church representatives specifically and in opposition to some other Lutheran bodies emphasizes the verbal inspiration and the inerrancy of the Scriptures.” p229 (JKP: Not so specific and emphatic.)
- “With the Missouri Synod the ‘Declaration’. . . , on the basis of the Scriptures and the Smalcald Articles, teaches that the Pope is the Antichrist”p.229 (JKP: They merely refer to the Smalcald Art, in direct opposition to this statement.)
- “While the Missouri Synod teaches . . . that the Pope is the very Antichrist for the past ‘and’ the future . . . a deviation in this doctrine need not be divisive of church-fellowship.” p.229
- “While the Missouri Synod teaches on the basis of Scripture that we are not to look forward to a universal conversion of all Jews before the end of the world, your Committee finds that the synodical fathers have declared that a deviation in this doctrine need not be regarded as a

cause for division." p.229

- ". . . need not be divisive of church-fellowship . . ." is a phrase used continuously in regard to, so-called, "non-fundamental" doctrines: a belief in more than one resurrection from the dead (p.230); a belief that the thousand years in Rev. 20 has not yet been fulfilled; p.230 (JKP: Missouri allows for different interpretations of this.)
- "Therefore a difference in this point need not be divisive of church-fellowship when, this expression, 'the visible side of the Church,' is understood in the light of our Synod's pronouncement by Dr. Walther in 'Das Buffaloeer Kolloquium,' 1866, p.9." p.231
- "While the phraseology employed was sometimes not that which we use, we feel, especially in view of the explanations by our Committee on Lutheran Union, that these statements contain the truth as expressed in the Scriptures and our Lutheran confessional writings." p.231 (JKP: Poor "phraseology" is dangerous and leaves "loopholes." What do they mean by the statement, "contain the truth"?)
- "Resolved: . . . That Synod declare that the 'Brief Statement' of the Missouri Synod, together with the 'Declaration' . . . and the provisions of this entire report of Committee No.16 now being read and with the Synod's actions thereupon, be regarded as the doctrinal basis for *future church-fellowship* between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran church." p.231
- "That in regard to the points of nonfundamental doctrines mentioned in the 'Declaration'.., we endeavor to establish full agreement and that our Committee on Lutheran Union be instructed to devise ways and means of reaching this end." pp.231-232 (JKP: Not strong)

In regard to the question of union with the United Lutheran Church of America:

- " Resolved, That according to the Scriptural injunction I Pet.3:15 ("Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you") and in the interest of Christian union with all those who are agreed in the doctrines of our Lutheran faith, Synod declare itself willing and ready to continue such conferences . . ." p.233 (JKP: Context of I Pet.3:15 does not allow this application.)

"Quartalschrift", re: LCMS October, 1938

In regard to the report of Committee No.16 reporting on 37th Reg. Conv. of the Missouri Synod (vol.35, no.4), :

- "Their (the resolutions') far-reaching consequences cannot easily be over-estimated. Witness the following comment by the reporter in the 'Lutheran Witness': 'The committee declared and was supported by others from the floor in its declaration - that adoption of the report would not be identical with establishing fraternal relations, the report merely pronouncing acceptance of the report of the Committee on Church Union as a *settlement of the doctrinal controversies*. It was stated emphatically by members of the Church Union Committee that its own report, together with the present report of Committee No.16 is to be regarded not only as basic for further negotiations but as a *sufficient and adequate basis for future fellowship*.'" p. 289

"The Lutheran Witness," re: ALC Nov. 1, 1938

Resolutions of the American Lutheran Church

Sandusky, Ohio, Oct.14-20 (as taken from "The Lutheran Witness," Nov. 1:1938

- ". . . our Fellowship Commission and the Commission of the Synod of Missouri have arrived at a doctrinal agreement . . ." p.373
- ". . . we declare that the 'Brief Statement' of the Missouri Synod together with the 'Declaration' of our Commission be regarded as. sufficient doctrinal basis for church-fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church." p.373
- ". . . we are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines . . ." p373
- ". . . we understand why the Missouri Synod is for the time being not yet ready to draw the logical conclusion and immediately establish church-fellowship with our Church. We, however, expect that henceforth by both sides the erection of opposition altars shall be carefully avoided and that just coordination of mission work shall earnestly be sought." p.373
- ". . . we believe the 'Brief Statement' . . . viewed in the light of the 'Declaration' . . . , is not in contradiction to the 'Minneapolis Theses, which are the basis of our fellowship in the American Lutheran Conference. We are not willing to give up this membership. However, we are ready to submit the aforementioned doctrinal agreement to the American Lutheran Conference for official approval and acceptance." p.373

"The Lutheran Sentinel," re: LCMS & ALC, Dec.12, 1938

On Inter-Synodical Committee Reports:

- "The Sentinel, up to the present time, has refrained from informing its readers as to the results of negotiations between inter-synodical committees of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. The committees arrived at an agreement which, with certain provisions, was adopted by the St. Louis convention of the Missouri Synod in June of this year, as a doctrinal basis for future fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. In our judgement this *agreement leaves much to be desired* as a doctrinal basis for fellowship between synods that have been in serious and mutually acknowledged doctrinal disagreement for decades.

"Since the St. Louis convention, the American Lutheran Church has held its 1938 convention in Sandusky, Ohio, and has, in its resolutions relative to the Inter-synodical Committee Report, made its *statements which to us seem to render a continuation of the present move towards fellowship impossible!*" p.54

*In regard to the speech of President Dr. Gullixson President of the ALConference, Quartalschrift quotes the Lutheran Standard;

- "" . . . President Gullixson referred to the prominent part played by the Norwegian Lutheran

Church and our own body (ALC) in the formation of the American Lutheran Conference, which, he declared, deserves to be named, "The Needed Agency in the Unfolding of Lutheran Destinies in America." In the midst of a world in transiency in both country and city, the distinguished head of the American Lutheran Conference declared that *the Lutheran Church has the duty and responsibility of he~ping to build America into the nation she is to be* and invoked God's richest blessing and immediate guidance upon our deliberations in the convention.

'In his response, President Poppin (affirmed) . . . , "The work of the American Lutheran Conference . . . has just begun, and we say that with full awareness of the implications. We are not saying farewell to you or your Synod or the American Lutheran Conference, but Auf Wiedersehen!"'

"If the words we underscored were found in the platform of some political party we would pass them by, but when a church body writes them into its program the duty of brotherly love impels us to raise our voice in warning. To conduct the affairs of state properly, God has given us intelligence and the natural law. To the church has been committed the Gospel of salvation. The affairs of the state are regulated by law: by the laws of organization, of finance, of logic, of physical force, of expediency, of compromise; while the church has but one means of doing her work: the testimony of the truth. If the church forgets about her task and attempts to shift her work to matters of state – be they social, political, or economical – the results must prove disastrous to both state and church." p.55-56

"Quartalschrift",re: Sandusky Res., January, 1939

Sandusky Resolutions on Fellowship with the ULCA (vol. 36, no.1)

– "Resolved:1. That, with gratitude to God and His Holy Spirit, we take recognition of the repeated desires that have been expressed for fellowship between the United Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Church and for the great progress which has been made towards such fellowship since conferences between our respective Commissions have been held.

'2. That, we therefore instruct our Committee to resume negotiations with the official Committee of the United Lutheran Church without delay in the interest of removing difficulties, doctrinal and practical, which may now exist.

'3. That, here again we humbly implore the Lord of the Church to guide us, His servants, in our efforts to strengthen the walls of Zion and to make our Church more useful in service and more worthy of His blessing.'

"We wonder how doctrinal difficulties that separate two church bodies can be removed by a joint committee. Since honest doctrinal confessions are merely the expressions of the hearts convictions, the proper way to remove such difficulties would be to change the convictions of a body first, to win the hearts for the truth, and then let the confessions follow naturally.

" – What can men do to strengthen the wails of Zion? Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Let

us not be deceived as though the Church's strength lay in numbers and organization. Build thou, O God, the walls of Jerusalem. Of Zion it shall be said . . . the Highest himself shall establish her. We pray the 46th Psalm, being still, to know that the Lord is God." p.53

A quote from the "Lutheran" Oct.19, 1938: spoken by Dr. Melhorn on behalf of the ULC with whom the ALC desired to be united.

- "I ask your notice while you are on the floor of the convention to the reports and recommendations that deal with our relationships with other bodies. Without exception you will see that no surrender of Lutheran principles is involved in the connections we have with the great Foreign, Home Mission and Educational Conference, with the National Lutheran Council. Indeed we are happy in all of these associations because through several of them we are in cooperation with members and commissions of the American Lutheran Church, among them Dr. Ralph Long, Executive Secretary of the National Lutheran Council and member of the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Convention. - There is a specific objective in thus directing your attention to items of the program of this convention. The reference permits me to express to you, and through you to your great American Lutheran Church, what is our dominant feeling in the sphere of Lutheran relations. We greet you as a fellow Lutheran. We plead with you as a fellow servant of Christ in times of great anxiety and opportunity. It is our conviction thus Lutheranism abroad has at times been so intent upon reflections from and upon what is past as to be unprepared for duties that approached it. There are times when correction should yield place to conquest order that conquest might work correction. If in your appraisal of this convention you decide that our faith in God, our dependence on grace, our loyalty to the historic confessions are our equipment for advance: if we seem courteous rather than deeply concerned about problems that confronted past generations, and if our sense of need impels us to ask you to share with us an attack on organized evil, you will correctly interpret our desires." This was spoken to a representative of the ALC, who is described as a "fraternal delegate" to the ULC convention. p.59

"Is a Difference in the Doctrine of Verbal Inspiration Divisive of Church Fellowship? — The ULCA does not think so. Witness a comment by the commissioners appointed to deal with representatives of the ALC and the Missouri Synod. The text is found in the "Lutheran" for October 5,1938:

- "The record of our meetings with the commissioners of both the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod serves to indicate the great extent of agreement and the slight extent of disagreement. The disagreement relates furthermore to a matter of theological interpretation which in addition applies only to a nonexistent original text of the Scriptures. In itself it is not a sufficient warrant to keep the various Lutheran bodies apart, especially as Lutheranism ??? the conditions which were declared at length in our Savannah Convention when the commission was appointed. *It is not our judgement that we can regard their views as outside of a Lutheran conception of the Scriptures, much less that they can so our views.*"

vol. 36, no.1

"The Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod and the Declaration of the ALC as the Doctrinal Basis for Church Fellowship"

- ". . . the secular press has given this matter nation-wide publicity with the effect that many within and without the Lutheran Church look upon the union of Missouri and the ALC as already consummated . . ."p.81-2

"I. Does the ALC Accept the 'Brief Statement' of 1932?

. . . We ask our readers to note the following facts:

- "1. The ALC considers the 'Declaration' to be a résumé of the deliberations of its representatives and the Committee on Union of the Missouri Synod.
- "2. On the condition of Missouri's acquiescence to a certain request hinges the willingness of the ALC to declare itself in doctrinal agreement with Missouri.
- "3. The Missouri Synod having accepted at its session last June the 'Brief Statement' together with the Declaration and the provisions in the report of committee No.16 as the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship, the ALC at its convention in Sandusky omits *the provisions of committee No.16* in enumerating the documents which are to be the basis for church fellowship, and wishes the Brief Statement to be *viewed in the light* of the Declaration.
- "4. The Declaration, according to its authors, is a document drawn up in part to *supplement* the doctrinal expositions of the Brief Statement, in part also to *emphasize* some of the points. (p.85)

- ". . . Has the ALC accepted the Brief Statement unconditionally and unequivocally? We think, the answer

is obvious and must be: No. (p.85)

- ". . . nothing in the Brief Statement may be adduced as countermanding a statement of the Declaration, that everything in the Brief Statement, on the other hand, must rather be construed as to be in harmony with the Declaration. Does not the phraseology of the resolution of the ALC force this conclusion on us?

If we were dealing with a mere human rivalry between the two large church bodies immediately concerned one would be tempted to admire the deftness with which the ALC at Sandusky tried to outmaneuver the Missouri Synod and to gain the upper hand, after Missouri by its resolutions of last June had committed itself to a certain course. But the embers of the ALC, as well as we, are all aware that it is God's truth, the saving Gospel of Christ, which is at stake. No one on either side strives to gain honor for himself at the cost of the other. All alike seek the glory and honor of God alone. Therefore we cannot but deplore the present state of affairs, as we see it. But after Sandusky Missouri can and will not remain silent, we hope. For if it would continue now its negotiations with the ALC for the establishment of church fellowship on the basis of the

Brief Statement and the Declaration, the result of all deliberations and resolutions, it seems to us, could only be confusion more confounded. The Missourian would, henceforth, tell her questioners: The ALC has accepted our Brief Statement. Do not forget that when you read the Declaration. The very fact of their approval of the Brief Statement precludes the assumption that any statement of the Declaration can run counter to anything said in the Brief Statement. The ALC man, on the other hand, with just as much right would say: The brief Statement has been accepted by us in the light of our Declaration and must, therefore, be understood from this viewpoint." p.86

- "What of the other churches to whom Missouri and the ALC are already tied by the bond of fellowship? We of the Wisconsin Synod and the other constituents of the Synodical Conference as well as the members of the American Lutheran Conference are asked to come to a decision whether or not we can accept a confession on the basis of which church-fellowship is contemplated. But how can we judge its merits when we are confronted with two confessional depositions — one by each of the two church bodies that are about to recognize each other publicly as brethren in the faith? They give rise to doubts as to seeming or real inconsistencies and conflicting allegations." p.87
- "It is our conviction : 1. in general, that the saving truth for which we are contending, to love of God, and our Christian duty to God's children — those who profess with us the same most holy faith and those who are enmeshed in error and false doctrine which jeopardize their eternal welfare; and furthermore 2. in particular, the settlement of doctrinal controversies, which have made a rift between some church bodies in the past, and the attempt to heal the breach by bringing about church-fellowship, which had been severed for conscience sake on account of doctrinal differences of the gravest nature, — imperatively demand such a confession, (That is a single, unanimously accepted confession.) A confession which must satisfactorily cover all the controversial points in a language so clear and in terms so succinct, in thetical and antithetical form so exact, as to exclude all ambiguity, so much as that can be done in human language. 'For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air.' (I Cor.14:8,9)." p.87

Regarding the ALC statement at Sandusky: "We are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines," the Quartalschrift states:

- "Fundamental doctrines are those whose denial or falsification undermines the very foundation of saving faith, not only vitiating or invaliding it, but making it utterly impossible. Such doctrines are e.g. those of the Scriptures, of God, of Christ's redemption, etc. Cf non-fundamental doctrines we speak in the sense that a deviation from the Scriptures in these points does not necessarily and immediately destroy saving faith. But they are also Scripture doctrines as well as the ones called fundamental. They are both doctrines of faith (Glaubenslehren). Hence it is by no means a negligible matter, something of not much or minor importance when one holds, and adheres to, erroneous views in non-fundamental doctrines. *If obstinately adhered to despite ample information and admonition errors in non-*

fundamentals become open rebellion against God and His holy Word and must at last lead into eternal perdition. We must not confound non-fundamental doctrines and open questions, so-called open because Scripture does not answer them.” p.90

- “Are the Brief Statement, the Declaration and the provisions contained in the Resolutions to be considered the doctrinal basis for future fellowship *before* that endeavor (to establish full agreement on non-fundamentals) has been made or *after* the desired result has been achieved? . . . the action of the ALC at Sandusky left no doubt of its interpretation of Missouri’s resolution. Disregarding Missouri’s conditions — if the provisions are meant as such — it accepted the Brief Statement and the Declaration of its representatives as a sufficient basis for fellowship and capped this with the climax ‘*that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines.*’ To our sorrow we reluctantly admit that the ALC has interpreted the Missouri resolution correctly, if the report in the ‘Lutheran Witness’ is true — and we have no reason to believe otherwise. We read there: ‘The committee declared . . . that adoption of the report would not be identical with establishing fraternal relations, the report merely pronouncing acceptance of the report of the Committee on Church Union as a *settlement* of the *doctrinal controversies*’ (Oct., ‘38, p.289). If by its acceptance of the report of Committee No.16 Missouri declares its doctrinal controversies with the ALC as settled, it has thereby denied at least the *necessity* of agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines.” pp.92-93
- “To summarize: The following distinctions should be sharply drawn and steadfastly maintained:
 - “1. It is one thing to bear with an erring brother, but quite another to sanction false teaching by tolerating it in our midst.
 - “2. It is one thing to sever the bond of fellowship with a person that is within the fold, belongs to our congregation or our synod. Only after having exhausted all means of convincing the erring brother, only after all efforts have failed to bring him to the acknowledgment and confession of the truth will we finally, in obedience to our Lord, exclude him from our communion.“But it is quite another thing when we deal with the question of receiving an outsider, one with whom we are not now in fellowship, especially a minister or public teacher of the Word, or a whole congregation or synod, into the fellowship of faith. In this case, church fellowship should not be established until a full agreement in and clear understanding of all points at issue has been reached, be they fundamental or non-fundamental, so long as they are Scriptural. — There is no room for other doctrines and opinions in the Church.” p.96

WELS Proceedings, August, 1939

Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Convention of the
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States Watertown, Wis., Aug.2-9, 1939

- "(1) The American Lutheran Church, assembled in Sandusky, Ohio, in October, 1938, (like the Missouri Synod in June) also adopted the 'Brief Statement' of the Missouri Synod together with the 'Declaration' of its own representatives as a sufficient doctrinal basis for church fellowship. It stipulated, however, that the 'Brief Statement' must be viewed in the light of the 'Declaration'; and it declared an unwillingness to give up its membership in the American Lutheran Conference.
- "(2) The American Lutheran Church representatives on February 13, 1939, in Pittsburgh, reached an 'Agreement' with the representatives of the United Lutheran Church of America on inspiration, the wording of which is such that a clear confession to the inerrancy of the Scriptures is lacking." pp. 59,60
- "On the basis of its observations, deliberations, and discussions the Committee is of the opinion that the doctrinal basis established by the Missouri Synod and by the American Lutheran Church, particularly in view of the proviso by the American Lutheran Church that the Missouri 'Brief Statement' must be viewed in the light of the American Lutheran Church 'Declaration,' is not acceptable. Not two statements should be issued as a basis for agreement; a single joint statement covering the contested doctrines thetically and antithetically and accepted by both parties to the controversy, is imperative; and, furthermore, such doctrinal statement must be made in clear and unequivocal terms which do not require laborious additional explanations. The sincerity of any theoretical statement must also be evidenced by a clean church practice." p.60

LCMS Proceedings, June, 1941

Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of . . . Missouri
Fort Wayne, Ind., June 18-27, 1941

- * Under the section: "Detroit Convention of the American Lutheran Church October, 1940"
- ". . . the Detroit Convention Report states: 'Concerning the first point, we are surprised that the sentence "God purposes to justify those that have come, to faith" could be so wrongly construed as "implying an assumption of an interval between the creation of faith and the justifying act of God." Concerning the so-called objective, or universal, justification we state that we adhere to this doctrine without excluding, however, the declarative nature of the individual justification in the moment of faith of which the Scriptures speak so often.'" p.280

(There is no definition of objective justification here. Therefore, no ground was gained by this statement. - JKP)

Concerning "non-fundamentals":

- "We concur with our commissioners and say, 'To be sure, everything that Scriptures teach is God's Word and therefore binding.' However, for clarity's sake we add: Not every traditional explanation of a Scriptural statement is binding. The traditional explanation may not be the sense intended by the Holy Ghost and therefore may make further study under His guidance

necessary; and since human short-sightedness and sin may preclude the finding or universal acceptance of the divinely intended sense, we thank God that it is not necessary for the establishment of church-fellowship to agree in every explanation of a Scriptural statement.” p. 281

- “We (Missouri) need merely repeat here what we stated to the commissioners of the American Lutheran Church: ‘This means, of course, that the American Lutheran Church has accepted the Brief Statement, excepting what they already accepted in the Declaration. Some may later abuse this statement so as to eliminate the Brief Statement as a part of the basis for doctrinal agreement. We are not responsible for such abuse.’” p.282

(If they saw this possibility, why didn't they do something about it? - JKP)

- “Referring to prayer-fellowship, we (ALC) are still convinced that prayer-fellowship is wider than church-fellowship; but we do not consider this difference as church-divisive and believe in the course of time it will be overcome completely.” p.283
- “Generally speaking, prayer-fellowship involves church-fellowship. There may be cases, however, where the question whether common prayer means fellowship belongs in the field of casuistry.” (Missouri’s position.) p.283

At a meeting of the American Lutheran Conference, Nov.,1940 –

- “. . . the American Lutheran Conference was unconditionally and emphatically assured by spokesmen of the American Lutheran Church that the latter had no intention of leaving the American Lutheran Conference.” p. 284

A little enlightenment:

*Petition to Withdraw the Doctrinal Basis for Church-Fellowship Adopted 1938:

- “Although Committee 16 felt that the ALC is now agreed with us in the doctrine of eternal election . . . the commissioners of the ALC have more recently stated: ‘We are not sure that Scripture actually and expressly speaks of a “definite number” of those elected from eternity . . .’” p.290
- “Section V of the Declaration does not tell us all that is ‘publica doctrina’ in the ALC in regard to the ‘Sunday question.’ For the ‘Lutheran Standard’ of Aug.10, 1935, says this (p.2): ‘Though Christians are not bound to keep any particular day of the week for rest and public worship, yet God demands that on one of the seven days they rest from unnecessary work and hold divine worship.’” p.290

WELS Proceedings August, 1941

Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint etc. Wisconsin — Saginaw, Mich. Aug. 6-13, 1941

- "Our complaint that the Union resolutions of the St. Louis convention (1938) compromised the sister synods of the Synodical Conference because they placed before them an accomplished fact in a matter of confession without giving them an opportunity to examine the contemplated new confession beforehand, was not acknowledged as valid. It was ignored, e.g. , 1) When the Missouri Committee withheld from us a copy of a document containing their demands on the American Lutheran Church (before Detroit); 2) When, apparently without considering our communication (Watertown Resolutions), the recent convention of the Missouri Synod at Fort Wayne again created a similar compromising situation for the sister synods, and this in spite of the advice of the Synodical Conference toward 'close cooperation' (Report 1940, p.89, 4)." (p.75)

p.77 "The unity of the Synodical Conference seems endangered by the action of Missouri.

- While the Synodical Conference advised 'close cooperation' ..., the Missouri Synod at Fort Wayne independently charted its own procedure.
- In the 'Columbus Conference' of January 20, 1941 ('Quartalschrift' 1941, p.133ff.; p.226f) delegates of the Missouri Synod agreed to a 'coordination' in relief work for orphaned foreign missions and in the welfare work among service men.

What is presupposed in coordination? Could we practice coordination with any church that is 'Basically evangelical' (in the broad sense in which this term is used in the Pittsburgh Agreement - 'Quartalschrift' 1939, p. 215)

- Moreover, in the 'American Lutheran' there appeared articles by prominent members of the Missouri Synod ('Foreign Missions and Intersynodical Cooperations' - 'Lutheran Union and Human Welfare'), which were hailed by the 'Lutheran Companion' (Augustana Synod) as indicating an 'important step' because 'more forward looking leaders are coming into position of power and influence in the Missouri Synod.' And the 'American Lutheran' admitted that it is 'true' - 'these articles indicate a change of sentiment' ('Quartalschrift' 1941, p.229f).

WELS Proceedings Aug.4-11,1943

Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synods of Wisconsin and Other States ... Watertown, Wisconsin August 4-11, 1943

- In regard to an article in the "Lutheran Witness" of May 11, 1943, in which the Missouri Committee for Doctrinal Unity reports on a meeting between it and the ALC Commission that the main obstacle between which keeps Missouri and ALC apart "...consists in a different view of the fellowship question or of the subject of unionism,"...fills us with serious misgivings, since matters of doctrine are not specifically mentioned." (p.66)
- The "Lutheran Witness" article continues: "Concerning the discussion of the Brief Statement and the Declaration in the American Lutheran Conference (which document the ALC delegation had promised to submit to the sister synods of the ALC for favorable action) the chairman of the ALC delegation stated that he was told in the executive committee meetings of the American Lutheran Conference when this subject was presented that such discussion would be altogether useless because the anti-Missouri feeling was at too high a pitch and that the time was not opportune for a consideration of these documents. He added that he had requested that this subject be kept on the agenda of the American Lutheran Conference committee. One of the commissioners of the ALC voiced the request that our Synod would help to remove these unfavorable attitudes."
- In regard to this statement, Wisconsin said: "In requesting that the issue of doctrine merely 'be kept on the agenda of the American Lutheran Conference committee' the American Lutheran Church Commission is accepting a status which falls far short of the expectations raised by the sharp criticism on doctrine and practice in other of the American Lutheran Conference which was voiced at the American Lutheran Church convention in Detroit, and one that fails to measure up to the importance which the synods of the Synodical Conference properly attach to matters of doctrine. If the Missouri Committee and Synod should agree to the proposed procedure, your committee holds that they would thereby be accepting this unsatisfactory status and would gravely compromise the truths we jointly seek to uphold." (p.66-67)

LCMS Proceedings, June 21-29, 1944

Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Regular Convention of the Missouri Synod ... Saginaw, Mich. June 21-29, 1944

*Mendota Resolutions (of the ALC)

- "... the American Lutheran Church has adopted the 'Pittsburgh Agreement' and accepted the 'Brief Statement' and 'Declaration'... as a basis for pulpit and altar fellowship ... Though these documents - the 'Pittsburgh Agreement' on the one hand, and the 'Brief Statement' on the other - differ in wording, yet both express the true position of the American Lutheran Church ... the United Lutheran Church in America has adopted the Pittsburgh Agreement; and the Declaration of our commissioners in connection with the Brief Statement has found acceptance within the Missouri Synod and was proposed by the intersynodical commissioners of the Missouri Synod as an integral part of the doctrinal basis for future church fellowship; ... its readiness to establish pulpit and altar fellowship with either or both of these honorable bodies on the basis of their full and wholehearted acceptance of, and adherence to, either of these documents ..." (p.228-9)

* Report of Missouri's committee in relation to the above document:

- ". . . according to our conviction, in the Missouri Synod quite generally the view is that the Pittsburgh Agreement is inadequate as a document on which the synods here in America can unite." p. 229

* Regarding memorials offered to the convention:

- ". . . joint prayer at intersynodical conferences, asking God for His guidance and blessing upon the deliberations and discussions of His Word, does not militate against the resolution of the Fort Wayne Convention, provided such prayer does not imply denial of truth or support of error. Local conditions will determine the advisability of such prayer. Above all, the conscience of a brother must not be violated nor offense be given." p. 252
- "Whereas, According to the best information available, membership in the National Lutheran Council, as at present constituted and in accordance with the proposed constitution, would apparently involve our Synod in unionistic principles and endeavors beyond a mere cooperation in externals and thus violate Scriptural principles which we are bound to observe; therefore be it Resolved, That we decline the request (to seek membership in the National Lutheran Council) ... and be it furthered Resolved, That we request the President and Vice-Presidents of Synod, together with our Committee on Lutheran Unity, to study the proposed constitution of the National Lutheran Council and gather further information as to the scope of the cooperative endeavors contemplated, with a view to collaborating with the National Lutheran Council in such matters as involve no violation of conscience and no denial of truth." p.252

WELS Proceedings, Aug.1-6, 1945

Proceedings of the Twenty-Eighth Convention of the Wisconsin Synod . . . New Ulm, Minn., Aug. 1-6, 1945

*Report of Church Union Floor Committee

- "2. In the fall of 1944 the Union Committee of the Missouri Synod and the ALC. jointly published a single document of agreement entitled 'Doctrinal Affirmation'. This document has been sent to all the pastors of our Synod for study.
- "According to its forward the Affirmation was prepared by 'inserting into the framework of the Brief Statement the additional truths and clarifications contained in other documents mentioned' (among others the Minneapolis Theses, The Declaration and The Resolutions of the ALC. of 1938). In a number of articles, including some on which the Declaration of the ALC. had a version of its own, the wording of the Brief Statement is taken over without changes. In some other articles, for instance on Inspiration, Means of Grace, The Last Things, the text of the Brief Statement had been modified substantially both by additions and omissions. Your committee is not satisfied that all previous errors have been excluded and the truth adequately safeguarded. In these matters your committee stands ready to present its misgivings to the Missouri Commission.
- "3. Your committee feels constrained to state, that the problem of union has become more difficult because of incidents which anticipate a union which does not yet exist."

Norwegian Synod Proceedings, June 2-6, 1946

Report of the Twenty-Ninth Regular Convention of the Norwegian Synod...Mankato, Minn., June 2-6, 1946

- "The General Pastoral Conference of the Norwegian Synod has studied the document called the DOCTRINAL AFFIRMATION and has found it unsatisfactory as a document of agreement between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod, since it does not sufficiently defend the truth in all the doctrines which have been at issue and does not in all its parts state the Biblical truths with sufficient clearness. Although we believe that the AFFIRMATION is an improvement on the DECLARATION, we believe that the BRIEF STATEMENT has been definitely weakened as a confessional basis. It is with genuine concern for the unity of faith in the Synodical Conference that we ask our brethren of the Missouri Synod to recognize the confusion which these union endeavors have caused in its own ranks and STATEMENT of the forty-four sent out from Chicago in 1945, we judge that a liberal and unionistic spirit is abroad in our midst which, if it prevails, will work havoc with sound Lutheranism. We ask our brethren of the Missouri Synod to rise up against this spirit with a renewal of the old time vigor and earnestness in contending for the faith, that we may all stand together in the confession of the one true faith and in that strong opposition to error which a true confession demands." p.58

*Statement of the Union Committee of the Norwegian Synod on the Doctrinal Affirmation

– "...Reviewing the Doctrinal Affirmation in greater detail:

"1) we hold that in the section dealing with the Holy Scriptures, 1-4,

a) it does not clearly confess the doctrine of verbal inspiration as this has been taught among us. This is a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures which has been and is being questioned today and therefore is worthy of special emphasis.

b) on the contrary , by rejecting the so-called dictation theory, it would seem to lend support to the charge that this is what our Synodical Conference has been teaching these many years with regard to the Scriptures.

c) it leaves room for the false idea of human cooperation by over-emphasizing the human element in the writing of the Holy Scriptures.

d) it also leaves room for the old theory of the Whole of Scripture - **das Schriftganze**.

"2) 14. We object to the inclusion of the statement, "We therefore reject also the Calvinistic teaching that grace works irresistibly", since this may strengthen some in the belief that the Synodical Conference, and the Missouri Synod in particular, has taught this. Instead we believe with the Confessions that God makes willing hearts out of the unwilling, this in His own mysterious way through the Gospel. The Brief Statement has in four places already pointed to this that grace may be resisted. By the proposed wording of the Doctrinal Affirmation room is easily made for the false teaching that the stubborn resistance of some explains the mystery of the doctrine of election, making election and the universal will of grace in the end identical.

"3) 22. The words of the Brief Statement, 'none other than', are to be retained in order to guard against the teaching that the Sacrament of Holy Communion may also have its physical effects upon the believer.

"4) 26. By a significant omission from the Brief Statement and the addition of other words in the Doctrinal Affirmation room is left for the old false teaching still harbored in the American Lutheran Church regarding the use of the means of grace as constituting the 'visible side' of the church. This divides the *Una Sancta*.

"5) 29. The objective definition of unionism found in the Brief Statement has been changed to a subjective one, and significant passages of Scripture have been removed from their proper place. Thus the door has been opened by these changes to much latitude on unionistic practice.

"6) 37-41 We need more definite assurance than these paragraphs give that the American Lutheran Church has dropped its adherence to the 'intuitu fidei' doctrine, that it does not continue to identify the election of grace with God's universal will of grace, and finally that it does not continue to distinguish between natural and wilful resistance with its resultant explanation of the mystery in the doctrine of election....

"7) 43ff Concerning the Last Things. In regard to this whole section we can not forget the insistence of the American Lutheran Church in looking upon all the doctrines in this section as those which are to be classed as non-fundamental in the sense that it is 'neither necessary nor possible' to establish unity in the Church on these points. . . an open door has been left for the former peculiar teachings of the American Lutheran Church on these points: the Millennium the Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the Resurrection of the Martyrs . . . the American Lutheran Church apparently does not intend to accept more than the 'doctrinal content' of the Brief Statement. Will not this also apply to the Doctrinal Affirmation? This will leave us all with a strange feeling of uncertainty, for no one can point definitely to that doctrinal content to tell us just what it is and just where it is defined . . ." pp. 59-60

LCMS Proceedings, July 20-29, 1947

Proceedings of the Fortieth Regular Convention of the Missouri Synod . . . Chicago, July 20-29, 1947

*Report of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity At a meeting with the Fellowship Committee of the ALC, Aug. 23, 1946,

- “. . .it was stated that in many an apathy, a reluctance, to study the Doctrinal Affirmation, and that this document did not receive a favorable reception where it was studied, that only three Districts of the American Lutheran Church approved it, but not enthusiastically, that some Districts rejected it, and that some to our knowledge that one District rejecting the Doctrinal Affirmation in principle published in its conferences, in which our Synod is accused of what is termed the ‘old Missouri heresy’ in the doctrine of election and of errors in justification, in conversion, and in other doctrines.” p.494-495
- “In the meeting of your Committee with the Fellowship Committee it was stated by the representatives of the American Lutheran Church that the Brief Statement and the Declaration presented two trends of thoughts, that they expressed differences in doctrine which do not exist, but which in the opinion of the Fellowship Committee do not preclude fellowship. Such differences were said to exist in the doctrines of election, of conversion, of the Church, and regarding the ‘Last things.’ The Fellowship committee held that in respect to our two bodies the phrase ‘doctrinal agreement’ should not be used, because doctrinal agreement does not exist.” P.495
- “Assembled at Appleton, in October of 1946, the American Lutheran Church adopted the following resolution of fellowship:
 - ‘Whereas, The attempt to formulate a unified doctrinal statement, such at the Doctrinal Affirmation, has not produced a document generally acceptable; and
 - ‘Whereas, After years of effort in this direction, we despair of attaining Lutheran Unity by way of additional doctrinal reformulations; and
 - ‘Whereas, The adoption of the Minneapolis Theses, the Washington Declaration, the Brief Statement and Declaration, the Pittsburgh Agreement, and Overture on unity are not matters of doctrine as much as differences of background, approach, spirit, Attitude which can be resolved in an atmosphere of candor, mutual understanding and love; therefore be it
 - ‘Resolved, That we affirm our sincere and earnest desire to achieve official church fellowship with all Lutheran bodies, and to that end continue our Committee on Fellowship, charging it to explore the measure of agreement we have with other Lutheran bodies and to further such agreement we have with other Lutheran bodies and to further such agreement toward the goal of true unity.” pp.495-6

At a meeting on May 9, 1947,

- “. . . the commissioners disavowed as unfortunate the statements made in the August, 1946, meeting. . . They furthermore stated that there committee ‘is bound by . . . the position

formulated in the resolution adopted by the American Lutheran church in 1938. . .” p.496

Three differences blocking the way to fellowship with ALC are discussed:

- “1. The manifest lack of doctrinal unity. . . . Writes the staff of the ‘Lutheran Witness’ (1947, page 76): ‘We have reported the fact that in some conferences our men have found ALC pastors taking a wrong stand on conversion, inspiration, predestination, and other doctrines. We have reported the action of several ALC conferences . . . which definitely revived old accusations against the Missouri Synod. . . Differences in doctrine still exist in various areas as between the ALC and Missouri.’ It would seem to us that if doctrinal unity actually prevailed, it would not be difficult to formulate a document acceptable to all concerned expressing such agreement.
- “2. The difference in conviction regarding the degree of doctrinal unity required for fellowship. The American Lutheran Church in its resolution adopted at Appleton makes mention of the Overture on Unity to which the American Lutheran church agreed, and which proposes that each Lutheran church body remain faithful to its particular confessional statement without subscribing for itself to the confession of any existing differences in doctrine, fellowship it to be established by resolution, rather than by actual agreement in doctrine as Scripture require.
- “3. The membership of the American Lutheran Church in the American Lutheran Conference. Nine years have elapsed since the American Lutheran Church gave the promise in its declaration, Proceedings, p.226: ‘At the same time we recognize it as our duty to do what we can to bring about the acceptance of these doctrinal statements by the bodies with we are now in fellowship.’ To date we have not been informed that any definite action has been taken in that direction.” p.497

(On page 523, the Proceedings report that the Declaration can no longer be used as an document that expresses the doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod.)

- “Resolved, That the Missouri Synod again officially express to the National Lutheran Council its willingness to cooperate in matters agreeing with Synod’s principles.” p.536

WELS Proceedings, August 3-9, 1949

Proceedings Thirtieth Convention of Wisconsin Synod . . . Milwaukee, WI. Aug.3-9, 1949

***Report of the Standing Committee on Church Union**

- "During recent years we of the Wisconsin Synod have found ourselves constrained to voice our protest against the rising tide of unionism and its attendant evils of indifference to Biblical truth and undermining of confessional Lutheranism. . . . In our efforts we have, however, been handicapped by the fact that members and sometimes official representatives and organizations of your Synod have been involved in what seems to be obvious violations of these principles. Efforts to remedy this situation have met with little or no success. Official discussions in an Intersynodical Forum have been equally futile. On the other hand, the positive testimony that we have tried to give has been to a considerable extent neutralized by the silence of your Synod. The inevitable result has been serious confusion and offense." p.112

***Resolutions of the College of Presidents The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

- "Recognizing that this critical period in the history of the world demands a realistic approach to the cultivation of the Unity in American Lutheranism, the College of Presidents of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod:
 - "1. Expresses profound distress over the Lutheran disunity and declares its willingness and desire to cooperate in efforts to achieve Lutheran unity in doctrine and its application to the life and work of the church;
 - "2. Proposes that all Lutheran bodies in America join in free conferences of pastors and laymen, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to establish existing agreement and to remove existing differences for the purpose of bringing about unity of Christian faith and fellowship;
 - "3. Hopes that a practical result of the discussion will be agreement in doctrine and the eventual formation of a federation of Lutheran bodies designed for cooperative action on the basis of the Word of God;
 - "4. Resolved collectively and individually, in the various districts of the Missouri Synod, to promote Lutheran unity through brotherly discussion with the hope that such discussion will lead to mutual recognition and cooperation;
 - "5. Requires the President of the Missouri Synod, in cooperation with the leaders of all other Lutheran bodies, to form a national inter-Lutheran committee for the purpose of arranging the proposed free conference of Lutheran pastors and laymen." p.113-4

*** Report of the Floor Committee on Church union**

"1. Your committee moves:

- (a) that the Synod wholeheartedly concur in the reply that was sent to President Behnken by President Brenner in which President Brenner states that 'we are not ready to consent to the creation of a "nation inter-Lutheran committee".'
- (b) that the Synod reaffirm its declaration of 1939 that 'we are willing to meet for the discussion of doctrine and practice the representatives of any church body desiring such a conference, providing that it frankly admits that difference exist, and insists that they must be removed before we can enter into fellowship with each other.'

"2. Your Committee wishes to emphasize the following points in President Brenner's reply:

- (a) We are not convinced 'that there is today a compelling need of an all-out effort to bring all Lutheran bodies together and that we are divinely called to support such a movement.'
- (b) We hold with President Brenner that 'negotiations' between synods should be chosen for this work and that the proposed local fee conferences are 'ill advised,' since all too frequently 'the activities of self-appointed men do not untie the church, but will decide it eventually. They offer occasion for propaganda and for the formation of pressure groups that do not serve the interests of the truth.'
- (c) In view of the sharp division in the Synodical Conference affecting matters of doctrine and practice, we are of the firm conviction that before we undertake to correct and direct other Lutheran bodies, 'it is our first duty, and this is a holy duty, to set out own house in order, and that in doing this in the true spirit of the Gospel we are making the most effective contribution toward the unity of the Lutheran church in our land and in other countries.'
- (d) We hold that the constituent synods of the Synodical Conference should have been consulted before the plan of free conferences was proposed to the presidents of the Lutheran bodies not in fellowship with us. The way in which the proposal has come to us places us 'in the unenviable position of facing an accomplished fact which leaves us no choice but of either following you (Missouri Synod) unquestioningly into a situation which we consider precarious, or of expressing our dissent by word and deed, and so bringing down on our Synod anew the condemnation of the fervid advocates of a Lutheran church union.'" (p.115-6)

LCMS Proceedings, June 21-30, 1950

Proceedings of the Forty-first Regular Convention of the ... Missouri Synod, Milwaukee, Wis., June 21-30, 1950

*Report of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity

- "The American Lutheran Church, at its convention in Fremont, Ohio, in October, 1948, passed several significant resolutions on Lutheran unity. One of these read 'that in the next biennium our pastoral conferences and district meetings busy themselves with a thorough study of the problems of the future of Lutheranism in America; that we continue a Committee on Fellowship to be appointed by the President of the Church to negotiate with a Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the ... Missouri Synod, toward the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship or of fellowship commensurate with the existing degree of unity; that we empower this Committee, together with the Executive Committee of the Church, to discuss with any and all Lutheran church bodies possible approaches and methods to attain fuller unity and closer affiliation.'" p.563

On pages 563 to 565, the report contains the beginning of plans within the National Lutheran Council (containing the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi Synod) to form the National Lutheran Council into a closer organizational affiliation, an organic union, a "National Lutheran Federation."

Pages 567-572 contain the results of a joint action on the parts of the ALC union committee and the Missouri Synod union committee. The outcome of this action was the single, confessional document known as the "Common Confession".

- "Upon recommendation of Committee 3, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolution 14

- = "Whereas, By the grace of God the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of Synod and the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church have jointly produced the document known as the 'Common Confession'; and
- = "Whereas, We find in this document nothing that contradicts the Scriptures; and
- = "Whereas, We are of a conviction that, under God, our Synod should seek a God-pleasing unity with all Lutherans; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, that we rejoice and thank God that the 'Common Confession' shows that agreement has been achieved in the doctrines treated by the two committees; and be it further
- = "Resolved, That we accept the 'Common Confession' as a statement of agreement on these doctrines between us and the American Lutheran Church.

Addition

- = "Whereas, Not all phases of the doctrines of the Scriptures are treated in the 'Common Confession'; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That additional statements, originating in the same manner as the 'Common Confession,' may be submitted to future conventions of our Synod and the American Lutheran Church for adoption.
- = "Note. An amendment was offered, reading: 'That it be understood that the acceptance of this document does not in any way affect our position as expressed in the Brief Statement.' The amendment was rejected. The Chair then put the question: 'Does anyone by his vote in favor of rejecting the brief statement?' No one arose in answer. (Cf. minutes of June 29, 1950.)" pp.585-6

Resolution 15

- = "Whereas, Our Committee on Doctrinal Unity states in its report 'since the practice of the Church must agree with the doctrine, your Committee recommends that matters of church practice , especially the attitude of Lutheran congregations toward lodgery and unionism and similar issues, be carefully studied and that for this purpose the President, Vice...(etc.) endeavor to hold conferences with the President ... of the honorable American Lutheran Church to survey the problems in the field and to see how uniformity in church practice can be brought about'; and
- = "Whereas, Our Committee on Doctrinal Unity further recommends that 'a Committee on Doctrinal Unity be again appointed, in the manner prescribed by the regulations of Synod, to serve as a steering committee and a clearinghouse'; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That the recommendations of the Committee be accepted; and be further
- = "Resolved, That every effort be made to hold the suggested meetings for the purpose mentioned; and be it further
- = "Resolved, That a Committee on Doctrinal Unity be again appointed, in the manner prescribed by the regulations of Synod, to serve as a steering committee and clearing house for all questions with regard to the 'Common Confession' or any other aspect of the matters of fellowship between the two church bodies."

*In reference to errors in the "Lutheran Witness" a memorial was presented to the Missouri Synod which contained the following quotes from the "Lutheran Witness":

- Feb. 25, 1947, p.59, ft.note. 10 — "We incline to the notion, supported by more than commentaries which we have consulted, that Rom. 16:17f. Refers to un-Christian enemies of the Church who by deceitful tactics are trying to seduce Christians."
- Dec. 14, 1948, p.414 - "To apply the passage (Rom. 16:17) to fellow Christians with whom we do not agree in all points, or, to put it the other way, who, we are certain, err from the truth of God's Word in some particulars, is a misapplication of the Word of God, an affront to such

children of God, and an insult to an affront to such children of God, and an insult to which we ought not to make ourselves guilty." P.643

*Appeal of the Norwegian Synod (as presented in these proceedings of the Missouri Synod)

– "In view of the continued agitation in Synodical Conference circles for union with heterodox Lutherans on a wider basis than the conservative Lutheran Church has hitherto considered Scriptural, particularly in the field of so-called 'externals' of church work, we of the Norwegian Synod wish to present to our sister Synods our position on the following points:

"1. With regard to President J.W. Behnken's call a 'Free Conference': *Although we, in general, favor 'free conferences' for doctrinal discussions with any and all who are willing to bow to the Word of God, we consider such 'free conferences' of but doubtful value at the present stage in union negotiations among Lutherans. They are not welcomed by those liberal Lutherans who want federation or organic union at once without further doctrinal discussion. Nor can they accomplish much toward building up a more conservative spirit in our own and other churches so long as we in our own circles are divided on the fundamental question of what constitutes 'unionism.' Cf. The agitation still carried on by the so-called 'Statementarians,' the American Lutheran', etc.

"2. With regard to the 'cooperation in externals,' so-called, which is becoming so widespread in our circles through such organizations as 'Lutheran Men in America,' 'The Editors' Association, 'The Association of Lutheran Seminarians,' certain welfare associations, etc. - We hold that this constitutes unionism. Cf. The Brief Statement. The organizations referred to do not limit themselves also with the spiritual side of the work of the Church. Cf. For detailed evidence the synodical essay appearing in the Norwegian Synod's Report for 1949, Synodical Conference Report, 1948, p.52.

"3. With regard to the form of unionism connected with prayer fellowship, as distinguished from pulpit and altar fellowship: - We hold that the position presented in Dr. S.C. Ylvisaker's synodical essay on 'Prayer', in 1947, is the correct Scriptural position. Cf. Report of the Synodical Conference, 1940 p.89.

"We are deeply concerned over these and other matters which are causing strained relations within the Synodical Conference, and appeal to our sister Synods to do everything possible, under the gracious hand of God, to maintain true unity of spirit in our circles. As a step to that end, we as a Synod are asking our sister Synods, at their next conventions, kindly to consider this statement of our Synod and express their agreement or disagreement with it." pp.667-668

* With regard to the Boy Scouts, the following resolution was adopted:

= "Whereas, The Boy Scouts of America have repeatedly assured us that 'no Boy Scout authority supercedes the authority of the local pastor and the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual welfare of the Lutheran men and boys in scouting'; and

- = "Whereas, In instances involving the violation of the rights and religious convictions of individual Scouts, the avenue of appeal to the local Scout council or to higher Boy Scout authorities is open; and
- = "Whereas, Scout authorities have shown every consideration to appeals directed to them by Scout leaders and Pastors of our Church and have shown every consideration to appeals directed to them by Scout leaders and Pastors of our Church and have shown a readiness to conform to their stated principles bearing on religious matters, therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That we ... declare that `the policy with regard to Scouting adopted by Synod in 1944 should be sustained. "' p.671

(That report reads: "That the matter of Scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide and that under the circumstances Synod may consider her interests sufficiently protected." Proceedings of 39th Regular convention, Saginaw, Mich., 1944, pp. 257-258.)

- * Concerning the National Lutheran Council and the Missouri Synod:

Resolution 6

- = "Whereas, There are certain areas of purely external endeavor in which our Church may participate, as it has done in the past; be it therefore
- = "Resolved, That we express our continued willingness to cooperate with the National Lutheran Council wherever it can be done without compromising Scriptural principles." p.692

WELS Proceedings, Aug.8-15, 1951

Proceedings of the Thirty-first Convention Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, New Ulm, Minnesota Aug. 8-15, 1951

* Review of the Common Confession

- = p. 129-"Any clear and correct presentation of this article requires not merely the inclusion of the term 'objective justification,' but a clear statement that in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has already declared every sinner righteous in His sight. For the non-imputation of the trespasses of the world (2 Cor. 5:19) is to be identified with the establishing of a public verdict of acquittal (dikaioi katastathesontai - Ro.5:19) upon those whose justification was revealed and proclaimed by the Resurrection of Christ (Ro. 4:25).
- = "This truth is impaired when the article states that forgiveness 'has been secured and provided for all men.' For this still leaves room for the thought that the justification of the sinner is not complete until the missing factor of personal (subjective)faith is supplied, a thought which is even suggested in the Article by its description of justification as taking place on the basis of 'Christ's righteousness, which He imputes to the sinner through the Gospel and which the sinner accepts by faith.'
- = "Since this formulation admits of false answers to the question concerning the function of faith in justification, the article must be rejected.

Art. VII. Conversion

- = "In view of past controversies on this subject a clear and correct presentation of the doctrine of Conversion must include a rejection of the untenable distinction between a natural and a willful resistance of man, as well as of any other attempt at explaining the mystery 'cur alii prae aliis?'
- = "We note that the CC not only fails to include such a specific rejection, but that its positive wording does not exclude the thought of man's preparing himself for conversion by his refraining from such willful resistance.
- = "We also note the lack of any reference to the total spiritual disability of natural man as described in the classic passages (Eph. 2:1-3; Ro.8:7; I Cor. 2:14), or of a clear statement on this subject ... In view of the other deficiency mentioned above this is a particularly unfortunate omission.
- = "Since the article thus leaves room for error that man's conversion is at least in part conditioned Upon his own attitude or preparation, and since this is precisely the issue that was in controversy between the synods of the ALC and the Syn, Conf., it must, as a confession, be rejected. The purely receptive function of faith has not been maintained.

"Art. IV. Election

- = "Since the Scriptural doctrine of Election is meant to comfort the believer with the assurance that his faith is secured unto him by God's eternal decree (Mt. 24:24; Eph. 1;3-

5; 2 Tim. 2:19; 2 Th. 2:13), a correct presentation of this important doctrine must include

- a) a clear and unmistakable statement that this election is an election unto faith (Act. 13:48; Eph. 1:5; 2 Th. 2:13);
- b) the positive assurance that this election is a cause of our salvation and what pertains thereto (Trgl, 1069, #8; Ro. 8:28-30; Jn. 10:27-29; cf. Jn. 6; 65);
- c) definite recognition of the 'certainty' of this election ('which cannot fail or be overthrown,'-Trig. 1079, #45. Cf. Also Mt. 24:24; Jn. 10:27-29; Ro. 8:28-30, 38f.)

= "These vital and indispensable statements are, however, not to be found in this article of the CC. This article must therefore be rejected because it fails to say what is required in a Scriptural presentation of the doctrine of Election. Acts 20:27; Deut. 5:2.

= "This article also falls short of confessional clarity by failing to state that God's eternal election did not merely set up a description of those who will be saved, but means that He has chosen' each and every person,' a specific number, unto faith and eternal life...

= "Since the CC in this article of predestination by which doctrine the Scriptures take the matter of our faith and salvation entirely out of our hands and place it completely into the hands of our loving God and Father - neglected to assign clearly and unmistakably to faith its place in God's act of election, this confession thereby failed in the supreme test concerning the 'sola Gratia,' and has opened the gates wide for the synergistic error.

"Art. V. Means of Grace

= "Whether the term 'verbal inspiration' be used or not, it is certainly necessary that a confessional document which undertakes to present the doctrine of Inspiration for our times and conditions speak clearly and unmistakably on two points:

- a) that all that was written in the Holy Scriptures was given by the Holy Ghost;
- b) that as a result of this inspiration, and as an article of faith, ignorance be claimed not merely for the Scriptures as a whole, but for each particular statement that they contain.

= "We note that Article V uses the expression 'content and fitting word,' occurring in the Pittsburgh Agreement and officially explained by one of the contracting parties as not meaning verbal inspiration. This interpretation has never been disavowed by the ALC.

= "Furthermore, the words 'Holy Scriptures in their entirety' are reminiscent of the 'Schriftganzen' of former days, as well as of the 'organic whole' of the ALC. Declaration of 1938. The Pittsburgh Agreement also speaks of the separate books of the Bible, 'taken together,' as a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole. Each of these expressions falls under the judgement of and earlier critique, namely that it 'makes the statement ambiguous because it may be understood in a limiting sense.'...

- = "Because the expression 'verbal inspiration' has been under fire by men who really object to the substance of the doctrine we are convinced that under these circumstances we should not even yield the term.
- = "The paragraph on the Lord's Supper states that in the Sacrament Christ enters into the most intimate communion with the members of His Church. If this is meant to refer to the communion of faith, it dare not be restricted to the Sacrament of the Altar, since Scripture beyond this, the article will lend encouragement and support to the current trend toward Sacramentalism, which is contrary to the Scriptural concept of the Means of Grace.

"Art. IX. The Church

1.

The nature and the work of the Church

- = "... It is externalizing the concept of the Church that this article throughout treats the 'commission to preach the Gospel' as a 'duty.'
- = " The truth that the Lord 'filled the hungry with good things' (Lk.1:53), and that then 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speak th' (Matt.12:34), that thus in preaching the Gospel 'it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of you Father which speaketh in you' (Mat. 10:20), is set aside, and the administration of the Means is reduced to a job imposed on an and executed by man. ...It thus shifts the attention from what the Church really is to something which is an obstacle to the Church.

2.

The Marks of the Church

- = ... "It is therefore again externalizing the concept of the Church when the CC reduces fidelity regarding the Means, which is a matter of life and death, to a mere question of 'duty'.

3.

The Question of Church Fellowship

- = ... "except for the lack of definition of 'unscriptural cooperation' and the absence of any reference to the question of prayer fellowship, we find ourselves in wholehearted agreement with the principles in themselves. But we cannot approve of the statement that 'We must also be alert and susceptible to the Lord's leading to establish and maintain fellowship with those whom he has made one with us in the faith.' ...Their faith is invisible until it comes out into the open by word and deed. How can we know the 'erring and wayward' except by their confession?
- = "Furthermore, ...coming from a Church (the ALC) that has by official resolution committed itself to a policy of selective fellowship and occurring in a context that refers to 'individuals, church bodies, or church groups', this interpretation may not be ignored, but must be recognized as the intended sense of one of the contracting parties, since it has not been

specifically disavowed.

= "...we can not approve of this article of the CC.

"Art. XII.

The Last Things

= "Our Lutheran Conf. make, without further qualification, the solemn statement that the Pope is 'the very Anti-Christ'... -2 Thessalonians 2 provides the Biblical warrant for accepting this as an article of faith. But the qualified statement of the CC ('still clearly discernable') leaves room for uncertainty as to the permanence of this conclusion.

= "We hold that at his point the CC does not adequately restate the Lutheran doctrine, nor does it treat this matter as an article of faith, but rather as historical judgement.

"CONCLUSION

= "Omissions: In the foregoing we have referred to a number of serious omissions in the articles dealing with the doctrines that have been in controversy. In addition to these, we find ourselves constrained to state that in a confession drawn up for the purpose of establishing fellowship between the Mo. Synod and the ALC also the doctrine of the Sunday would need to be included, since up to recent date it had been in controversy between these church bodies."

* Report "A" ... of the Standing Committee on Church Union

I. The Reply of Our 1949 Letter to Missouri

= At its Convention our Synod addressed a formal communication to the Mo. Synod addressed a formal communication to the Mo. Synod, dealing with certain cases of offense. And meant to clarify this confused and vitiate the spiritual life within both synods. . . Under the date of Dec.14, 1950, President Brenner received the. . . reply from Pres. Behnken. . .

"Your committee has given careful thought to this reply, and comes to the conclusion that the various answers sometimes do not meet the facts upon which our questions were based, and sometimes are indirect contradiction to them. For the information of this convention we present the several questions, and in connection with them discuss the Reply."

"1) Questions; Does the Mo. Synod approve of the participation of its pastors in the programs and in the joint worship of the intersynodical laymen's organizations, specifically Lutheran Men in America? If not, only a public disavowal of the offense will remove it.

" The Reply refers to 'situations, especially in the area of joint church work, which can be judged only on the basis of an accurate knowledge of the conditions present,' and states that 'it would be unfair and unjust to express any opinion on definite cases without having

had the opportunity to study all details involved.'

". . .the matters to which our question refers were repeatedly discussed in the forum of the Intersynodical Relations Committee of the Synod. Conf., and its details thus officially brought to the attention of the Presidium of our sister synod. . . . Therefore we cannot accept the plea of ignorance on which this particular answer is based. Nor can we agree that the conditional statement ('if a violation of this principle is committed, we most assuredly disavow it') constitutes a removal of the offense.

"2) Question: Does the Mo. Synod approve of the cooperation of some of its welfare agencies with Lutherans with whom it is otherwise not in fellowship, in view of the fact that such welfare work is inseparably associated with spiritual implications? If the Synod does not approve, what will you do in order to clear yourselves of the responsibility for the offense that has been given?

" The Reply states the our question is misleading. It implies that we are taking cases of cooperation in externals and building them up into a charge of cooperation with respect to 'spiritual implications.'

" The cases which were brought to the official attention of our brethren . . . were specific instances of a cooperation that had gone far beyond mere externals. . . .

"3) Question: Does the Mo. Synod approve the cooperation of its representatives with the National Luth. Council in matters which are admittedly no longer in the field of externals? . . . If not, what will be done to remove the offense?

"The Reply states that we are misinformed . . .

"We cannot accept the charge that we operated with untrustworthy information, for we raised our question on the basis of information furnished by the 'Lutheran Witness', the official organ of the Mo. Synod. This article speaks very clearly of the spiritual work which is being done jointly by the ALC and the MS, and is in itself and illustration of this cooperation, since it is over the signature of the official representative of the ALC.

"We find ourselves unable to reconcile the assertions of the Reply with this official report. Nor can we follow the reasoning which considers it as an 'external' when physical relief is granted 'so that these (displaced Lutherans) may be enabled to reestablish the office of the ministry in on a full time bases among themselves.' . . .

"4) Does the Mo. Synod approve the position taken by its representative at the First Bad Boll with regard to the program for devotions and worship? If not, what will be done to remove the offense?

". . . the devotions at this meeting held under the auspices of the Mo. Synod were shared equally by representatives of various German State Churches, also that the Sunday Service was conducted by a bishop of the Union Church of Baden. These facts are not denied.

"As for the significance of this arrangement we once more quote Dr. Geiseman:

“ Last summer officially appointed representatives of our church met for a number of weeks with the representatives drawn from various Lutheran Churches in Germany. The meetings were held for the purpose of discussing important doctrinal truths. Each day was opened and closed with devotional services. The privilege of leadership in these services was shared equally between the representatives of our church and of the German Churches. When we met with Christians from other churches bodies not affiliated with our Synod to pray with them, one can scarcely say that this is in the area of externals or that we are hiding ourselves behind an iron curtain.’ ...

“5) Question: Does the Mo. Synod approve of the arrangement whereby prominent members of its official committees are serving with representatives of other Lutheran bodies as sponsors of the book ‘Scouting in the Lutheran Church’, published by the National Scout organization? If not, what will you do about the offense that was thus given?

“The Reply challenges our use of the term ‘sponsors’ in describing the activity of its members ... and minimizes it as ‘cooperation in externals, pure and simple.’ . . .

“The fact that this Lutheran Committee on Scouting continues to function, regulating such matters as the ‘Pro Deo et Patria’ award strengthens us in our conviction that this cooperation does not merely lie in the field of ‘externals’. . . .

“6) Question: Does the Mo. Synod still hold to its position that Rom. 16:17 applies to all errorists, whether Lutheran or not? If so, what will be done to correct the growing impression that this is no longer the case?

“The Reply quotes two of the resolutions passed on this subject by the Milwaukee Convention (Resolutions No. 10 and 11). It does not mention a third, ... No. 12.

“We find ourselves in full agreement with the paragraph 2 of the resolution quoted when it says that in Rom. 16 and other passages ‘Scripture warns against unionism and tolerance of error, and requires that we deny church fellowship to all who persist in false doctrine.’ We find, however, that this sound statement is weakened by another resolution (No. 12) which refers to ‘legitimate differences of opinion in purely exegetical matters.’ This is the very argument which has been employed by those who maintain that Romans 16 does not apply to all errorists, particularly not to other Lutheran Bodies.

“We also find that this resolution on Rom. 16 is further weakened by the reference to the distinction which is made between prayer fellowship and joint prayer at intersynodical conferences. . . .” pp. 129-144

Part II. GROWING RECOGNITION AND INDECISION 1953-1956

WELS Proceedings - Aug.5-12, 1953

Proceedings of the Thirty-second Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States held at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, Aug. 5-12, 1953

* Supplementary Report of the Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union

= "Your Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union presents the following report on its work during the past biennium.

I. General Survey

= "Two years ago, at its convention in New Ulm, Minn. Our Synod after thorough study declared itself on a number of issues bearing on the relationship between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and our own body. The Convention Report .. Draws attention to the fact that this action of our Synod was unanimous. The resolution dealt with the following questions:

- "1. Reply to our Letter to the Mo, Synod: Our Synod repeated its request to our sister synod for public disavowal of certain offenses involving unionistic practices and listed in our Letter of 1949...
- "2. Scouting in the Lutheran Church: Deploring the fact that unfavorable reply of our sister to earlier communications was arrived at with our conveying the substance of our argument to the body of the 1950 Convention, and noting that the Syn. Conf. Had placed this problem into the hands of a new committee, we insisted that the final report of this new committee be heard and acted upon at the next convention of the Syn. Conf. ...
- "3. The Common Confession: Noting that this document was presented to our Synod as a settlement of certain past differences between the ALC and the constituent synods of the Syn. Conf., differences which are, however, however, not settled in fact, we asked our sister synod to repudiate its stand that the CC is a settlement of te doctrines treated by the two committees....Suspension of further negotiations with ALC was likewise asked for, until that body recognizes the obstacle that is created by its statement concerning 'an area where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching to the Word of God'...

"The sequence of events from New Ulm to the Syn. Conf. Convention in St. Paul, and thence to the Mo. Synod Convention at Houston in June of this year has been recited in the Preliminary Report of your Standing Committee (Reports and Memorials, pp.58-61).

"We draw attention to the reference in this report

II. The Houston Convention

= "Our New Ulm Resolutions, which had been transmitted to the President of the Mo, Synod

shortly after the close of our convention, were brought to the official attention of the recent convention of our sister synod by a letter of President Brenner. Our Synod was also personally represented by professors C. Lawrenz and E. Reim. In general it may be said that our several requests were courteously but definitely declined.

"1. Reply to Our Letter to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Our request for disavowal of certain offenses was answered by Resolution #13:

Resolved,

- a) that this convention ask the Praesidium to continue to 'take the steps necessary to bring about a God-pleasing disposition of the matters mentioned in this memorial; and
- b) that the Wis. Synod be informed of this action of the convention.'

"Although it was pointed out that this procedure would put the entire matter back into the hands of the same group that was involved in the original complaint ..., the resolution was nevertheless adopted in its 'letter of the Praesidium correctly states the Scriptural principles in the matters concerned.'

"The request for reconsideration of the position on 'Joint Prayer' ... was answered by Resolution No.14:

"Resolved, That synod declares that it does not consider 'Joint Prayer' at intersynodical meetings unionistic and sinful, 'provided such prayer does not imply denial of truth or support of error'...

"2. Scouting in the Lutheran Church. Neither Committee No. 3 (Intersynodical and Doctrinal Matters) nor Committee No.7 (Lodges and Boy Scouts) reported on the reference to scouting contained in the 'Communication from the Wis. Synod.'

"The only reference to this issue came in a resolution answering a Memorial from a Mo. Synod congregation which asked that Synod clarify its policy in the matter of Scouting. The resolution restates the policy of the last three conventions, namely 'That the matter of scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide.'

"3. The Common Confession. The answer of the Houston Convention to our New Ulm Resolution No.3 ('That we ask the Mo. Synod to repudiate its stand that the CC is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees') is given in Resolution No. 19, . . .

Resolved, That we respectfully request also our sister synods in the Syn. Conf., for purposes of study to treat Part I and Part II of the CC as one document. . . .

"Our suggestion that further negotiations with the ALC be suspended was likewise declined by the Houston Convention in its Resolution No.15. Stating that 'Progress toward unity of doctrine has been achieved through discussion on the basis of the Word of God by the representatives of the ALC and the Mo. Synod' and referring to meetings that have been

held and to others that are planned, it was

Resolved,

- a) That this convention urge the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the MO. Synod to continue the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Mo. Synod to continue its discussions with the representatives of the ALC; and be it further

Resolved,

- b) That this convention authorize further meetings of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, the President, ... with corresponding representatives of the ALC.

"Your committee must point out that the request of postponement of action on the CC until Part II shall have received further study has the following serious implications:

- "a) That the postponement requested is a long and, under the circumstances, a dangerous one: three years in the case of the Mo. Synod, four years until our own Synod can take the matter anew in 1957, and five years until the next following meeting of the Syn. Conf.
- "b) That during this time the original CC will remain in effect, and by official declaration is not under reconsideration, but is to stand as a valid settlement of the controversies treated therein:
- "c) That during the manner of the study that is requested would involve an inconsistency, since Part I is to be understood in the light of a second part which has not yet been adopted.
- "d) That Part II of the CC does not meet our objections to those sections of the original document about which we expressed our greatest concern, namely the doctrines of Justification, Conversion, and Election, the very area in which the sola gratia... is at stake...
- "e) That the untruthful situation which the adoption of the CC has created has thus been seriously aggravated, and will remain, even though the CC should, because of

WELS Proceedings - Aug.10-17, 1955

Reports and Memorials of the Thirty-third Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States held at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Michigan, August 10-17, 1955

* Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union Preliminary Report . . .

I.

= "In the matter of our relations with the Missouri Synod your committee was governed by the following considerations:" (A through C reiterate the Report of Committee II of the 1953 Wisconsin Synod Convention in part, which see) . . .

"D. The Syn. Conf. convention has proposed a plan involving the appointment of new committees, to which the task of settling these differences is to be entrusted. This plan, however, envisions a long range program of discussion.

E. In our dealings with our sister synod we have been earnestly endeavoring to heed the Scriptural exhortation to patience and forbearance in love.

F. We have, however, arrived at the firm conviction that because of the divisions and offenses that have been caused, and which have until now have not been removed, further postponement of a decision would be a violation of the apostolic injunction of Romans 16:17 ..."

"On the basis of these consideration we recommend the following resolution, which we herewith submit for study our brethren and for subsequent consideration and action by the synodical convention.

Resolved: That with the deepest sorrow, taking notice of the fact that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine that we have learned, we, in obedience to God's injunction to avoid such, declare the fellowship which we have had with said synod to be terminated....." pp.77-81

Report of Floor Committee No. 2

Preamble

= "For years our Wisconsin Synod has patiently admonished the Missouri Synod in the fear and love of God, seeking to win her from the path that leads to liberalism in doctrine and practice."

= "We of the Wisconsin Synod in our convention of 1953 with heavy hearts had to declare that the Missouri Synod by reaffirming its acceptance of the CC and by its persistence adherence to its unionistic practices 'has brought about the present break in relations that is now threatening the existence of the Syn. Conf. and the continuance of our affiliation with the sister Synod.'"

= "Without entering upon the question of whether the present charges of our Synod against

the Missouri Synod do not already constitute the accusation of false doctrine, we believe that it should be reiterated in uncertain terms that a specific charge of false doctrine is not a Biblical prerequisite for separation from a church body. A church body which creates divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies and practices not in accord with Scripture also becomes subject to the indictment of Romans 16:17-18. The Missouri Synod has by its official resolutions, policies, and practices created divisions and offenses both in her own body and in the entire Syn. Conf. Such divisions and offenses are of long standing.

- = "Moreover, Dr. John W. Behnken, Pres. Of the Mo. Synod, in two recent articles in 'The Lutheran Witness' (July 19 and August 2, 1955) has intensified these divisions and offenses by attempting to justify the position of the Mo. Synod through bare declarations that its position is correct and the charges of our Synod are false, without, at least up to this time, bringing the facts of the controversy into true focus. We do not wish to imply that this has been intentional, since that would involve a judgement on our part, but we do not maintain that it has been made more difficult the possibility of reaching Scriptural agreement on the issues that are dividing the two Synods.
- = "In view of these facts you Floor Committee, together with the Floor Committee, together with the Standing Committee in matters of Church Union, affirms `our position that the Mo. Synod by its "acceptance of the CC as a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled," and "by its persistent adherence to its unionistic practices..."has brought about a break in relations, and that our Synod, bound by the Word of God, should now declare itself on the matter..."

Resolutions

- = "Out of love for the truth of Scriptures we feel constrained to present the following resolution to this convention for final action in a recessed session in 1956:

"Resolved, that whereas the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod had created divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies, and practices not in accord with Scriptures, we, in obedience to the command of our Lord in Romans 16:17-18, terminate fellowship with the Mo. Synod.

"We recommend this course of action for the following reasons:
 1. This resolution has far reaching spiritual consequences.
 2. This continues to heed the Scriptural exhortation to patience and forbearance in love by giving the Mo. Synod opportunity to express itself in its 1956 convention.
"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Praesidium make the arrangements necessary for this recessed session.

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that our Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union evaluate any further development in the ensuing year;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we ask the nine Districts of our Synod to postpone

their 1956 biennial conventions so that this evaluation may be presented to these Districts, which are to meet according to a staggered schedule as arranged by the Conference of Presidents. It is to be understood that these Districts will meet prior to the recessed session of the Synod;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Synod be informed of this action through the President of our Synod. . . ." pp.84-86

"We, the undersigned members of the Floor Committee, although we are in full agreement with the preamble and the resolution to terminate fellowship, are of the conviction that the reasons stated for delay do not warrant postponement of action upon the resolution. . . ." pp. 86-87

"Action by the Convention: The Preamble ... was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Convention. The Resolution calling for a recessed session of the Convention in 1956 to take final action on the resolution to terminate fellowship with the Mo. Synod was adopted by a standing vote of 94 to 47. The matter of drawing up a Confession of Faith was referred to the General Synodical Committee for study action.

= The entire report of Floor Committee No. 2 was adopted. . . ." pp. 87

The names of 43 delegates follow in protest of the adoption of this report. Among them are members of the CLC.

LCMS Proceedings, June 21-30, 1950

Proceedings of the Forty-first Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Milwaukee, Wis., June 21-30, 1950

*Report of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity

- "The American Lutheran Church, at its convention in Fremont, Ohio, in October, 1948, passed several significant resolutions on Lutheran unity. One of these read 'that in the next biennium our pastoral conferences and district meetings busy themselves with a thorough study of the problems of the future of Lutheranism in America; that we continue a Committee on Fellowship to be appointed by the President of the Church to negotiate with a Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the ... Missouri Synod, toward the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship or of fellowship commensurate with the existing degree of unity; that we empower this Committee, together with the Executive Committee of the Church, to discuss with any and all Lutheran church bodies possible approaches and methods to attain fuller unity and closer affiliation.'" p.563

On pages 563 to 565, the report contains the beginning of plans within the National Lutheran Council (containing the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi Synod) to form the National Lutheran Council into a closer organizational affiliation, an organic union, a "National Lutheran Federation."

Pages 567-572 contain the results of a joint action on the parts of the ALC union committee and the Missouri Synod union committee. The outcome of this action was the single, confessional document known as the "Common Confession".

- "Upon recommendation of Committee 3, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolution 14

- = "Whereas, By the grace of God the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of Synod and the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church have jointly produced the document known as the 'Common Confession'; and
- = "Whereas, We find in this document nothing that contradicts the Scriptures; and
- = "Whereas, We are of a conviction that, under God, our Synod should seek a God-pleasing unity with all Lutherans; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, that we rejoice and thank God that the 'Common Confession' shows that agreement has been achieved in the doctrines treated by the two committees; and be it further
- = "Resolved, That we accept the 'Common Confession' as a statement of agreement on these doctrines between us and the American Lutheran Church.

Addition

- = "Whereas, Not all phases of the doctrines of the Scriptures are treated in the 'Common Confession'; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That additional statements, originating in the same manner as the 'Common Confession,' may be submitted to future conventions of our Synod and the American Lutheran Church for adoption.
- = "Note. An amendment was offered, reading: 'That it be understood that the acceptance of this document does not in any way affect our position as expressed in the Brief Statement.' The amendment was rejected. The Chair then put the question: 'Does anyone by his vote in favor of rejecting the brief statement?' No one arose in answer. (Cf. minutes of June 29, 1950.)" pp.585-6

Resolution 15

- = "Whereas, Our Committee on Doctrinal Unity states in its report 'since the practice of the Church must agree with the doctrine, your Committee recommends that matters of church practice , especially the attitude of Lutheran congregations toward lodgery and unionism and similar issues, be carefully studied and that for this purpose the President, Vice-...(etc.) endeavor to hold conferences with the President ... of the honorable American Lutheran Church to survey the problems in the field and to see how uniformity in church practice can be brought about'; and
- = "Whereas, Our Committee on Doctrinal Unity further recommends that 'a Committee on Doctrinal Unity be again appointed, in the manner prescribed by the regulations of Synod, to serve as a steering committee and a clearinghouse'; therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That the recommendations of the Committee be accepted; and be further
- = "Resolved, That every effort be made to hold the suggested meetings for the purpose mentioned; and be it further
- = "Resolved, That a Committee on Doctrinal Unity be again appointed, in the manner prescribed by the regulations of Synod, to serve as a steering committee and clearing house for all questions with regard to the 'Common Confession' or any other aspect of the matters of fellowship between the two church bodies."

*In reference to errors in the "Lutheran Witness" a memorial was presented to the Missouri Synod which contained the following quotes from the "Lutheran Witness":

- Feb. 25, 1947, p.59, ft.note. 10 — "We incline to the notion, supported by more than commentaries which we have consulted, that Rom. 16:17f. Refers to un-Christian enemies of the Church who by deceitful tactics are trying to seduce Christians."
- Dec. 14, 1948, p.414 - "To apply the passage (Rom. 16:17) to fellow Christians with whom we do not agree in all points, or, to put it the other way, who, we are certain, err from the truth of God's Word in some particulars, is a misapplication of the Word of God, an affront to such

children of God, and an insult to an affront to such children of God, and an insult to which we ought not to make ourselves guilty." P.643

*Appeal of the Norwegian Synod (as presented in these proceedings of the Missouri Synod)

- "In view of the continued agitation in Synodical Conference circles for union with heterodox Lutherans on a wider basis than the conservative Lutheran Church has hitherto considered Scriptural, particularly in the field of so-called 'externals' of church work, we of the Norwegian Synod wish to present to our sister Synods our position on the following points:
 - "1. With regard to President J.W. Behnken's call a 'Free Conference': *Although we, in general, favor 'free conferences' for doctrinal discussions with any and all who are willing to bow to the Word of God, we consider such 'free conferences' of but doubtful value at the present stage in union negotiations among Lutherans. They are not welcomed by those liberal Lutherans who want federation or organic union at once without further doctrinal discussion. Nor can they accomplish much toward building up a more conservative spirit in our own and other churches so long as we in our own circles and divided on the fundamental question of what constitutes 'unionism.' Cf. The agitation still carried on by the so-called 'Statementarians,' the American Lutheran', etc.
 - "2. With regard to the 'cooperation in externals,' so-called, which is becoming so widespread in our circles through such organizations as 'Lutheran Men in America,' 'The Editors' Association, 'The Association of Lutheran Seminarians,' certain welfare associations, etc. - We hold that this constitutes unionism. Cf. The Brief Statement. The organizations referred to do not limit themselves also with the spiritual side of the work of the Church. Cf. For detailed evidence the synodical essay appearing in the Norwegian Synod's Report for 1949, Synodical Conference Report, 1948, p.52.
 - "3. With regard to the form of unionism connected with prayer fellowship, as distinguished from pulpit and altar fellowship: - We hold that the position presented in Dr. S.C. Ylvisaker's synodical essay on 'Prayer', in 1947, is the correct Scriptural position. Cf. Report of the Synodical Conference, 1940 p.89.

"We are deeply concerned over these and other matters which are causing strained relations within the Synodical Conference, and appeal to our sister Synods to do everything possible, under the gracious hand of God, to maintain true unity of spirit in our circles. As a step to that end, we as a Synod are asking our sister Synods, at their next conventions, kindly to consider this statement of our Synod and express their agreement or disagreement with it." pp.667-668

* With regard to the Boy Scouts, the following resolution was adopted:

- = "Whereas, The Boy Scouts of America have repeatedly assured us that 'no Boy Scout authority supercedes the authority of the local pastor and the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual welfare of the Lutheran men and boys in scouting'; and

- = "Whereas, In instances involving the violation of the rights and religious convictions of individual Scouts, the avenue of appeal to the local Scout council or to higher Boy Scout authorities is open; and
- = "Whereas, Scout authorities have shown every consideration to appeals directed to them by Scout leaders and Pastors of our Church and have shown every consideration to appeals directed to them by Scout leaders and Pastors of our Church and have shown a readiness to conform to their stated principles bearing on religious matters, therefore be it
- = "Resolved, That we ... declare that `the policy with regard to Scouting adopted by Synod in 1944 should be sustained. "' p.671

(That report reads: "That the matter of Scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide and that under the circumstances Synod may consider her interests sufficiently protected." Proceedings of 39th Regular convention, Saginaw, Mich., 1944, pp. 257-258.)

* Concerning the National Lutheran Council and the Missouri Synod:

Resolution 6

- = "Whereas, There are certain areas of purely external endeavor in which our Church may participate, as it has done in the past; be it therefore
- = "Resolved, That we express our continued willingness to cooperate with the National Lutheran Council wherever it can be done without compromising Scriptural principles." p.692

LCMS Proceedings, June 17-26, 1953

Proceedings of the Forty-second regular convention of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
Houston, Texas June 17-26, 1953

- Resolution of the Norwegian Synod at its convention in June, 1951:
 - = "Whereas, The matter of the Common Confession has been placed before our Synod by our sister Synod, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, for our consent to the course of action outlined in the resolutions of the Missouri Synod, be it
 - = "Resolved, That we cannot give our consent to the Common Confession as a settlement of doctrinal differences between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church, for the following reasons:
 - ≡ "The Common Confession does not reject the errors of the American Lutheran Church. The document does not reject the false doctrine which has been expressed in the American Lutheran Church, that some parts of Scripture are not divinely inspired. John 10:35; II Tim. 3:16. On the contrary, when describing the origin of Scripture the Common Confession uses the expression 'content and fitting word,' which is acceptable to many of those who also accept the false doctrine aforementioned.
 - ≡ "Secondly, although the justification of all mankind in Christ (objective justification, Rom. 4:5; 5:18) has been openly denied within the American Lutheran Church, yet the Common Confession does not definitely state that God has declared all mankind to be righteous in Christ.
 - ≡ "Thirdly, the error of the American Lutheran Church, that some people are converted to Christ while others are not, because the converted offer only a natural resistance, - this error is not rejected in the Common Confession. Rom. 3:22, 23
 - ≡ "Fourthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error taught in the ALC, that God elected His people to eternal life in view of their foreseen faith. Acts 13:48
 - ≡ "Fifthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error in the ALC, that the Means of Grace belong to the essence of the Holy Christian Church. Eph. 2:19; Acts 2:38; Matt. 26:38. (The saints in heaven do not need the remission of sins.)
 - ≡ "Sixthly, the CC does not wholly reject such errors in the doctrine of the Last Things as the ALC is tolerating, as, for example, that the Papacy may not be the Anti-Christ until the last day: (II Thess. 2:8); that an unusually large number of Jews will be converted to Christ in the future (Acts 7:51; Rom. 8:7), and that there will be some kind of millennial reign of Christ (II Tim. 3:1).
 - = "These are examples to show that the Common Confession is not a settlement of differences.
 - = "We therefore earnestly entreat our sister synod, the Mo. Synod, to reconsider its adoption of the Common Confession and to reject it as a settlement of its doctrinal differences with

the ALC.

- = "We further entreat the Mo. Synod to discontinue negotiations with the ALC except on the basis of a full acceptance of the Brief Statement. (Titus 3:10)
- = "Concern for the truth and for the continuation of our fellowship with the Mo. Synod on the doctrinal basis which we have enjoyed in the Syn. Conf. thru these many years moves us to draw up these resolutions. We desire our fellowship on the basis of the right doctrine and practice to continue. God grant that the unity which once prevailed in the Syn. Conf. may be restored by a steadfast adherence to the Scriptural principles that have united us." pp. 495-496
- The Slovak Church adopted the following:
 - = "Resolved, That the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church express its agreement with the doctrines set forth in the Common Confession and grant its consent to the course of action as outlined in the resolution of the Mo. Synod." p. 497
- In reference to a memorial regarding a reconsideration of the move toward fellowship with the ALC the following resolution:
 - = "Whereas, Progress toward the unity of doctrine has been achieved through discussion on the basis of God's Word by representatives of the ALC and the Mo. Synod; and
 - = "Whereas, Meetings of the Committee on Union and Fellowship of the ALC and the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church - Mo. Synod afford opportunity to give testimony to the truth; and
 - = "Whereas, The committees on doctrine, the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and District Presidents of the two Churches in a joint meeting in February of this year resolved that further meetings of this kind should be held; and
 - = "Whereas, the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Mo. Synod is planning to discuss with the representatives of the American Lutheran Church the document entitled 'United Testimony on Faith and Life,' which is to form the doctrinal basis for the proposed merger between the American Lutheran Church and other churches of the ALConference (Reports and Memorials, p. 324); and
 - = "Whereas, One of the major objectives of the Syn. Conf. of North America is to 'strive for true unity in doctrine and practice among Lutheran Church bodies' (Constitution, Article IV); therefore be it
 - = "Resolved, That this Convention authorize further meetings of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, and District Presidents of the Mo. Synod with corresponding representatives of the ALC." pp. 534-535
- At its convention in 1953, the Norwegian Synod adopted the following:

- = "We reaffirm our 1951 resolution regarding the CC and regarding continued negotiations with the ALC, also for this reason (besides other reasons we have given), that the original purpose of a new confession, as defined by the Mo. Synod in 1941, has not been fulfilled." p.538

- Missouri adopted the following:
 - = "Whereas, The Norwegian Synod and the Wisconsin Synod have expressed their misgivings about Part I of the CC (Reports and Memorials, pp. 320-322; 357,358); and
 - = "Whereas, The addition to Resolution 14, pp. 585, 586, of the proceedings of the 1950 convention makes explicit provision for additional statements to clarify the CC; and
 - = "Whereas, Part II of the CC is intended as a supplement to Part I; and
 - = "Whereas, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, at its 1953 convention in Houston, Tex., resolved that 'for purposes of study, Parts I and II of the CC hereafter be treated as one document with the understanding that Part II has not yet been adopted'; therefore be it
 - = "Resolved, That we respectfully request also our sister synods in the Synodical Conference, for the purposes of study to treat Part I and Part II of the CC as one document." pp.538-539

- A Memorial: "To Reconsider Synod's Position on Joint Prayer, etc.
 - = "Reverse your resolution on 'Scouting' and reconsider your position on 'Joint Prayer,' as well as your answer to the 'Questions' our Synod addressed to yours in 1949.
 - = "We hope that you will find it possible to discuss these issues on the floor of the convention and that all of your delegates will learn all of the facts. May the gracious Lord guide you and give you the spiritual strength to do His will.
 - = "We are requesting this action on your part only because we are seeking the restoration of our previous relationship on the basis of the position we once held jointly and from which we find ourselves unable to depart.
 - = "If we are invited to do so, we will be glad to send a delegation of our Committee on Church Union to expatiate on the matters which we have set down briefly.
 - = "Praying for peace and brotherly understanding and for true unity in the Syn. Conf.,

(Signed) The Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Wisconsin And Other States

John Brenner, President"

pp. 551-552

Action

“Upon recommendation of Committee 3 Synod resolved, with seven negative votes:

Resolution 14

- “Since the request of Memorial 610 (quoted immediately above) concerning Joint Prayer is general and indefinite , your Committee proceeded on the assumption that references are to Synod’s position on Joint Prayer at intersynodical conferences as expressed in the proceedings of the Saginaw convention ... and reaffirmed by the Chicago Convention ... Your Committee suggests the following resolution:
 - = “Whereas, Such prayer at the intersynodical meetings does not pretend that doctrinal unity exists where it does not exist, nor intimate that doctrinal differences are unimportant, but rather implores God, from whom true unity in the spirit must come, for His blessing, in order that unity may be achieved in those things where it is lacking; be it therefore
 - = “Resolved, That the Synod declare that it does not consider Joint Prayer at intersynodical meetings unionistic and sinful, ‘provided such prayer does not imply denial of truth or support of error.’” p.552

- Regarding a memorial to clarify the Mo. Synod’s stand on Scouting:
 - = “Whereas, your Committee is of the opinion that Synod’s policy which has been restated in the last three conventions is clear, namely: ‘That the matter of Scouting should be left to individual congregations to decide’; and
 - = ‘Whereas, Synod thus leaves it to each congregation to establish its own policy as pastoral wisdom on the part of both the congregation and the ministry in its own particular situation dictates; therefore be it
 - = “Resolved, That for the peculiar problem which exists in the petitioning congregation we recommend to them the services of our official Commission on Fraternal Organizations; and be it further
 - = “Resolved, That Synod urge its congregations to avoid extremes in either direction in the matter of Scoutism lest consciences be burdened.” pp. 555-556

- Regarding a motion to reconsider Mo’s answer to the Wis. Synod, the following resolution:
 - = “1. In 1949 the Wis. Synod addressed a letter to our Synod in which it asked for an answer to certain questions on matters of doctrine and practice . . .
 - = “2. Upon instruction of the 1950 convention the Praesidium of our Synod answered the questions put to our Synod in the letter of the Wis. Synod . . .
 - = “3. At its convention in 1951 the Wis. Synod declared the answers of our Praesidium to be unsatisfactory.

- = "4. In 1952 the Wis. Synod appealed this matter to the Synodical Conference, whereupon the Syn. Conf. passed a resolution urging 'the Missouri Synod to take steps necessary to bring about a God-pleasing disposition' of these matters . . .
- = "5. The Wis. Synod now appeals to this convention to 'reconsider the reply' of our Praesidium . . .
- = "6. Your Committee has studied
 - ≈ the questions addressed to our Synod;
 - ≈ the reply of our Praesidium to these questions;
 - ≈ the action of the Wis. Synod at its 1951 convention; and
 - ≈ the action of the Syn. Conf. on the appeal of the Wis. Synod . . .
- = "Your Committee believes that the letter of the Praesidium correctly states the Scriptural principles on the matters concerned; however
 - "Whereas, Not only matters of doctrine, but also the application of Scriptural principles to exceptional cases are involved in Memorial 610.3 (the Wis. Synod memorial quoted above); and
 - "Whereas, Such cases cannot be adequately considered on the floor of the Convention; and therefore be it
 - "resolved, That this Convention ask the Praesidium to continue to 'take steps necessary to bring about a God-pleasing disposition of the matters' mentioned in this memorial; and that the Wisconsin Synod be informed of this action of the Convention." pp.553-554

WELS Proceedings - Aug.5-12, 1953

Proceedings of the Thirty-second Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States — Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, Aug. 5-12, 1953

* Supplementary Report of the Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union

- = "Your Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union presents the following report on its work during the past biennium.

I. General Survey

- = "Two years ago, at its convention in New Ulm, Minn. Our Synod after thorough study declared itself on a number of issues bearing on the relationship between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and our own body. The Convention Report .. Draws attention to

the fact that this action of our Synod was unanimous. The resolution dealt with the following questions:

- "1. Reply to our Letter to the Mo, Synod: Our Synod repeated its request to our sister synod for public disavowal of certain offenses involving unionistic practices and listed in our Letter of 1949...
- "2. Scouting in the Lutheran Church: Deploring the fact that unfavorable reply of our sister to earlier communications was arrived at with our conveying the substance of our argument to the body of the 1950 Convention, and noting that the Syn. Conf. Had placed this problem into the hands of a new committee, we insisted that the final report of this new committee be heard and acted upon at the next convention of the Syn. Conf. ...
- "3. The Common Confession: Noting that this document was presented to our Synod as a settlement of certain past differences between the ALC and the constituent synods of the Syn. Conf., differences which are, however, however, not settled in fact, we asked our sister synod to repudiate its stand that the CC is a settlement of te doctrines treated by the two committees....Suspension of further negotiations with ALC was likewise asked for, until that body recognizes the obstacle that is created by its statement concerning 'an area where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching to the Word of God'...

"The sequence of events from New Ulm to the Syn. Conf. Convention in St. Paul, and thence to the Mo. Synod Convention at Houston in June of this year has been recited in the Preliminary Report of your Standing Committee (Reports and Memorials, pp.58-61).

"We draw attention to the reference in this report

II. The Houston Convention

= "Our New Ulm Resolutions, which had been transmitted to the President of the Mo, Synod shortly after the close of our convention, were brought to the official attention of the recent convention of our sister synod by a letter of President Brenner. Our Synod was also personally represented by professors C. Lawrenz and E. Reim. In general it may be said that our several requests were courteously but definitely declined.

- "1. Reply to Our Letter to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Our request for disavowal of certain offenses was answered by Resolution #13:

Resolved,

~ that this convention ask the Praesidium to continue to 'take the steps necessary to bring about a God-pleasing disposition of the matters mentioned in this memorial; and

≈ that the Wis. Synod be informed of this action of the convention.'

"Although it was pointed out that this procedure would put the entire matter back into the hands of the same group that was involved in the original complaint ..., the resolution was nevertheless adopted in its 'letter of the Praesidium correctly states the Scriptural principles in the matters concerned.'

"The request for reconsideration of the position on 'Joint Prayer' ... was answered by Resolution No.14:

"Resolved, That synod declares that it does not consider 'Joint Prayer' at intersynodical meetings unionistic and sinful, 'provided such prayer does not imply denial of truth or support of error'...

"2. Scouting in the Lutheran Church. Neither Committee No. 3 (Intersynodical and Doctrinal Matters) nor Committee No.7 (Lodges and Boy Scouts) reported on the reference to scouting contained in the 'Communication from the Wis. Synod.'

"The only reference to this issue came in a resolution answering a Memorial from a Mo. Synod congregation which asked that Synod clarify its policy in the matter of Scouting. The resolution restates the policy of the last three conventions, namely 'That the matter of scouting should be left to the individual congregation to decide.'

"3. The Common Confession. The answer of the Houston Convention to our New Ulm Resolution No.3 ('That we ask the Mo. Synod to repudiate its stand that the CC is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees') is given in Resolution No. 19, . . .

Resolved, That we respectfully request also our sister synods in the Syn. Conf., for purposes of study to treat Part I and Part II of the CC as one document. . . .

"Our suggestion that further negotiations with the ALC be suspended was likewise declined by the Houston Convention in its Resolution No.15. Stating that 'Progress toward unity of doctrine has been achieved through discussion on the basis of the Word of God by the representatives of the ALC and the Mo. Synod' and referring to meetings that have been held and to others that are planned, it was

Resolved,

a) That this convention urge the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the MO. Synod to continue the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Mo. Synod to continue its discussions with the representatives of the ALC; and be it further

Resolved,

b) That this convention authorize further meetings of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, the President, ... with corresponding representatives of the ALC.

"Your committee must point out that the request of postponement of action on the CC until Part II shall have received further study has the following serious implications:

- "a) That the postponement requested is a long and, under the circumstances, a dangerous one: three years in the case of the Mo. Synod, four years until our own Synod can take the matter anew in 1957, and five years until the next following meeting of the Syn. Conf.
- "b) That during this time the original CC will remain in effect, and by official declaration is not under reconsideration, but is to stand as a valid settlement of the controversies treated therein:
- "c) That during the manner of the study that is requested would involve an inconsistency, since Part I is to be understood in the light of a second part which has not yet been adopted.
- "d) That Part II of the CC does not meet our objections to those sections of the original document about which we expressed our greatest concern, namely the doctrines of Justification, Conversion, and Election, the very area in which the sola gratia... is at stake...
- "e) That the untruthful situation which the adoption of the CC has created has thus been seriously aggravated, and will remain, even though the CC should, because of a possible merging of the ALC with other Lutheran bodies, ever become a basis of official fellowship between the ALC and the Mo. Synod.

"On the basis of official fellowship between the ALC and the Mo. Synod.

"On the basis of the foregoing report your committee is constrained to present the following to this convention as its carefully considered findings:

"We hold that the Mo. Synod

- by its 'deviation to an ever increasing extent from the position we have so long held and defended together,' and 'from which we find ourselves unable to depart'; and
- by its failure to heed our admonition in some matters . . . ; and
- by declining early action on our objections to the CC as a settlement of the controversies in the doctrines treated therein,

has disrupted the Syn Conf. and made it impossible for us to continue our affiliation with the Mo. Synod and our joint labors in the service of the Lord.

"We ask that these findings as well as our entire report be given careful study by your appointed Floor Committee, which will then present this convention with appropriate recommendations and resolutions. . . . pp.98-102

* Report of Committee II

Report of Floor Committee on Church Union . . .

. . . .

"Your Committee therefore makes the following recommendations:

"1. That we declare that the Mo. Synod

- a) by reaffirming its acceptance of the CC as a 'settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled' . . . and
- b) by its persistent adherence to its unionistic practices, (the CC, joint prayer, scouting, chaplaincy, communion agreement with the ALC, cooperation with unorthodox church bodies in matters clearly not in the field of externals; . . .)

has brought about the present break in relations that is now threatening the existence of the Syn. Conf. and the continuance of our affiliation with the sister Synod.

"2. That we without delay make this declaration known to the President of the Syn. Conf., and to the Presidents of the constituent synods.

"3. That we herewith approve the Protest (... We . . . continue to uphold our protest and to declare that the Mo. Synod by retaining the CC and using it for further steps toward union with the ALC is disrupting the Syn. Conf. . . . Thus while we await a decision by our Synod in this grave situation we continue our present relationship with the Mo. Synod only in the hope that it may still come to see the error of its way. Hence we find ourselves in a STATE OF CONFESSION . . . We hope and pray that the truth may prevail and that God in His grace may avert the threatening disruption of the Syn. Conf.) agreed upon by our representatives immediately following the St. Paul convention of the Syn. Conf., 1952.

"4. That we prevail upon the Pres. of the Syn. Conf. to arrange a program for the convention in 1954 that would devote all its sessions to a thorough consideration of our declaration in Point 1 and of the doctrinal issues and doctrines involved.

"5. That the Conference of Presidents make a special effort during the coming year to provide all our congregations with thorough instruction regarding the issues and doctrines involved.

"6. That while during the period up to the next meeting of the Syn. Conf. we, in view of Pres.

Behnken's offer, still anxiously and prayerfully await an indication that the Mo. Synod will not persist in its present stand as set forth in Point 1, we remain in a state of confession.

Gal.6:1-2 . . .

Rom.15:5-6 . . .”

. . . pg.102-105

WELS Proceedings - Aug.10-17, 1955

Reports and Memorials of the Thirty-third Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States — Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Michigan, August 10-17, 1955

- * Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union Preliminary Report . . .

I.

= "In the matter of our relations with the Missouri Synod your committee was governed by the following considerations:" (A through C reiterate the Report of Committee II of the 1953 Wisconsin Synod Convention in part, which see) . . .

"D. The Syn. Conf. convention has proposed a plan involving the appointment of new committees, to which the task of settling these differences is to be entrusted. This plan, however, envisions a long range program of discussion.

"E. In our dealings with our sister synod we have been earnestly endeavoring to heed the Scriptural exhortation to patience and forbearance in love.

"F. We have, however, arrived at the firm conviction that because of the divisions and offenses that have been caused, and which have until now have not been removed, further postponement of a decision would be a violation of the apostolic injunction of Romans 16:17 ..."

"On the basis of these consideration we recommend the following resolution, which we herewith submit for study our brethren and for subsequent consideration and action by the synodical convention.

Resolved: That with the deepest sorrow, taking notice of the fact that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine that we have learned, we, in obedience to God's injunction to avoid such, declare the fellowship which we have had with said synod to be terminated....." pp.77-81

Report of Floor Committee No. 2

Preamble

= "For years our Wisconsin Synod has patiently admonished the Missouri Synod in the fear and love of God, seeking to win her from the path that leads to liberalism in doctrine and practice."

= "We of the Wisconsin Synod in our convention of 1953 with heavy hearts had to declare that the Missouri Synod by reaffirming its acceptance of the CC and by its persistence adherence to its unionistic practices 'has brought about the present break in relations that is now threatening the existence of the Syn. Conf. and the continuance of our affiliation with the sister Synod.'"

= "Without entering upon the question of whether the present charges of our Synod against

the Missouri Synod do not already constitute the accusation of false doctrine, we believe that it should be reiterated in uncertain terms that a specific charge of false doctrine is not a Biblical prerequisite for separation from a church body. A church body which creates divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies and practices not in accord with Scripture also becomes subject to the indictment of Romans 16:17-18. The Missouri Synod has by its official resolutions, policies, and practices created divisions and offenses both in her own body and in the entire Syn. Conf. Such divisions and offenses are of long standing.

- = "Moreover, Dr. John W. Behnken, Pres. Of the Mo. Synod, in two recent articles in 'The Lutheran Witness' (July 19 and August 2, 1955) has intensified these divisions and offenses by attempting to justify the position of the Mo. Synod through bare declarations that its position is correct and the charges of our Synod are false, without, at least up to this time, bringing the facts of the controversy into true focus. We do not wish to imply that this has been intentional, since that would involve a judgement on our part, but we do not maintain that it has been made more difficult the possibility of reaching Scriptural agreement on the issues that are dividing the two Synods.
- = "In view of these facts you Floor Committee, together with the Floor Committee, together with the Standing Committee in matters of Church Union, affirms `our position that the Mo. Synod by its "acceptance of the CC as a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled," and "by its persistent adherence to its unionistic practices..."has brought about a break in relations, and that our Synod, bound by the Word of God, should now declare itself on the matter..."

Resolutions

- = "Out of love for the truth of Scriptures we feel constrained to present the following resolution to this convention for final action in a recessed session in 1956:

"Resolved, that whereas the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod had created divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies, and practices not in accord with Scriptures, we, in obedience to the command of our Lord in Romans 16:17-18, terminate fellowship with the Mo. Synod.

"We recommend this course of action for the following reasons:
 1. This resolution has far reaching spiritual consequences.
 2. This continues to heed the Scriptural exhortation to patience and forbearance in love by giving the Mo. Synod opportunity to express itself in its 1956 convention."

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Praesidium make the arrangements necessary for this recessed session.

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that our Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union evaluate any further development in the ensuing year;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we ask the nine Districts of our Synod to postpone their 1956 biennial conventions so that this evaluation may be presented to these Districts, which are to meet according to a staggered schedule as arranged by the Conference of Presidents. It is to be understood that these Districts will meet prior to the recessed session of the Synod;

"AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Synod be informed of this action through the President of our Synod. . . ." pp.84-86

"We, the undersigned members of the Floor Committee, although we are in full agreement with the preamble and the resolution to terminate fellowship, are of the conviction that the reasons stated for delay do not warrant postponement of action upon the resolution. . . ." pp. 86-87

"Action by the Convention: The Preamble ... was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Convention. The Resolution calling for a recessed session of the Convention in 1956 to take final action on the resolution to terminate fellowship with the Mo. Synod was adopted by a standing vote of 94 to 47. The matter of drawing up a Confession of Faith was referred to the General Synodical Committee for study action.

= The entire report of Floor Committee No. 2 was adopted. . . ." pp. 87

[The names of 43 delegates follow in protest of the adoption of this report.

Among them are the names of future members of the CLC.]

LCMS Proceedings – June 20-29, 1956

Proceedings of the Forty-Third Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
St. Paul, Minn. June 20-29, 1956

- Recommendations on the part of the Mo. Synod Union committee:
 - = " Your Committee recommends that the Forty - third Regular Convention of the Mo. Synod. . . as a statement of doctrine and as a guide for practice in harmony with the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions."

II

- = " Whereas, Because of the probable union of the ALC with the ELC and the UELC on the basis of the United Testimony on Faith and Life, the CC will not serve as a functioning union document for fellowship with the ALC "; . . . therefore
- = " Your Committee recommends that the CC (Parts I and II) henceforth be regarded as a significant historic statement which may, like other documents of a similar nature, serve out church for purposes of discussions and instruction, both within our own circles and in meetings with others."

III

- = . . . " We furthermore recommend that the Mo. Synod request the joint committee in future discussion other churches "
 - ≡ "1. To institute a thorough exploration of the doctrine and practice to all the churches participating until, under the blessing of God, unity of doctrine and common procedure in attaining unity in practice are established on the basis of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.
 - ≡ "2. After much exploration to draw up a fresh document, jointly arrived at by the representatives of all churches involved, setting forth the agreement found both as to doctrinal basis and require; to submit this document to the membership of all groups concerned in sufficient time for thorough study before the conventions of the churches or synods ; and to present it to the conventions for action.
 - ≡ "3. To supply the leadership for the planning and execution of approaches designed to promote a fuller meeting of minds on a broader front, such as free conferences on the district, circuit, and local levels . . . meetings of theological faculties, and similar ventures. ..." pp.491-493

- *Action of the Norwegian Synod

(The statement opens with a history of the long relationship between the two synods.)

- = " In the face of such a long and treasured fellowship, therefore . . . it is with the deepest and most heartfelt sadness that we consider the events of the past 20 years. For it is to the year 1935 that we must turn back at the time the Missouri Synod first adopted an independent course by opening negotiations with the unionistic American Lutheran Church, whereas our Norwegian Synod declined this invitation. . . The rest of the story is history. . .
- = "First it was the 1938 St. Louis Articles of Union, which were drawn up and accepted as the doctrinal basis for union with the ALC... it was found to contain the old error of the Iowa and Ohio Synods on the central doctrine of justification, as well as certain unscriptural principles on church fellowship held by the ALC... neither the Norwegian Synod nor the Wisconsin Synod could give approval... and the Missouri Synod was petitioned to revoke these... Articles... Our pleas, however, were not directly nor satisfactorily answered. . .
- = "Then came the Saginaw Resolution of 1944, which attempted to draw a distinction between 'joint prayer' and 'prayer fellowship' ... These resolutions... were also protested by our Norwegian Synod on the grounds that this distinction cannot be supported on the basis of Scripture and opens the door to further unionistic practices. The answer of the Missouri Synod... was the reaffirmation of its 1944 Resolution... (The 'Doctrinal Affirmation' of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, September, 1944.)
- = "In 1945 the Chicago Statement appeared, signed by 44 Missouri Synod pastors and professors... This was a document which further weakened the bulwarks against unionism, and laid down unscriptural principles for church fellowship. Representatives of our Norwegian Synod repeatedly asked the Missouri Synod... either to require the signers... to retract or to exercise discipline was exercised , nor did these signers retract their Statement
- = "Then came the agreement with the National Lutheran Council, a federation of liberal and heterodox Lutheran synod, by which the Mo. Synod entered into joint welfare work and joint armed service work with these erroristic groups. ...To these acts of unionism, as well as numerous other instances, our Norwegian Synod has repeatedly protested, but to no avail.
- = "Then, in 1950, came the Common Confession... which was hailed as a settlement of the past doctrinal differences...and a sufficient basis for union between them... we find it to be a document of compromise which does not in any way reject the errors of the ALC and which is, therefore, inadequate as a settlement of past doctrinal differences and unsatisfactory as a basis for union... our Norwegian Synod petitioned the Mo. Synod to 'reconsider its adoption of the CC and to reject it' ... our petition was met by... postponement and delay. . .
- = "Finally, at the last convention of the Syn. Conference in 1954, our Norwegian Synod sent an urgent and prayerful plea to that body, as a court of last appeal, to petition the Missouri Synod to take some action to remedy these many offenses. . .
- = "In this memorial our Resolutions I and II covered the historical position of the Syn. Conf. On objective justification and unionism. ...Resolutions III, IV, and V... covered the points on which there had been disagreement for years. The end result was that while Resolutions I

and II were adopted ..., Resolutions III, IV, and V were ... assigned to committees for further study.

- = "This procedure, we are convinced, will settle nothing. In the first place, these matters... have already been discussed in one committee after the other for many years with no tangible results. As a matter of fact, the situation is that we are not only no closer together, but we are actually drifting farther and farther apart.
- = "What seems to be of even greater moment, however, is the fact that these issues, all of which involve unionism in one form or another... were so vigorously and stoutly defended by the spokesmen for the Missouri Synod... The many discussions demonstrated that there was no real meeting of the minds, nor was there any such 'Unity of the Spirit' as must underlie all fraternal relations in the Christian Church. (Cf. I Cor.1:10)
- = "We feel, therefore, that, as matters now stand, further negotiations by committees will be fruitless. . .
- = "As for ourselves we affirm that we want to remain true to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. We want to continue in the old paths in which our fathers walked, together with the fathers walked, together with the fathers of the Mo. Synod. Before God, therefore, we feel that we have only one choice. Since the Mo. Synod has shown us in its official proceedings that it no longer walks in the old ways with us, we must declare that the Mo. Synod has broken the bond that has bound us together for 100 years..."
- = "THEREFORE WE HEREBY DECLARE with deepest regret that fellowship relations with the Mo. Synod are suspended on the basis of Romans 16:17, and that the exercise of such relations cannot be resumed until the offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned have been removed by them in a proper manner."
- = "It is our firm conviction that we and those who stand with us represent the Scriptural principles and spirit of the Syn. Conf., and that it is the Mo. Synod which has departed from them. Therefore we wish it to be clearly understood that we have no desire to suspend fraternal relations with those who agree with us in our stand and who testify with us against these present errors and unionistic practices. On the contrary, we wish to continue fraternal relations with them and to labor for realignment of Lutherans faithful to the Lutheran Confessions on more realistic lines than those which prevail under the present chaotic conditions in the Synodical Conference.
- = TO THIS END WE HEREBY DECLARE our desire to maintain and establish fraternal relations with those synods, congregations and individuals who are of one mind and spirit with us in matters of Christian doctrine and practice..." pp.508-514

Part III. Decision – Negative and Positive 1957-1960

WELS Proceedings – Aug.7-14, 1957

Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Convention of The Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States — Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN, Aug.7-14,1957

- Report of the Floor Committee on Union Matters

= "Dear Brethren;

"Lord let Thy Word be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Order our steps in Thy Word. Amen

"Your Floor Committee on Union Matters presents the following report: In 1955 our Floor Committee No. 2 . . . reported;

'For years our Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States has patiently admonished the Mo. Synod in the fear and love of God, seeking to win her from the path that leads to liberalism in doctrine and practice.

'We of the Wis. Synod in our convention in 1953 with heavy hearts had to declare that the Mo. Synod by reaffirming its acceptance of the CC and by its persistent adherence to its unionistic practices "has brought about a break in relations that is now threaten-ing the existence of the Syn. Conf. and the continuance of our affiliation with the sister Synod.'"

"This was unanimously adopted by our Synod in convention in 1955.

"As a result our Floor Committee No. 2 at the 1955 Convention of our Synod felt constrained to offer the following resolution to the convention;

'That whereas The Mo. Synod has created divisions and offenses by its official resolutions, policies, and practices, not in accord with Scripture, we, in obedience to the command of our Lord in Romans 16:17,18 terminate our fellowship with the Mo. Synod ...'

"Final action on this resolution was postponed to the recessed convention of our Synod held at Watertown, Wisconsin, in August, 1956, to give the Mo. Synod opportunity to express itself at its convention at St. Paul in June 1956.

"The recessed convention of our Synod at Watertown, Wisconsin, in August, 1956, which followed the convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in June 1956, concurred in the suggestion of our Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union 'to hold in abeyance the judgement of our Saginaw resolutions' until our 1957 convention.

"Our Standing Committee ... reports to us;

'...we cannot come to the conviction that the answers given by the Praesidium of the Mo.

Synod do full justice to the spirit and intent of the St. Paul resolutions as they appeared to the majority of your observers...'

And . . .

' . . . we must recognize the difficulty of the Joint Union Committees thus far to agree on an antithetical premises, and the problem presented by the fact that the Mo. Synod representatives were not ready to declare issues between us divisive.

'...the controversial issues still remain wholly unresolved and continue to cause offense.'

And . . .

'While we saw a hopeful, sign in the excellent statement of Scriptural principles of church fellowship on which the Mo. Synod in 1956 declined membership in the LWF, this hope has been dimmed by the fact that on an official basis the Mo. Synod has since the convention in St. Paul involved itself in just such cooperative programs "in actual church work, e.g. joint . . . educational endeavors," of which it said in its resolution that they would involve it "in a union in spiritual matters with groups not in doctrinal agreement with us.'"

"Since we now find that the Mo. Synod still upholds resolutions and condones principles and practices which deny the Scriptural truth expressed in Art. 28 Of its own Brief Statement of Doctrine; . . . we feel conscience-bound to declare publicly, that these principles, policies and practices create a division between our synods which the Mo. Synod alone can remove. Until these offenses have been removed, we cannot fellowship together with the Mo. Synod as one body, lest our own Wisconsin Synod be affected by the same unionistic spirit which finally weakens and destroys all true doctrine and leads to indifference and liberalism concerning Scriptural truth; therefore be it

"Resolved, that we now suspend church fellowship with the Mo. Synod on the basis of Romans 16:17,18, until the principles, policies, and practices in controversy between us have resolved in a thorough Scriptural and mutually acceptable manner; and be it further

"Resolved, that we declare ourselves ready to continue discussions with representatives of the Mo. Synod with the aim and hope of reestablishing unity of doctrine and practice.

"We want it to be known that we do not hereby consider members of the Mo. Synod as heathen and publicans, but that we are dealing with the Mo. Synod as a corporate body.

"We will continue to support the joint projects of the Synodical Conf. until arrangements made necessary by the foregoing resolution can be completed.

"We are grateful to the Lord of the Church for the unity which existed between our Wis. Synod and the Mo. Synod for so many years, and we pray that He will grant a complete return to the unity of doctrine and practice which formerly existed between us. "Be it finally

"Resolved, that the president of our Synod send copies of the report. . . to the president of the Syn. Conf. and to the presidents of the constituent synods of the Syn. Conf."

- "Action by the Convention:
 - = "The motion to adopt the report of Floor Committee No.2 failed to carry by a standing vote of 61 to 77. Eight delegates abstained from voting.
 - = "The following resolutions pertaining to matters of Church Union were adopted by the Convention:
 - ≡ WHEREAS, our Synod, after long and patient debate, voted not to suspend fellowship with the Mo. Synod at this time, therefore be it
 - ≡ "Resolved, that we continue our vigorous protesting fellowship over against the Mo. Synod, because of the continuation of the offenses with which we have charged our sister synod, Romans 16:17,18 and be it further
 - ≡ "Resolved, that we continue our doctrinal discussions with the union committees of the synods of the Syn. Conf. in an effort to restore full unity on the basis of the Word of God, and be it finally
 - ≡ "Resolved, that we ask our Standing Committee . . . to keep the membership of our Synod informed concerning the progress of these discussions." pp.142-144

[This action is followed by the letters of some proclaiming that they cannot continue in the Wisconsin Synod and still remain faithful to God's Word.]

WELS Proceedings – Aug.5-12, 1959

Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Convention the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States held at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich., Aug. 5 to 12,1959

[After a number of Memorials, pleading for action on the part of the Wisconsin Synod to suspend fellowship with the Mo. Synod, the following resolutions]

Report of Floor Committee No. 2

- = “. . . That we instruct our Church Union Committee under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to continue and accelerate discussions in the Joint Union Committees to bring about complete unity of doctrine and practice in the Syn. Conf;
- = c) That we instruct our Church Union Committee to continue its efforts . . . until agreement . . . has been reached, or until an impasse is reached and no such agreement can be brought about; . . .
- = “Resolved, That in our vigorously protesting fellowship with the Mo. Synod we testify strongly against the offenses which are still prevalent and unresolved in the Mo. Synod and request that body to remove them, and to refrain from causing a wider breach between the members of the Syn. Conf.
- = “. . . Resolved, . . . That we instruct our Church Union Committee not to proceed with the discussions (on Scouting) until it has been reassured by the Mo. Committee on Doctrinal Unity that they will be governed by Resolution 1 of Committee 3 of the 1959 Convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, . . .
- = “Resolved, That a letter be drafted by the District Presidents and conveyed in a manner left to their discretion to every pastor, teacher, and congregation of the Wis. Synod, said letter to plead in a loving spirit with every brother and congregation to preserve the bond of fellowship and to consult the District President before acting.” pp. 194-197

CONCLUSION – 1961

In 1961, at the August convention of the Wisconsin Synod, said Synod suspended fellowship with the Missouri Synod. The pertinent resolution:

- "Resolved, a) That we now suspend fellowship with The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod on the basis of Romans 16:17,18 with the hope and prayer to God that The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod will hear in this resolution an evangelical summons to 'come to herself' (Luke 15:17) and to return to the side of the sister from whom she has estranged herself. . ." ("Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly," No.4, vol. 58, Oct, 1961, pg. 301)

At a special convention in 1962, the Wis. Synod memorialized the Syn. Conf. that it dissolve itself, The ELS (Norwegian Synod) made a similar memorial. The Syn. Conf. declined the request in November, 1962.

In August of 1963, the Wisconsin Synod declared its withdrawal from the Syn. Conf. In June of the same year, the ELS did the same.

Thus the Synodical Conference, as it had existed for so many years, came to an end. This came about as a result of the attempts of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod to create an outward union with the ALC without an inner, doctrinal unity. The Wisconsin and Norwegian Synods pleaded with and rebuked the Missouri Synod, but to no avail. Unfortunately these two synods continued in their pleading to long and violated the apostle's directions found in Romans 16:17,18. Moreover they developed extra-Scriptural doctrinal principles in order to justify their actions.

For this reason, certain men, in order to remain faithful to the Word of God, withdrew from the synods and formed the Church of the Lutheran Confession. God grant that this Synod remain faithful to God's Word.