

# THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

---

VOL. XIV.

OCTOBER, 1910.

No. 4.

---

## UNIFORMITY OF LITURGY FOR OUR ENGLISH CHURCHES.

The deplorable fact that no uniformity of liturgy for our English services exists in our Synod no one who has given the matter any consideration will deny. Since our Synod has not supplied a satisfactory liturgy for our English services, each congregation with its pastor, in introducing English services, is forced to cast about for some suitable order of service. The consequence is, that most congregations have made a liturgy to meet the requirements of their own good, or bad, liturgical taste. The outcome usually has been an order of service that is as cold and bare, and devoid of churchliness, as if it had been prescribed by unfeeling, iconoclastic Rationalism itself.

Of course, every congregation has the privilege so to do. The order of service is an adiaphoron, and according to the *Formula of Concord* "we believe, teach, and confess that the Church of God of every place and every time has, according to its circumstances, the authority, power, and right (in matters truly adiaphora) to change, to diminish, and to increase them without thoughtlessness and offense, in an orderly and becoming way."<sup>1)</sup> Neither should we condemn such congregations as heterodox that have more or less ceremonies than seems good to us. "We believe, teach, and confess also that no Church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies not commanded by God than the other,

---

1) *Formula of Concord* II, ch. X, § 9.

if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and all its articles, as also in the right use of the holy sacraments, according to the well-known saying: 'Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith.'"<sup>2)</sup> Luther himself, in supplying the *Deutsche Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes*, 1526, writes: "Above all things do I want all those requested in a very friendly manner, also for God's sake, who see this order in the services, or care to follow it, that they do not make a necessary law of it, and thereby ensnare or entrap any one's conscience, but to use it according to their Christian liberty and good pleasure, how, where, when, and as long as the occasion may offer or require it."<sup>3)</sup>

Nevertheless, where there is unity of faith, there is also a common demand for uniformity in matters external such as "ceremonies, or church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, but have been introduced into the Church for the sake of good order and propriety."<sup>4)</sup> For every congregation to make full use of its Christian liberty by introducing and abiding with the ceremonies and rites of its own fancy, entirely irrespective of the wishes of its sister congregations, would be folly and presumption. Every individual Christian, as well as every Christian congregation, must profess with St. Paul: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient."<sup>5)</sup>

Uniformity of liturgy should be striven for by every truly Christian congregation, "that the unity of the Christian people may be affirmed also by such external things which otherwise are not necessary of themselves."<sup>6)</sup> Experience has shown that differences in rites and ceremonies pander to disruptions, to divisions and offenses also in doctrine. An example are the Christians of "Liefland" (Livonia), to whom Luther writes: "Nevertheless, also this simplicity of doctrine will not remain unassailed by Satan; yea, through the ex-

2) Form. Conc. I, ch. X, § 7.

4) Form. Conc. I, ch. X, § 1.

6) Luther, X, 261.

3) X, 226.

5) 1 Cor. 6, 12.

ternal disagreement of the ceremonies he tries to sneak in, in order to create dissensions in spirit and faith, as is his custom, amply experienced in so many heresies.”<sup>7)</sup> “Although the outward orders of services, as masses, singing, reading, baptizing, do nothing for salvation, yet is that unchristian to be discordant in them and thereby to perplex the poor people, and not much rather regard the bettering of the people than our own will and pleasure. I, therefore, pray you all, my dear sirs, let go of your own mind and get together amicably, and come to an agreement how you want to keep these external things, so that uniformity may exist among you in your district and not dissension with different observances at different places, whereby the people are perplexed and displeased.”<sup>8)</sup> Luther furthermore deplored the sad lack of uniformity in his days, that grievous complaint and offense is caused by the manifold kinds of new masses, and admonishes: “Wherever it happens that people become offended or perplexed by such a manifold usage, we are certainly in duty bound to limit our liberty, and, as much as possible, do all we can that the people might be bettered by us and not offended. Since these external orders are of no consequence to our conscience before God, and yet may be of benefit to our neighbor, we should charitably endeavor, as St. Paul teaches, to be of one mind, and, as well as this can be done, have similar rites and ceremonies, even as all Christians have the same baptism and the same sacrament, and no one has received a special one of God.”<sup>9)</sup> Although our confessions maintain against our opponents that dissimilar rites in themselves do not injure the unity of the Church, yet they declare that “it is pleasing to us that, for the sake of tranquillity (unity and good order), universal rites be observed. Just as also in the churches we willingly observe the order of the mass, the Lord’s day, and other more eminent festival days.”<sup>10)</sup> For the sake of good order and propriety, to prevent divisions and offenses, to express the

---

7) X, 259.

8) X, 260.

9) X, 226.

10) Apology, ch. IV, § 33.

unity of faith, and to make the fellow-Christian stranger within our gates perfectly at home during our services, let us, one and all, honestly strive for, and, peradventure, earnestly recommend more, and, if possible, perfect, uniformity of liturgy for our English services.

If it is so desirable to have a uniform liturgy, it is worth our honest efforts to look about for an order of service that may serve as a model until Synod has provided us with a suitable liturgy. This, however, does not call upon any one to create an order of service and to recommend that creation for universal acceptance. If we assume the privilege of arranging our own liturgy, and thus make unwarranted use of our Christian liberty, we would have to concede the same prerogative to any one who desired to exhibit his master skill in this direction. Then our Church would suffer untold harm from every shade of subjective opinions, arrangements, and liturgical nuisances.<sup>11)</sup> If we essay to establish a new liturgy, or even to piece a new one together from the old *Kirchenordnungen*, we would expose ourselves to Luther's condemnation: "Grievous complaint and offense is caused by the manifold kinds of new masses, since every one fashions his own: some from good intentions, others from presumption, that they also might start something new, and appear among others as fine masters, as is always the case with Christian liberty, that a few use it otherwise than for their own pleasure and profit, and not for the glory of God and the neighbor's welfare."<sup>12)</sup> "We would scorn the presumption and suspicion the intelligence of the pastor who would reject the Church's models and frame a liturgy of his own. There would be no possibility of arriving at a desirable uniformity of usage upon the basis of personal taste or preference."<sup>13)</sup> The Church's models

---

11) HOMMEL: "Wir verschmähen es, nach eigenen Fündlein und Ideen eine Gottesdienstordnung aufzubauen; das ist der Weg der Subjektivität und des Schwankens, der nie zum Ziele führt." (*Liturgie*, 1851, p. V.)

12) X, 226.

13) *The Choral Service Book*, General Council Publ. Board, p. XXXIV.

must be our models. Our aim must be to go back to the old masters, to a liturgy that has a genuine, classic, Lutheran ring, one that echoes and resounds to the liturgy that Luther endorses,<sup>14)</sup> and that was heard in the sanctuaries of our devoted and loyal fellow-Lutherans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We must abide with both the forms and the musical settings then in use. Such a liturgy that contains the old Lutheran forms as they were used in those centuries, and that has been adapted for our use, is to be found in the so-called Common Service. And since it is claimed for this service that it is "typical pure Lutheran service of the sixteenth century adapted for the use of English-speaking churches," embodying "the common worship of the Christian Church of all ages," enjoying "the common consent of the pure Lutheran liturgies of the sixteenth century;"<sup>15)</sup> and since it has been adopted by our own sister-Synod<sup>16)</sup> and other bodies of the Lutheran Church in America; and since many of our own congregations have introduced it and are using it, although generally in a very badly crippled form; and since it enjoys the preference over the service of our *Agende*, being historically and liturgically more correct, and containing gems of pure Lutheran liturgies that are missing in our service, although endorsed and recommended for use by leading liturgists of our own Synod<sup>17)</sup>: we would like to call attention to

---

14) In this we agree with Frederick William III, who had commissioned Eylert to prepare a new *Agenda*, of which the king disapproved, saying: "Vor Ihrem guten Willen habe ich allen Respekt, aber Sie sind in den Fehler aller gefallen, die neue Liturgien und Agenden geschrieben haben. Sie haben den historischen Boden verlassen. . . . Alle Liturgien und Agenden, welche in unserer Zeit erschienen, sind wie aus der Pistole geschossen. . . . Wir müssen, soll etwas aus der Sache werden, auf Vater Luther rekurrieren." (Rietschel, *Lehrbuch*, p. 448. *Choral Service*, p. XV.)

15) *An Explanation of the Common Service*, General Council Publ. House, p. 14.

16) *The Common Service with Music*, American Lutheran Publication Board, Pittsburg, Pa.

17) Lochner in his *Hauptgottesdienst* recommends the principal parts that are contained in the Common Service for general use. *Lehre und*

the component parts of the Common Service, hoping that this may be of some assistance in striving for our common goal: uniformity of liturgy for our English services.

After a proper hymn by the congregation, and after the pastor has intoned the Invocation of the Triune God, and the congregation has responded with Amen, the MORNING SERVICE opens with the *Confiteor*, or the *Confession of Sins*, which is to be used on Sundays when the regular services are not preceded by a confessional service. This position is different from the one in the *Agende*. The purpose of the *Confiteor* at the beginning of the service is to "prepare the hearts of both minister and congregation for communion with God. With the sincere confession of sin God does not bestow His grace upon us; nor does He accept our sacrifice of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving."<sup>18</sup> We maintain that the sermon in the Lutheran Church is not a promulgation of the Law, but rather a proclamation of the Gospel, *i. e.*, the free pardon of God toward the sinner for the sake of the sinner's Savior. The Confession and Absolution immediately after this divine assurance would seem out of place. Whether

---

*Wehre*, in reviewing the work, brought the following opinions: Graebner: "Der würde sich bei uns keinen Dank verdienen, welcher für jedes Hinwirken auf eine sorgfältige und liebevolle Behandlung der gottesdienstlichen Zeremonien, Bräuche, Formen, oder wie man diese Dinge nennen mag, nur ein gleichgültiges Abwinken, ein mitleidiges Lächeln als für Schrullen und Liebhabereien einseitiger Köpfe, oder gar ein energisches Kopfschütteln, als gälte es, gefährliche Bestrebungen abzuweisen, in Bereitschaft hätte. . . . Wir lassen uns aber durch das Bewusstsein unserer Freiheit nicht bestimmen, zu verachten oder über Bord zu werfen, was etwa von alters her in der Kirche als lieblich und schön geliebt, gelobt und geübt worden ist." — Schaller: "Obgleich die Zeit vielleicht für immer vorbei ist, in welcher man hoffen könnte, den *alllutherischen Gottesdienst in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt und Schönheit wieder in das Leben eingeführt zu sehen*, so ist doch schon viel gewonnen, wenn das rechte Verständnis der einzelnen Bestandteile des lutherischen Hauptgottesdienstes in weiteren Kreisen gewirkt und befördert wird." — Dr. Walther: "*Es ist der köstliche Schlussstein zum Wiederaufbau der wahren lutherischen Kirche in Amerika. Gott segne Dich dafür!*" (*Lehre und Wehre* 34, p. 355 ff.)

18) *An Explanaton*, p. 21.

the place immediately after the sermon is liturgically proper has, therefore, been disputed.<sup>19)</sup> Many feel that the Confession of Sins that follows especially a festival sermon, such as on Christmas, Easter Day, etc., is not in keeping with the happy mood to which the sermon endeavored to elevate its hearers.

In studying the old Lutheran *Kirchenordnungen*, we find that there is no common consensus that would demand the position immediately after the sermon as the only correct one. Neither Luther's *Formula Missae*, 1524, nor his *Deutsche Messe*, 1526, contains it. Indeed, Luther mentions it as following the sermon, but to our knowledge he has never advocated that position. A number of the old *Kirchenordnungen* place the Confession where the Common Service has it, e. g., *Andreas ev. Mess im neuen Spital zu Nuernberg*, 1525; *Strassburg deutsches Kirchenamt*, 1525; *Brandenburg (-Ansbach) und Nuernberg*, 1533; *Wittenberg*, 1559; 1563; *Mecklenburg*, 1552; 1650; *Frankfurt a. M.*, 1565; *Lueneburg*, 1564; 1569; *Lippe*, 1571; *Oldenburg*, 1573; *Liegnitz*, 1594; and others.<sup>20)</sup>

If, therefore, the position of the *Confiteor* in the Common Service is not by general consent the preferred one, it is, at any rate, a justifiable one, enjoying the authority and endorsement of the Lutheran liturgists of highest rank.

The service proper begins after the Confession of Sins with the *Introit*. The *Introit* is of very ancient origin. It really dates back to the services in the temple of Jerusalem, where the two divisions of the singers would sing the psalms responsively. During the first centuries of the Christian Church both the pastors and choristers entered the church at the beginning of the services in procession, singing a psalm antiphonally. The congregation would respond to each verse of the psalm with the proper Antiphon for the respective Sunday or festival. At the end of the psalm the *Gloria Patri* was sung as a confession of the Holy Trinity. This

19) Cf. *Lehre und Wehre* 54, p. 385 ff.

20) Lochner, *Hauptgottesdienst*, p. 185.

solemn opening of the service was called *introitus*. Later, however, our present form of the Introit came into use, which consisted in the Antiphon, one psalm-verse, and the Gloria Patri.

That the Introits, which were completely suppressed by Pietism and Rationalism in the time after the Thirty Years' War, have been omitted from our *Agende* is a much-deplored fact. Lochner writes: "To congregations that do not yield to the present desire to abbreviate the services more and more, but that have preserved a little more endurance from former times for the duration of a full service, the resumption of the Introits ought to be recommended."<sup>21</sup>) Luther, in his *Weise, christliche Messe zu halten*, 1523, as well as in his *Deutsche Messe*, 1526, wants the Introit retained as an opening hymn. He says: "The Introits for the Sundays, and that are sung on the festivals of Christ, such as Easter, Pentecost, Christmas, we praise, and also retain them."<sup>22</sup>) The Introit at the beginning of the service proper puts a special stamp, the peculiar characteristic upon the Sunday for which it is set. The names of the Sundays, as *Invocavit*, *Reminiscere*, *Oculi*, etc., are the first words of the Latin Introits for the respective Sundays. Therefore, instead of canceling them from our order of service in conformity with the whims of Pietism and Rationalism, we should rather approve of them and gladly restore them to their former position and usage.

As far as the rendering of the Introits is concerned, it might be mentioned that the way in which this is usually done, *viz.*, that the pastor reads the Antiphon and psalm-verse, the congregation responding with the Gloria Patri, is not the correct one. Reed and Archer, in the preface to the *Choral Service*, say: "The Introit properly belongs to the choir. Any other disposition of it is simply a makeshift."<sup>23</sup>) Lochner corroborates this and writes: "The Introit is sung antiphonally by two choirs, the second being supplied a little

21) l. c., p. 81.

22) X, 2238.

23) p. XXIV.—All the Introits with their proper musical setting in psalm-tone are given in *The Choral Service Book*, pp. 96—141.

fuller than the first. The Gloria Patri, however, in case it is not desired to carry the change through, may be sung by both choirs, which has a real pleasing effect."<sup>24)</sup> He also advises to have the Introit rendered with the help of a children's choir: "This could be done best, according to ecclesiastical precedent, by pupils who are able and willing to sing. If they are unable to sing in several 'voices,' or even in two 'voices,' then a unisonous singing will do, which will sound quite delightful through the clear voices of the children."<sup>25)</sup> Loche remarks: "It must be mentioned that the Introit is sung best according to one of the eight psalm-tones, as long as the proper Introit melodies are not restored to our Church." Lochner adds: "This would be done even according to Luther's precedent."<sup>26)</sup>

To retain the Introits, therefore, does not belong to the impossibilities. If it cannot be otherwise, let them be rendered by the pastor and have the congregation respond with the Gloria Patri. It must be remembered, however, that such a disposition of it is simply a makeshift. There is in our congregations no necessity for taking refuge to such a makeshift, since we have the children of our churches in our parochial schools every day, who, with a few minutes each week devoted to a little training, will be able to render the Introits and the other propria of the choir needed in the liturgy. There is hardly a congregation anywhere that would not delight in such singing. "Should it really be impossible," asks Lochner, "especially in our city schools, to select a number of gifted boys and to train them gradually as the proper choristers?"<sup>27)</sup> It is needless to add that Luther in his boyhood days sang in a boys' choir, and that highly endorses and recommends this old Lutheran institute.

Then shall follow the *Kyrie*, according to the rubric of the Common Service. Luther says: "Then they suit me well

24) *Hauptgottesdienst*, p. 84.

26) l. c.

25) l. c., p. 82.

27) l. c., p. 31.

that have added the Kyrie Eleison."<sup>28</sup>) There is a very logical connection between the Introit and the Kyrie. The Introit is the herald of the Sunday, announcing in a Gospel message God's grace and every blessing to the worshipers. This announcement having been made, all are desirous of obtaining that mercy of God. Therefore the congregation prays: "Lord, have mercy upon us!" The prayer for mercy is uttered three times, not nine times, as in the Roman Church,—to denote that the prayer is directed to the Holy Trinity mentioned in the Gloria Patri of the Introit.

The Kyrie is, as a rule, rendered antiphonally, the minister intoning and the congregation responding. It may be rendered antiphonally by two choirs, or the choir may intone and the congregation respond. The rendering by choir and congregation would seem the more solemn manner where the pastor does not sing the liturgy.

The *Gloria in Excelsis*, which, like the Kyrie, is also prescribed by the *Agende*, is a very beautiful part of the liturgy. Luther claims, "It did not grow; nor was it made on earth; it came down from heaven." It was first sung on Bethlehem's fields in honor of the Savior's birth, who had come to bring us life and salvation. So it is used to-day as an answer to the Kyrie that the congregation has just sung, as a praise for the many gracious deliverances from the manifold sorts of evil. The words themselves are grand, sublime, awe-inspiring. Luther declares: "A great deal of singing in the mass is fine and delightful . . . such as the Gloria in Excelsis et in Terra, the Alleluia, the Patrem (the Creed), the Preface, the Sanctus, the Benedictus, the Agnus Dei. In these things you find nothing of the sacrifice, but only pure praise and thanks, wherefore we have retained them in the mass."<sup>29</sup>)

The Gloria in Excelsis together with the *Laudamus* ought to be sung by the congregation. Whether the congregation will be able to sing the *Laudamus* part depends a great deal

28) X, 2235.

29) X, 2194 f.; cf. 2235 f.; 1676.

on its musical ability. Lochner's suggestion seems the most feasible way, *viz.*: "In case it cannot be attained that the congregation participates in the singing of the *Laudamus*, then let the choir take it; and the order would be: Pastor: 'Glory be to God on high!' Congregation: 'And on earth peace, good will toward men.' Choir: 'We praise Thee,'” etc.<sup>30)</sup> This disposition of the *Gloria in Excelsis* might be adhered to until the congregation has learned to sing all of it.

The well-known *Salutation*, *Oremus*, and *Collect* require no explanation.

After the reading of the *Epistle* "the *Hallelujah* shall be sung, except in the Passion season."

That the *Sentences* for the various seasons of the Church-year after the *Hallelujah* might be omitted may be urged for the reason given in the *Choral Service* in a different connection: "The congregation too often but begins to accustom itself to one setting when another season of the church-year brings a different one into use and paralyzes the tongues in the pews."<sup>31)</sup> A suitable hymn, instead of the *Sentences*, is just as appropriate and more practical.

The reading of the *Gospel* is considered the principal reading. This fact is emphasized by the *Gloria Tibi*, which the congregation sings as an expression of joy after the *Gospel* has been announced. After the *Gospel* has been read, in order to express its praise at the glad tidings heard, the congregation sings the *Laus Tibi*.

After the reading of the *Gospel* follows the *Creed*. By reciting the *Creed*, either the *Nicene* or the *Apostolic*, the con-

30) *Hauptgottesdienst*, p. 122. 35, § 2. Office of the choir in the public worship, p. 32 ff.

31) p. XXXVI. — LUTHER: "Zum vierten lasse man singen das Graduale, etwa mit zwei Versen, samt dem Halleluja, oder nur eins (von diesen beiden), nach Gefallen des Pfarrers oder Bischofs. Aber die langen Gradualien, so man in der Fasten singt, und dergleichen, so mehr denn zwei Verse haben, mag, wer da will, daheim in seinem Hause singen; in der Kirche wollen wir nicht, dass der Gläubigen Geist mit Ueberdruss gedämpft werde." (X, 2239 f.)

gregation performs one of its foremost Christian duties, in making, in a brief summary, a public confession of its faith. (Vide Matt. 10, 32; 16, 15—18; Rom. 10, 9.) The most appropriate place and time for such a confession of faith is in the principal service. The Common Service prescribes it to be recited in monotone, with soft organ accompaniment.

After the Creed follows, without prelude, a short hymn (Kanzellied), during which the pastor enters the pulpit to deliver the *Sermon*.

Between the Sermon and the General Prayer the Common Service inserts the *Offertory*.<sup>32)</sup> The Offertory evidently has its origin in the offerings that the first Christians brought for the support of the ministry and for benevolent purposes at their *agapae* at which they celebrated the Lord's Supper. This custom in the course of time degenerated into the sacrificial mass, in which meritorious offering, or sacrifice, is made "pro innumeris peccatis et offensionibus et negligentis meis et pro omnibus circumstantibus, sed et pro omnibus fidelibus Christianis, vivis atque defunctis." Though Luther swept everything out of the mass, "das nach Opfer klingt und stinkt," he, nevertheless, retained the Offertory in our present usage as a common offering of the penitent heart, and as an evidence of Christian charity.<sup>33)</sup>

The *General Prayer*, the special petitions or thanksgivings which might have been requested, together with the Lord's

32) Hommel, *Liturgie*, 1851: "Von dem Grundsatz der Freiheit ausgehend, haben wir keinen Anstand genommen, das Offertorium wieder aufzunehmen." (p. VI.) — Schoeberlein assigns the *Predigt-Nachlied* to follow the sermon. He writes: "Nachdem die Gemeinde die Predigt angehört hat, bekennt sie sich gelobend und bittend zu ihrem Inhalt im Gesang eines Liedes." (*Hauptgottesdienst*, pp. 262. 275.) — Layritz: "Das Predigtlied findet keine bessere Stellung als eben nach der Predigt, so dass die durch die Predigt zubereiteten Herzen nun entweder den Hauptinhalt derselben sich noch einmal selber gegenseitig bezeugen oder die Lob- und Dankopfer ihrer Lippen für das verkündigte Wort dem Herrn darbringen." (*Kern des deutschen Kirchengesangs* IV, p. VII.)

33) During the singing of the Offertory the offerings are gathered and brought to the minister, who places them on the altar. (Cf. Luther, X, 229, § 9.)

Prayer, are to be read at the altar. This is done in view of the purpose that the altar has in the Lutheran churches. Although it is not regarded as a sacred shrine of the consecrated host, nor as a sepulcher for the bones of some of the famous or infamous saints, yet it is considered the proper place, not only for the administration of the Sacrament of the Altar, but especially also where the called minister of Christ offers the congregation's sacrifices of prayer and praise. Therefore, the General Prayer, as well as all liturgical prayers, ought to be read at the altar.

"If there be no communion, a *Doxology* may be sung, and the minister, standing at the altar, shall pronounce the *Benediction*, after which the congregation shall offer silent prayer." (Rubric.)

The *Communion Service* is virtually the same as that of the *Agende*, except that the Common Service prescribes the Exhortation after the Sanctus, the Pax after the Words of Institution, the *Nunc Dimittis* after all have communed, and the *Benedicamus* after the Collect.

Although the *Exhortation* has the endorsement of the highest authority, and though it would be of benefit to the communicants when used, yet it seems to be used but very little, especially where a confessional, or preparatory, service precedes the regular services.

Of the *Pax* Luther says: "The *Pax Domini* should be read, which is a public absolution of sins for all that go to the sacrament, and is, indeed, a real evangelical word that pronounces forgiveness of sins, and the only and most worthy preparation for the Lord's Table, if it is apprehended by faith, not otherwise than if Christ had spoken out of His own mouth."<sup>34</sup>)

The *Nunc Dimittis* is a very appropriate hymn of joyful thanksgiving at the end of a Communion Service, for which the Common Service provides a beautiful setting in psalm-tone.

---

34) X, 2243 f.

“And for the *Ite, missa est*, the *Benedicamus Domini* should be sung.”<sup>35)</sup> Herein the communicants, as well as the entire congregation, offer their thanks to the Lord for the benefits received in the sacrament and in the whole service.—

Let this suffice in indicating the appropriateness and value of the several parts of the Common Service. Much more could be said. The little that has been said could have been said much better. A special chapter might be written on the Vespers; but if we understand the Morning Service and agree on that, no serious difficulties will present themselves in studying the Evening Service. This service is strictly Lutheran, very beautiful, a liturgical treat, and easily learned.

A word may be added in regard to the *Service Music*. If we adopt the forms as they are contained in the old Lutheran church books, we must also use the music that was set to those forms. Both have been handed down to us together. The liturgy and its music together form a unit. Indeed, most of the forms have a number of good Lutheran musical settings; but to discard the old classic music, in order to replace it with compositions of our own, or with the effeminate productions of modern composers, is committing a liturgical nuisance. Such treatment of the old, venerable forms evidences liturgical ignorance, as well as a lack of appreciation for musical art. If we are shown a statue of Luther, we expect to see him clothed in the quaint apparel and style of his age. We would not even consider it natural to see him arrayed in a suit of clothes made according to the latest fashion of a modern tailor. But why should we act so unreasonably in liturgies? Why divorce the music from its liturgy? We have every right to claim for our ecclesiastic music: “It comes down to us through the centuries as a precious inheritance . . . and stands before us to-day, not a crude, undeveloped, or traditional nondescript, but a completed, fully developed art-form, hoary with ages and hallowed with centuries of holy service, but with the vigor and purity of never-fading youth.”<sup>36)</sup>

35) Luther, X, 2244.

36) *The Choral Service Book*, p. VII.

The Service Music is endorsed by the most eminent musicians. Mozart, *e. g.*, declared of the historical Preface melody as found in the Common Service, "If he could truthfully say that he was the author of this melody, he would gladly forego whatever other musical reputation he might possess."<sup>37)</sup> So in adopting the forms, let us also adopt the music that was set to those forms, and thereby forego the trouble of looking about for "something better."

To congregations that have not been made thoroughly acquainted with the Common Service and its various parts, it will seem intricate and difficult. Yet, by familiarizing ourselves and our congregations with these "liturgical gems of our Church" these objections, we hope, will be overcome. Until this is done, it may be best to abide with the order of the *Agende*, and to borrow the necessary musical settings from the Common Service. Of course, "there are those to-day who attach but little importance to the cultivation and employment of the beautiful in divine worship. Though at great pains to indulge their artistic tastes in their homes and their social relations, when they come to worship they prefer to deaden the aesthetic sense the Creator gave them, and commune with their God with self-crippled powers. Such worship is not the humble offering of Mary, but rather the sinful withholding of Ananias. We must ever strive to bring unto God an offering of every fruit of our mind and hand, the first and best."<sup>38)</sup> It is our duty as pastors and Christians to see that everything within our congregations is done decently and in order. This duty pertains also to the order of service. And when we essay to establish such an order, let us be of the determination that the best is not too good.

Indeed, if we would simply announce that, beginning with next Sunday and for all times to come, the full Common Service must be used, and introduce it by our own authority, it is needless to say that a presumption of this kind would be

---

37) l. c., p. XXVI.

38) l. c., p. XXXVII.

little appreciated. The congregation must be taught. The service must be thoroughly explained. The meaning of its various parts must be elucidated. The beauty and art of its music must be shown. And then, not the pastors, but the congregations must decide whether they wish to introduce the liturgy or not. "We reject and condemn also as wrong when these ordinances are urged by force upon the congregation of God as necessary."<sup>39</sup>)

However, let us not pay first attention to our own convenience and ease, but rather act according to the admonition of the Apostle: "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, think of these things." Let it ever be our aim to beautify the services in the tabernacles of the Lord of hosts to the edification of His redeemed and to the praise and honor of His holy name!

Fort Smith, Ark.

H. W. BARTELS.

---