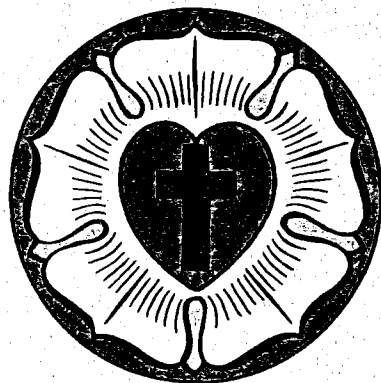


**EVANGELICAL  
DIRECTIONS  
FOR  
THE  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**



EVANGELICAL  
DIRECTIONS  
FOR THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

ERICH KIEHL  
WALDO J. WERNING  
*Editors*

# Foreword

The Lutheran Congress with its emphasis on humble loyalty to the Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions is now history.

Through the pages of this book the reader may share in the rich experience of the listeners at the Congress during the days of August 31 to September 2, 1970. Calm and positive expression was given to eternal truths of the Scriptures, the truths which are also reflected in the Lutheran Confessions.

In one of his two essays delivered at the Congress, Dr. Francis Schaeffer recalled the tragic experience of his beloved Presbyterian Church. He reminded his Lutheran friends that many of them now stand at the same crossroads where his church once stood. Dr. Schaeffer retains all rights to his two manuscripts, and no publication is to be made without his personal permission.

We must remember that most Lutherans have never walked this way before. Most of us have never experienced a situation where God's Word is openly questioned, where eternal truths are relativized, traditional theological terms are emptied of their Biblical meanings, and the process of normal communication between brothers in faith is made difficult with endless ambiguity.

What shall we do as we face a new humanism, a new theology, and a new hermeneutic parading as permissible options for the Lutheran Church in the Twentieth Century? Speakers at the Lutheran Congress were conscious that many are deeply perplexed and pained by these challenges to the firm Biblical moorings of the historic Christian faith. The program was planned to give Scriptural and evangelical guidance and direction regarding the nature of Scriptural truth, faithful confessional life in the church, and evangelical communication of the Word.

Although all essayists sought to be faithful to the statements of purpose of the Congress, each essayist is responsible for the contents of his essay. Participants came as individual Lutherans to share their views as they understood the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. The only exception was Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer, who graciously accepted an invitation to come as a Presbyterian to speak to his Lutheran friends.

By common consent the essay on "Humanization and Mission" by Rev. Gunnar Stalsett of Oslo, Norway, does not appear in this book. He will be presenting this essay at several gatherings in Europe. It will then be published within the context of the mission enterprise of the church. Stalsett's provocative essay is available on cassette or tape for \$3.95 from the Congress Registrar, Roy Bleick, 2751 South Karlov Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60623. All essays can be attained from this source.

The editors ask the reader to join them in appreciation to the essayists who freely gave the rights of publication so that others might have the opportunity of reading their timely messages for Christians in mission for our Savior Jesus Christ.

Reformation Day  
1970

Erich H. Kiehl  
Waldo J. Werning  
*Editors*

# Congress Call To Order

Edwin C. Weber, D.D.

Dear Fellow-Christians,

In our world, where everyone seems to be seeking a solid foundation for life here and the one to come, many articles have been written influencing the thought of our day.

One such article appeared in the syndicated column of Sydney J. Harris in the Detroit Free Press on August 14, 1970. In casting about for an opening statement to those who attend this Lutheran Congress, I chose this article to give momentum to our discussions here.

## THE WORLD YEARNs FOR FALSE MESSIAH

People keep saying "We need a leader" or "We need better leadership," but that is not what they really mean. What most of them are looking for is not a leader, but a Messiah.

They want someone who will give them the Word. And the Word would be one that is agreeable to them, that appeals to their preferences and prejudices, so that they can follow it whole-heartedly.

But this is not what a true leader does — a leader tells people hard truths, gives them a difficult path to follow, calls upon their highest qualities, not their basest instincts. A true leader does not tell us what we WANT to hear, but what we OUGHT to hear.

Indeed, this is the difference between a false Messiah and a true one. A false Messiah — such as Hitler, in our time — caters to and inflames the fears, hates, angers and resentments of his people, and drives them to destruction rather than to salvation or self-realization.

A TRUE MESSIAH — such as Jesus, even taken on the worldly plane — rebukes his people, shows them their errors, makes them want to be better, not stronger or richer, and asks them to make sacrifices for the common good and for the good of their own souls. He is never followed by very many, usually killed by the majority, and venerated only when he is safely dead and need not be taken seriously.

What we are looking for, I am afraid, is neither a true leader nor a true Messiah, but a false Messiah — a man who will give us over-simplified answers, who will justify our ways, who will castigate our enemies, who will vindicate our selfishness as a way of life, and make us comfortable within our prejudices and preconceptions.

We are seeking for leadership that will reconcile the irreconcilable, moralize the immoral, rationalize the unreasonable, and promise us a society where we can continue to be as narrow and envious and short-sighted as we would like to be without suffering the consequences. In short, we are invoking magic, we are praying for the coming of the Wizard.

But there is no Wizard. There are only false prophets — and they come equally from left, right, center, and below. Wherever they come from, no matter how they differ, they can all be distinguished by the same sign: those we like make us feel better, instead of making us feel worse. We want to follow them because they "understand" us.

But all the true prophets, from the Old Testament through Jesus, made us feel worse. They knew, and said, that the trouble wasn't with our enemies, but with ourselves. They demanded that we shed our old skin and become New Men. And this is the last thing we want to do. What we are looking for is a leader who will show us how to be the same old men, only more successfully — and his ancient name is Satan.

Our Lord Jesus gave His people direction in His day when He said to those Jews which believed on Him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Note that He spoke to believers. We who are assembled to bear witness to our faith will identify with these Christians of old. We believe in Jesus and would certainly seek knowledge and understanding from Him Whom we claim as our Savior.

What was His directive to those who believed on Him? "Continue in My Word" are the words which the Son of God urges upon His followers. We know Him as the one Who reveals to us the Father and sends the Holy Spirit to work and maintain faith in the hearts of men. His word, spoken by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is the one guideline that never fails.

He makes a promise in connection with this statement when He says, "Then are ye my disciples indeed." Here speaks the Son of God, the omniscient God, the wise leader, the spokesman for the Holy Trinity. This is how we become disciples. The one who bears and heeds will be a disciple. Our God has spoken to us from the beginning in His word and deed and we have studied this word to become wise unto salvation.

A confessing Christian must know the truth. Jesus said, "I am the truth." Many uses have been made of the Word of God. Many have studied it so that they might attack it. Some have used it to demonstrate a preconceived idea. Some have employed it to exhibit great scholarship. Jesus holds out the brightest prospect and the real use to which it must be put. Seekers can find the truth there. The truth becomes evident to all who approach the Word of God humbly and find in it the truth, which is the foundation of their faith.

This truth will make men free. This truth shows a sinner the way to become free indeed. Under the forgiveness of sins, a believer will be free to pursue a free life of joy in Christ, a testimony to all who are still struggling to find life, a way of life which will lead to a true confession of Christ, the Lord, a freedom to serve this God with heart and soul and mind.

As we begin to speak to one another during these next three days, may God grant grace that we might continue in His Word.

# Table of Contents

Page

Foreword

Congress Call to Order — Rev. Edwin Weber, D.D.

## THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURAL TRUTH

1. God's Word — Prof. Paul Zimmerman, Ph.D. .... 1
2. Theologies — Prof. Martim Warth, M.S.T. .... 13
3. Truth Versus New Humanism and New Theology —  
Rev. Francis A. Schaeffer, D.D. .... 21
4. Shaping Society-Social Action — Rev. Richard Klann, Ph.D. .... 30

## FAITHFUL CONFSSIONAL LIFE IN THE CHURCH

5. The Confessions and Confessing Today —  
Prof. Manfred Roensch, D. Theol. .... 35
6. Confessional Subscription — Prof. Robert Preus, Ph.D., D. Theol. 43
7. Confessional Declaration — Rev. Alvin E. Wagner..... 53
8. Confessional Polity — Rev. George Wollenburg ..... 60
9. Confessional Practice — Rev. Waldo J. Werning ..... 71
10. Confessional Ecumenism I — Rev. Ralph Bohlmann, Ph.D. .... 82
11. Confessional Ecumenism II — A Case Study in  
Communion Practice — Prof. Lowell Green, D. Theol. .... 92

## EVANGELICAL COMMUNICATION OF THE WORD

12. Christian Education — Prof. Erich Kiehl, Th.D. .... 100
13. Professional Education — Rev. Edwin C. Weber, D.D. .... 108
14. Evangelism — Rev. Wm. Gast ..... 111
15. World Missions I — God's Harmony and Man's Discordant  
Notes — Rev. Elmer Reimnitz, M.S.T. .... 117
16. World Missions II — The Gospel Imperative — A Call For  
World Missions — Rev. Eugene  
Bertermann, Ph.D., LL.D. .... 127

## GENERAL

17. Lutheran World Federation — Prof. Martim Warth, M.S.T. .... 137
18. A Protestant Evangelical Speaks to his Lutheran Friends in a  
Day of Theological Crises — Rev. Francis A. Schaeffer, D.D. .... 143
19. Greetings — Herman A. Sasse, D.D., L. Theol. .... 151
20. Ordination Vow — Mr. Alfred Tessman ..... 154
21. Confirmation Vow — Mr. George Mohr ..... 157
22. Go Home Confessing — Rev. Wilbert Sohns ..... 161
- Prayers — Rev. Donald Pohlers ..... 164
- Authors ..... 165
- Statement of Purpose ..... 166



# 20. Ordination Vow

Alfred Tessmann

I came by this assignment rather by accident. Some months ago I volunteered a rather simple observation to a member of the committee. I asked him this simple question: "Doesn't the ordination vow required of our pastors and educators, in fact, preclude the possibility of any unqualified persons ever being assigned to a position of authority and responsibility within our church." As a result, I was promptly asked to study the ordination vow and then read it here at the Congress.

As it turned out, it was not quite that simple. The more I studied the vow and the more I read it and related it to the problems which we are facing today, the more I became disturbed.

In the secular world we have a similar situation. As a matter of course, we require people in high office to accept and make a statement of loyalty before we will place them in sensitive positions of responsibility. As I thought about this, I couldn't help but say to myself how much more important then should be the ordination vow which our ministers, teachers, and educators make and by which they are committed to serve their Lord and their church.

I will now simply read in part what is stated in this vow. Most of you have heard it and have read it many times:

Dearly beloved brother: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said unto His disciples: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

And when He had ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things, He gave unto His Church some, Apostles, and some, Prophets, and some, Evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Whereas, after due examination, you have been found well versed in Christian doctrine and able to teach others, and have been called to the office of the holy ministry in this congregation, it is meet and right that you should hear and ponder what God, in His holy Word, inculcates upon His ministers concerning the solemn responsibilities of their sacred office.

Thus says St. Paul:

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work.

Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.

Speak the things which become sound doctrine, in all things showing yourself a pattern of good works.

Take heed unto yourself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this you shall both save yourself and them that hear you.

Thus the ministers of Christ are His ambassadors and as such are to preach the Word and administer the Holy Sacraments.



Whereas, dear brother, you have accepted the call extended to you by this congregation and are about to enter on the performance of the duties pertaining to the holy office of the ministry, in accordance with the Word and the will of the Lord Most High, I now ask you in the presence of God and this congregation:

Do you believe the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament to be the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

Do you accept the three Ecumenical Creeds — the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian — as faithful testimonies to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and do you reject all the errors which they condemn?

Do you believe that the Unaltered Augsburg Confession is a true exposition of the Word of God and a correct exhibition of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and that the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the two Catechisms of Martin Luther, the Smalcald Articles, and the Formula of Concord — as contained in the Book of Concord — are also in agreement with this one Scriptural faith?

Do you solemnly promise that you will perform the duties of your office in accordance with these Confessions and that all your teaching and your administration of the Sacraments shall be in conformity with the Holy Scriptures and with the afore-mentioned Confessions?

Will you, finally, adorn the doctrine of our Savior with a holy life and conversation?

To all of the above, our ministers and teachers answer, "I will, the Lord helping me through the power and grace of His Holy Spirit."

The officiant then continues:

I now commit unto you the holy office of the Word and the Sacraments; I ordain and consecrate you a minister of the Church and install you as pastor of this congregation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. The Lord pour out upon you His Holy Spirit for the office and the work committed to you by the call, that you may be a faithful dispenser of the means of grace. Amen.

Go, then, take heed unto yourself and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you an overseer, to feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood. Feed the flock of Christ, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lord over God's heritage, but being an example to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away. The Lord bless you from on high and make you a blessing to many, that you may bring forth fruit, and that your fruit may remain to eternal life. Amen.

### **Complacency**

I didn't feel that I could close just by reading this. As a layman, I have a further observation to make. This was touched on in part by previous speakers. It deals with the subject of complacency. I must ask myself the same question and address it to all the laymen, and perhaps even to some of our pastors and teachers. Who is there among us who can truthfully say that we have not become somewhat complacent?

As I see it today in the light of what is happening, those of us who have been indoctrinated all our life in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod seem to have taken our church for granted. As is so often the case, we probably don't fully appreciate what we have until we run the risk of losing it. And this is the problem as I see it.

I must also point a finger at the leaders of our church, at our pastors and teachers. I have done this privately several times in the last few months in the sense that I tried to inform myself more clearly on what is the total background for what has been going on. This is not something which has happened only in the last year or two. After searching I find that some things have been

developing over a period of fifteen to twenty years and perhaps even longer as we heard yesterday was the case in the Presbyterian Church.

I have asked myself and also some pastors: "Why is it that our leaders have not enlightened our laity?" I want you to ask yourselves that question today. I have yet to hear from a minister either publicly or privately in our regular church life that the problems we are facing today actually existed. I think it is incumbent upon our ministers to tell their people exactly what the facts are. Someone touched on this this morning in an indirect way, but I cannot emphasize it too strongly.

In order to attain the results that we are looking for from this Congress, we must have the backing, the help, and the support of our laymen across the country. During the last few months, I have had the opportunity to discuss this subject with laymen. I was appalled that people didn't know what I was talking about. They had little or no conception of the true facts. How can they know them unless someone tells them? How can they act unless they are informed?

So I would like to close my remarks with this one admonition: Tell the people. Give them the facts, and I am sure that you will tap for this cause to conserve pure doctrine a reservoir of strength which has heretofore been unknown!



# Authors

Eugene R. Bertermann, Ph.D., Ll.D., St. Louis, Missouri  
Ralph A. Bohlmann, Ph.D., St. Louis, Missouri  
William Gast, Aurora, Colorado  
Lowell C. Green, D. Theol., Boone, North Carolina  
Erich Kiehl, Th.D., Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Richard Klann, Ph.D., St. Louis, Missouri  
George Mohr, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Robert D. Preus, D. Theol., Ph.D., St. Louis, Missouri  
Elmer Reimnitz, M.S.T., Porto Alegre, Brazil  
Manfred Roensch, D. Theol., Oberursel, Germany  
Herman A. Sasse, Ph.D., D. Theol., Adelaide, South Australia  
Francis A. Schaeffer, D.D., Huemoz, Switzerland  
Wilbert Sohns, Broomfield, Colorado  
Alfred Tessmann, Jacksonville, Florida  
Alvin E. Wagner, North Hollywood, California  
Martim C. Warth, M.S.T., Porto Alegre, Brazil  
Edwin C. Weber, D.D., Frazer, Michigan  
Waldo J. Werning, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
George F. Wollenburg, Billings, Montana  
Paul A. Zimmerman, Ph.D., Ann Arbor, Michigan

# LUTHERAN CONGRESS

## Loyalty to the Scriptures and Confessions

### A FORUM FOR STRENGTHENING SCRIPTURAL AND CONFSSIONAL CHRISTIANITY IN LUTHERAN CHURCHES

Sheraton - Chicago Hotel — Chicago, Illinois

August 31 - September 2, 1970

A Convocation for evangelical Lutherans on Biblical perspectives for the theological issues and crises of our day and to seek evangelical directions for the Seventies.

#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

In worship of the Triune God and in obedience to His infallible Word for effective proclamation of the saving Gospel, the Congress seeks:

To affirm our commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ in our historic Lutheran faith as known from the verbally inspired and infallible Scriptures as the only authentic, inerrant and completely adequate source and norm of Christian doctrine and life; for the sake of the Gospel to hold loyally to the Bible in its entirety and in all its parts as the Word of God under all circumstances regardless of man's attitude to it.

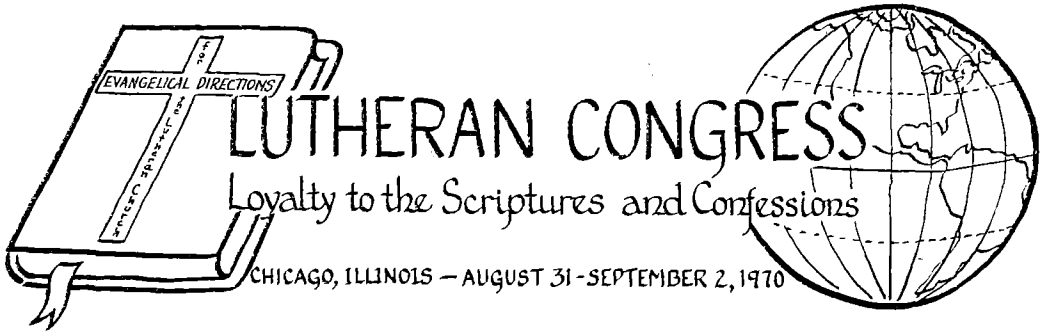
To demonstrate the validity and relevance of Scriptural and Confessional truths for our times, showing the right course for faithful Lutherans.

To evaluate the present condition of Confessionalism and to establish a true and firm Biblical base for work within our churches and for future cooperation.

To help develop a united front for all loyal Lutherans to be guided honestly by confessional theology and to provide guidance for resolving all critical problems of theology and missions forthrightly.

To motivate and involve all Lutherans in keeping truly faithful to their Gospel heritage and relate it to the entire task of missions, its message and methods.

To activate all loyal members for effective and constructive involvement in the decision-making processes to strengthen and unify us all in our only and infallible source of Christian knowledge — Holy Scriptures — and to send us on our mission aggressively to take the Gospel to all people in the world.



What shall we do if we face a new humanism, a new theology, and a new hermeneutic parading as permissible options for the Lutheran Church in the 20th Century? Speakers at the Lutheran Congress were conscious that many are deeply perplexed and pained by these challenges to the firm Biblical moorings of the historic Lutheran faith. The essays of the Lutheran Congress published in the book *EVANGELICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE LUTHERAN CHURCH* were planned to give Scriptural and evangelical guidance and direction regarding the nature of Scriptural truth, faithful confessional life in the church, and evangelical communication of the Word.

On one hand, these essays avoid a diversity and understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures which is untenable by Scriptural rules of interpretation. On the other hand, they keep aware that there is a negativism and dead theological orthodoxy, and a "fundamentalism," which is sterile. They show that orthodox theology must go beyond assent to doctrine and add action to belief.

These essays will help those who have never experienced life in the church where God's Word is openly questioned, where eternal truths are relativized, traditional theological terms are emptied of their Biblical meaning, and the process of normal communication between brothers in faith is made difficult.

*EVANGELICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE LUTHERAN CHURCH* puts theological crises into proper focus and proposes Biblical answers that will be relevant for years to come.

Price: \$2.45

Lutheran Congress

**EVANGELICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

2751 South Karlov Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60623