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# Theological Observer

IN MEMORIAM  
PETER BRUNNER  
1900-1981

On May 24, 1981, Professor Peter Brunner, D. Theol., passed away at the age of 81 at his home in Neckargemuend, Germany, not far from Heidelberg, where he was associated with the famous university as a professor of systematic theology. The Missouri Synod's Concordia Publishing House published his *Worship in the Name of Jesus*, now available again in a reprint edition and still used widely for studies in liturgics. Within the Lutheran World Federation, he made a valiant attempt to protest the ordination of women as pastors. Concordia Publishing House published his *The Ministry and the Ministry of Women*, a contribution he made originally to the *Lutheran World*, the official publication of the Lutheran World Federation. The *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, when it went under the title of the *Springfielder*, offered to Missouri Synod pastors his articles, "Commitment to the Lutheran Confessions - What Does it Mean" and "Regin Prenter on the Ordination of Women." His research covered such subjects as Nikolaus von Amsdorf, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Luther, the possibility of a Lutheran witness within the Union Church, and Calvin.

Throughout his life Professor Brunner remained a member of the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland, a union church for both the Lutherans and Reformed. Within this context he attempted to maintain a Lutheran confessional consciousness. Regardless of his personal situation, he will be considered as one of the great confessional Lutheran scholars of the twentieth century. For example, his opposition to the ordination of women first appeared in 1959, not long after the Church of Sweden became the first Lutheran body, under government pressure, to inaugurate the aberration. Now only one generation later, the Swedish aberration has become the common rule in world Lutheranism. At that time Dr. Peter Brunner pointed out that ordination of women, regardless of how successful such women pastors would be, would fundamentally alter the church's understanding of God. Professor Brunner lived long enough to see his prophetic assessment come true. Even Lutheran liturgies and hymns are moderating masculine allusions to God in order not to offend feminine sensitivities. Sweden first allowed Lutheran pastors with conscientious scruples not be ordained or work with women pastors. This option is about to be removed. No bishop will be consecrated in the future who does not endorse the concept of women pastors. Since Dr. Brunner's essay appeared, two thirds of American Lutheranism have begun ordaining women. This fact may have been the major cause of the Missouri Synod's breaking fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. The Lutheran World Federation churches to which the clarion was first sounded did not hear Professor Brunner's warning. It is a warning that must be heard and heeded in the world of confessional Lutheranism.

Confessional Lutheranism has lost a fine scholar and a penetrating voice. He will be missed, but his contributions will remain. He has earned his reward.

David P. Scaer

## THE TRISAGION

The CTQ editor in his recent article, "Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church" (XLV, pp. 37-60), used the term *Trisagion* as the Greek equivalent for the Latin *Tersanctus*, a not uncommon practice among Lutheran scholars. For liturgical scholars the *Trisagion* is not interchangeable with the *Tersanctus* but is to be used solely of the hymn sung by the choir at the Little Entrance in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. The English translation of the Greek *Trisagion* would be "Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy upon us." The vestigial remains of this ancient Greek hymn remained in the Latin rite for the Good Friday Liturgy. After the *Trisagion* was sung in the original Greek, it was followed by Latin translation, "Sanctus Deus, Sanctus Fortis, Sanctus Immortalis, miserere nobis." On the other hand, the *Tersanctus* occurs as the climax of the prefatory dialogue in all traditional eucharistic rites including the Lutheran one: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory."

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