

**Evidence of Errors in
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**



**Association of Confessing Evangelical
Lutheran Congregations**

V. Service of Women in the Church (Order of Creation)

October 12, 2010
Updated June 15, 2012; August 21, 2012

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Note: This document is one of several ACELC documents on evidence of errors in the LCMS. As the documents are completed they will be posted to the ACELC web site at <http://www.acelc.net/>. Topics include:

- Pure Doctrine
- Holy Communion
- The Divine Service and Liturgical Offices
- Unionism and Syncretism
- Service of Women in the Church
- The Office of the Holy Ministry
- The Unbiblical Removal of Pastors from their Calls
- The Church’s Mission and Her Evangelistic Task
- Ecclesiastical Supervision
- Dispute Resolution

Additional topics may be added as needed. If you have a comment, question, or concern, please contact the ACELC (<http://www.acelc.net>). Your input will be seriously considered.

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The references from the Lutheran Confessions include some words or passages from the German 1580 or Latin 1584 edition, these are set apart with < >.

Record of Document Updates

Version	Changes/Additions	Date
October 12, 2010	Original Document	October 12, 2010
June 15, 2012	Page 4, first bullet. Inserted verbiage to clarify & strengthen the ACELC position regarding the doctrine of the Order of Creation. Specifically, because it is an Order of Creation, it must apply to all God's creation not just the pastoral office. Change authorized at Business Meeting Feb 09, 2012, Lincoln, Nebraska.	June 15, 2012
August 21, 2012	Page 7, item h., added resolution number (2-36) to Detroit convention citation. Page 8, item i., changed year of New York convention from 1965 to 1967.	August 21, 2012

A Fraternal Admonition to Correct the Errors of Our Beloved Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Preamble

"And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of bread and in the prayers." Acts 2:42

C.F.W. Walther, (first President of the LCMS), wrote:

"A fellowship in which the Word of God is fundamentally falsified, or in which a fundamental falsification of it is tolerated, is not a true orthodox church, but a false, heterodox church or sect."

(*Essays For the Church* Vol I, "Communion Fellowship," Concordia Publishing House, 1992, p.207)

Presented in this document are concerns over variant teachings and practices by some pastors, congregations, and institutions of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. These errors have largely been ignored and even tolerated by those elected for the supervision of doctrine and practice in our fellowship. Even the Synod itself in convention has adopted resolutions that violate our fidelity as a synod to Holy Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions.

Many attempts have been made to address and correct these errors. Numerous pastors, laity, congregations, respected doctors of the Church, circuits, district pastoral conferences, even sister synods and their pastoral conferences have taken public issue with these errors and the recent "positions" the LCMS has taken in its past conventions, but to no avail. Districts also have sought redress of these errors through resolutions and overtures to the Synod in Convention only to have them never come to the convention floor for consideration.

In addition, various publications and organizations have attempted to address the adoption of worship forms, texts, and ceremonies that come from alien and errant confessions - as to whether this may be done without also adopting their error. Church history and the inseparable correlation between doctrine and practice teach us that how we pray and worship is in fact our faith, our belief, and our confession (*Lex orandi, lex credendi*).

At stake is the very doctrine upon which the Church stands or falls - the genuine confession of justification by grace alone through faith alone for the sake of Christ's death and resurrection alone. As the Lutheran Confessions state, "this article of justification by faith is the chief article of the entire Christian doctrine." [SD III, 6] When this chief article is at stake so also is the evangelical mission of the Church in our midst, and likewise the ongoing presence of the marks of the Church, and thus the LCMS as a light of the true Gospel of Christ.

Therefore we are compelled out of faithfulness to Holy Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions (to which The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod claims fidelity) to seek Biblical reproof and correction of these errors. Our cause is to offer a fraternal critique of our teaching and practice, and to call our much loved Missouri Synod, her pastors, congregations, and institutions to repentance and back to what she has previously claimed as her source and norm of faith and life – Holy Scripture and its correct exposition, the Book of Concord of 1580.

In this process we seek not to contend over the trivial, nor matters merely of denominational custom or tradition, but over those matters that challenge our very fidelity to the changeless faith that was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). It is our intent to hold the LCMS to the Scripturally faithful teaching of the Book of Concord as catholic teaching and not simply something that we, as Lutherans, believe. Thus, when we speak of theological "positions" and the "position of synod," this should be understood as nothing less than what the Athanasian Creed calls "the catholic (or universally held) faith."

It is our sincere prayer that the LCMS would give serious and fraternal consideration to the words here given according to their benevolent intention. Our mission/purpose is to restore what has been compromised – that is a fellowship of unabashed confessional Lutheran congregations in North America and throughout the world for the sake of our children and grandchildren – and yes, for the life of the world. *May God the Holy Spirit, through the Word of Law and Gospel, call, gather, enlighten and sanctify the Church gathered within the Missouri Synod!*

(Please note: All evidence for the existence of error is only illustrative, not exhaustive.)

V. Service of Women in the Church (Order of Creation):

- **Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions are very clear that life within the Christian congregation should be governed in accord with the doctrine of the Order of Creation. Because it is indeed an Order of Creation it must apply to all of God’s creation not just the pastoral office, not just the home, not just the church, but the world too. Today the LCMS has condoned and officially adopted a position that limits the Order of Creation to the pastoral office and the home. As a consequence of this denial, women may serve as elders, congregational presidents and vice-presidents, may assist with communion distribution, and publicly proclaim the Word of God in worship services by reading Holy Scripture. Such changes within the LCMS represent a capitulation to the culture, deny the third use of the Law, and promote Gospel Reductionism, which our Synod previously rejected. We reject these errors.**
- **Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions clearly teach that women are not to occupy the Office of the Holy Ministry. Yet today some pastors in our Synod have been allowed to remain on our Ministers of Religion – Ordained roster while publicly stating their belief that it is proper to ordain women into the pastoral office – and this without correction or removal. We reject the toleration of this error.**

(Note: While acknowledging that the Order of Creation also applies to the world and this in itself deserves a thorough treatment, in this document we are concerned with how it applies to the Church and home.)

- A. Original Position** - The position of the LCMS at its founding was that, in accord with the biblical doctrine of the Order of Creation, it was considered a sin for a woman to exercise authority over a man in the context of either congregation or home. Thus, for 122 years the LCMS maintained that women’s suffrage in the Church was a violation of the Word of God. No women were permitted to hold elective office within the congregation, nor were girls or women permitted to participate in the public worship within the chancel area where the Word of God was being publicly proclaimed and the Sacraments were being administered by those called to the Pastoral Office. Additionally, no woman could serve as a delegate to either district or synodical conventions. All of this was predicated on the conviction of the LCMS that this practice of the doctrine of the Order of Creation was in harmony with God’s Word.

1. The Witness of Holy Scripture:

Genesis 1:27-28

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Matthew 19:4

⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,…”

Ephesians 5:22-33

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now

as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

I Corinthians 11:7-9, 11-12

⁷ For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. ⁸ For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. ⁹ Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

¹¹ Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; ¹² for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God.

I Corinthians 14:33-37

³³ For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. ³⁵ If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.

³⁶ Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached? ³⁷ If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.

I Timothy 2:11-14

¹¹ Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. ¹² I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴ and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

I Timothy 3:2-5

² Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

I Peter 3:5

⁵ For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, ...

2. The Witness of the Lutheran Confessions:

Many liberal theologians both within and outside of the LCMS have indicated that the Lutheran Confessions remain silent regarding the ordination of women into the pastoral

office. In fact, their silence speaks volumes. They are silent precisely because this was never an issue in contention between any of the theologians of that day. Male only ordination has always presumed that the practice of the historic and biblical Church would never consider the ordination of women. Thus the subject was never addressed.

3. The Witness of the Church Since the Time of the Apostles:

The three oldest Christian groups: Eastern Orthodox, Coptic Christian, and Roman Catholic retain the orthodox practice of reserving the Office of Pastor or Priest to men to this day. While some Protestant groups in America permitted women to lead congregations in the 1800's, no Lutheran Church body either in Europe or in America did until the 20th Century. The first Lutheran body to ordain a woman occurred in Norway in 1961 because the State demanded that it be done. In America the first church body to ordain women into the Pastorate was the United Methodist Church in 1956. In November 1970, the Lutheran Church in America became the first American Lutheran body to ordain women. The American Lutheran Church ordained its first woman pastor the next month in December 1970. In other words, the ordination of the first Lutheran woman as a pastor in 1956 overturned over 4,000 years of doctrine and practice among God's people at a time when the Feminist Movement was the true cause of the change. The Church's doctrine had not changed.

"Ordination of women is a monumental turn in the history of the Church. Yet the practice is not a progressive step forward; it is a veering away from the received tradition of the Church. It puts those church bodies that practice it on dangerous ground, for it indicates that they are out of step not only with two thousand years of Christian history but with the will of the Lord of the Church." (*Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*, a Collection of Essays edited by Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless, Introduction to Historical Studies, p.107.)

4. The Witness of the History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

a. **1864 – St. Louis.** Dr. C.F.W. Walther writes:

"All adult males members of the congregation are entitled to active participation in the transactions of such meetings by way of speaking, deliberating, voting, and resolving. But women and the young are excluded from such participation." (Dr. Walther quotes 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 as his authority for this observation.)

b. **C.F.W. Walther's, *Pastoral Theology***, states:

"All adult male members of the congregation have the right to participate actively in the discussion, votes, and decisions of the congregation since that is the right of the whole congregation...Excluded from the exercise of this right are the youth...and the female members of the congregation (I Cor. 14:34,35)."

c. **1908, *Der Lutheraner*** (the official newsletter of the LCMS) strongly condemned the decision of the Finnish Suomi Synod to allow woman suffrage in their congregations as "an unlutheran and unbiblical innovation" which could not be reconciled with the directives of the holy apostle Paul on the position of women in the church. The newsletter unequivocally asserted the clarity and direct applicability of I Cor. 14:34, 35 and I Tim. 2:12 and warned of dire consequences for those who disregarded these texts:

"These words are as clear as day so that no church body need be in doubt over the will of God. And anyone, who, in spite of these words, wants to appoint women as pastors, or

give them the right to vote, although men are present to administer the congregation, is a person who wants to be wiser than God; who contradict the Scripture; and who will receive his judgment.”

- d. **1938 – St. Louis** - A committee at this convention offered a resolution that this whole matter be restudied. Fifteen years elapsed before the question came up again as an item of Synodical business.
- e. **1953 – Houston** - This convention passed the following Resolution 27:
Resolved, That the President of Synod appoint a committee of five members to prepare for the next convention a thorough exegetical study of 1 Corinthians 14, 1 Timothy 2, and all other applicable texts as they relate to the question of woman suffrage in our congregations; and be it further
Resolved, That, in the meantime, our congregations be urged to continue the present practice of our Synod in restricting the privileges of voting membership to qualified male communicants.
- f. **1956 – St. Paul** – The committee (appointed as a result of 1953 Res 27 above) prepared a report, which concluded:
“We believe that Scripture fully sanctions the basic polity set up in our church, and we can foresee only evil results in any change of the polity under which our church has been so signally blessed for more than a century.”

Floor Committee 3 formulated a set of five resolutions which upheld the previously accepted position and practice despite the fact that the President’s committee could find no “express words in the Scriptures” forbidding women’s suffrage.

There was also a resolution passed to “continue to study this entire area of the place of woman in the church.”
- g. **1959 – San Francisco** - Floor Committee 3 submitted a report, which concluded:
Any congregation in the membership of Synod now or applying for membership which grants woman suffrage is urged to reconsider this practice in the light of Scripture... and to consider the danger of offense to others and to conform to the historic position of Synod in this matter.

The following resolution was adopted at this convention:
Resolved, That we reaffirm the position of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod on the place of woman in the church.
- h. **1965 – Detroit** - This convention passed the following resolution (2-36):
Resolved, That we adopt the following statement for guidance in this matter:
On the basis of 1 Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:11-15 we hold that God forbids women publicly to preach and teach the Word to men and to hold any office or vote in the church where this involves exercising authority over men with respect to the public administration of the Office of the Keys. We regard this principle as of binding force also today because 1 Tim. 2:11-15 refers to what God established at creation.

As stated at the St. Paul convention in 1956 and at the San Francisco convention in 1959, we consider woman suffrage in the church as contrary to Scripture only when it violates the above-mentioned Scriptural principals.

- i. **1967 – New York** - The convention passed a resolution that allowed women to serve on Synodical boards, commissions, and committees for the first time.
 - Resolved**, that the Synod declare women eligible to serve as advisory on synodical boards, commissions, and committees within the framework of Scriptural principals; and be it further
 - Resolved**, that women be granted such membership ... by appointment only.
- j. **1969 – Denver** - Woman suffrage was officially sanctioned. Most congregations of the LCMS church now have some form of woman suffrage.
- k. **2004 – St. Louis** – Resolution 3-08A is passed declaring that women may serve as elders, congregational presidents, and vice presidents. During this convention a question from the floor was asked whether or not this also meant that women could read the lections and assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. In both instances the question was answered in the affirmative.

B. Position Advocated and/or Practiced Today - In our Synod there are many pastors on its clergy roster who openly advocate and/or support women’s ordination and they have not been placed under discipline by their ecclesiastical supervisor nor removed from our roster. Additionally, women are permitted to participate in the public proclamation of the Word in our worship services, assist the pastor in the administration of the Lord’s Supper, serve as an Elder, congregational President or Vice President.

Evidence of this Error:

1. Dr. Matthew Becker (former professor at Concordia, Portland, now Valparaiso, IN), in his paper, “Female Teachers of Theology,” dated “Reformation 2005” in his “Concluding Theses” writes:
 - “10. Although women share these Gospel freedoms and responsibilities with the other disciples and apostles (Romans 16:7), there are a few apparent limitations, but these are isolated and ambiguous, e.g., there is one passage in the New Testament which ambiguously places a few limits on women who were at that time praying and prophesying in a congregation, and there are two passages in the New Testament which ambiguously place limits on women/wives in a congregation.”
 - “15. There is no legitimate biblical or dogmatic rationale for why women ought not serve as teachers of theology in a university or seminary.”

(**Note:** To our knowledge no disciplinary action has been brought to any conclusion respecting this clear and public support for the placement of women into the leadership of seminaries and church universities and Rev. Becker remains on the LCMS clergy roster.)

Also, Res. 5-07 (To Revise Bylaw 3.8.3.7 re College/University President Responsibilities) in *Today’s Business* for the 2010 Synodical Convention also sought to permit women into these roles.) Thankfully, this resolution did not make it to the convention floor.
2. Rev. Arnold Voigt in his paper “...because it is a woman” posted on the DayStar website at: <http://www.day-star.net/journal/3-3-voigt.htm> and distributed to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, writes:
 - “Baptism is the sacrament of new life, changed life, life lived in repentance even of our ‘patterned dominations,’ our systemic patriarchal behavior, our quenching of God’s call

to women to public ministry to whom he has given the gifts. So 'If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world?' (Colossians 2:20). Our focus is not with status, position, authority...God calls us not to engage in preferential treatment (James 2:8-9). What kind of ordering is God seen to be doing? One clue: There are many biblical examples of women who have served faithfully in teaching and leadership positions in the early church. We would not find those examples if such roles were inherently and intrinsically masculine. Whenever, then, a person is called by God to pastoral ministry, we honor God by honoring that gift. To be subordinated because of an accident of birth such as gender, or even skin color, is to be unfairly and un-Christlike determined to be inferior."

And again:

"That would assume that a male's superordination and associated hierarchical authority is not what opens up the office of public ministry to him, and we suggest that the obverse also would be true, that a woman's suggested 'subordination' would not invalidate any public ministry on her part."

And again:

"Order of creation thinking is contrary to the core of our Confessions in that it insists that gender – an element of one's own person – is the basis for getting out the news of the forgiveness of sins through the public ministry of the church. The order limits the 'ordering of the church,' this ministry of getting out the forgiveness, by circumscribing the ministry because of gender and makes it an element of 'worthiness' – 'he is male.' If gender is a qualification, does the person really represent Christ, or oneself?"

(Note: To our knowledge no disciplinary action has been brought to any conclusion respecting this clear and public support for the ordination of women into the pastoral office and Rev. Voigt remains on the LCMS clergy roster.)

3. Rev. Karl Wyneken, Emeritus, in Volume 3 of the *DayStar Journal*, Pentecost 2007, comments in his article, "Let's Include Women in the Pastoral Office":

"Doesn't the Bible clearly teach that women are not to speak in public assembly (I Corinthians 14:33-35), or teach men or have authority over them (I Timothy 2:11-15)? Must we not regard these as authoritative for us today? [Wyneken responds to his own question.] "This is true only if we make certain assumptions about the nature and purpose of the Bible. One such assumption would be that the Bible was ever intended to provide us with direct and absolute answers to questions such as this. The Bible's all-important purpose is clear – to lead us in faith to a right and saving relationship with God in Christ." [In theological terminology, this kind of thinking is called "Gospel Reductionism" that boils down the entire content of Holy Scripture to only the forgiveness of sins in Christ as though Scripture had nothing to say about any other subject.] Wyneken concludes:

"It is the contention of this study that there is no 'heavenly reason' to exclude women from the pastoral office. That means it is a human option. But that option, for very compelling reasons, is no longer appropriate or advisable. There is no 'earthly reason' either to persist with our present policy that needlessly discriminates against women."

(Note: To our knowledge no disciplinary action has been brought to any conclusion respecting this clear and public support for the ordination of women into the pastoral office and Rev. Wyneken remains on the LCMS clergy roster.)

4. 2004 Overture 3-92 from Ascension Lutheran Church, Littleton, CO., says in part:
“Whereas, The subject of the ordination of women is not addressed in the Lutheran confessional writings contained in the Book of Concord, and limiting the office of pastor to males only is not an article of faith according to any of the ancient ecumenical creeds, and...
Whereas, The Bible teaches an equality of genders in Gen. 1:26-28 and that no ‘subordination’ appears until after the fall in Genesis 3, and that anyone in Christ is a ‘new creation,’ so any ‘order of creation/redemption’ supersedes the effects of the fall...therefore be it
Resolved, That the LCMS meeting in convention in 2004 a. direct the President of Synod to appoint a special committee comprised of theologically trained men and women of the Synod, some of whom support our traditional position and some of whom understand the Scriptures to enable ministerial roles based on gifts, not gender; and that b. this committee prepare study documents that accurately present both sides of the issues...”
- (Note:** To our knowledge no disciplinary action has been brought to any conclusion respecting this clear, public support for the ordination of women into the pastoral office.)
5. 2004 Resolution 3-08A (To Affirm the Conclusions of the 1994 CTCR Report: *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*), from the convention floor committee reads in part:
“Resolved,...that women may serve in humanly established offices in the church as long as functions of these offices do not make them eligible to carry out ‘official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office’” (Vote - Yes: 576, No: 520)

What does the passage of this resolution mean to the LCMS? One such interpretation of it is that of Rev. James D. Heiser, Salem Lutheran Church, Malone, TX. He attended the entire convention at his own congregation's expense, and he captured the spirit of the assembly that day in his report to his congregation, which he graciously shared with the synod at large, titled, *Here We Have No Continuing City*. He writes on page 12:

Extensive debate swirled around this resolution because of the controversial nature of the report in question [the 1994 CTCR Report: *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*]. The 1995 Convention had essentially batted the report aside by referring it for further study. Now, however, it was brought back in such a way as to continue to erode the Missouri Synod's historic understanding of the role of women in the Church. The crucial resolved stated that “women may serve in humanly established offices in the church as long as the functions of these offices do not make them eligible to carry out ‘official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the functions of the pastoral office’.” The precise meaning of these words became clear as the discussions continued: the only office that would be forbidden was the divinely-established office of pastor.

A substitute resolution which would have *excluded* women from serving as “congregational elders, congregational presidents or communion assistants” was *defeated*, receiving only 43.8% support. Even the issue of women reading a prepared sermon seemed to be in some doubt, as CTCR chairman Samuel Nafzger explained that the

resolution did not give women permission to “publicly” preach, but then explained that he was using the term “public” to mean “officially.”

(Note: As a direct result of this resolution and this convention's actions *in toto*, Pastor Heiser's congregation terminated her relationship with and membership in the LCMS.

“After years of growing concern over the increasing liberalism of the Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod(LCMS), Salem Lutheran Church in Malone, TX, has severed its connection with that synod. The decision came via a nearly unanimous vote during the congregation’s quarterly meeting on July 18, 2004.

“Salem’s pastor, Rev. James Heiser, explains that the problems in the LCMS have been growing for years, but that events of the last few years made the situation intolerable for members of Salem. Among the issues troubling conservative Lutherans within the LCMS: Participation by LCMS clergy in joint worship services with non-Christian religions; changes to the constitution and bylaws of synod which are essentially building a hierarchical form of church government; failure to discipline charismatics and others who violate biblical doctrine and practice; adoption of doctrinal resolutions which undermine or directly contradict the teaching of Scripture concerning the Lord’s Supper and the role of women in the Church.” (*Salem Lutheran Church Declares Independence from Missouri Synod*, July 18, 2004, http://salemlutheranchurch.net/independence_from_lcms.html)

By this action (Res. 3-08A) it was clearly indicated on the floor of the convention by Rev. Dr. Samuel Nafzger, CTCR Executive Director, that this resolution would expressly approve women serving as Elders, congregational presidents, vice presidents, and would permit women to participate in the public proclamation of God’s Word by reading the lessons in worship and by assisting the pastor with the distribution of the communion elements. Sadly, there is no mention of the doctrine of the Order of Creation anywhere in this resolution nor was there any explanation to help the delegates see how such a participation of women in such activities was not a violation of that doctrine.)

Although few realized it at the time (or even now), this resolution **changed LCMS theology**. Following is a quote from Rev. Dr. Ken Schurb: “[By adopting Res. 3-08A] The Synod thereby changed its theological position.” The foregoing quote is from an article Dr. Schurb wrote for the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* (“The Service of Women in Congregational Offices, 1969 to 2007,” Fall 2009, Vol.82, No.3, p.147). In this article, Dr. Schurb traces the changes that took place between 1969 and 2007. His research documents the ambiguity created by the terms “public accountability” and “function” of the pastoral office as used in Res. 3-08A. The resolution was so unclear that only a few weeks after the conclusion of the 2007 Convention, the synodical president appointed a task force to give guidance to congregations and districts. As detailed in Dr. Schurb’s article, the task force fell short of clarifying the terms.

6. 2007 Overture 3-67, To Restudy and Provide for Ordination of Women,” from Resurrection Lutheran Church, Coronado, CA, says in part:

“**Resolved**, That the delegates at this convention affirm the desire to provide for the ordination of women as soon as possible.”

(Note: Again, to our knowledge no disciplinary action has ever been taken against Redeemer, Coronado, CA.)

7. Since Res 3-08A was passed in 2004, many LCMS congregations, circuits and districts have asked that it be overturned.
- a) During the 2007 Convention a substitute resolution to Res 3-07 (To study CTCR Reports Relating to the Service of Women in the Church) was submitted. Among the Resolves: **Resolved**, that the 2004 Resolution 3-08A be rescinded, along with any policies or administrative procedures that have stemmed from it; and be it further..." This substitute resolution failed by a vote of Yes 40%; No 60%.
- b) The following overtures did not make it into the first edition of 2007's *Today's Business*, even though they were, to our knowledge, submitted in a timely fashion:
- Ov -68 (To Rescind 2004 Res 3-08A, Withdraw Guidelines, and Study Orders of Creation and Redemption), IN District.
 - Ov 3-69 (To Rescind 2004 Res 3-08A and Author New Service of Women Document), IA District West.
 - Ov 3-70 (To Rescind 2004 Resolution 3-08A and Provide for Review), Central IL District.
 - Ov 3-71 (To Rescind Res 3-08A and Affirm Prior Position), Western Regional Pastors' Conferences, MO District; Glory of Christ, Plymouth, MN, Holy Cross, Albany, OR.
 - Ov 3-72 (To Rescind 2004 Res 3-08A and Return to 1995 Res 3-06A), MN North District.
 - Ov 3-73 (To Rescind Res 3-08A and Involve Seminary Faculties in CTCR Study), MO District; Zion, Moberly, MO.
 - 3-74 (To Suspend Implementation of 2004 Res 3-08 Pending Study of Order of Creation), SD District.
 - 3-76 (To Apply the Order of Creation to Humanly Established Offices), Southern IL District; St. Paul, Edna, TX; Trinity, Herrin IL; Greater Egypt Circuit Forum 11, Faith in Christ, Portales, NM.
 - Ov 3-77 (To Direct CTCR to Restudy Service of Women in Consultation with Seminary Faculties), TX District.
 - Ov 3-79 (To Continue Study of Scripture Related to Service of Women), Southern District.
 - Ov 3-80 (To Repeal 2004 Res 3-08A and affirm Order of Creation), Salem, Taylorsville, NC.
 - Ov 3-83 (To State that Women are Not to have Authority even in Humanly Established Offices), Trinity, Austin, TX.
 - L3-106 (To Recognize Greater Specificity Regarding Functions of the Pastor Office), Trinity, Clinton, MA.
- c) The following overtures were submitted in 2010. Committee 3 (Theology and Church Relations) declined to allow them onto the convention floor:
- Ov 3-28 To Review the Role of Women in the Church, Trinity, Freistatt, MO; Zion, Moberly, MO.
 - Ov 3-30 To Agree that Female Readers in Public Worship are Divisive and Offensive, Trinity, Tryon, NC.

Committee 3; however, **did** submit Res 3-06 (To Commend *The Creator's Tapestry*), which passed by an 86% vote during the last session of the convention. Following is an excerpt from page 45 of that document, written by the CTCR:

The Bible's clear direction regarding responsible male leadership in the home and male ordination to pastoral ministry may not be assumed to mean that only men can exercise any kind of leadership or authority in home, church, or society. Some view this as an inconsistency, but it is not. In Baptism every believer is called to service in his or her vocations within the various spheres of life. The body of Christ requires that its individual members exercise the wide variety of their gifts, whether that individual is male or female (1 Cor 12:7). Therefore our church has affirmed the calling of women teachers, deaconesses, professors, and missionaries. We have endorsed such organizations as the

Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the Women's Leadership Institute. **We have affirmed the freedom of congregations to grant women's suffrage and have opened to women various lay leadership positions in congregations, districts, and Synod. We have recognized and encouraged the leadership of women in business, government, the professions, and other sectors of society.** [Emphasis added.].

Such leadership of women is not inconsistent with Scriptural teaching. [Emphasis added.]

On the contrary, it exists in the very context of our church's life and teaching which upholds and promulgates the divinely ordered responsibility of pastors and husbands. When women serve in this way they are enhancing the work of the priesthood of all believers, serving as members of the body of Christ, and **not usurping pastoral authority or violating the "order of creation."** [Emphasis added.] Scripture provides numerous examples of such service, for instance Priscilla's instruction of Apollos (Acts 18:26) or the teaching Timothy received from his mother and grandmother (2 Tim 1:5).

We can expect more "study" on this, as the last Resolved of 2010 Res 3-06 is that "...the CTCR continue to address additional questions and issues such as these in the continuing triennium."

8. In 2007, Concordia University, Irvine, CA, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, entered into a "partnership" with an ELCA group called WordAlone for the training of pastors in the ELCA. The WordAlone mission statement says that "The WordAlone Institute shall: Prepare men **and women** [emphasis added] to be pastors in the Lutheran Confessional tradition." This means that women studying to be pastors in the ELCA may now enroll in their studies at Concordia, Irvine of the LC-MS, and in graduate courses at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Report on WordAlone Institute

WordAlone Institute is a new educational venture which must be confessional. Its mission is to train pastors, train future teachers, provide education for lay people and provide resources for congregations. They have a working relationship with Independent Lutheran Theological Education Project (ILTEP); Concordia University, Irvine, CA; Concordia Lutheran Seminary, St. Louis, MO; Mt. Carmel, Alexandria, MN; and the Lutheran Bible Institute, Irvine, CA.

Concordia Seminary faculty has voted to create a liaison position for orthodox Lutherans from Word Alone and has invited their students to its grad program. This must be referred to their Board of Regents. Dr. Dennis Bielfeldt read a letter from the Concordia Seminary. The first class will be offered this fall (2007) by Professors Nestingen and Paulson. [WordAlone Network Annual Convention, Calvary Lutheran Church, Golden Valley, MN, April 29 - May 1, 2007]

Dear Brothers and Sisters within the WordAlone Network, ...

... as discussed with your representatives, Concordia Seminary invites students to enroll into our graduate programs of theological studies, cognizant of our traditional, confessional position within the framework of historic and evangelical Lutheran theology. Indeed, we welcome those who are willing to engage in honest dialogue and conversation about controversial theological matters, including issues such as the historical-critical method and women's ordination. We recognize that, as a denominational seminary, we do not prepare candidates for the Holy Ministry outside of the LCMS and those in church fellowship with her. We are also prepared to continue discussion of the initiatives of WordAlone Network to augment such graduate education as they see fit, including proposals such as a house of studies and the interchange of guest faculty. [Letter from Andrew Bartelt—Dean, Concordia Seminary, News: April 30, 2007]

LCMS seminary in St. Louis invites WordAlone Network members from the ELCA to attend graduate programs ...

WordAlone Network members have been invited by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., to enroll as students in graduate programs of theological studies at that Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod institution, reported the director of a theological institute being initiated by WordAlone, a group within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Dennis Bielfeldt, the director, has been working for at least two years to bring such an institute into being, “not with bricks and mortar” but online and at existing institutions. Several have agreed to host classes taught by WordAlone professors or to fold WordAlone students into their programs.

The LCMS seminary is the most recent to invite WordAlone students to enroll, according to a report by Bielfeldt today to the WordAlone annual convention meeting Sunday through Tuesday in Golden Valley, Minn. ...

While most WordAlone Network participants are members of the liberal, social justice focused ELCA, prospective students from WordAlone may have more theological beliefs in common with the LCMS than with many of their colleagues in ELCA seminaries. ...

While noting some areas of theological agreement between WordAlone and the seminary, [Andrew] Bartelt [Executive Vice President and Academic Dean at Concordia] did not ignore two potential areas of dispute. He wrote, “Indeed, we welcome those who are willing to engage in honest dialogue and conversation about controversial theological matters, including issues such as the historical-critical method [of biblical study] and women’s ordination.” ...

Bartelt noted the seminary does not prepare candidates for ministry outside of the LCMS or of churches in fellowship with the LCMS. Most likely, that means WordAlone students who wish to become pastors may study at Concordia Seminary but then take ministry courses through the WordAlone institute, according to earlier statements from Bielfeldt. [NEWS RELEASE, News: April 30, 2007, by Betsy Carlson (Editor, WordAlone Network)]

(Note: Though the LCMS in doctrine maintains that women’s ordination is contrary to Scripture, *nevertheless*, in practice one of our universities and one of our seminaries now officially serve as institutions through which women in another church body may train toward ordination. To engage in dialogue toward unity in the truth is to be commended. However, to officially enter into a partnership that engages the Synod in an act of hypocrisy not only ignores the biblical warning that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump,” but also places the Synod at risk of misleading others when officially declaring women’s ordination unbiblical while yet knowingly and intentionally providing training for women toward the same, even though for another church body. This “partnership,” as well-intended as it may be, simply undermines and compromises the practice of our right confession.)

C. ACELC Response:

Since the early 1960’s the cultural pressure of the so-called Feminist Movement has attempted to move all church bodies to disregard all Scriptural references to gender and even to change the very Word of God itself to be gender-neutral.

In the LCMS, the Synod's progression from all male congregational leadership and solely male pastors has been subjected to incremental changes which continue unabated to this day. First, women were made to be non-voting, advisory members of Synodical administrative boards (1965). Then women suffrage was approved (1969). Then it became permissible to have women read Scripture lessons (the public proclamation of the Word), assist with the distribution of the Lord's Supper (the public administration of the Sacraments), and then at the Synod's 2004 convention women were authorized to serve as Elders, congregational presidents and vice presidents.

Each time those within the Synod desiring to advance the involvement of women into formerly prohibited activities (especially involvement in the public worship of the Church), continued to demand further "study" as an instrument of change toward the next hoped for incremental step.

A wholesale lack of discipline for those publicly supporting and/or advocating the ordination of women to the pastoral offices indicates that there is virtually no collective will in our Synod to reestablish biblical practice within our church body in harmony with the doctrine of the Order of Creation.