

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD...
ALL LUTHERAN or ANY CHURCH...
...BEING CHURCH / CHURCH

(Parts I thru IV are taken from: *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology* by A. L. Graebner (No Copyright), St. Louis, MO. Concordia Publishing House)

I. THE CHURCH IS:

1.

Ephesians 2: 19-22

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:25-27

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.

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Ephesians 1:1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 1:1

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

Colossians 1: 2

² To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

John 10: 26-27

²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

2.

Hebrews 11: 1

¹Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2 Timothy 2: 19

¹⁹But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

Luke 17: 20-21

²⁰Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, ²¹nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

1 Kings 19: 14 & 18

¹⁴He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

¹⁸ Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

3.

Ephesians 4: 3-6

³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1 Corinthians 12: 13

¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Romans 12: 4-5 & 12

⁴For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

John 10: 16

¹⁶And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

Revelation 5: 9-10

⁹And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

4.

Ephesians 1: 22-23

²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Romans 12: 4-5

⁴For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Ephesians 4: 11-14

¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

5.

Ephesians 1: 22

²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,

Ephesians 4: 15-16

¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Ephesians 5: 23

²³For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

Colossians 1: 18

¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

6.

Ephesians 2: 21-22

²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 6: 16

¹⁶What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Ephesians 2: 20

²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

1 Corinthians 3: 11

¹¹For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2: 6

⁶For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

Matthew 16: 18

¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

John 10: 27-28

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

THEREFORE:

The Church, the community of all those who believe in Christ and are justified by faith ^[1]is the invisible ^[2]Church of Christ on earth, the one holy Catholic Church; ^[3]in the proper sense of the word, the spiritual body of Christ ^[4]of which Christ is the only spiritual Head, ^[5]the spiritual house and temple of God ^[6]of which Christ is the sole Foundation; ^[7]and this is the Church which is to endure forever and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

II. THE "MARKS (evidence of the existence)" OF THE CHURCH ARE ...

1.

Acts 2: 42

⁴²And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

2.

Isaiah 55: 10-11

¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Mark 16: 15-16

¹⁵And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

THEREFORE:

Since, wherever the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered, ^[1]the invisible Church of Christ is sure to be, ^[2]the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments are the unfailing marks of the existence of the invisible Church.

III. A VISIBLE CHURCH IS...

1.

Matthew 13: 47-48

⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. ⁴⁸When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad.

Matthew 25: 1-2

¹"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

Matthew 22: 2 & 11

² "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ¹¹"But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment.

2.

Galatians 1: 2

²and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:

Matthew 18:17

¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

3 John 9-10

⁹I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

Revelation 3: 13-18

¹³ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the Church in Laodicea ¹⁴And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: "The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. ¹⁵I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷ For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. ¹⁸I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.

3.

Isaiah 55: 10-11

¹⁰ "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Luke 8: 11-15

¹¹ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹²The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. ¹⁴And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. ¹⁵As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

THEREFORE:

In one sense ^[1]all those who have and hear the Gospel and profess the Christian religion, both true believers and ^[2]hypocrites together, are called the visible church, and in the same sense every community or local congregation gathered about the means of grace and professing the Christian faith is termed a visible Christian church. ^[3]Since wherever the Gospel of Christ is preached and His sacraments are administered the Holy Spirit is active, works regeneration, builds and preserves the invisible Church of God.

IV. AN ORTHODOX (VOICE ONE WITH THE CHURCH) VISIBLE CHURCH ...

John 8: 31-32

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Matthew 28: 20

²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

THEREFORE:

The preaching, teaching, and profession of divine truth in all its purity, and the administration of the sacraments in full accordance with their divine institution, are the criteria of the visible church of Christ on earth in order to be truly "orthodox", to walk together (synod) the Church. If not a church is heterodox, "double voiced."

V. THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IS ORTHODOX

A. THE CONFESSION OF THIS TRUTH IS FOUND IN THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

Article VII: Of the Church

¹ Also they teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.

² And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and

³ the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. ⁴ As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4:5-6.

Article VIII: What the Church Is

¹ Although the Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use Sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: The Scribes and ² the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat, etc. Matt. 23:2. Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.

³ They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect.

B. THE CONFESSION OF THIS TRUTH IS FOUND IN THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD, CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI (Adopted 1932)

24. We believe that there is one holy Christian Church on earth, the Head of which is Christ and which is gathered, preserved, and governed by Christ through the Gospel. The members of the Christian Church are the Christians, that is, all those who have despaired of their own righteousness before God and believe that God forgives their sins for Christ's sake. The Christian Church, in the proper sense of the term, is composed of believers only, Acts 5:14; 26:18; which means that no

person in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought faith in the Gospel, or -- which is the same thing -- in the doctrine of justification, can be divested of his membership in the Christian Church; and, on the other hand, that no person in whose heart this faith does not dwell can be invested with such membership. All unbelievers, though they be in external communion with the Church and even hold the office of teacher or any other office in the Church, are not members of the Church, but, on the contrary, dwelling-places and instruments of Satan, Eph. 2:2. This is also the teaching of our Lutheran Confessions: "It is certain, however, that the wicked are in the power of the devil and members of the kingdom of the devil, as Paul teaches, Eph. 2:2, when he says that `the devil now worketh in the children of disobedience,'" etc. (Apology, Triglot, p. 231, Paragraph 16; M., p. 154.)

25. Since it is by faith in the gospel alone that men become members of the Christian Church, and since this faith cannot be seen by men, but is known to God alone, 1 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:19, therefore the Christian Church on earth is invisible till Judgment Day, Col. 3:3, 4. In our day some Lutherans speak of two sides of the Church, taking the means of grace to be its "visible side." It is true, the means of grace are necessarily related to the Church, seeing that the Church is created and preserved through them. But the means of grace are not for that reason a part of the Church; for the Church, in the proper sense of the word, consists only of believers, Eph. 2:19, 20; Acts 5:14. Lest we abet the notion that the Christian Church in the proper sense of the term is an external institution, we shall continue to call the means of grace the "marks" of the Church. Just as wheat is to be found only where it has been sown, so the Church can be found only where the Word of God is in use.

26. We teach that this Church, which is the invisible communion of all believers, is to be found not only in those external church communions which teach the Word of God purely in every part, but also where, along with error, so much of the Word of God still remains that men may be brought to the knowledge of their sins and to faith in the forgiveness of sins, which Christ has gained for all men, Mark 16:16; Samaritans: Luke 17:16; John 4:25.

27. Local Churches or Local Congregations. -- Holy Scripture, however, does not speak merely of the one Church, which embraces the believers of all places, as in Matt. 16:18; John 10:16, but also of churches in the plural, that is, of local churches, as in 1 Cor. 16:19; 1:2; Acts 8:1: the Churches of Asia, the church of God in Corinth, the church in Jerusalem. But this does not mean that there are two kinds of churches, for the local churches also, in as far as they are churches, consist solely of believers, as we see clearly from the addresses of the epistles to local churches; for example, "unto the church which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified, in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," 1 Cor. 1:2, Rom. 1:7, etc. The visible society, containing hypocrites as well as believers, is called a church only in a improper sense, Matt. 13:47-50, 24-30, 38-43.

28. On Church-Fellowship. -- Since God ordained that His Word only, without the admixture of human doctrine, be taught and believed in the Christian Church, 1 Pet. 4:11; John 8:31, 32; 1 Tim. 6:3, 4, all Christians are required by God to discriminate between orthodox and heterodox church-bodies, Matt. 7:15, to have church-fellowship only with orthodox church-bodies, and, in case they have strayed into heterodox church-bodies, to leave them, Rom. 16:17. We repudiate unionism, that is, church-fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine, as disobedience to God's command, as causing divisions in the Church, Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9, 10, and involving the constant danger of losing the Word of God entirely, 2 Ti. 2:17-21.

29. The orthodox character of a church is established not by its mere name nor by its outward acceptance of, and subscription to, an orthodox creed, but by the doctrine which is actually taught in its pulpits, in its theological seminaries, and in its publications. On the other hand, a church does not

forfeit its orthodox character through the casual intrusion of errors, provided these are combated and eventually removed by means of doctrinal discipline, Acts 20:30; 1 Tim. 1:3.

30. The Original and True Possessors of All Christian Rights and Privileges -- Since the Christians are the Church, it is self-evident that they alone originally possess the spiritual gifts and rights which Christ has gained for, and given to, His Church. Thus St. Paul reminds all believers: "All things are yours," 1 Cor. 3:21, 22, and Christ Himself commits to all believers the keys of the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 16:13-19, 18:17-20, John 20:22, 23, and commissions all believers to preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments, Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-25. Accordingly, we reject all doctrines by which this spiritual power or any part thereof is adjudged as originally vested in certain individuals or bodies, such as the Pope, or the bishops, or the order of the ministry, or the secular lords, or councils, or synods, etc. The officers of the Church publicly administer their offices only by virtue of delegated powers, and such administration remains under the supervision of the latter, Col. 4:17. Naturally all Christians have also the right and the duty to judge and decide matters of doctrine, not according to their own notions, of course, but according to the Word of God, 1 John 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:11.

THEREFORE:

**The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod,
any Lutheran church, is to be the same.**

VI. THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

What is now The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod had its beginning in 1847 when a group of congregations formed by both the pastors and people who came to the United States because in Germany they were being forced by the government to accept false doctrine and practice and some Lutherans already in the United States.

A. IN THE BEGINNING ...

1. C.F.W. Walther, the first President of what is now the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, delivered an essay to the first Synod convention in 1848 titled *The Synod has no power but the Word of God*. In it he asks this question: *Why should and can we carry on our work joyfully although we have no power but the power of the Word?*

He answers: *The principal and most important motive is the following: because Christ has given His servants only this and no other power; and because even the holy apostles have appropriated to themselves no other power and therefore have seriously warned the servants of the Church against claiming every other power.*

We study the Scripture texts Walther quotes as proof.

John 18:36-37

John 10:11-14

Matthew 23:8-10

Ephesians 1:22-23

Psalm 23:4

Matthew 23:8

Mark 10:42-43

2. The reason for forming a Synod has been and still is stated at the very beginning of our Constitution as the preamble. We study the texts referenced:

Reason for the Forming of a Synodical Union

1. The example of the apostolic church. Acts 15:1–31.

2. Our Lord's will that the diversities of gifts should be for the common profit. 1 Cor. 12:4–31.

B. YEAR TWO OF THE SYNOD

1. C.F.W. Walther delivered an address at the second Synod Convention in 1849 titled *Blessed Beginnings*. In it he said the following concerning why other Lutheran congregations decided to join this Synod instead of the other Lutheran Synods already in existence. It is sectioned and numbered for ease of study:

a. First, we have maintained an honorable manner of thought and dealing, which is faithful to the Church, in spite of all sorts of slander and suspicion by people who are ignorant or of evil intent.

Why? See Revelation 12:13-17

b. This has been increasingly recognized. In fact, quite a few small groups of Lutheran Christians have again this year requested preachers from us. And, as we understand, there are again more congregations that desire to become members of this Synod. They have certainly not come to this point merely through human persuasion or somehow because out of personal preference they have followed after their preacher and pastor who already belongs to our Synod.

See Acts 14:8-18

c. Therefore, it is our joyous hope that these congregations have been moved to join the Synod out of the force of inner conviction, because our basis and manner of proceeding re honorable and salutary. We believe that, in part due to the instruction of their shepherd on all matters and in part the instruction from the synod address of the previous year they have sufficiently understood how we, in our synodical constitution and in our way of dealing in and evangelical manner, follow the narrow and straight road of what is correct and avoid both of the following dangerous and wrong ways.

- i. We do not follow the precedent of the Roman or Episcopal Church and trample on the right of self-governance of the individual congregation through the false doctrine that episcopal authority or the papal government is a divine, conscience-binding right.*

What problems arise when the Roman or Episcopal form is used?

ii. Nor do we take the other wrong way, according to the precedent of local democratic forms of constitution. The fleshly Americanized church fellowships, ruled by these principles, do injury to the divine prerogative of the holy preaching office. They make of the minister of the Lord and of His Holy Church, who is the messenger standing in the stead of Christ and the co-worker of the Holy Spirit, an optional, hired-and-dismissed servant of men.

What problem arises when the "democratic" form is used?

C. TO BE ORTHODOX THIS SYNOD DECLARES:

1. Duties of an 'Evangelical Lutheran' Synod - First Iowa District Convention, 1879 by C.F.W. Walther

THESIS I

It's primary duty is to be faithful to the Confessions in word and deed, and therefore it must

- a. unreservedly confess the Creeds of the evangelical -lutheran church.
- b. accept only pastors, teachers and congregations that are faithful to the Confessions.
- c. supervise the confessional faithfulness of its members.
- d. practice fellowship only with church bodies that are faithful to the Confessions.

THESIS II

It's second major duty is, that it treats its congregations in an evangelical way, and therefore

- a. it does not try to assume dictatorial role over the congregations but instead maintains only an advisory role to them.
- b. it assists them in acquiring orthodox pastors and teachers.
- c. it protects them against pastors who err in doctrine, who follow a life style that is offensive, and who use their Office to lord it over their congregations.

THESIS III

It's Third major duty is, that it supports its pastors and teachers, and therefore

- a. it counsels with them.
- b. it supports them in the proper conduct of their office.
- c. it defends them against unjust treatment.

THESIS IV

A fourth major duty is, that it promote the growth of its members in the knowledge of the truth in every way possible, and therefore

- a. it gives priority to doctrinal discussions in arranging its conventions/conferences.
- b. it arranges for both pastoral and teacher conferences, reviews their minutes and evaluates them.
- c. it makes every possible effort to disseminate good literature.

THESIS V

A fifth major duty is, that it strives for peace and unity in the truth in its midst, and therefore sees to it that

- a. all members are mutually submissive.
- b. members bear one another's burden in brotherly love.
- c. unnecessary disputes are not allowed to arise or be continued, regardless of whether they have to do with either doctrine or practice.

THESIS VI

A sixth major duty is, that it seeks, not its own glory, but only the glory of God, is intent not on its own growth, but rather on the growth of Christ's Kingdom and the salvation of souls, and therefore

- a. it does not employ dishonest means but is above all intent on using the Gospel in all its truth and purity to save and preserve it's souls.
- b. it seeks to produce in its members, not so much zeal for its particular community, but rather a living faith, unfeigned love, and genuine godliness.
- c. it takes an enthusiastic and, as much as possible, an active part in all God-pleasing organizations dedicated to the spread of Christ's kingdom in the world.

2. WHAT IS IN OUR 2007 VERSION OF OUR CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE II - CONFESSION

The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE VI - CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Conditions for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod are the following:

1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II.
2. Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description, such as:
 - a. Serving congregations of mixed confession, as such, by ministers of the church;
 - b. Taking part in the services and sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confession;
 - c. Participating in heterodox tract and missionary activities.
3. Regular call of pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, and parish assistants and regular election of lay delegates by the congregations, as also the blamelessness of the life of such.

4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms in church and school.
5. A congregation shall be received into membership only after the Synod has convinced itself that the constitution of the congregation, which must be submitted for examination, contains nothing contrary to the Scriptures or the Confessions.
6. Pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, or candidates for these offices not coming from recognized orthodox church bodies must submit to a colloquium before being received.
7. Congregations and individuals shall be received into membership at such time and manner, and according to such procedures, as shall be set forth in the bylaws to this Constitution.

3. PROPOSED AS CHANGES TO OUR CONSTITUTION (AND BYLAWS)

Below are a few excerpts From *Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synodical Structure and Governance (BRTFSSG) Final Report*

PG 5

"In June 2005 LCMS President Gerald B. Kieschnick charged this task force with completing a thorough, zero-based assessment of the entirety of the system of governance and organizational structure of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS)."

Question 1: Was this authorized by Synod in convention, or on his own did President Kieschnick burden us with this cost? See next...

PG 9-10

MEMO TO: Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synodical Structure and Governance

FROM: Gerald B. Kieschnick

SUBJECT: Task Force Assignment

DATE: June 10, 2005

"The Synod in convention (2004 Resolution 7-02A) directed creation of a committee to be appointed by the President and Board of Directors to review matters regarding officer and board responsibilities. That committee, with its special and limited focus, has been appointed and is to report to the 2007 convention of the Synod."

"Recent events, however, have convinced me that more than this is needed. There is a great need for a thorough and fundamental review of what our Synod is, how it is organized, and how it functions. What was first created as an organizational system for a Synod made up of a small number of congregations now struggles to serve more than 6,150 congregations."

Question 2: What recent events? None given.

Question 3: What is the real "struggle"; doctrinal or organizational?

"The existence in our Synod of confusion and disagreement regarding our life and work,

together with a growing conviction that the system of structure and governance we have created for ourselves throughout the past 158 years may no longer be ideal....

Question 4: What have we always confessed as our "life and work"? See the 2007 Constitution:

Article II Confession

The Synod, and every member of the Synod, accepts without reservation:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Article III Objectives

The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall—

1. Conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3–6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defense against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;
2. Strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;

Question 5: Since Jude says *contend for the Faith once for all delivered to the saints and remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions" ... who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life*, where will Satan cause "confusion and disagreement" to exist, in doctrine and its practice or in structure and its practice? Are we to build ourselves up in a *system of structure and governance*, or *your most holy faith*?

... led me to announce the formation of this task force..."

Question 6: Why did President Kieschnick focus not on our doctrinal issues and disagreements but instead on a complete structural overhaul WITHOUT Synod in Convention approval, and therefore obligate a great amount of the money congregations give on his own?

Note one "proposed" change by the BRTFSSG:

Article VI Conditions of Membership

Conditions for acquiring and holding membership in the Synod are the following:

1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II.
2. Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description, as such:
 - (a) Serving congregations of mixed confession, such as, by ministers of the church;
 - (b) Taking part in the services and sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confession;
 - (c) Participating in heterodox tract and missionary activities.
3. Regular call of pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, and parish assistants and regular election of lay delegates by the congregation, as also the blamelessness of the life of such.
4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymn-books, and catechisms in church and school.
5. A congregation shall be received into membership only after the Synod has convinced itself that the constitution of the congregation, which must be submitted for examination, contains nothing contrary to the Scriptures or the Confessions.
6. Pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, deaconesses, certified lay ministers, or candidates for these offices not coming from recognized orthodox church

Article VI Requirements of Membership

A. Requirements for acquiring membership in the Synod are the following:

1. Subscription to the confessional basis of the Synod (Article II) and to its Constitution.
2. In the case of congregations, examination and approval of constitutions and bylaws by the district receiving such applications.
3. In the case of ministers of religion—ordained and ministers of religion—commissioned, certification by a competent authority and acceptance of a regular call after placement by the Board of Assignments of the Synod.

B. Requirements for retaining membership in the Synod are the following:

1. Continued subscription to the confessional basis of the Synod and to its Constitution;
2. Use of worship and catechetical resources that are in harmony with the confessional basis of the Synod; and
3. Non-participation in activities which compromise a member's subscription to the confessional basis of the Synod, such as:
 - (a) Practicing altar and pulpit fellowship with congregations or clergy holding a different confession from that of the Synod (unionism, syncretism), or
 - (b) Supporting organizations or causes that promote a position contrary to the confessional basis of the Synod (unionism, syncretism).

Some questions:

Under proposed A.1.

Why is "subscription" to the Constitution of the Synod placed in an equal setting with "subscription to the confessional basis of the Synod"?

Are we ready to elevate this man made document subject to change to a level with that which is not?

Would a pastor have to give a "quia" that is, "because it is in agreement with Scripture", subscription to the Constitution?

Under proposed A.3.

who is the added "competent authority"?

Under proposed B.2.

Why the dropping of "exclusive use" and "doctrinally pure"?