

*The Events and People Which Led to the Formation of  
The Orthodox Lutheran Conference of 1951:*

**A Thesis**

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February 5, 1992

In Fulfillment of History 499 - Honors Course

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An examination of the history of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS) is not an easy study, particularly when one looks at the doctrinal history of the twentieth century. In order to properly understand the LC-MS today, it is necessary to understand the LC-MS yesterday. This paper examines the events and people involved in leaving the LC-MS and forming the Orthodox Lutheran Conference (OLC) in 1951. We will specifically be looking at: 1) The whole question of prayer and church fellowship in the 1930's and 1940's. 2) The controversy regarding the "Statement of 44". 3). The conservative response to alleged liberalism in the LC-MS. 4). The person and work of Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann. 5). And the formation, theology, and LC-MS response to the Orthodox Lutheran Church.

Whether or not the men who left the Synod in 1951 were right or wrong in doing so is a moot point. However, it would be doing them a great disservice to argue that their departure was over inconsequential matters. Many of the questions and objections that these men raised stemmed from deep seated theological problems that would not come to a head until 1974. Their most significant questions addressed how doctrine was handled. What is the basis for theological discussions between church bodies? P.E. Kretzmann, Wallace McLaughlin, Harold Romoser and others believed that these (and any) doctrinal questions were of paramount importance, and that to gloss over them with documents such as the *Common Confession* would be a disgrace to the Church which they held dear. We will see in our examination how sometimes this concern for pure doctrine could be taken to an absurd extreme, but that the concern is both real and valid.

## BACKGROUND

The theological questions which prompted the organization of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference (OLC) are old in terms of Synodical history, some of them almost as old as the Synod itself. The first of these is the question of prayer fellowship.

In terms of the question of prayer fellowship, one of the foremost controversies was the case surrounding Dr. Adolph Brux.<sup>1</sup> After receiving a doctorate in Semitic languages, Dr. Brux was called as a missionary to the Muslims of Southern India in 1923. The problem came about when Brux agreed to attend Scripture readings with prayer at the Protestant hospice where he was staying.<sup>2</sup> According to Brux's understanding, Schwan's 1912 edition of *Luther's Small Catechism* allowed for prayer with any believers in Christ, which included Protestants of other denominations.<sup>3</sup> Brux was asked to present a paper on prayer fellowship to the spring conference in India, went through literally years of synodical run around over the "heresy" in the paper, was recalled from the field, and was finally recommended that he be eligible for a call again in 1935.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Pfotenhauer, then President of Synod, was not satisfied with the findings, and everything had to be redrafted. In 1938, Dr. Brux published his *Re-appeal to Synod*, in which he attempted to set forth his position on prayer as Scriptural and as that which the Synod held itself.<sup>5</sup> Eventually Dr. Brux was indeed made eligible for a call, but was

<sup>1</sup>Herbert Lindemann, "Personal Reflections on the Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the Publication of 'A Statement,'" *CHIQ*, November 1970, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup>F. Dean Lueking, *Mission in the Making*, 1964, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>4</sup>Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, *Proceedings*, 1935, p. 293.

<sup>5</sup>Adolph A. Brux, *Re-Appeal to Synod*, 1938, p. 1.

never issued one. He left the Synod in 1940 to pursue his own studies.<sup>6</sup>

A second controversy in the Synod surrounded the Committee on Lutheran Union's 1938 report on doctrinal discussions with the American Lutheran Church (ALC).<sup>7</sup> The committee included St. Louis Seminary President Ludwig Fuerbringer and Dr. Walter A. Maier, the Lutheran Hour Speaker. The only differences they found separating the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church were not divisive of fellowship.<sup>8</sup> This, of course, was contingent upon the convention accepting the *Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church*.<sup>9</sup> It dealt with the following questions:

- I. Scripture and Inspiration
- II. Universal Plan of Salvation, Predestination, and Conversion
- III. The Church
- IV. The Office of the Public Administration of the Means of Grace
- V. The Doctrine of Sunday
- VI. The Doctrine Concerning the Last Things.

The Synod adopted the proposed resolutions of the Committee, one of which read as follows:

2. That Synod declare that the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod, together with the *Declaration* of the representatives of the American Lutheran Church and the provisions of this entire report of Committee No. 16 now being read and with Synod's actions thereupon, be regarded as the doctrinal basis for *future church-fellowship* between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.<sup>10</sup> (emphasis original)

<sup>6</sup>Lueking, *Mission*, p. 275.

For a more complete examination of the Brux case, see Lueking pp. 270-276, and J.T. Robinson, *The Spirit of Triumphalism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod* (unpublished doctoral thesis), pp. 126-151.

<sup>7</sup>Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, *Proceedings*, 1938, pp. 221-233.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 226.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 221-226.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 231.

This Lutheran Union Committee report and subsequent action became the object for criticism among many different groups in Synod, including the newspaper *The Confessional Lutheran*,<sup>11</sup> as well as the Wisconsin and Norwegian Synod's.<sup>12</sup> Later, Theodore Graebner objected to the resolutions proposed on the basis that they had serious structural problems, as well as coming from a "traditionalist" perspective.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps what Graebner was referring to was the fact that doctrinal unity, according to the Committee, was to be decided on the basis of the *Brief Statement* of 1932 and the *Declaration*, and not "simply" on the basis of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. It is also interesting to note that when the *Confessional Lutheran* objected to these resolutions in 1940, they objected on the basis that the ALC *Declaration* was a compromise of the *Brief Statement*, thus arguing the same thing as Graebner, but for different reasons. The Wisconsin, Norwegian, and Slovak Synods historically had reservations with the Missouri Synod's dealings with the American Lutheran Church. Eventually, they refused to take part in any of the joint meetings, and it became a source of contention within the Synodical Conference.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE STATEMENT OF 44

On September 6-7, 1945, a group of men gathered at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago to discuss their concern about the attitude and mindset of those in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. The document which followed, called the "Statement of 44," or the "Chicago Statement," has had a profound effect

<sup>11</sup>See later section on *The Confessional Lutheran*.

<sup>12</sup>Theodore Graebner, "The Cloak of the Cleric," *CTM*, Feb. 1971, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>Erwin G. Peterson, "A Quantitative Measure of the Missouri Synod's Interest In Lutheran Union from 1930-1944," B.S. diss., Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Neb., 1946, p. 17.

upon our Synod. Signers included seminary faculty, former district presidents, circuit counselors, prominent pastors and many others. For some, it spurred new hope that the LC-MS was not just a church of "traditionalism." But for others, it was one sign of many that the LC-MS was going down the path of theological liberalism and ecumenicalism, simply a generation after most denominations.

The "Statement of 44" (hereafter referred to as the *A Statement*) was not the result of an arbitrary gathering of men to discuss an "attitude problem" in the Synod. There had been previous meetings, called the "Round Table" discussions, held in 1926, 1937, 1940, and 1941.<sup>15</sup> Called by the Colorado District President, Rev. E.J. Friedrich, the purpose of the 1945 meeting was:

(To study a) pernicious spirit characterized by barren, negative attitudes, unevangelical techniques in dealing with the problems of the individual and the Church, unsympathetic legalistic practices, a self-complacent and separatistic narrowness, and an utter disregard for the fundamental law of Christian love.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, the meeting was intended to be "sane and soundly Lutheran, evangelical, positive, and constructive."<sup>17</sup> According to Dr. Theodore Graebner, one of the premiere theologians of the Statement, what they were concerned about could be summed up as "traditionalism." Traditionalism was:

...placing human authority above that of the Word of God; made fellowship depend on acceptance of every terminological detail in ecclesiastical dogma; treated the New Testament body of saving doctrine as a code of laws; (and) paid lip service to the Sola Scriptura but actually (was) operating with synodical resolutions.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Speaking the Truth in Love, 1946, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Richard Caemmerer, "Recollections of 'A Statement,'" CHIQ, Nov. 1970, p. 156.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Graebner, "Cleric", p. 5.

In light of this, there were two important concepts in the *A Statement*, and they were closely related. The first was the doctrine of the Church, and the second was how we, both individually and as a church, relate to each other.<sup>19</sup> Herbert Lindemann, one of the "Statementarians," expressed the questions well in the *Concordia Historical Quarterly's* 25th anniversary of the Statement issue:

How is the Christian related to other Christians? What is the extent of their fellowship in Christ? What is the church? How does it function? What is it which destroys her unity? How shall differences in teaching and practice be dealt with? What about sacramental fellowship?<sup>20</sup>

### *Analysis of Significant Portions of "A Statement"*

Of the twelve theses, one of the most controversial was Thesis V.<sup>21</sup> In this thesis, the authors argued that the traditional interpretation of passages like Romans 16:17-18 and I Thess. 5:22 were inappropriate. These texts were the ones primarily used as an argument against "unionism." Unionism was defined at the time as any unscriptural relationships between churches and denominations. Ironically, Thesis V, according to the Statementarians, was one of the least threatening statements in terms of doctrine. In the words of O.P. Kretzmann, former President of Valparaiso University, "Such a simple little thing as the interpretation of Romans 16:17-18 we had to defend with our very lives."<sup>22</sup>

Thesis V argued that according to sound Lutheran exegesis, the text did not apply to the LC-MS relationship to other Lutherans in America. In

<sup>19</sup>See Appendix C, "A Statement."

<sup>20</sup>Herbert Linemann, "Personal Reflections on the 25th Anniversary of the Publication of 'A Statement,'" *CHIQ*, Nov. 1970, p. 165.

<sup>21</sup>See Appendix C.

<sup>22</sup>O.P. Kretzmann, "Letter to the Editor," *CHIQ*, Nov. 1970, p. 189.



*Speaking the Truth in Love*, the follow-up and "official" interpretation of the Statement, Dr. Oswald Hoffman did an in-depth exegesis of Romans 16:17-18.<sup>23</sup> Based on such Greek words as κοιλία (Koilia, meaning "belly"), Hoffman concluded that Paul was not talking here about erring Christians, but rather Paul was referring to those "outside the pale of evangelical, historical Christianity."<sup>24</sup> Hoffman looked to supporting passages in places like Phil. 3:18-21, Mat. 24:23, 2 Pet. 2:1, and others.

And yet many rejected the *A Statement's* exegesis as faulty and considered this to be the basis for later heresies.<sup>25</sup> A.T. Kretzmann and H.J. Wunderlich, in an article on the *A Statement* contained in *The Confessional Lutheran*, wrote of this thesis:

...It is very important that the signers of "A Statement" be shown that the exegesis which supports Thesis V contradicts what the plain words say in Rom. 16:17-18 and that if they persist in such rejection of the clear words of Scripture in order to uphold a false and unscriptural position on church fellowship (Thesis XI) they will become guilty of the very thing condemned in this text.<sup>26</sup>

In the eyes of the Statementarians and their supporters, this sort of attack only proved what they already thought to be true.

Perhaps the more serious in terms of its long-term impact on the theology of the Synod was Thesis VI.<sup>27</sup> In this thesis, the Statementarians argued that part of the problem was an over-emphasis on the power and authority of the Synod. The Synod is not to be seen as a church, or even a part of the church, but simply a human organization, with human goals.<sup>28</sup> Because of this, one of the things which the Synod does not have a right to rule over is the area of church fellowship. Theodore Schroedel, the author of

<sup>23</sup>Speaking the Truth in Love, pp. 35-46.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>25</sup>Carl S. Meyer, Moving Frontiers, 1964, pp. 424-425.

<sup>26</sup>A.T. Kretzmann and H.J. Wunderlich, "The Forty Four and Romans 16:17-18," The Confessional Lutheran, April 1946, p. 43.

<sup>27</sup>See Appendix C.

<sup>28</sup>Speaking, p. 47.

the section on Thesis VI in *Speaking the Truth in Love*, wrote of this relationship:

Keeping in mind that fellowship is established neither by the congregation nor by Synod but by the Holy Spirit, and also that after such fellowship has thus been established and recognized it must eventually be implemented, the members of the local congregation, as the royal priests of God and responsible for the preservation of truth in the Church, should be informed on the questions of fellowship and on their responsibility to decide such questions. A mere resolution on the part of Synod declaring that our Synod is henceforth in pulpit and altar fellowship with another church body *cannot* legislate for a given congregation.<sup>29</sup> (emphasis mine)

With this understanding of the Synod, it is very easy to understand how membership in such organizations as the Lutheran World Federation, National Council of Churches, and The World Council of Churches would not be a question of fellowship at all.<sup>30</sup> O.P. Kretzmann, in a supporting paper, even went so far as to say that the distinction between the visible and invisible church is not found in the New Testament.<sup>31</sup> Theodore Graebner, in an essay presented at Bad Boll, Germany in 1949, said in plain language that neither the LWC, the Synodical Conference, or the LC-MS, are church.<sup>32</sup> Graebner went on to say, "Their purpose is not the fulfillment of a divine commission, but the solution of a problem posed by time and world."<sup>33</sup>

### *The Official Synodical Response to the Statement*

The response of the LC-MS, not surprisingly, was quite negative. When the document was issued, Dr. John Behnken, the President of the Synod, officially protested against its issuance, and requested it be

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>30</sup>Herbert Lindemann, p. 165.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>Kurt Marquart, *Anatomy of an Explosion*, 1977, pp. 54-55.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 55.

postponed until he could discuss the matter with the signers.<sup>34</sup> This request was denied. In February of 1946, the Praesidium met with the Statementarians in order to hear twelve supporting essays presented on behalf of the signers, later published as *Speaking the Truth in Love*.<sup>35</sup> They then agreed upon setting up two committees (the "Ten and Ten") to discuss the document. The Rev. Harold Romoser was appointed chairman of the President's Committee,<sup>36</sup> and District President E.J. Friedrich was appointed chairman of the Statement's group. The purpose of the group was "...making an exhaustive study in carrying out discussions of the wording of the *A Statement* in the light of Scripture."<sup>37</sup> According to the Rev. A.T. Kretzmann,<sup>38</sup> the Secretary of the Praesidium's "Ten", Dr. Behnken made it very clear to the Committee that he was in doctrinal disagreement with the *A Statement*.<sup>39</sup>

Part of the problem, in A.T. Kretzmann's eyes, arose when the Praesidium tried to be conciliatory toward the signers of *A Statement*. The President refused to admit that there was a split going on in Synod, and he agreed to allow them to withdraw the document, not retract it.<sup>40</sup> The purpose of the two committees of Ten and Ten was to pinpoint the differences in doctrine. In this they succeeded. They intended to publish the results of their meetings, which lasted eleven days over three meetings, but this project was cut short when the signers agreed with Dr.

<sup>34</sup>A.T. Kretzmann, "The Statement of the 44: 1945-1979," *CHIQ*, Summer 1982, p. 72.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup>See section on The Chicago Study Club.

<sup>37</sup>Glenn E. Reichwald, "The Committee of Ten and Ten: An Interview with A.T. Kretzmann," *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, Dec. 1979, p. 7.

<sup>38</sup>A.T. Kretzmann was also involved in the Chicago Study Club, and was the nephew of Dr. P.E. Kretzmann.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

See also A.T. Kretzmann, "Statement," p. 79.

Behnken to withdraw the *A Statement* as a basis for discussion.<sup>41</sup> The President's committee protested at length to Dr. Behnken, but with no success.<sup>42</sup> Rev. Harold Romoser, the committee chairman, said the following ominous words to Dr. Behnken:

You have sprung the escape hatch for the Statementarians and served notice that error may be publicly advocated in Synod without correction and discipline. You have set the stage for the destruction of the Missouri Synod as an orthodox church body.<sup>43</sup>

Ten of the thirteen members of the President's Ten (there were three alternates) submitted a "Memorial" to the 1947 convention, protesting this "withdrawal" and submitting five declarations which could have been used as a basis for dealing with false doctrine. The Memorial was by-passed on the basis that the *A Statement* had been withdrawn as a basis for discussion, thus effectively ignoring the entire purpose of the Memorial in the first place.<sup>44</sup>

So, we can see that the situation in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod was far from unified at this point in its history. There was a considerable amount of conflict going on in the area of church union and prayer fellowship. However, the existence of the *A Statement* seemed to be the rallying point that the "ultra-conservative" elements needed to express their opinion that the Synod was going down the road toward heterodoxy. We will see in the next section two of the groups which took that position.

There were two major responses to these apparent changes of focus in the Synod: The formation of the newspaper *The Confessional Lutheran* and the organization of the *Chicago Study Club*, an independent pastor's

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>42</sup>Harold Romoser, *The Chicago Study Club*, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup>Reichwald, p. 53.

conference. There was a great deal of interaction between the paper and the study club, and the paper was sometimes referred to as the unofficial publication of the *Chicago Study Club*, although the paper predated the club by five years. We will deal with each of them in turn, then later see how they were used in the Synod, and later in the paper see how they interacted with the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*.

## THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

In January of 1940, a newsletter/newspaper came forth in the LC-MS. Its title was *The Confessional Lutheran*, and it was published "In the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism."<sup>45</sup> Rev. Paul Burgdorf, the chief editor for the newspaper in its entire existence, was a pastor in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. The purpose of the newspaper was to promote historic Lutheranism as it was known in the Missouri Synod.<sup>46</sup> There was a definite emphasis on doctrinal and Confessional purity, and it was formed to counteract doctrinal aberrations. It is also interesting to note that the newspaper was designed to fight "the widespread maze of Socialistic and Communistic propaganda of our day and its undeniable effect upon the Church."<sup>47</sup>

Issues in the first three years of *The Confessional Lutheran*, show editorial concern over the question of Lutheran Union (a question that was becoming more and more prominent in the 1940's). In the first few issues, they carried articles on: the history of the Church Fellowship Controversy; the Synodical Conference; the dogmatic-historical

<sup>45</sup>Paul Burgdorf, "The Confessional Lutheran," The Confessional Lutheran, January 1940, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

background to the Union Movement; and the Lutheran position regarding non-fundamental doctrines (*adiaphora*).<sup>48</sup> Later on the question of the *A Statement* and the *Common Confession* would also become prominent, but throughout the paper's history the question of unionism was very significant.

The position which the *Confessional Lutheran* held regarding Lutheran Union was essentially the same one that Dr. P.E. Kretzmann held, which we will examine later. In the opening article, Rev. Burgdorf pointed to the union resolutions of 1938 as the source of the problem.<sup>49</sup> The problem, according to Burgdorf, was that the matter was handled too hastily, and that the delegates were not properly informed as to the issue of concern. Furthermore, they were acting in good faith that the American Lutheran Church was willing to "renounce its liberal associations."<sup>50</sup> Burgdorf also made the pertinent observation that any organization which could not critically examine itself was doomed to failure. The Rev. J. Buenger, in his article, "The Dogmatic - Historical Background Of the Present Union Movement," argued that with the acceptance of the 1938 union resolutions, the LC-MS was a house divided against itself, and that it was on the road toward heterodoxy.<sup>51</sup> He contended that the present problems actually began with the Chicago Theses in the early 1920's, and that the issues involved in these Theses were never dealt with, but were shoved under the theological table. Articles like this one and others were common in *The Confessional Lutheran* for years to come.

*The Confessional Lutheran* received a great deal of support from the

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>J. Buenger, "The Dogmatic-Historical Background Of the Present Union Movement," *The Confessional Lutheran*, June 1940, p. 37.

conservative elements in the Synod over the years. It became the unofficial organ of the *Chicago Study Club* of which Burgdorf was a member, and also raised the flag over Dr. P.E. Kretzmann's struggle with the LC-MS on several occasions. *The Confessional Lutheran* was discontinued in the late 1950's.

## THE CHICAGO STUDY CLUB

The second significant conservative element in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in the 1940's and early 1950's was the Chicago Study Club. This informal organization came into being in January of 1945, through the leadership of Rev. Harold Romoser, and at the prompting of the President of the Northern Illinois District, Dr. Ernest T. Lams.<sup>52</sup> The club met at Romoser's congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church, Oak Park, Illinois, for its entire existence. The meetings often had forty or more pastors in attendance, and continued until about 1956.<sup>53</sup>

Rev. Romoser and Rev. Paul Burgdorf were the chief driving forces behind the Chicago Study Club.<sup>54</sup> A brief amount of biographical information on Rev. Romoser is appropriate here. Rev. Romoser was born in 1907 to the Rev. George A. Romoser, president of Concordia College, Bronxville, and Amelia Koelling Romoser.<sup>55</sup> He graduated from Concordia College, Bronxville, then from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (1929), and finally received a Master of Arts degree in Classical Languages from Columbia University in 1930. He was a prominent individual in Synod.

<sup>52</sup>Harold Romoser, "Chicago Study Club," Concordia Historical Institute Interview Transcript, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>54</sup>John Klotz, *Personal Interview*, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup>Romoser, p. 1.

He served as Secretary of the English District from 1939 to 1945, Secretary of the Centennial Committee of Synod from 1941 to 1947, Chairman of the Centennial Committee from 1947 to 1956, and finally as Chairman of the President's committee on *A Statement* in 1946 and 1947.<sup>56</sup> In addition to these he served as Administrator of the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation from 1969-1974. He retired in 1983.

The purpose of the club was to study "Scriptural doctrine and exegesis" which was apparently missing in pastoral conferences at the time.<sup>57</sup> There was a special intent at its inception to study the synodical declarations of 1938 regarding prayer fellowship. Rev. Romoser, in an interview conducted by the Concordia Historical Institute, made a point of emphasizing that the club was not organized with the purpose of counteracting the *A Statement*, since the club was formed nine months before the Statement's inception.<sup>58</sup> Later, the organization looked at questions such as the position Dr. Walter A. Maier (the Lutheran Hour Speaker) held on joint worship, a question regarding prayer fellowship practices of Dr. Louis J. Sieck, President of the St. Louis Seminary, "doctrinal error" contained in the *Lutheran Witness* during the 1940's, and others.<sup>59</sup>

It appears that the biggest issue that the club dealt with was the question of the *A Statement*. Two members of the Chicago Study Club were chosen to serve on the President's Committee of Ten: Rev. Romoser as chairman, and the Rev. A.T. Kretzmann as secretary. In addition, the Rev. Wallace McLaughlin (who would later serve as president of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference) was on the committee. McLaughlin had

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p.2.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 3.



close ties with the Chicago Study Club, and had succeeded Romoser as pastor of a congregation in Pittsburgh.<sup>60</sup> It is not our intent here to discuss the events following the signing of *A Statement*. However, it is important to note that the Study Club continued to examine this problem and to voice their protest in the Synod for years after the issue was supposedly "settled."<sup>61</sup> As late as 1950, the Chicago Study Club published a "White Paper" critique of the *A Statement*.<sup>62</sup> Slightly later, the club spent some time studying the question of the *Common Confession*, and, not surprisingly, came down very hard against the document.<sup>63</sup>

In looking at both *The Confessional Lutheran* and the *Chicago Study Club* we have seen that the concerns we will now be examining were neither novel nor outlandish claims on the part of Dr. Kretzmann and the founders of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference. There were many pastors and laymen in the Synod who had voiced the same concerns for years after the founding of the OLC.

## PAUL EDWARD KRETZMANN

In the midst of this early struggle, there is one man who stood out on the "conservative" side: Paul Edward Kretzmann (1883-1965). He was one of the most prolific of the LC-MS theologians in the first half of the twentieth century and is known even today as the author of the *Popular Commentary*. In order to understand the importance of this man, it is necessary for us to first examine significant aspects of his life, and then examine his periodical writings in the years immediately preceding the

<sup>60</sup>John Klotz, *Personal Interview*, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup>Romoser, *Chicago Study Club*, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup>Add For "White Paper" found in *The Confessional Lutheran*, March 1950, p. 29.

<sup>63</sup>Romoser, p. 8.

formation of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference.

### *Biographical Information*

Paul Edward Kretzmann was born on August 24, 1883 in Dearborn County, Indiana.<sup>64</sup> He was the son of Carl Heinrich Ernest Kretzmann and Anna Maria Elisabeth Polack. He graduated from Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and was ordained on March 25, 1906. In his career, he served congregations in Shady Bend, Kansas, Denver, Colorado, St. Paul, Minnesota and St. Charles, Missouri. He was a professor at St. Paul's High School, Concordia, Missouri, from 1912-1919, production manager for Concordia Publishing House from 1919-1923, and a professor at Concordia Seminary from 1923 until his resignation in 1946. He married Louise Schroeder on August 29, 1907, and they subsequently had five children. He was well known for his numerous books, including: *Popular Commentary*, *Jesus Only*, *A Brief History of Education*, *The Teaching of English*, and others.

Beginning about 1935, he became concerned with many of the doctrinal trends going on in the Synod, and this concern resulted in his resignation from the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1945. He was especially concerned with the theology of Dr. Theodore Graebner, Dr. William Arndt, Richard R. Caemerer, A.M. Rehwinkel, and W.G. Polack.<sup>65</sup> His concerns were centered around church fellowship, the Anti-Christ, the doctrine of the Last Things, and the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Dr. Kretzmann died on July 13, 1965, as a member of the

<sup>64</sup>Materials obtained from the Biographical Record in P.E.K. Supplementary File I, and File #4 from the Concordia Historical Institute.

<sup>65</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "An Open Letter," June 30, 1948, P.E.K. File #4, Concordia Historical Institute.

Lutheran Churches of the Reformation.

*The Thought of P.E. Kretzmann in the 1940's*

Several documents indicate Kretzmann's concerns about his beloved LC-MS during the 1940's.<sup>66</sup> Although he excluded himself from the LC-MS in 1951, he always held a great love for the theology which Missouri held dear. Several pamphlets, or open letters, written from 1943 to 1950, typify how he viewed the problems of the Synod and showed how his views on the solution changed. The views that he held were neither new nor original to him. The Chicago Study Club and the *Confessional Lutheran*, edited by Kretzmann's friend, Paul Burgdorf, held many of the same views that Kretzmann did. These Kretzmann documents reveal an increasing frustration on his part over the Synodical administration's silence and ignorance of what he considered to be vital theological issues for the church.

The first document we see from this period is entitled "Trying to Force The Issue."<sup>67</sup> This document outlined Kretzmann's concerns with men such as Theodore Graebner who seemed to be "pushing" the question of Lutheran union. He began by pointing out that one of the original intentions of the Synodical Conference was the hopeful union of all Lutheran synods into one orthodox Lutheran body in the United States.<sup>68</sup> He examined a March, 1943 issue of *Lutheran Outlook*, which argued that the theological faculty of St. Louis was stepped in traditionalism, and that it was holding back Missouri. He also examined the August, 1943 issue of

<sup>66</sup>All of Kretzmann's documents from this section are taken from the Concordia Historical Institute's personal files on P.E. Kretzmann.

<sup>67</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Trying to Force the Issue," P.E.K. File #4, Concordia Historical Institute.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

*The American Lutheran*, where the author pushed for the laymen of the churches to assert themselves, because the theologians were creating the problems and dissention. He also looked at the danger of what he called Sacramentalism. In "A Report on Progress toward Lutheran Unity," they argued that on the basis of Holy Communion, which is also the preaching of the Word, there is, by definition, an internal unity of Lutherans.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, the Eucharist is the Sacrament of Unity, and wherever the Sacrament is celebrated with the proper understanding (Real Presence), then there is unity, for one cannot divide the Church.

Kretzmann saw three problematic attitudes present in this view. The first was a lack of proper information on the part of pastors and laymen as to what the specific issues involved were. The second was an indifference toward the need for the full truth of Scripture, because as long as salvation was there, then the rest wasn't really important. The third factor was simply fatigue. People were tired of theological controversy.

More importantly "union or bust" was in error on several theological points. The first was the nature of the Church. The argument, according to Kretzmann, was that since all believers in Christ were one in the Church, there was no reason not to have external fellowship also. Kretzmann's problem with this understanding of the Church was that it worked from the assumption that there was no distinction between the so-called visible and the invisible Church.<sup>70</sup> Because Christians could not read one another's hearts, they were bound to base fellowship on the outward profession, not on inward faith. He cited numerous passages which dealt with the importance of holding onto the whole Word of God,

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.

and not just certain parts of it. He wrote:

While there is, according to Scripture itself, a difference as to the importance of certain doctrines in the faith-life of the Christians, this fact does not permit us to discard or deny so much as one single truth of the Bible.<sup>71</sup> (Emphasis original)

The second mistake involved was that of the inerrancy and inviolability of the Holy Scriptures. According to Kretzmann, if we were to hold the whole Scriptures to be inerrant and true in all their parts, then we could not ignore the smallest part of Scripture, even though we do not understand its significance.

The third mistake was that forcing Lutheran union involved setting aside the clear command of God to avoid those who depart from the full truth of Scriptures. He cited Romans 16:17, 2 John 10ff., 1 Timothy 6:3-6, and Titus 3:9-11 to support his position.

Finally, Kretzmann argued that the "Lutheran union now" people worked under the delusion that the strength of the Church was in numbers, not in the Gospel. This document showed early on that Kretzmann was both aware of those who were pushing hard for union, especially with the American Lutheran Church, and that he believed that their emphasis was not based on God-pleasing doctrinal unity, but on external unity. It is interesting to note that at that date (11/1/43) he did not name any names. Later on he was not so subtle in his dealings with his opponents in the LC-MS.

In a short document entitled "Sowing the Wind - Reaping the Whirlwind," Kretzmann examined the situation in the LC-MS as he saw it in 1948.<sup>72</sup> He saw two serious problems in the Synod. The first was the

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>72</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Sowing the Wind - Reaping the Whirlwind." P.E.K. File #4, Concordia Historical Institute.

document submitted by the Committee on Lutheran Union entitled the "Declaration of the Representatives of the American Lutheran Church."<sup>73</sup> According to Kretzmann, the resolution which followed established the *Brief Statement* as well as the ALC *Declaration* to be the basis for future fellowship between these two bodies. He pointed out that the ALC would only interpret the *Brief Statement* in light of their own *Declaration*, and that the provisions set up in the resolution had not been met. The second problem was the continued existence of the *A Statement* without reprimand in the LC-MS. Kretzmann saw the signed advocacy of the document by five St. Louis faculty as a deplorable lack of doctrinal discipline on the part of the Synod. The *American Lutheran* was pushing the cause of the "Statementarians" and there were organizations popping up all over the country which were espousing its "unionistic" views.<sup>74</sup> He finished the article by stating that the Statementarians had sown the wind, but the LC-MS and the Synodical Conference were reaping the whirlwind, and that God would judge them.

On June 30, 1948, Kretzmann wrote his "Open Letter" to the President and all members of Synod, which stated that he resigned from the clergy roster of the LC-MS.<sup>75</sup> However since he had resigned from the St. Louis faculty two years before the move did not come as a surprise to anyone. He listed six specific reasons for his resignation. They were as follows:

1. The problem of liberalism at the St. Louis Seminary, which he tried for a decade to stem to no avail, was increased.
2. In January, 1945, he presented a formal request for an investigation into the theology of A.M. Rehwinkel and R.R. Caemmerer. Nothing happened in the three years after his request.
3. At the time of his resignation, he found himself completely out of step with what was happening at the Seminary, but this point was

<sup>73</sup>Dealt with in section one.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>75</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "An Open Letter," P.E. Kretzmann File #4, CHI.

completely ignored by the Board of Control and had in fact gotten worse since his leaving.

4. The President of the Synod was unable to deal effectively with the problem of the *A Statement*, especially regarding the heresy of Theodore Graebner and William Arndt.
5. The Centennial Convention (1947) was unable to pass enough resolutions contrary to the position of the Statementarians.
6. The President of the Synod had allowed Theodore Graebner to be reinstated as a member of the editorial board of the *Lutheran Witness* and that Dr. William Arndt was allowed to deliver a heretical essay at the Western District Convention of 1948.

Kretzmann then stated his resignation, and that he must, on the basis of conscience, and applied Romans 16:17f., and 2 John 9-11 to the situation.

One of Kretzmann's many short articles written from Cuba, Missouri, after his resignation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was entitled "Where are the Seven Thousand?"<sup>76</sup> Kretzmann voiced his criticism of the way the *A Statement* matter was handled by the synodical administration. He pointed to the pastoral letter of the President written in January, 1946, which promised that official action would be taken to rectify the situation. However, there were never any "teeth" put into this promise on Dr. Behnken's part. All of the uproar by clergy and laymen alike had. Kretzmann saw, in his typical fashion, three reasons for this change of attitude: 1) Ignorance of the situation. 2) Indifference or fear of the repercussions. 3) And lack of consciousness of what was involved, namely the truth of God's Word. He then called on all true Lutherans to take a stand for the Word of God and not to remain silent regarding the Synodical leadership.

In May of 1949, after his resignation from the clergy roster, it was apparent that Kretzmann's patience with the situation in the LC-MS was continuing to fail. In the document entitled "The Skandala Remain" he proposed fifteen items which he considered to be unacceptable in the

<sup>76</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Where are the Seven Thousand," P.E.K. Supplementary File I, Concordia Historical Institute.

LC-MS.<sup>77</sup> They are worth repeating in condensed form here:

1. The unionistic activities of Lutheran Hour Speaker Walter A. Maier continued
2. The signers of the *A Statement* had not been disciplined and still openly continue in their false doctrine.
3. Five Statementarians who were St. Louis faculty had not withdrawn their signatures or repudiated the aberrations of the document.
4. Dr. Theodore Graebner had not disavowed the historical and doctrinal errors contained in his pamphlet, "Prayer Fellowship."
5. Dr. William Arndt had not given satisfactory explanation of his change of exegesis regarding Romans 16:17.
6. Dr. Richard R. Caemmerer had not corrected his teaching that the pope is not the Anti-Christ.
7. Dr. Arthur M. Rehwinkel repudiated his similar position regarding the Anti-Christ not being the pope.
8. There had been no official repudiation of the unionistic matters regarding the Valparaiso Youth Conference, the "Lutheran Men of America," the doctrinal confusion in Dr. Arndt's essay delivered before the Western District in 1948, and the unionistic fellowship efforts reported time and again in the *Lutheran Witness*.
9. The *American Lutheran*, an independent and openly unionistic magazine, was listed in the *Lutheran Annual*, while the conservative *Confessional Lutheran* was not.
10. The St. Louis faculty had offered an opinion on the Romans 16:17 exegesis which reversed their previous stand.
11. The St. Louis student body was given permission to join the unionistic "Lutheran Students' Association," although they were repudiated by several faculty members decades ago.
12. The mandatory provisions of the Centennial Convention to abstain from any overt act ignored the fact that we are not yet united with the American Lutheran Church had, on the whole, not been carried out.
13. The absence of synodical discipline has kept orthodox men in other synods from joining the LC-MS.
14. The laymen of the Synod had not been properly informed as to what was really going on in the synod, and they were being misinformed by the *Lutheran Witness*.
15. Orthodox men in the Synod knew what was right, but had kept silence, against their consciences.

Kretzmann pointed out in his conclusion that the facts involved in these points are just that, factual. He went on to say that they were personal stumbling blocks for him because if he were to keep quiet, he would be denying the call of his conscience, and would not be keeping the Word of God.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "The Skandala Remain," P.E. Kretzmann File #4, Concordia Historical Institute.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.



Another serious concern of Kretzmann's, which was also reflected in the formation of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, was the autonomous nature of the local congregation. In another Cuba, Missouri, document entitled "Have we Drifted into a Synodical Polity?" Kretzmann argued that the way things were being handled in the Synod was contributing to the downfall of the local congregation.<sup>79</sup> From a financial point of view, the initiative was coming from the top, no longer from the local congregation. Although he did not argue that this change in emphasis was *wrong*, he did point out that it was changing how the Synod was viewing itself. He wrote:

Pastors are provided with "canned" sermons for a whole year; Sunday schools and Sunday school teachers receive material in such huge quantities that it requires hours of study even to select subject matter for next Sunday's lesson; workshops for practically every activity going on in the average congregation are established; even the selection of instructors at our higher institutions of learning is no longer under the control of the constituent congregations....We are concerned in this connection with only one fact, namely that the present arrangement is definitely jeopardizing our accepted teaching concerning the autonomous, independent, sovereign character of every congregation in our midst, and it is costing us a mint of money.<sup>80</sup>

Kretzmann here revealed that he did not believe that the Synod, as a larger institution, had any business doing the work of local congregations. To Kretzmann, the local congregation was the visible church, not the synod as an organization. The synod was designed as an advisory body only, and when it was doing the work of the congregation, it had overstepped its bounds. This perspective was very evident in the formation of the OLC, as we will see later.

Another document which is undated, but which was found with all of Kretzmann's 1940's materials, is entitled "Aphorisms on the 'Liturgical

<sup>79</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Have We Drifted into a Synodical Polity?" P.E.

Kretzmann, Supplementary File I, Concordia Historical Institute.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

Movement."<sup>81</sup> In this document Kretzmann set forth several principles which were carried out in the Orthodox Lutheran Conference. Two quotations are instructive of what could almost be called anti-clericalism on Kretzmann's part:

...The form of church polity in the Lutheran Church, like that of the Apostolic Church, after which it is modeled, is strictly democratic, with *no recognition of the distinction between "clergy" and "laity,"* especially not that of a priestly or clerical order or station, and all rites and usages whose symbolism points in that direction are contrary to Lutheran principles resting upon the Word of God.<sup>82</sup> (Emphasis mine)

And again:

...Any vestments that are distinctively priestly, especially if they tend to emphasize an alleged priestly order as distinguished from the laity, such as those of the Roman and the Anglican churches, are not in harmony with the principles of equality set forth in the New Testament.<sup>83</sup> (Emphasis original)

While he began the article with the point that if liturgical changes enhance the worship and emphasis on the Word, then they are good, such an extreme view on the use of vestments and such a black and white understanding of the clergy/laity relationship made Kretzmann find himself out of step with some of the things going on in the LC-MS at the time.

One of Kretzmann's more analytical insights into the theology of the day was his "Honest Attempt At An Objective Evaluation of the Proposed Common Document or Confession."<sup>84</sup> In this document Kretzmann set up what he believed was the proper criteria for a confession of any sort: It must have no ambiguity, nor should it either intentionally or

<sup>81</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Aphorisms on the Liturgical Movement," P.E.K. Supplementary File I, Concordia Historical Institute.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "An Honest Attempt at an Evaluation of the Proposed "Common Document" or Confession," P.E.K. File #4, Concordia Historical Institute.

unintentionally allow for the position of the writers to be misunderstood in any way. Based on this system, Kretzmann had four problems with the *Common Confession*. 1) It had no antitheses. This, according to Kretzmann, flew in the face of how Lutherans had always understood confessions, and left the Church wide open to any number of false doctrines, because the errors were not specifically pointed out as being in error. 2) Related to the first is that the *Confession* did not deal specifically with past differences between the LC-MS and the ALC (e.g. evolution, inspiration, the Law itself as a means of grace, the distinction between the universal priesthood and the parish pastor, the visible and invisible Church, prayer fellowship, and others). 3) He also pointed out that there are inadequate sections in the propositions themselves. He especially was concerned with the section on Election, the Church, and the Anti-Christ. 4) Finally, the *Common Confession* was over-simplified in the attempt make it readable for laymen. He ended the document with the question of whether or not the LC-MS had the right to accept this document when there were theologians in their Synod who openly taught doctrine against some of the controverted points. Apparently he was referring to Graebner, Arndt, and the others at the St. Louis Seminary.

"The Congregation as a Corporate Body" outlined Kretzmann's views concerning the relationship of the local congregation to any other organizations, including a synod.<sup>85</sup> Through an examination of the use of the word *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία) Kretzmann developed the argument that only the local congregation, as such, can be recognized as the visible church. Other organizations, like a larger church, a synod, denomination, or inter-denominational organizations (e.g. the Lutheran World

<sup>85</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "The Congregation as a Corporate Body," P.E. Kretzmann Supplementary File I, Concordia Historical Institute.

Federation) were not the visible church. He pointed out that there are no examples of Christians holding membership in anything but the local congregation.<sup>86</sup> There were no Scriptural examples of anything remotely similar to a synod, and the only relationship there appeared to be between congregations in Scripture were fraternal relations, based on a common cause. His conclusion was that the organization of synods was God pleasing, but entirely a matter of Christian liberty.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, no body larger than a local congregation could assume any of the functions of the *ekklesia*, such as calling a pastor, excommunicating, celebrating the Eucharist, etc. Related to this, of course, was the fact that the offices of parish school teachers, deacons and professors were divine, but that they could only be done under the jurisdiction of the congregation. We can see, therefore, a difference in understanding on the function and purpose of the synod, and how it related to these auxiliary offices, between Kretzmann and his opponents.

In October of 1949, Kretzmann wrote a very significant three page article entitled "What Next?"<sup>88</sup> In this document Kretzmann saw the problem in the Synod getting to the point of no return. He set forth seven specific things (presented here in summary) that confessional Lutherans could do to help rectify the situation:

1. Continue to expose public aberrations from the truth of God's Word. These include: Advocating unionism and prayer fellowship, declaring certain Scriptural "doctrines" not to be divisive of fellowship, denying the clear teaching of Romans 16:17ff., refusing to accept the Pope as the Anti-Christ, holding false views on the Church and saying that engagement is not tantamount to marriage, etc.
2. Condemn persistent errorists, specifically by telling their names to the world.
3. Insist on the application of synodical discipline out of a true love for the brethren.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>88</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "What Next?," P.E.K. Supplementary File I, Concordia Historical Institute.

4. Withhold contributions if none of the other actions have an effect.
5. Prepare for eventually leaving the Synod. He here cited Romans 16:17ff, I Timothy 6:5, etc.
6. Admonish all who keep quiet to speak the truth of God's Word, for their own sake.
7. Study the possibility of saving at least a part of Synod's property for the work of the orthodox party if the controversy is not handled in a God-pleasing manner by the 1950 convention.<sup>89</sup>

Of these numbers five and seven were the most significant. This was the first time Kretzmann suggested in public writings that there would be a split in the Synod if nothing was done to rectify the situation. He set the "deadline" to be the 1950 convention.

Through all of these writings we can see a man with deep conviction as to the rightness of his cause. Kretzmann was absolutely convinced that his position was the only one which could be tolerated, but he did not hold this with an arrogant attitude. To him, the entire episode of the change in LC-MS theology seemed out of step with what the Synod had stood on for one hundred years. That is probably one reason why it took him until 1951 to finally sever all ties with his beloved Synod.

## THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

On September 25-26, 1951, a group of pastors and laymen met at St. John's Lutheran Church in Okabena, Minnesota. Their purpose: the formation of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference (OLC). Although the number of individuals present was confused in publicity reports, official proceedings reported that was fifteen pastors and five laymen attended.<sup>90</sup> Of these, nine pastors and all five laymen signed the final articles of incorporation.

There are several things contained in the *Convention Proceedings*

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-3.

<sup>90</sup>For the exact listing of attendees, please see Appendix E.

which are of particular interest. The first is the "Historical Note" which preceded the proceedings. In this historical note, the unnamed author gives a two page background of the events preceding the formation of the OLC.<sup>91</sup> The author began by stating that the "agitation" over Lutheran union began in the LC-MS in 1929, and resulted in the very fine *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*, adopted in 1932, and reaffirmed in 1947. The American Lutheran Church responded with the *Doctrinal Declaration*, which was designed, along with the *Brief Statement*, to be the basis for doctrinal discussion between the two church bodies.<sup>92</sup> In 1947 the LC-MS decided that this was not an appropriate action. Meanwhile, according to the author, the entire situation with the *A Statement* developed. Finally, everything reached its head when the 1950 convention accepted the *Common Confession* by majority voice vote (*Part I*; *Part II* did not exist yet). This, according to the author of the historical note, was not only unconstitutional, but was unscriptural, because the Bible requires full doctrinal unity, not merely majority doctrinal unity. Shortly before this, in 1949, a group of laymen formed the St. Louis Study Club. This group came into being because of the St. Louis Seminary position that engagement is not a Scriptural requirement, the breaking of which would be divorce. The group "spread" through the United States, largely through a document entitled, *Confession of Faith Professed and Practiced by All True Lutherans*.<sup>93</sup> Mr. Herman A. Strumpler (b. 1899), the leader of the St. Louis Study Club, felt it necessary to organize all "true" orthodox Lutherans who had signed the Confession of Faith, and was then instrumental in organizing the meeting

<sup>91</sup>Orthodox Lutheran Conference, First Convention Proceedings, September 25-26, 1951, pp. 3-4.

<sup>92</sup>LC-MS, Proceedings of 1938, p. 231.

<sup>93</sup>Contained in the Proceedings of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, September 25-26, 1951, pp. 51-55.

which was held September 25-26, 1951. This "Historical Note" showed several significant things: 1) The meeting was not a "spur of the moment" meeting organized by people who were recently dissatisfied with the Missouri Synod. 2) The individuals involved, at least upon writing the *Proceedings*, could trace in their own minds why the OLC came about, and what specific events in the Synod prompted them. 3) And it showed the strong influence of Mr. Harold Strumpler on the theological position and emphasis in the OLC.

The Conference elected the following men to office: Rev. Wallace H. McLaughlin, President; Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann, Vice-President; Rev. Albert Schupmann, Secretary; Mr. Fred J. Niebruegge, Treasurer; And Mr. Harold A. Strumpler, Member-At-Large. We are already familiar with Dr. Kretzmann, so we will direct our attention to the man elected president, Rev. McLaughlin. The Rev. Wallace Mclaughlin was born in Philadelphia on March 28, 1902. He was born and raised Presbyterian, but was received as a member of the Lutheran Church (U.L.C.A.) in 1918.<sup>94</sup> He was ordained in 1924 after attending Mount Airy Seminary. Through the study of Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* he became convinced of the Missouri Synod's position on verbal inspiration and was eventually led to join the LC-MS. He then served as a missionary to China from 1928-1938, assisted in Negro mission work in Philadelphia, and served as pastor of Immanuel, Pittsburgh, from 1940 until 1952. The congregation opted not to join the Orthodox Lutheran Conference and deposed him in 1952. On the Synodical level, the only notable position he held was as one of Dr. Behnken's "Ten and Ten" of the *A Statement* incident. This gave him, along with A.T. Kretzmann and Harold Romoser, first hand

<sup>94</sup>Items from his biography were taken from the Orthodox Lutheran, Vol. 1 #3, January 1952, p. 33.

information on the way the Synod handled the *A Statement* matter. In all probability, much of the information the OLC members received on the "A Statement" was from Rev. McLaughlin.

The articles of agreement adopted by the OLC began with a preamble, which stated in a condensed form, the basic thought of the "Historical Note" found at the beginning of the *Proceedings*.<sup>95</sup> The confessional platform was simply stated as that of the *Confession of Faith Professed and Practiced By All True Lutherans*. Later the OLC adopted a document entitled *Our Confessional Platform*, which restated in a more comprehensive manner the thought of the *Confession of Faith*. It is interesting to note that in these articles of agreement there was no mention of the relationship of the OLC to its member congregations. The articles stated that the Conference had four objectives: 1) To hold fast to the truth of God's Word. 2) To continue to voice a united opposition against errors in doctrine and practice. 3) To offer encouragement and assistance to individuals who were *in statu confessionis* (protesting membership) in heterodox Lutheran bodies. (primarily the LC-MS.) 4) And finally, to build the Kingdom of God by establishing missions wherever possible.<sup>96</sup>

These articles of agreement indicated that the purpose of the organization was to form an orthodox "synod" to counteract the "heterodox" Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Their reason for joining together was their belief in a common call by God to "mark and avoid" (Romans 16:17ff.) the Missouri Synod and not necessarily their call as Christians to further the spread of the Gospel. While they could have stayed in the Missouri Synod with the hope that the truth might convince

<sup>95</sup>*Proceedings*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 49.



the "gainsayers," as Dr. P.E. Kretzmann called them, apparently these men, including Kretzmann, believed the situation was beyond a peaceful resolve. Of the men who finally joined the OLC members of the Chicago Study Club were conspicuously absent and remained within the LC-MS. However, the Chicago Study Club and the founders of the OLC were clearly kindred spirits, and they did maintain fraternal relations for a time. Many of the men who led the Chicago Study Club eventually left the Synod a decade later to form the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation.

## **THE THEOLOGY OF THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

The OLC had two documents from which its theology could be deduced: The *Confession of Faith*, which the St. Louis Study Club produced and the OLC endorsed as its first statement of faith, and *Our Confessional Platform*, developed by Dr. Kretzmann not long after the formation of the OLC. Much of their theology could also be deduced from their official publications, although this did not differ from the official documents in any significant way. These two documents will be examined in turn.

### *Confession of Faith Professed and Practiced by All True Lutherans:*

This document, adopted by the St. Louis Study Club on November 19, 1950, became the confessional basis for the OLC. Acceptance of the document was required as a sort of "litmus test" for those attending. The

following was one of the principles followed at the convention:

...Because of the fact that there is not full unity among the pastors of the Missouri Synod, it was presumed necessary to give each of the Missouri Synod pastors attending the Conference a confessional test for their orthodoxy. Those who had signed the Confession of Faith were admitted, and given full floor and suffrage privileges. (Rom. 16,17.18; 2 John 9.10).<sup>97</sup>

Advisors from the Norwegian Synod and the Wisconsin Synod were not required to take this "confessional test," because their church bodies were still orthodox. Thus, all those attending worked with the premise of the doctrinal stand that this *Confession of Faith* held to be true. It is not known whether there were any members who objected to this standard. No objections were noted in the official proceedings. In addition to those who signed at the OLC meeting, the "Historical Note" pointed out that there were signatures from 74 pastors and professors and 45 laymen in the Missouri Synod.<sup>98</sup>

The document itself was divided into two parts: A general confessional statement, and twelve specific points. The general statement declared the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God. It accepted the Symbolical Books of 1580 and the *Brief Statement* of 1932, reaffirmed in 1947. Furthermore, it specifically did not accept the *Doctrinal Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church, the *Doctrinal Affirmation* of 1944, and it especially did not accept the *Common Confession* of 1950.<sup>99</sup> It pointed out, as it did again in the specific points, that one cannot accept both the *Brief Statement* and the *Common Confession*.

The twelve points, rather than being a systematic explanation of their theology, outlined the theological controversies with which they had specific concerns on which they held a definite position. The twelve points

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 51.

are most easily examined one at a time.

The first point was that a Scriptural engagement initiates holy marriage and not merely a societal norm. This statement probably came about as the result of the 1949 position of Dr. Sieck and the St. Louis Seminary that engagement is not tantamount to marriage.<sup>100</sup> This was a position that the OLC continued to hold throughout its existence.

The second point was that Romans 16:17-18 is a clear passage and is to be used in reference to any fraternizing in the religious field where there is no doctrinal unity. It applies to not only non-Christians, but other Christians and even aberrants within Lutheranism as well. This, of course, was in direct contradiction to thesis five of the *A Statement*.<sup>101</sup>

The third point was that the "selective fellowship" often practiced by Lutheran bodies in America was generally outright unionism or would inevitably lead to unionism. It should therefore not be practiced by confessional Lutherans.

The fourth point was that the National Lutheran Council, the National Council of Christian Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and any organizations of this type were essentially unionistic church bodies, especially with reference to their Eucharistic services. These organizations were to be avoided by confessional Lutherans.

The fifth point was a reiteration of verbal inspiration, and made a strong point that not only doctrinal statements, but any statements, historical, geographical, even spurious are inspired by God. It cited the Small Catechism in saying that the Holy Ghost moved holy men to write and put into their minds the very thoughts and very words which they wrote.

<sup>100</sup>St. Louis Lutheran, "Engagement Not Tantamount to Marriage, Opines Sem Faculty," Saturday, October 1, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>101</sup>See Appendix C.

The sixth point was that the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines in Lutheran circles had caused much confusion. The point read:

...We dare not give up one statement of the word. He who teaches that non-fundamental doctrines are not divisive of church fellowship thereby becomes guilty of separatistic teaching. We reject, in addition, the teaching that it is neither necessary nor possible to be agreed in all points of doctrine, or that complete agreement in details of doctrine and practice is not required.<sup>102</sup>

It is difficult to estimate how far this statement was to be taken. In its extreme "details of doctrine and practice" could be interpreted to mean details to the point of the same Bible translation, the same liturgical vestments, or even the same liturgy. Whatever the interpretation, it was written in a very open-ended, non specific manner which was the exact opposite of its original intent.

The seventh point was related to the sixth and pointed to the evil of denying the clarity of Holy Scripture. It argued that to inject theories about exegetical difficulties, theological questions and open questions can be both dangerous and misleading. The authors presented the simple solution: "The regular study of Holy Writ by believing Christians will remove most difficulties."<sup>103</sup> In other words, they argued that most of the problems with the Bible are a result of the darkening of people's minds, not because of the lack of clarity of Holy Writ.

The eighth point argued that although the Bible does not promote isolationism, neither does it sanction behavior which can give offence to brethren. Christians were not to identify themselves with outward forms and customs which were associated with enemies of the truth.

Specifically, in the matter of "vestments and characteristic services."<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

What exactly was meant by this is unclear. Did this mean no use of vestments that could be interpreted as "Romanizing"? It is difficult to determine, although the point suggested that Christians are to separate, even within the Lutheran group, from those who support erroneous teachings.

The ninth point suggested that church organizations, such as synods, have jurisdiction in doctrinal matters alone and only when those resolutions and doctrinal pronouncements were in accord with the Word of God. Further it argued that any bureaucratic or hierarchical man-made rules could not be put over individuals or congregations without their consent, nor could they exist unless sanctioned by the Word of God. A synod could not bind the conscience of its members with anything except for what was required by God's Word.

The tenth point was a reiteration of the position of the parish pastor in the congregation and of the universal priesthood of all believers, as understood by Luther. The believers had the right and the obligation to judge in all matters referring to doctrine and practice. The pastor was the one who had been called to publicly administer the Office of the Keys for the local congregation.

The eleventh point was that any individuals who were aware of the error of the *A Statement*, and who were aware of the false teaching appearing in the *Lutheran Witness* and elsewhere, must state their objections. If they do not, they were partaking of other men's sins.<sup>105</sup>

This point is very important because it stated, in effect, that anyone in the synod who did not agree with the signers of the *Confession of Faith* was a heretic or at least tolerated heretics within their own midst.

The twelfth point stated in no uncertain terms that it was

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

impossible to uphold both the *Brief Statement* and the *Common Confession*. It went on to say that the time had come when upholders of the truth in the Missouri Synod must proclaim the "actual status of affairs," lest they be condemned by the Lord of Truth together with those who persistently taught falsehood.<sup>106</sup>

For an church body to hold up this document as their statement of faith was extraordinary. It was ambiguous in several of the points, but at the same time allowed no room for discussion even on open questions such as the use of vestments. It would also be very difficult to use as a teaching device.

*Our Confessional Platform:*

The document *Our Confessional Platform* was very different in character and intent than the *Confession of Faith*. Rather than setting out to declare the problems with the Lutheran Church in America, its intent was to be a confession of faith in the same manner as the *Brief Statement* or the *Formula of Concord*. Therefore it was much more thorough. It had sections on all of the major parts of theology with following antitheses. It was eleven pages long (legal sized) and roughly the same length as the *Augsburg Confession*. The document was "compiled" by Dr. Kretzmann, and first appeared in print in part in the November, 1954 edition of the *Orthodox Lutheran*.<sup>107</sup> Rather than examine this document part by part, we will look at the sections in the document which point to unique emphases in the theology of the OLC.

In the first section, under the Means of Grace, the section on the

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>107</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, "Our Confessional Platform," *Orthodox Lutheran*, November 1954, pp. 165-167.

Holy Scriptures had a very straightforward antithesis that is worth repeating here:

In view of the fact that clarity is an essential attribute of Holy Writ (Ps. 19:7; Is. 35:8; Ps. 119:105) and that aberrations from Scriptural truths are due to human ignorance and perversity (2 Peter 3:16; Eph. 4:18), we reject and condemn statements which declare that "it is neither necessary nor possible" to be in agreement on all teachings of Holy Scripture, that "there are doctrines which are not divisive of church fellowship," that "existing differences are merely a matter of terminology, or of interpretation, need not be divisive, may be understood to be correct," all such declarations being evidence, to put it mildly, of theological amateurism, if not of actual antagonism to Scripture truth.<sup>108</sup> (emphasis original)

This section closely corresponded to points six and seven of the *Confession of Faith*, and allowed for no differences whatsoever in doctrine. If it is a doctrine, according to Kretzmann, then it was by definition potentially divisive of fellowship. Conspicuous by its absence, however, was any reference to a complete unity in practice (e.g. vestments) as was contained in the *Confession of Faith*. Whether this was an oversight, or a distinction in doctrinal emphasis over the eight years is difficult to determine.

In the section on the Work of Creation and Preservation, there was a specific antithesis for the entire theory of evolution, with all of its implications.<sup>109</sup> It pointed to the date of the earth as being somewhere around 4000 years before Christ. The statement furthermore rejected the entire concept that man descended from a lower being and especially theistic evolution. Also conspicuous by its absence was any distinction made between what is now known as macroevolution vs. microevolution.

In the section on the Church, it was pointed out that the Church is essentially invisible, or *obscura, abscondia*, and that its presence may only be determined by the means of grace, which are the "marks" of the

<sup>108</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, Our Confessional Platform, p. 1.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

Church.<sup>110</sup> However, this section noted, these marks were not *part* of the Church, for only the true believers in Christ are the Church. Later in the section Kretzmann pointed out that ~~the~~ there is only one visible representation of the Church that is recognized in Scripture, and that is the local, organized congregation. Kretzmann went to great lengths to point out that these local congregations were what was referred to in Acts and all of the letters of Paul, because they used "parliamentary procedure," letters of recommendation addressed to specific congregations, the Sacrament only in operation under the local congregation, etc.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, it was pointed out that in no way did any type of synod have any Scriptural backing and that synods were only for outward cooperative efforts on the part of the congregations. This question remained one of the most controversial to be debated on the nature of the Church in the twentieth century. It is one of the great ironies of theology that Dr. Theodore Graebner, perhaps Dr. Kretzmann's greatest theological opponent, was to come to the same conclusion, but for entirely different reasons.<sup>112</sup>

The final section which is of significance to us is the section on "A Rightful Betrothal."<sup>113</sup> This statement reiterated what the *Confession of Faith* stated, namely, that a rightful betrothal places the same obligations upon the parties as a marriage, especially with regard to fidelity. The Small Catechism was quoted as supporting this position by stating:

"Marriage is entered into by a rightful betrothal, or engagement."<sup>114</sup> <sup>115</sup>

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup>Kurt Marquart, *Anatomy of an Explosion*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>113</sup>P.E. Kretzmann, *Our Common Platform*, p. 10.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup>It is beyond the author how the Small Catechism was used here to state that an engagement requires the same fidelity and obligations as a marriage.



In examining these two documents, we can see that there were very few actual doctrinal differences between the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and the Orthodox Lutheran Conference. The main differences between the two bodies could probably be summarized as the increased emphasis in the OLC on the questions of engagement and the Anti-Christ, a much more specific, definite position on the question of fellowship (both prayer and altar/pulpit), and a much greater emphasis on uniformity in practice.

## **THE SYNODICAL RESPONSE TO THE ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

Three sources recorded the response the LC-MS had to the formation of the OLC: 1) A court case involving Trinity Lutheran Church, Chesterfield, Missouri. 2) A court case involving St. John's Lutheran Church, Becker County, Minnesota. 3) And finally, President John Behnken's personal correspondence regarding the OLC.

The LC-MS response to the OLC was a very simple, straightforward action: They made every attempt to prove that there were, in fact, no actual differences in doctrine, and that the pastors and congregations who formed the OLC were doing so for either personal reasons or in an especially legalistic spirit on their part. We can see this response in two areas especially: the Chesterfield court case and Dr. Behnken's correspondence with district presidents and circuit visitors dealing with the OLC and their congregations.

*The Chesterfield Court Case:*

This court case involved two factions of Trinity Lutheran Church, Chesterfield, Missouri. A portion of the court case was reprinted in the April, 1954 edition of the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*,<sup>116</sup> because it was believed that the court case would be of great significance to any study of the OLC in later years as it proves to be significant to us today. Upon the formation of the OLC one faction of the congregation (approximately 90 members) wished to stay with the LC-MS, while another faction (70 members) wished to join the OLC. (The pastor, Gustav Schupmann, was one of the founders of the OLC.) The case came to court because the majority were contending that the property and liquid assets of the congregation were theirs, since they stayed with the Missouri Synod.

In this court case, OLC President Wallace McLaughlin and Vice-President Paul E. Kretzmann testified as to whether or not there were any doctrinal differences between the OLC and the LC-MS. This was the primary point in the controversy: The OLC contended that there were real, significant doctrinal differences; the LC-MS contended that there were not. Mr. Robertson, for the LC-MS, stated this specifically:

We are contending that insofar as this case is concerned that the dispute is not over a doctrinal question, and it has been our contention throughout the case. That is the reason for our numerous objections on any doctrinal question. They, by their answer, have injected a doctrinal question, and on rebuttal we have to have our theologians testify as to whether there is or is not a difference in these doctrinal questions.<sup>117</sup>

Dr. Kretzmann, in his testimony, limited the doctrinal differences to three

<sup>116</sup>"The Doctrinal Position of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, A Court Statement," *CHIQ*, Vol. XXVII, April 1954, pp. 20-33.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

main areas: The acceptance of the *Common Confession*, the interpretation of Romans 16:17, and the question of engagement. Prof. McLaughlin concurred in his testimony. The LC-MS contended throughout the entire case that there were no actual doctrinal differences, and therefore, Pastor Schupmann and the minority faction had no right to leave the LC-MS in opposition to the majority of the congregation. The congregation eventually simply dissolved.

*The Minnesota Court Case:*

In July of 1952, a court case went before the Seventh Judicial District of the State of Minnesota. The case was against the Rev. Francis Q. Schupmann and others operating as members of the OLC congregation in Becker County, Minnesota.<sup>118</sup> The question revolved around which party had legal rights to the property and legal standing of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Rev. Francis Schupmann had operated as the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church from March 7, 1949. The constitution of the congregation stated that if there was a split in the congregation only the party which remained true to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions could claim the rights to any property.

The court case, in its "Findings of Fact" section, stated that:

...After the adoption of the "Common Confession" by the Mo. Synod in 1950, a few pastors of congregations affiliated with the Mo. Synod contended that the "Common Confession" was a departure from the Lutheran doctrine formerly held by those churches affiliated with the Mo. Synod. The great majority of the pastors of congregations affiliated with the Mo. Synod contended that there was no change in doctrine, but merely some unimportant changes in the phraseology employed in the "Common Confession."<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup>Dr. John Behnken, Box 20, CHI, Document #6042.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.

This statement was amazing in itself, because apparently the court deemed it necessary to judge whether or not there were doctrinal differences involved in the adoption of the *Common Confession*. Rev. Schupmann started holding study classes and urged his congregation to leave the Missouri Synod, and join the OLC.<sup>120</sup> The majority of the congregation opted to stay with the Missouri Synod and eventually deposed the Rev. Schupmann. Rev. Schupmann refused to recognize the validity of this action, continued to hold services for his minority faction and maintained his residence in the parsonage. Rev. Schupmann and the minority later changed the locks on the church doors and refused the majority the right to use the building, except for attending the services held by Rev. Schupmann. The court case came about because the majority filed suit against Rev. Schupmann and the minority. Interestingly enough, the court also stated that there were no doctrinal differences between the two factions, since they both upheld Article 2 of St. John's Constitution.<sup>121</sup>

According to the court case, the Rev. Schupmann was legally deposed of because the meeting was properly held by a majority of the members, which was what the constitution required. The court also ruled, however, that both parties had equal rights to the church property since there were no doctrinal differences between the two groups. In the memorandum, Judge Rol E. Barron went so far as to set forth his own legal definition of the "Call." It was as follows:

The "Call" is the contract of employment between Rev. Schupmann and the congregation. The contract is for personal services involving a high degree of truth and confidence, and therefore terminable by either party upon reasonable notice...The congregation had the right to

<sup>120</sup>This obviously must have happened after the formation of the OLC in September of 1951.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

discharge Rev. Schupmann because of his persistent attempts to change the synodical affiliation, which attempts caused serious friction in his congregation.<sup>122</sup>

This definition as it stands would not hold up to theological scrutiny; however, from a legal point of view, it is difficult to determine what other definition the state could hold which would satisfy its needs.

From our perspective in studying the OLC, this case is very significant. The state took the same position which the LC-MS was trying to hold from the beginning: There were no actual doctrinal differences and the OLC was being extremist and hasty in its disassociation with the LC-MS. This case was certainly a win on the side of the Missouri Synod.

*President John H. Behnken's Correspondence:*

Through the writings and press releases which Dr. Behnken sent out, one can see the manner in which the OLC question was handled, as well as some of the criticisms that members of the LC-MS had of the men in the OLC. We will look at several documents, each in turn.

The earliest document from Dr. Behnken's files was a letter to a Rev. A.F. Wegener dated October 19, 1951 (three weeks after the formation of the OLC).<sup>123</sup> Rev. Wegener wrote to Dr. Behnken, expressing concern over the events leading to the formation of the OLC and asking how the districts should handle dealing with both the pastors and congregations which were involved with the OLC. Dr. Behnken's advice was that the Synod had an obligation to the congregations, as well as to the pastors. The officials should "get into the congregations" and that the congregation's pastor should be present if at all possible.<sup>124</sup> He

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>123</sup>Dr. John Behnken, Personal Correspondence, CHI, Box 20.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.

wrote that the official stance was that there had been no change in the doctrine or practice of the Missouri Synod. Essentially, they were to flat out deny the charges that were leveled against the Synod by the OLC.

In a letter dated December 10, 1951, from Minnesota District President H.A. Gamber, the Rev. Gamber informed Dr. Behnken that the district was doing everything in its power to keep Immanuel, Minneapolis, from leaving the Synod.<sup>125</sup> Rev. Gamber, along with Drs. Walter Baepler and Arnold Grumm attended a congregational meeting with 500 people present. Dr. Kretzmann, Mr. Strumpler and several other members from the OLC were present at the meeting. According to Rev. Gamber, they presented a "united front," contending that Missouri was still loyal to the Bible and the Confessions, and that it was doing everything in its power to keep its members loyal in doctrine and practice. They also pointed out that in a very large body doing this simply took time. Obviously, the Synod was remaining fairly consistent with the approach they were using against the members of the OLC. These last two letters coincided with the manner the Chesterfield court case was handled. There were no problems in Synod, contrary to what the OLC was claiming.

However, there was apparently some personal antagonism between members of the two parties, especially with reference to Mr. Herman Strumpler. In a letter addressed to Dr. Behnken from Dr. Walter Baepler, professor of Church History at Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, Dr. Baepler expressed his opinion that Mr. Strumpler was a very difficult person. He wrote:

Well, old man Strumpler is sore at me, as the enclosed will show. I suppose I angered him, when I told him that he was the man who was keeping the fires burning high about the issues in the Statement by sending out cards to the clergy and trying to poll them.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., Document #6021.

...He is a troublemaker and will use any opportunity fair or unfair - to fan the flames of discontent and dissension.<sup>126</sup>

It is difficult to determine if these charges were substantiated because the "enclosed" were not with the material in Dr. Behnken's files. It is important to remember, nevertheless, that there were personality conflicts; that Mr. Strumpler apparently had angered individuals in the past; and that this antagonism could have potentially impacted the Synod's dealings with the OLC, since Mr. Strumpler was their Director of Public Relations.

In another letter to Dr. Behnken from the Rev. T.A. Weinhold, President of the Western District, Rev. Weinhold claimed that the pastor of the Trinity, Chesterfield, Missouri, Rev. Gustav Schupmann had "autocratic" powers over his congregation, and that he in effect scared many of the members who disagreed with him out of speaking out. Furthermore, Rev. Weinhold wrote: "In addition he has men like Strumpler and others who are known to stoop to any method, fair or foul, in order to achieve their desired goal."<sup>127</sup> Rev. Weinhold went on to say that they were doing everything in their power to uphold the rights of those who wished to remain with the Synod, although Rev. Schupmann's party appeared to be in control.

Dr. Behnken, in a press release for the LC-MS clergy, dated February 11, 1952, attempted to deal with the question of fellowship with members of the LC-MS.<sup>128</sup> Dr. Behnken quoted two and a half pages of citations from the OLC *Proceedings* which pointed to their dissatisfaction with the LC-MS and which indicated that the OLC did not consider itself in fellowship with the Missouri Synod as a corporate body. Dr. Behnken

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., #6027, p. 1.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., #6031, p. 1.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., #6034, pp. 1-4.

went on to say that the OLC no longer considers themselves in fellowship with the LC-MS, but that both he and the rest of the Synod would gladly deal with them as brethren as soon as they withdrew the assertion that the LC-MS must be avoided on the basis of Romans 16:17. As it stood at that time, Dr. Behnken would deal with the Rev. McLaughlin as "presidents of two church bodies."<sup>129</sup> It is interesting that in this press release Dr. Behnken did not state any of the doctrinal differences which the OLC claimed existed between themselves and the Missouri Synod.

The Rev. Arnold E. Wenger wrote to Dr. Behnken pleading with him to assist him in dealing with the charges being made by former members of his congregation (Immanuel, Minneapolis) against the LC-MS.<sup>130</sup> The Rev. Otto Schupmann had formed a counter-congregation (Holy Trinity) and was serving former members of Immanuel, Minneapolis. Dr. Behnken responded with a clear-cut letter that succinctly denied the charges Rev. Schupmann was making against the Missouri Synod. In reference to their arguments against the *Common Confession*, Dr. Behnken claimed that they lacked any biblical proof. According to Behnken, these men had every opportunity to express their dissent at the Milwaukee Convention in 1950. They had the floor and said that the *Common Confession* was unscriptural, but did not back themselves up with any biblical proof. When charged that the Synod was using "hierarchical tyranny" in its dealing with congregations, Behnken flat out denied the charge.<sup>131</sup> Behnken argued that in order for officials to carry out their role as servants and advisors, they must, by definition, meet with congregations. Behnken criticized Schupmann for making overgeneralizations in reference to Synodical dealings with congregations.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., #6046, p. 1a.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., p. 2.



He also claimed that the students at the Seminary (St. Louis) were taught that the Pope is the Anti-Christ and that the Church is indeed invisible. He argued that Schupmann was making charges to the contrary without presenting any proof to support himself.

In a letter dated November 13, 1951, Dr. Behnken addressed the district presidents on the events leading up to the formation of the OLC and the proper procedure for dealing with them.<sup>132</sup> Apparently, there was some confusion at the beginning as to what the exact number of pastors and congregations who joined was. Numbers given ranged from "fifty pastors and fifty laymen" to "several dozen" to "twenty pastors and twenty-five laymen" to the accurate three congregations and ten pastors. Dr. Behnken pointed out once again that the Synod had a duty to both the pastor and the congregation. When there was confusion on the issues, and if the congregation asked for the synodical officials to step in, then the officials should do so in a loving and evangelical manner. "Everything is to be done open and above board," wrote Dr. Behnken.<sup>133</sup> He was also concerned that the congregations realize that the officials were not autocrats or tyrants, but were friends and advisors. He cited an example (the name not given) where the congregation asked for the district officials to come in and discuss the matter with them and with the pastor. The pastor saw the district entering in as autocratic and refused to meet with the officials. He considered the meeting sinful and ungodly. The officials agreed to come to the meeting and the congregation sent an envoy to the pastor, asking him to attend. He agreed to come, only to tell the congregation that their actions were sinful. The congregation voted to stay with the LC-MS, and then suspended the pastor. In a postscript to

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., #6050, pp. 1-4.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

the letter, it was noted that: H.D. Mensing, pastor of a congregation in Tinley Park, Illinois, had been suspended; Rev. M.L. Natterer's call had been declared null and void by his congregation in Lansing, Illinois; the South Dakota officials had declared the Rev. Paul Bloedel ineligible for a call; the congregation of the Rev. Albert Schupmann (Secretary of the OLC) had deposed him; and finally, the congregation of President McLaughlin had "terminated" his pastorate and voted to stay with the Synod.<sup>134</sup> All of these were apparently used to indicate that these pastors did not have any congregational support for their position.

## CONCLUSION

The Orthodox Lutheran Conference did not exist for long. After a minor controversy in 1956, the body split in two, part of the group remaining based in Minnesota, and another group, using the same name, based in Lebanon, Oregon. The splinter group eventually renamed itself the *Concordia Lutheran Conference*, which is still in existence today, albeit very small in number. The original body eventually dissolved, with some members going into the Wisconsin Synod, and some members (most notably Kretzmann and McLaughlin) helping in the formation of the *Lutheran Churches of the Reformation*.

In closing, throughout the episode with Dr. Brux, the fellowship question of the 1930's and 1940's, the Synod's dealing with Dr. Kretzmann, the question of the *A Statement*, and the Synod's handling of the OLC once they were organized there permeated an underlying two-sidedness in how to deal with the problem. There were, undeniably, changes going on in the theology and practice of the Synod. However,

<sup>134</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

instead of facing these questions head on and addressing them in public, an attempt was made to maintain the "public image" that all was well in the stalwart, theologically solid Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

We saw this especially in the Synod's dealing with the OLC after their formation. An attempt was made to flat out deny any and all of the concerns that Dr. P.E. Kretzmann, Rev. Wallace McLaughlin, and others felt were serious concerns within the LC-MS. The OLC, conversely, took theological positions on matters such as vestments, which the Lutheran Church has never raised to a "confessional" status. The OLC saw the LC-MS as going over to the "liberals," while the LC-MS saw the OLC as being a group of extreme legalists.

This paper has been a preliminary study into the events and people leading to the formation of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference. In that goal, it has succeed. However the paper was limited in the resources used. For a more thorough study, it would be necessary to have more of the personal files of Dr. John Behnken, P.E. Kretzmann's personal correspondence, the official correspondence of the OLC and its first president, Wallace McLaughlin, and the correspondence and paperwork that the district presidents and their circuit visitors used in reference to the congregations whose pastors joined the OLC.

This entire era is ripe for further research. Study into the work of Paul E. Kretzmann would be very fruitful, as well as into the life and impact of Wallace McLaughlin. It would also be beneficial to do further study into the Chicago Study Club and how it impacted the Synod as a whole, particularly with reference to the *Common Confession*. Another area of interest which was barely touched upon in this paper was the relations that the OLC had with the Wisconsin, Norwegian and Slovak Synods, and how this impacted the Synodical Conference. It might also be

particularly interesting to examine the life of Harold Strumpler, who not only helped to start the OLC but the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation twelve years later.

On a personal note, the author would like to thank the Concordia Historical Institute for its valuable assistance in research. The author would also especially like to thank Sarah Honig for assisting with the typing, and Renea Gernant and Calli Holaway for their invaluable assistance in reading and correcting the rough draft.

## APPENDIX A

*Timetable of Events: 1902-1965*

YEAR	DATE	EVENT
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1902-1905		Free conferences held with Iowa and Ohio Synods
1905		P.F. Bente presents article on fellowship
1919		Publication of <i>Chicago Theses</i>
1925		Publication of <i>Minneapolis Theses</i>
1932		Publication of <i>Brief Statement</i>
1938		Synodical Resolutions on Fellowship
1940	1	The <i>Confessional Lutheran</i> is formed by the Rev. Paul Burgdorf.
1944		Saginaw Convention
	9	The <i>Doctrinal Affirmation</i> is approved by the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the LC-MS and the Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship of the ALC.
1945	1/30	The <i>Chicago Study Club</i> is formed.
	9/6-7	A <i>Statement</i> is written and signed in Chicago, Illinois by 44 concerned pastors of the LC-MS.
	9	Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann resigns from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.
	11	Dr. John Behnken meets with Chicago Study Club to discuss the <i>A Statement</i> .
1948	6/30	P.E. Kretzmann resigns from the LC-MS clergy roster.
1949	12/6	The <i>Common Confession: Part I</i> is approved by the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the LC-MS and the Committee on Fellowship of the ALC.
1951	1/1	Dr. John Behnken publishes his "Thoughts on Prayers Fellowship and Joint Prayer, etc."
	1/9	Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann renounces his membership in the LC-MS, printed in the <i>Lutheran Witness</i> .
	8/15	Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and

Practice to the Praesidium of the LC-MS.

- |       |         |   |
|-------|---------|---|
| 9/26  |         | The <i>Orthodox Lutheran Conference</i> is formed in Minneapolis, Minnesota.  |
| 11/15 |         | Rev. Wallace McLaughlin is deposed as pastor of Immanuel, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.   |
| 11/28 |         | Dr. John Behnken and the Rev. Wallace McLaughlin discuss the <i>Orthodox Lutheran Conference</i> at a <i>Chicago Study Club</i> meeting.                |
| 1952  |         | The Orthodox Lutheran Seminary is opened in Minneapolis, with P.E. Kretzmann at its head.   |
| 1953  | 2/9     | The <i>Common Confession: Part II</i> is approved by the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the LC-MS and the Committee on Fellowship of the ALC.          |
| 1954  |         | <i>100 Questions and Answers for Lutherans of the Synodical Conference</i> is published by the Chicago Area Church Councils and the Chicago Study Club. |
|       | 11      | <i>Our Confessional Platform</i> is compiled and published by P.E. Kretzmann.   |
| 1958  | 5       | Revision of the 8/15/51 report of the ACDP to the Praesidium.   |
| 1961  |         | <i>Lutheran News</i> (Later <i>Christian News</i> ) is formed by the Rev. Hermann Otten   |
| 1964  | 4/28-29 | The LCR has first organizational meeting. Rev. Cameron MacKenzie is named as the first Administrator.   |
| 1965  | 7/13    | Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann dies.   |

## APPENDIX B

(Taken from *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XLIII, p. 152)

The names of the signers of the Statement are as follows:

Acker, Lawrence	Riedrich, E.J.	Kurth, Erwin
Amiling, C.M.	Geiseman, O.A.	Kumnick, H.H.
Arndt, W.	Giesleler, C.A.	Lindeman, Fred H.
Bertels, H.	Glabe, E.B.	Lindeman, Herbert
Bauer, W.E.	Graebner, Theo.	Loose, F.W.
Behnke, C.A.	Hanser, Arthur R.	Meyer, Adolf F.
Bernthal, Aug. F.	Hemmeter, Bernard H.	Miller Paul F.
Bobzin, Aug. F.	Memmeter, H.B.	Polack, W.G.
Bretscher, Paul	Milmer, Wm. H.	Sauer, O.A.
Bruening, Wm. F.	Hoffmann, Oswald	Schroedel, Theo. H.
Brustat, A.W.	Kretzmann, A.R.	Theiss, O.H.
Caemmerer, Richard R.	Kretzmann, Karl	Weber, Edmund W.
Coates, Thomas	Kretzmann, O.P.	Wenchel, J. Frederic
Deffner, L.H.	Kuechle, Geo.	Wind, H.F.
Engelbrecht, H.H.	Kuntz, Werner	

## APPENDIX C

(Taken from *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XLIII, pp. 150-152)

*In Nomine Jesu*

### A STATEMENT

We, the undersigned, as individuals, members of Synod, conscious of our responsibilities and duties before the Lord of the Church, herewith subscribe in the following statement,

ONE

*We affirm our unswerving loyalty to the great evangelical heritage of historic Lutheranism. We believe in its message and mission for this crucial hour in the time of man.*

We therefore deplore any and every tendency which would limit the power of our heritage, reduce it to narrow legalism, and confine it by manmade traditions.

TWO

*We affirm our faith in the great Lutheran principle of the inerrancy, certainty, and all-sufficiency of Holy Writ.*

We therefore deplore a tendency in our Synod to substitute human judgments, synodical resolutions, or other sources of authority for the supreme authority of Scripture.

THREE

*We affirm our conviction that the Gospel must be given free course so that it may be preached in all its truth and power to all the nations of the earth.*

We therefore deplore all man-made walls and barriers and all ecclesiastical traditions which would hinder the free course of the Gospel in the world.

FOUR

*We believe that the ultimate and basic motive for all our life and work must be love - love of God, love of the Word, love of the brethren, love of souls.*

*We affirm our conviction that the law of love must also find application to our relationship to other Lutheran bodies.*

We therefore deplore a loveless attitude which is manifesting itself within Synod. This unscriptural attitude has been expressed in suspicions of brethren, in the impinging of motives, and in the condemnation of all who have expressed differing opinions concerning some of the problems confronting our Church today.



## FIVE

*We affirm our conviction that sound exegetical procedure is the basis for sound Lutheran theology.*

We therefore deplore the fact that Romans 16:17,18 has been applied to all Christians who differ from us in certain points of doctrine. It is our conviction, based on sound exegetical and hermeneutical principles, that this text does not apply to the present situation in the Lutheran Church of America.

We furthermore deplore the misuse of First Thessalonians 5:22 in the translation "avoid every appearance of evil." This text should be used only in its true meaning, "avoid evil in every form."

## SIX

*We affirm the historic Lutheran position concerning the central importance of the una sancta and the local congregation. We believe that there should be a re-emphasis of the privileges and responsibilities of the local congregation also in the matter of determining questions of fellowship.*

We therefore deplore the new and improper emphasis on the synodical organization as basic in our consideration of the problems of the Church. We believe that no organizational loyalty can take the place of loyalty to Christ and His Church.

## SEVEN

*We affirm our abiding faith in the historic Lutheran position concerning the centrality of the Atonement and the Gospel as the revelation of God's redeeming love in Christ.*

We therefore deplore any tendency which reduces the warmth and power of the Gospel to a set of intellectual propositions which are to be grasped by the mind of man.

## EIGHT

*We affirm our conviction that any two or more Christians may pray together to the Triune God in the name of Jesus Christ if the purpose for which they meet and pray is right according to the Word of God. This obviously includes meetings of groups called for the purpose of discussing doctrinal differences.*

We therefore deplore the tendency to decide the question of prayer fellowship on any other basis beyond the clear words of Scripture.

## • NINE

*We believe that the term "unionism" should be applied only to acts in which a clear and unmistakable denial of Scriptural truth or approval of error is involved.*

We therefore deplore the tendency to apply this non-Biblical term to any and every contact between Christians of different denominations.

TEN

*We affirm the historic Lutheran position that no Christian has a right to take offense at anything which God has commanded in His Holy Word. The plea of offense must not be made a cover for the irresponsible expression of prejudices, traditions, customs, and usages.*

ELEVEN

*We affirm our conviction that in keeping with the historic Lutheran tradition and in harmony with the Synodical resolution adopted in 1938 regarding Church fellowship, such fellowship is possible without complete agreement in details of doctrine and practice which have never been considered divisive in the Lutheran Church.*

TWELVE

*We affirm our conviction that our Lord has richly, singularly, and undeservedly blessed our beloved Synod during the first century of its existence in America. We pledge the efforts of our hearts and hands to the building of Synod as the second century opens and new opportunities are given us by the Lord of the Church.*

*Soli Deo Gloria*

In Witness Whereof, we, the undersigned, affix our signatures this seventh day of September in the year of our Lord 1945 at Chicago, Illinois.

(See Appendix B for list of signatures)

## APPENDIX D

### *Confession of Faith Professed and Practiced by All True Lutherans*

(Taken from the first proceedings of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, September 25-26, 1951, pp. 51-55)

These articles of agreement have been adopted to show what we as orthodox Lutherans teach concerning certain controverted doctrines. And we invite others to join us in spreading these truths by confession and conduct.

## I. IN GENERAL

### **The Bible**

We recognize and accept, with our whole heart, and without any reservations of whatever kind, the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament as the Word given by inspiration of God.

### **The Symbols**

We accept the Lutheran Confessions, as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, as a correct exposition of the Word of God regarding all the doctrines discussed therein.

### **The Brief Statement**

We accept the BRIEF STATEMENT of the Missouri Synod (adopted in 1932 and reaffirmed in 1947) as a correct presentation of the teaching of Holy Writ on all the questions therein discussed.

### **Antithesis**

We do not accept the *Doctrinal Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church, as presented in 1938, nor the *Doctrinal Affirmation*, as presented in 1944, nor the so-called *Common Confession*, adopted by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod by a majority vote in 1950. In all these cases, as in that of the Intersynodical *Chicago Theses*, submitted to the Missouri Synod convention in 1929 and not accepted, we find that there are clear reasons, found in and based on Scripture, which compel us to reject these documents as such and to adhere wholeheartedly to the confessions named in the three opening paragraphs.

With regard to the *Common Confession*, in particular, we declare that it has not accomplished its purpose of being clear, concise, and unequivocal in composing the differences which have separated the synods concerned for many decades. The *Common Confession* is incomplete, inadequate, and at times faulty in its teaching, and it lacks throughout the vigor of the BRIEF STATEMENT.

## II. TWELVE POINTS

More specifically and offering the main reasons for forming a dissenting group, we take the following stand with regard to the doctrinal controversies in the Lutheran church bodies of America, including the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

## 1.

That the validity of a Scriptural engagement is determined by clear texts of Holy Writ which do not pertain merely to the Ceremonial Law, but are in force at all times, e.g., Gen. 24:57-58; Gen. 29:21; Deut. 22:23-26; Matt. 1:20, etc., and that the teaching in the exposition of our Small Catechism is definitely Scriptural. A Scriptural engagement initiates holy marriage and is not a mere vestibule.

## 2.

That Romans 16:17-18 is, in both the original and in translations commonly in use, a clear passage, condemning all fraternizing in the religious field where there is no doctrinal unity. 1. Cor. 1:10-; Gal. 5:9, without restriction or modification as to the degree of aberration in doctrine. The warning of the passage applies not only to non-Christians or to non-Lutherans, but to persistent adherents of aberrations within Lutheran bodies also.

## 3.

That "selective fellowship", as advocated and practiced in certain parts of Lutheran bodies in America, even if not intentionally unionistic, is bound to involve those who practice it in a relation that is contrary to the fellowship which, according to the will of God, is to obtain between those who wish to be regarded as brethren; it is thus contrary to the law of love, which required primary allegiance to those with whom honest confessors of the full truth are united in doctrinal fellowship.

## 4.

That the National Lutheran Council and the National Council of Christian Churches are *essentially* unionistic church *bodies* with distinctive marks and functions of such organizations, also that the Lutheran World Federation and all other organizations of this type are contrary to Scripture, chiefly because of the unionistic nature of their Eucharistic services and other endeavors which are not in the field of externals.

## 5.

That the phrase of Holy Writ, "*All Scripture* is given by inspiration of God," 2 Tim. 3:16, and "*Whatsoever things* were written aforetime were written for *our* learning," Rom. 15:4, declare not only the doctrinal sections of Holy Writ (specifically those pertaining to the redemption wrought by Christ), but also *all other statements*, historical accounts, geographical references, and even incidental remarks, to be the inspired truth of God. We hold the definition of our Small Catechism to be correct:

"By inspiration of God' means that God the Holy Ghost *moved* the holy men to *write*, and *put into their minds*, the *very thoughts* which they expressed and the *very words* which they wrote." 2 Pet. 1:21.

## 6.

While Holy Writ itself distinguishes between more important and less important recorded facts (1 Cor. 3:3; Hebr. 5:12-6-2) (sic), the distinction between so-called fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines while in agreement with Scripture, has been introduced by Theologians, and its abuse has caused much confusion. We dare not give up one statement of the word. He who teaches that non-fundamental doctrines are not divisive of church fellowship thereby becomes guilty of separatistic teaching. We reject, in addition, the teaching that it is neither necessary nor possible to be agreed in all points of doctrine, or that complete agreement in details of doctrine and practice is not required.

## 7.

To this point we are bound to add another. Since Scripture itself claims the attribute of *clarity* in all matters pertaining to faith and life (Ps. 119:105; Ps. 19:7-8), it is dangerous and misleading to inject theories pertaining to so-called exegetical difficulties, theological problems and open questions into any discussion regarding the unassailable truth of the bible. Most of these difficulties are not within the scope of Holy Writ. On the part of God there is nothing dark in any part of the inspired Volume; it is merely the darkness of our minds, the difficulty of certain words and phrases in the original, and a few archeological references which give us trouble; all else pertains to man's perversity. See 2 Pet. 3:16; 1 Cor. 13:9-12; 1 Cor. 2:13-16; Matt. 11:25; 2 Cor. 4:3. The regular study of Holy Writ by believing Christians will remove most difficulties.

## 8.

While Holy Writ warns against a subjective isolationism, that is, schisms and separations which are concerned with outward forms and customs that do not bear in themselves elements of confusion and disruption (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 14:33; 11:18-19), it does not sanction arbitrary modes of behavior which are apt to give offense to brethren (Rom. 14:15; 1 Cor. 8:9); and the Formula of Concord is right (Art. X, especially Nos. 5.7.16) when it tells Christians not to identify themselves, also in outward forms, with customs which are associated with the enemies of the truth, specifically also in the matter of vestments and characteristic services. Separation is *demanded by God* when church fellowship with others, also within the Lutheran group, is equivalent to the condoning of error and the supporting of erroneous teaching (1 Tim. 5:29-22; 2 John, 10-11). On such principles the Christian Church was founded and the Lutheran Church established, for the repudiation of error in doctrine and practice is an essential requirement in the case of all true members of the Christian Church.

## 9.

We regard a church organization, such as synod, a federation of congregations and certain individuals, as supreme and sovereign with reference to its own internal affairs, and its jurisdiction over its officials of every type. But the resolutions of a synod regarding doctrinal matters have validity in its constituent congregations and for its individual members only if such resolutions are in full agreement with the Word of God and do not infringe upon the sovereignty of the individual congregation. Any bureaucratic or hierarchical polity in which congregations or individuals are subjected to man-made rules or to government and direction of synodical officials cannot so function according to the Word of God. While a church body may, and should, publish its confessions and insist on the use of orthodox textbooks by its constituents, it transgresses its function, if it attempts to bind on the consciences of its members any resolutions that are not supported by Holy Writ.

## 10.

We recognize and honor the position of the parish pastors and other leaders who labor in word and doctrine (Gal. 6:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Hebr. 13:17), and we acknowledge the fact that the Lord has safeguarded their office (1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Hebr. 13:7). At the same time we emphasize the position of all Christians as kings and priests before the Lord of the Church (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6), and their right to judge all doctrine (John 10:5, 1 Cor. 2:15; 1 John 4:1), as stressed especially by Luther in various monograph and expository writings (also the matters of regulating Church Ceremonies, vestments, etc.). When believers form a congregation, they jointly exercise the Office of the Keys, forgiving and retaining sins and administering the Sacraments in the name of all, the *public* exercise of this power being in the hands of the pastor in his divinely instituted office.

## 11.

According to scripture all officials and pastors in fact all members of Synod who are aware of the implications of the *Chicago Statement* of 1945 and of its doctrinal aberrations, also of the false teaching which appeared in the columns of the LUTHERAN WITNESS and elsewhere, and did not state their objections or inform their congregations of the growing doctrinal discord in the Missouri Synod, are remiss in their duties and have become guilty of other men's sins (Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 1 Tim. 5:22).

## 12.

Without our solicitation we find ourselves supported in our objection to the *Common Confession* by the results of searching studies of brethren in our own country and in other countries, the general agreement in the criticism being that the Common Confession has weakened and even nullified many parts of the BRIEF STATEMENT. To try to uphold them both is equivalent to halting between two opinions. If

the BRIEF STATEMENT, in all doctrinal teaching, is right, then the *common Confession*, in the corresponding parts is wrong, because of its vagueness and omissions. And since repeated efforts to halt the progressive deterioration of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod have brought no results, the time has come when, for the sake of hundreds of troubled consciences, the actual status of affairs must be proclaimed to the whole world, lest we be condemned by the Lord of Truth together with those who persistently teach falsehood.

**APPENDIX E****Roster of Attendants at the first meeting of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference**

(Taken from the first proceedings of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, September 25-26, 1951, p. 5)

Dr. P.E. Kretzmann	Cuba, Missouri
Pastor H. D. Mensing	Tinley Park, Illinois
Pastor Wallace H. McLaughlin	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Pastor Walter R. Buhl	Springfield, Minnesota
Pastor George Schweikert	Okabena, Minnesota
Pastor Herbert F. Koehlinger	Detroit, Michigan
Pastor Melvin L. Natterer	Lansing, Illinois
Pastor F.J. Schleef	Alta, Iowa
Pastor A.T. Kretzmann	Crete, Illinois
Pastor Gustav Schupmann	Chesterfield, Missouri
Pastor Otto G. Schupmann	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Pastor Francis Schupmann	Frazee, Minnesota
Pastor Bramscher	Alpha, Minnesota
Paster Albert M. Schupmann	Plymouth, Nebraska
Pastor E.C. Hallstein	Corona, South Dakota
Pastor P.R. Bloedel	Wilmot, South Dakota
Mr. H.A. Strumpler	St. Louis, Missouri
Mr. Fred Niebruegge	Clayton, Missouri
Mr. William Koslowske	St. Louis, Missouri
Mr. Warren H. Osterloh	St. Louis, Missouri
Mr. O.E. Reimnitz	St. Louis, Missouri
Mr. Emil L. Weis	Winter Haven, Florida



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