

**CTCR DOCUMENT**

**The Doctrinal Authority of C. F. W. Walther's *Kirche und Amt* (*Church and Ministry*) in Lutheran Church-Canada**

In her first convention Lutheran Church–Canada [LCC] committed herself to the doctrinal position of her mother synod by including article II in her constitution. This article binds the synod and every member thereof to accept without reservation the Holy Scriptures as the only rule and norm of faith and practice, and the writings in the Book of Concord as a true and unadulterated exposition of the same. The convention made no express commitment to any doctrinal writings, resolutions, or statements of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod [LCMS], though it has been assumed that the historical actions of the mother synod would continue to carry weight in the daughter. In order to clarify the status of existing LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations [CTCR] documents, for example, LCC passed resolution 90:1.02, which explained that they were to be received “as part of its heritage” and referred to “for reference and guidance”.

The present confusion in LCC over the authority of C. F. W. Walther’s writing, *Kirche und Amt* (Church and Ministry), can be adequately addressed on the basis of the preceding paragraph. Although no CTCR existed in 19th-century Missouri, Walther’s book served a similar purpose to such documents in that it provided a unified response to a theological issue that stood behind a church relations problem (see the history below). Although it cannot be placed on the level of the doctrinal authorities in Article II, it ought to be received and honoured by LCC “as part of its heritage” and referred to “for reference and guidance”. However, in light of recent action in the LCMS, the popular belief that *Kirche und Amt* was officially adopted as a binding doctrinal statement needs further examination.

In her 2001 synodical convention, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod passed resolution 7-17A “to reaffirm” that Walther’s book *Kirche und Amt* [KuA] is “the official position of the LCMS”. The convention did not claim to be adopting KuA but to be “reaffirming” its status. The historical basis was presented in the second and third “whereas” of the resolutions:

WHEREAS, Dr. C. F. W. Walther addressed this confusion [with regard to the doctrine of church and ministry] in 1851 through his *Theses on Church and Ministry*, which were subsequently declared to be the position of the LCMS in 1851; and

WHEREAS, The book *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry*, by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, was published in 1852. The LCMS in convention declared this book to be the pure doctrine (*reine Lehre*) of church and ministry;

It is in the very nature of a “whereas” that what it states must be incontrovertibly and demonstrably true. Unfortunately, the resolution does not cite explicit text from the 1851 and 1852 conventions to which it broadly refers (with the exception of the two German words). In order to understand precisely what occurred, it is necessary to examine closely the published Synodal-Berichte (convention records).

### **The Origins of *Kirche und Amt* in the LCMS (1850-52)**

The genesis of Walther’s writing can be found in the minutes of the 1850 synodical convention in St. Louis. The synod discussed at length their ongoing pastoral and doctrinal conflict with Pastor Grabau and the Buffalo synod, dating back to his *Hirtenbrief* “Pastoral Letter” (1840)<sup>1</sup> and perpetuated in disputes over the right of excommunication.<sup>2</sup> At the heart of the debate was the source and nature of pastoral authority. Grabau was understood to be the aggressor, against whom the synod felt compelled to defend herself. Having heard Pastors Walther, Sihler, and Brohm present a series of theses on the basis of the Book of Concord, the convention commissioned Walther to develop the work into a book, a draft of which was to be presented to the synod the following year.

At the 1851 convention (Milwaukee), Walther presented the completed theses on church and office, including a sketch of the supplementary material from Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the church fathers that would be marshalled in their defence. The published convention minutes are worth reading at length:

When, at the last Synodical convention, Grabau's second Synodical letter, that included false accusations and charges, was discussed, it was thought best to publish a paper as a justification for our teaching on Church and Ministry. We were not only accused, on these parts, of false teaching by Pastor Grabau, but also among our brothers in Germany, with whom we are in faith fellowship, there is a growing disapproval. Prof. Walther had taken over the preparation of the paper on behalf of the Synod, and now he presented the draft of the paper to the present convention for examination. According to his presented plan the paper is divided into three parts: a preface, historical presentation of the conditions under which the paper arose; a number of theses that present our teaching on the Church as well as the Preaching Office in a short and precise fashion; it ends with an epilogue that focuses on the application of the theses on the present doctrinal differences. As proof for the theses the author cites from a) Scripture, b) the Symbolical Books, c) the acknowledged most reliable teachers of our and of the early church, in order to, in the strongest sense, dispel the appearance of an innovation in the teaching; to show the agreement between the whole Church from the beginning and our church, and to put this agreement, with a systematic compilation of many witnesses, in the clearest light. The character of the whole paper should be more apologetic than polemic in order to invite a more relaxed examination and to heal the impending split in love. The Synod declared itself in full agreement with this plan, and approved the apologetic way of teaching of the author in so far as that through it the necessary proof of the untenability [sic] of the opposing errors are given.

The honorable author now presented the specific theses to which the Synod gave its agreement [ihre Beistimmung]. Since, however, the book will be published soon, it would be superfluous to go into the specifics of the theses here. The reading itself, and the discussion that followed on the doctrine and practice of the Church, was held, with very little interruption, in eight sittings. This was unquestionably the part of the proceedings that was proven to be the most fruitful. It filled the hearts of everyone with great rejoicing over the Scripturality, the clearness, and the loveliness of our teaching. It was also experienced that the peace of the Spirit of God is a sweet, well tasting fruit of the true unity and confidence of faith.<sup>3</sup>

The following noteworthy points arise from a careful reading of this report:

1. The historical context and purpose of Kirche und Amt is apparent: it was a defence against the accusations of Pastor Grabau, and an attempt to avoid a breach with the German churches.<sup>4</sup> It did not arise from internal disputes among the Missourians, nor was it intended to settle an internal dispute. Nor, additionally, was it directed against Pastor Wilhelm Löhe, with whom the Missourians were still in fellowship.<sup>5</sup>
2. The intention of KuA was to be "apologetic" (defensive and explanatory) not "polemic" (aggressive or condemnatory).
3. Although Walther is presented as the "author", it is apparent that KuA is viewed mainly as a collection of sources that can be used to defend the Missourians' teachings. It is for this reason that Walther will later appear on the title page as "editor" (not author).<sup>6</sup>
4. As each thesis was presented to the synod and discussed at length, the convention pastors and lay delegates gave their "agreement [Beistimmung]". The meaning is clearly that they agreed with the teaching of the theses and concurred with Walther's marshalling of evidence to be presented to and against Grabau.

Most significantly, however, there is no evidence that the convention "adopted" the theses as a confessional document to which the members of synod would be bound, as is frequently asserted.<sup>7</sup>

What the 1851 convention did was to agree that Walther's theses and proof material from Scripture and historic Lutheranism formed a magnificent reply to Grabau. The convention therefore commissioned Walther to complete the book (which was published the following year by a printer in Erlangen, whom Walther had visited while in Germany). In the preface to the first edition of *Kirche und Amt*, Walther rehearsed this history, noting the resolve of the 1851 Milwaukee convention "to publish the manuscript as our unanimous confession in our name."<sup>8</sup> As Walther appears to be referring to the above-cited section of the 1851 Synodal-Bericht, "our unanimous confession" would seem to be his paraphrase of the fact that the convention gave its *Beistimmung* "agreement" to each of the theses. Walther does not mean that the synod adopted his writing as a new confession, but that they wholeheartedly agreed with his theological presentation against Grabau.

The following year, at the 1852 convention (held again in Milwaukee), the delegates again discussed the ongoing dispute with Pastor Grabau. The minutes record the convention's decision:

The synod expressed herself in the matter this way: "Since it is important above all things to become one in doctrine with the Buffalo Synod, specifically with Pastor Grabau, her [the synod's] response [consisting] of the pure teaching on church and office, edited by Prof. Walther under her commission, ought to be sent to the latter [Grabau] through the Secretary, with the request to read through this book in as impartial a manner as possible, and thereby to be persuaded that our apology is nothing other than the voice of the Lutheran Church."<sup>9</sup>

The minutes then record that, should Grabau not be fully persuaded by reading the book, a delegation should be sent to meet with him. In the meantime, no one in Missouri was to write against him. (Unfortunately, Grabau was not persuaded by KuA that the Missourians were right, nor did the planned meetings take place.) From these minutes it is clear that the synod believed KuA contained the "pure teaching" of historic Lutheranism, but the word "edited" reminds us that KuA was viewed chiefly as a collection of sources. The convention took no action other than sending the book to Grabau. It did not officially adopt KuA or elevate it to the status of a doctrinal norm.

The phrase "the voice of the Lutheran Church" found in those minutes echoes the opening words of Walther's title page, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt: Eine Sammlung von Zeugnissen ...* ["The Voice of Our Church in the Question of Church and Office: A Collection of Witnesses ..."]. This title and the words of the 1852 convention have sometimes been subtly but significantly misinterpreted. "The Voice of Our Church", as interpreted by Walther's own subtitle, clearly does not mean "The Voice of the Missouri Synod" but "The Voice of Historic Lutheranism"—for Walther considered the material that he "edited"<sup>10</sup> merely to be a collection of sources from the Scriptures, the Confessions, and the church fathers. Walther clarifies this meaning in his preface:

hardly anyone, so far as we know, has thought of letting the church of our fathers also express its opinion, and since the opinion is becoming ever more general that our church has left the doctrines in question unanswered, we therefore do not consider it superfluous if in this present book, according to the humble talent entrusted to us, we seek to make a contribution so that in the present important controverted question concerning the church and the ministry also our official confessions and the private writings of its teachers may be heard and considered.<sup>11</sup>

It is quite likely that the common misinterpretation of Walther's title as "the voice of the LCMS" fuelled the belief that KuA had been officially adopted as a doctrinal statement.

Walther's own actions belie this interpretation, as he took upon himself personally to revise and reissue the volume in a second and third edition (1865, 1875) without any commission from or approval of the synod. A fourth edition appeared after his death (1894), revised by Walther's student, Franz Pieper. This is not the expected behaviour of men who believed the first edition was an official synodical document.<sup>12</sup> Nor does Walther refer back to KuA in his later writings or published convention essays; there is, at least, no evidence that Walther held KuA in higher esteem than any other of his writings.

## The Reception of Kirche und Amt in Later LCMS History

The same conclusion must be drawn from examining synodical literature on church and office in the generation after Walther's death. Franz Pieper's —A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod || (1897) is consistent with KuA but does not cite its theses or contents. Pieper's three volume Christian Dogmatics certainly cites KuA, but accords it no more prominence than any other writing of Walther; Pieper, in fact, cites Walther's Pastoral Theology more frequently than KuA in his sections on church and office. As Todd Peperkorn concludes about this period in a significant recent study of the question:

In the first seventy-five years of the history of the Missouri Synod, there was little distinction made between any of the writings of Walther as to their authority. Kirche und Amt was understood as authoritative because it contained the doctrines which the Missouri Synod stood by and for. It was an anthology of what the Lutheran Church has always taught, and not a new confession as such. This was also true of *Die rechte Gestalt*, the *Pastoraltheologie*, and many other writings of Walther. Walther and the early Missouri Synod were not asking the question of whether or not they were creating a new confession.<sup>13</sup>

What changed at the end of this 75-year period, according to Peperkorn, is that KuA took on a new prominence in the growing debate between Missouri and Wisconsin on church and office.<sup>14</sup> It was at the height of this debate that CPH published the English-language abridgement of KuA in the little volume *Walther and the Church* (1938). In the translator's preface W. H. T. Dau refers to KuA as "an official manifesto of the Missouri Synod".<sup>15</sup> The page headers for this section of the volume repeat the assertion: "Church and Ministry—Our Church's Doctrine". According to Peperkorn, "This is the first instance where Kirche und Amt is specifically and emphatically placed on a different level than the other writings of Walther."<sup>16</sup> The fact that a new generation of LCMS pastors was arising who could not read German meant that Dau's translation would be their only point of contact with KuA, and the words of his introduction were most likely responsible for perpetuating the belief that the synod had officially adopted it. But the evidence cited thus far suggests Dau's judgment that it was "an official manifesto" cannot be substantiated. Dau's abridgement dealt a further disservice to a new generation of Walther students by reproducing only the theses and scriptural proofs, while neglecting the citations from the Confessions and the Lutheran fathers that Walther believed were the unique strength of his argument.

It is intriguing to follow the fortunes of Kirche und Amt through the intervening decades of the twentieth century. Todd Peperkorn has performed a remarkably-thorough investigation of LCMS publications in the hope of discerning the role that KuA played. Walter Baepler's *A Century of Grace: A History of the Missouri Synod 1847-1947* (1947) does not mention KuA in its 11-page history of the Grabau/Löhe debates. The first two volumes of doctrinal essays, *The Abiding Word* (1946-47), likewise published in honour of the synod's 100th anniversary, display a distinct ambivalence towards KuA. Of five essays touching on church and office, three make no reference to KuA, and two cite it only occasionally.<sup>17</sup> When the 44 "Statementarians" of 1945 criticise the growing use of synodical resolutions as "canon law" they do not mention KuA.

In response to the latter crisis and in the successive years leading up to the seminary walkout, the precise nature of doctrinal resolutions made by synod became the subject of intense debate. In 1959 resolution 3-09 bound all pastors of synod to teach and act in harmony with "every doctrinal statement of a confessional nature adopted by Synod", which were "to be regarded as public doctrine (*publica doctrina*) in Synod"; three years later the 1962 resolution 6-01 rescinded this action as unconstitutional, in violation of the doctrinal norm expressed in article II. At the same time, resolution 3-17 affirmed the use of doctrinal statements in subordination to Scripture and Confessions, and asked members of synod to honour and uphold them. In successive years, this view of the synod's doctrinal resolutions was generally upheld, though every resolution passed was fiercely contested.<sup>18</sup> The two decades of discussion culminated in the formulation of a procedure for producing doctrinal resolutions and statements (1977:3-07), contained also in LCC's by-laws (1.03). It is significant to note that since the creation of the

distinction between “doctrinal resolutions” and “doctrinal statements”, no document has been put through the procedure to elevate it to the latter status.

Likewise, it is remarkable in this era that the aforementioned synodical resolutions do not formulate a list of doctrinal resolutions or documents they believed the synod had previously accepted and might be placed at the level of a “doctrinal statement”. Contrary to popular belief, no such list can be found in the synodical minutes. The lengthy Preamble to resolution 1973:2-12 comes closest as it includes a paragraph giving the history of Walther’s theses on church and ministry, and quotes Dau’s 1938 preface to the effect that they are “an official manifesto” of the LCMS. Significantly, however, they do not quote a convention of synod in support of Dau’s belief. The Preamble goes on to cite the 1881 theses on election, which might more legitimately be labeled synod’s official position, inasmuch as they were explicitly adopted. When the 1973 convention proceeded to propose “A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles” for adoption by synod (3-01), 19 the Preamble cited the Thirteen Theses on Election as precedent, but did not mention KuA. Thus, not until 2001 did the LCMS directly address the doctrinal status of Walther’s work.

## **Summary**

This lengthy historical investigation has resulted in a complex picture of Kirche und Amt’s role in the LCMS. On the one hand:

1. Kirche und Amt was commissioned by synod in convention (1850) as a defense of her teaching in response to Grabau.
2. At the 1851 convention, Walther presented the 19 theses and a summary of the book. The convention delegates gave their unanimous agreement to the contents as the appropriate way to respond to Grabau.
3. The 1852 convention resolved to send the book to Grabau in the hope of achieving unity in teaching. They spoke of the book as containing “pure teaching” on the matter, and representing the voice of historic Lutheranism.
4. KuA was understood as an apologetic writing explaining the Missourians’ understanding of church and office, and was never intended to be used in a disciplinary manner within the synod.
5. Prior to the 2001, no subsequent LCMS convention adopted KuA or referred to it as Missouri’s official position.

Thus, the early LCMS conventions give no evidence that KuA was “adopted” by synod, nor that it was intended to resolve internal disputes or to be used in a disciplinary manner. The popular belief that KuA was adopted may have arisen from the following factors:

1. The initial words of the title “The Voice of Our Church ...” may have been misunderstood as if it were “The Voice of the LCMS”. Walther’s preface, however, makes it clear that it is “The Voice of Historic Lutheranism”, meaning that it was chiefly a collection of sources.
2. Dau’s preface to the 1938 abridgement of Kirche und Amt calls it “an official manifesto”, but such words are not supported by the actual language of the 1851 convention.
3. J. T. Mueller’s 1987 translation of the preface places the words “our unanimous confession” into quotation marks, implying that these words are quoted from the convention minutes, which they are not.
4. The synodical controversies of the 20th century led the synod into lengthy debates on the authority of synod to take decisive action on doctrinal matters. As doctrinal resolutions were passed on a raft of theological issues in order to deal with internal disputes, the belief (mistakenly) arose that KuA had arisen in the same circumstances and had the same purpose.

This historical survey has nonetheless demonstrated the enormous significance that Kirche und Amt holds in the common history of the LCMS and LCC. Walther's theses and his collection of Lutheran sources in defense of the same were received unanimously by the synod for the purpose of responding to Grabau's errors. Thus, KuA was "official" in the sense that it was produced at synod's request and had her approval.<sup>20</sup> The oft-asserted distinction between the theses and the rest of the book is perhaps overdrawn, inasmuch as Walther himself placed far more weight on the Lutheran authorities he cited than on his own contribution in the theses and introductions. Walther believed, and the synod concurred, that the volume contained the voice of historic Lutheranism, and as such must be taken with utter seriousness by any church that professes to be truly Lutheran. His theses represent the LCMS's historic response to Grabau's errors and illustrate how Missouri theologians have spoken about church and office.<sup>21</sup> The language of LCC's resolution 1990:1.02, though written about CTCR documents, provides a helpful pattern of thinking also for KuA:

RESOLVED that the Lutheran Church–Canada receive the documents of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as part of its heritage; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Lutheran Church–Canada continue to refer to these documents for reference and guidance and/or for study in accord with their mode of adoption by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, in regard to matters of doctrinal content, and in practice insofar as they are applicable to the Canadian scene; . . .

Most importantly, Walther would have his beloved synod follow his own method: that in addressing theological controversy we begin with the teachings of Holy Scripture, follow them through into the Lutheran Church's confessional writings, and confirm them with the wisdom of the church fathers' private writings (among whom Walther himself must surely be numbered).

In the end, however, the synod which understands herself to be "Waltherian" ought not ignore the profoundly confessional perspective of her founding president. In his own lifetime C. F. W. Walther discerned and fought against a growing tendency to turn his own writings and the public words of the synod into a new confession. Walther's thoroughgoing commitment to Holy Scripture and the Book of Concord led him to warn sternly against this development in his own church:

Unfortunately there has constantly been among certain individuals also in the orthodox church a wrong, "parrot" mind-set. One would follow this or that great teacher. Now, as long as this had reference only to what is right, it may indeed not have caused particularly great harm, although, considering its character and nature, it always was and is something extremely dangerous. Furthermore, we do not deny that also among us there have been and perhaps still are people, and in fact good, guileless people, who simply say in their defense, "You see, it says so in the Proceedings of the Western District." Or if one asks that this or that point of doctrine might be proven, one can perhaps also sometimes hear, "You see, it says so in Walther's Pastorale." This indeed happens as a rule in pure simplicity, without any intent to place human writings next to Scripture or even above Scripture. Yet it is and remains papistic, dangerous, and harmful to faith; therefore we cannot among ourselves oppose this tendency earnestly enough.<sup>22</sup>

#### Notes

1 This pastoral letter was addressed to a group of Prussian Lutherans in Wisconsin, whose pastor had turned back to Germany. The congregation wished to choose a suitable man from their midst and ordain him as their pastor. Grabau argued that such an ordination and any subsequent sacramental acts would be invalid, as the ministry can only be conferred by those who already possess it. Grabau, in a friendly gesture, sent his letter to the Missourians for their advice and approval of his position. He was surprised to discover that they disagreed, as they had emerged from the Altenburg debate with the view that the ministry—in an emergency—can arise from the

congregation on the basis of the Word of God alone. Thus, at the heart of the debate on the office of the ministry between Missouri and Grabau (Buffalo) was the question of from where the ministry derives its authority.

2 Grabau complained that Missouri congregations had received as members, people who had been rightly excommunicated from Buffalo Synod churches. Some Missourians argued that their congregation had the right to overrule the judgment of the Buffalo Synod pastor. Grabau disagreed.

3 Synodal-Bericht 1851 (convention minutes), 169-70. Translation from Todd Peperkorn, *The Use of C. F. W. Walther's "Kirche und Amt" in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to 1947* (Ft. Wayne: unpublished S.T.M. thesis, 1999), 139, with minor editing of the final sentence.

4 In the preface to *Kirche und Amt*, Walther recognizes that the North American disputes on church and office were only on the fringe of a much larger debate going on in Germany, —the great battle being fought in our old German fatherland on the field of theological science || . He was referring to the German territorial churches' attempts to free themselves from the dominance of the state and establish a churchly governance, a battle in which Löhe was a major player. Walther hoped by his written contribution to persuade the Germans not to adopt a hierarchical system of church governance. See Holsten Fagerberg, *Bekenntnis, Kirche, und Amt in der deutschen konfessionellen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1952).

5 Certainly there were already public disagreements between the Missourians and Löhe on some aspects of church and ministry (see 1850 convention minutes), though Löhe considered himself a mediating party between Walther and Grabau. The same 1851 convention commissioned Walther and Wyneken to visit Löhe in Germany to try to heal the impending breach, as well as to visit the various theological faculties and church conferences to avoid a split with the German mother churches. Walther reported that their meetings with Löhe were cordial, though little substantial progress was made on points of theological disagreement. At the 1852 convention Walther hailed Löhe as a founding father of the Missouri Synod. The ultimate cause of Missouri's break with Löhe was the latter's upset over what he called —papistic territorialism || when the Missourians tried to assume control of his Pilgerhaus and teacher's college in Michigan. In his black-edged —farewell letter || in 1853 Löhe specifically noted that he did not believe the differences over church and ministry were divisive. See Thomas M. Winger, —The Relationship of Wilhelm Löhe to C. F. W. Walther and the Missouri Synod in the Debate Concerning Church and Office || , *Lutheran Theological Review* 7 (Fall/Winter 1994 and Spring/Summer 1995): 107-32.

6 The full title is highly significant: *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt: Eine Sammlung von Zeugnissen über diese Frage aus den Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche und aus den Privatschriften rechtgläubiger Lehrer derselben. Von der deutschen evang.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten als ein Zeugnis ihres Glaubens, zur Abwehr der Angriffe des Herrn P. Grabau in Buffalo, N.Y., vorgelegt durch C. F. W. Walther* [The Voice of our Church in the Question of Church and Office: A Collection of Witnesses concerning this Question from the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and from the Private Writings of Orthodox Teachers of the Same. By the German Evang.-Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States, as a Witness of Her Faith, in Defence against the Attacks of Pastor Grabau in Buffalo, N.Y., Presented by C. F. W. Walther].

7 When the synod did wish to solve an internal dispute by adopting a decisive doctrinal position, they clearly knew how to do so. Consider the following declaration from the minutes of the 1881 convention at which Walther's Thirteen Theses on Election were declared to be the truth of Scripture from which the members of synod were not expected to deviate:

We are assembled here by the authority of all our congregations. Every one of our congregations is decidedly represented here (in spite of the delegate system established in 1872) and this includes also each one's confessional position. No one has the right to insist on the contrary unless he can produce uncontroverted facts in his favor. No



individual members of the Synod or their persons have rendered a confession, but the Synod itself has rendered its confession. If later on it should appear that the confession of this or that delegate in this or that matter is not the confession of this or that parish which he represented, that still does not alter the circumstances in the least that here the Missouri Synod as such was assembled and rendered a confession. All the congregations of our synodical fellowship knew what the doctrine of Synod on predestination was. If our congregations did not acknowledge this, then, through their properly constituted boards, they would have stepped into the matter and would have expelled those, who, according to their convictions, had publicly been defending false doctrine. Our congregations will neither tolerate nor retain false teachers in their institutions. (Synodal-Bericht 1881, 43; trans. August Suelflow, "Congregational Autonomy", *Concordia Journal* 3 [Nov. 1977]: 268.)

8 In J. T. Mueller's 1987 translation of the preface, the final words are rendered "'in our name and as our unanimous confession' [that of Missouri Synod]" (9). The quotation marks imply (quite misleadingly) that Walther is quoting words from the convention minutes; in fact, the original German text of Walther's preface contains no quotation marks, nor the name of the Missouri Synod (which Mueller adds in brackets).

9 Synodal-Bericht 1852, 212; trans. T. Winger.

10 It has been suggested that Walther considered himself merely an "editor" because *Kirche und Amt* was published in the name of the synod, the LCMS being the true author (see Dau, below). In light of Walther's own explanation in the preface, this interpretation is surely wrong.

11 C. F. W. Walther, *Church and Ministry (Kirche und Amt): Witnesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church on the Question of the Church and the Ministry*, trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia, 1987), 8-9.

12 It is also noteworthy that, though an abridgement was produced in 1938, Concordia Publishing House did not produce a complete English translation until 1987, after many other writings of Walther had previously been rendered into the synod's new language. It is apparent that in the early- to mid- 20th century *Kirche und Amt* held no higher rank among Walther's writings.

13 Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 141.

14 See Todd Peperkorn, "C. F. W. Walther's *Kirche und Amt* and the Church and Office Debate Between the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods in the Early Twentieth Century", *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 65.4 (Oct. 2001): 299-322.

15 Walther and the Church, ed. Wm. Dallmann, W. H. T. Dau, and Th. Engelder (St. Louis: Concordia, 1938), 50. The full context of the statement is even stronger:

The treatise is evidently regarded by him no longer as his own, to promulgate his private opinions, but it is an official manifesto of the Missouri Synod, which here offers to its Christian brethren everywhere and forever its humble witness to the truth which it has joyously embraced on these great basic questions: What is the Church? and, What is the Ministry of the Church? Let Walther's synodical posterity take notice of this fact: In Walther's *Kirche und Amt* spoke—and still speaks!—not a single, deservedly revered individual but the entire God-blest Missouri Synod, whom this treatise of Walther helped to make into a sound, staunch, faithful herald of genuine Lutheranism. (50-51)

Dau's revisionism is apparent in the first sentence of the next section: "Church and the Ministry is a polemical essay"—precisely the opposite of what the 1851 minutes actually report, that it was apologetic, not polemical.

16 Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 116.

17 See Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 130-38.

18 See resolutions 1969:2-27; 1971:2-21; 1971:5-24; 1973:2-12; 1975:3-04; 1977:3-07; 1986:5-02A.

19 This document was adopted by simple convention majority (562-455), and therefore, contrary to popular belief, stands at the level of “doctrinal resolution”, not “doctrinal statement” (according to the 1977 terminology). The language of the next convention, 1975:3-05, clarifies this:

A Statement is not to be used mechanically or legalistically to discipline members of the Synod, but it is to be honored, upheld, and used fraternally and evangelically throughout the Synod in an effort to assist the Synod in remaining faithful to its confessional position. ... [T]he Synod cannot make A Statement binding upon its members in the same sense in which the Scripture is binding. Nor can it ask its members to bind themselves to A Statement in the same manner in which they freely bind themselves to the Lutheran Confessions.

20 Thus it holds the kind of official status given to the synod’s hymnals and explanation of the catechism.

21 The 1981 CTCR document, “The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature”, included Walther’s 10 theses on the ministry in an appendix, to which it appended this measured comment: “We append ‘The Theses on the Ministry’ prepared by C. F. W. Walther and approved by the Synod in 1851 not merely as a matter of historical interest, but as a testimony to the theological and practical consistency of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod in its view of the ministry” (45).

22 C. F. W. Walther, “Church Fathers and Doctrine: Synodical Conference Essay, Cleveland, Ohio, Aug. 13-19, 1884,” in *Essays for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992), 2:83-84.