


THE
CRISIS
HAPPENING
IN THE
LUTHERAN

CHURCH

ISSUE 3

WORSHIP
AND
PREACHING

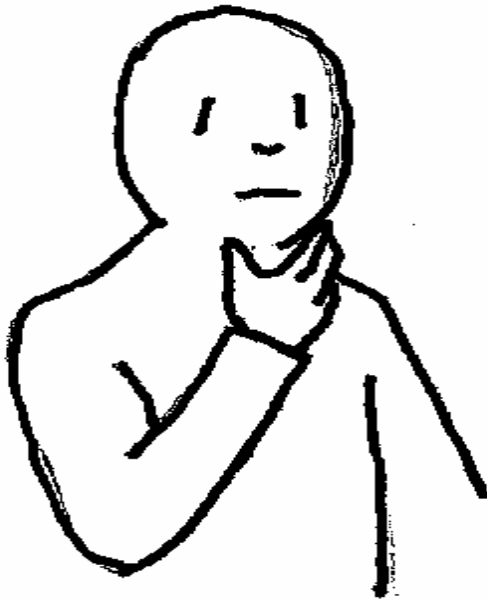
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for Christ
website at
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Wait a second!
You meant to tell me
We have a crisis in our
Worship
And
Preaching,
Too!



Preaching should provide:

**Interpretation of God's Word so
we can understand His will**

**Insight into our place in God's plan
for humanity**

**Inspiration to take the message of
the Gospel of Christ into the world**

It should not:

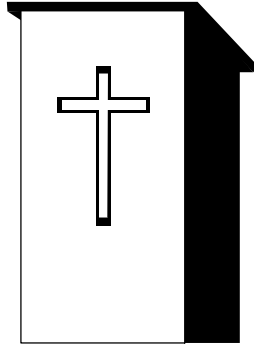
Substitute our will for God's

Avoid truth so as not to offend

Confuse with conflicting messages

**Worship & preaching
should always be directed
to God's service
by the Holy Spirit
not by any human agenda.**





**Preaching
is nothing less than
the public proclamation of
God's saving action in Christ
and
His will for humanity.**

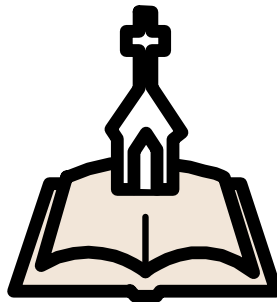


Yes !

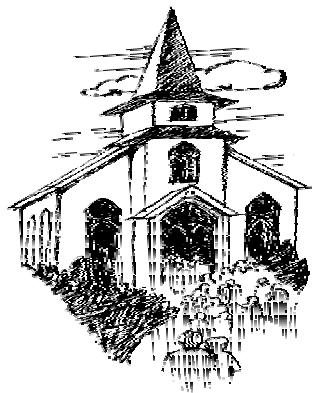
**The direction our church
has been taking
seems to demonstrate that
our church and its leaders
have forgotten
what the church is all about.**

Good preaching

**Focuses on the
messages
of Scripture
by declaring
God's Word to
His people.**



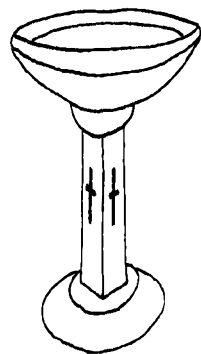
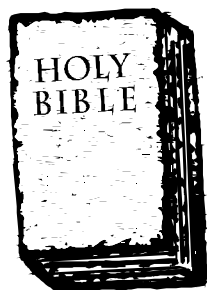
**The
Reformers
knew ...**



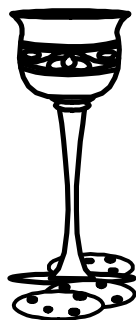
They believed:

**The Church
exists
where**

**the Word of God
is
proclaimed**



**&
the
Sacraments
are rightly
administered**



THAT'S WORSHIP !

Worship should:

Strengthen

us in our devotion to God

Empower

us in our discipleship to Christ

Guide

us in our relationship to God
and each other

Reveal

to us God's will and purpose

Assure

us of the salvation and hope
that comes only in Christ

It should not:

Diminish

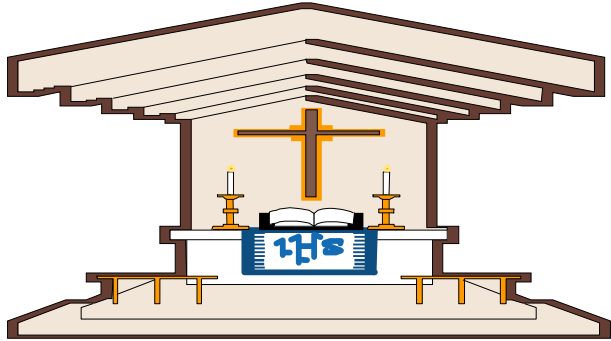
God's authority

Contradict

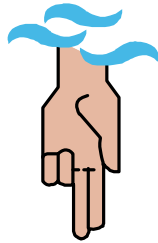
God's saving action in Christ

Substitute

God's purpose with our own

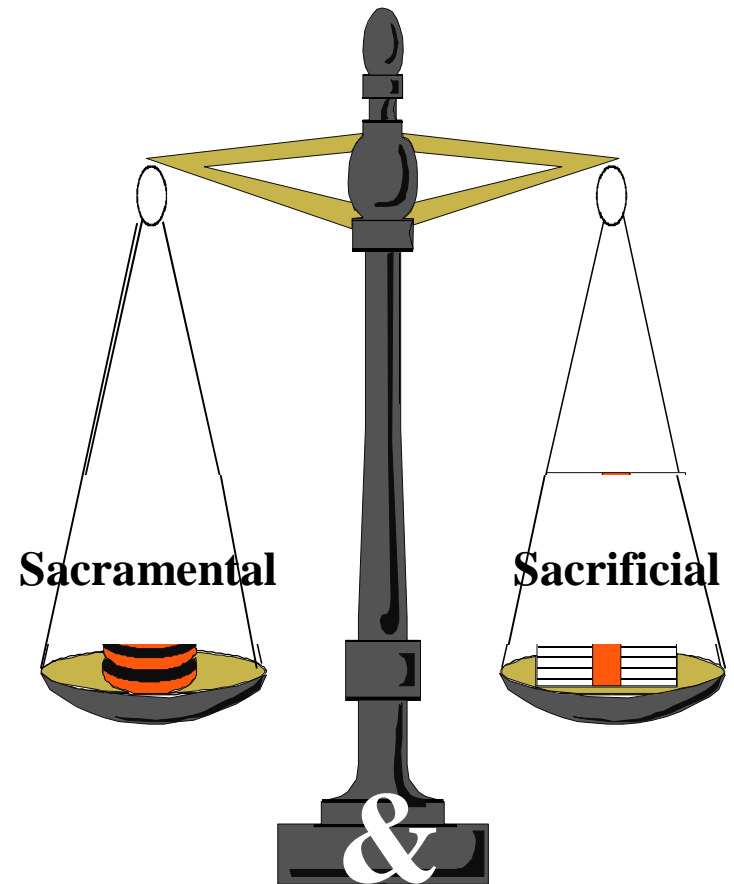


WORSHIP
that focuses on the
human condition
isn't good worship.



**God gave us worship as a
gift because He knew we
needed it.**

**Luther intended
worship
to be a balance
between**



Sacramental

God's sacramental action in worship is His speaking to us — through the Scriptures, the sermon, the sacraments, etc. God does it, not us. It is an act of God's grace which we cannot deserve, demand, or earn.

Sacrificial

The sacrificial part of worship is shown in our response — our hymns of prayer & praise, our prayers, our faithful reception of what God offers, our commitment to live a new life in accord with God's will.

If we preach Gospel love without the consequences of the law



— it is empty and cheap.



However, if we preach only the law without Gospel's grace,

— we are lost & without hope.

Too many preachers extol LOVE, but avoid sin's consequences.

God's Word is both
LAW & GOSPEL.

Something is missing!

What about sin?

**What happens to accountability,
responsibility, & obedience?**

Jesus never said all people would be saved. He did say:

“on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Matthew 12:36-37

As to the notion that there are many ways to come to salvation and the Father, Jesus said:

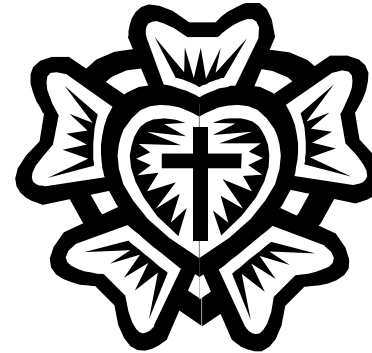
“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6

and Peter said: “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

Acts 4:12

In addition, the Reformers still wanted the



Lutheran Church to be a Liturgical Church

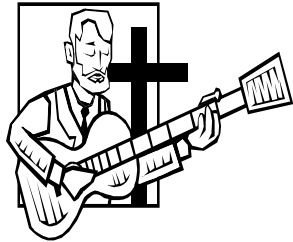
This means we follow set liturgical patterns of worship & these patterns are not static — one size fits all — They change!

Change is good, isn't it?



ABSOLUTELY !

Music changes
Johann Bach
to
Amy Grant



Forms change
Traditional
to
Contemporary

Language & symbols change
to communicate
and be meaningful to
each new generation.



But, the structure & content of God's Word is constant — yesterday, today, always !

Changing God's Word is SINFUL !

The
Gospel of social change
Is
Inclusive & inoffensive

Everyone is saved !

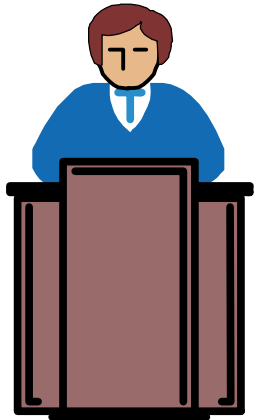
Being good is enough !

People need to feel good !

The church is even thinking of taking HELL out of the Apostle's Creed because it makes people feel uncomfortable.



What's
Wrong
With
That ?



**Today's
Lutheran preacher
in the ELCA
seems more
interested in
proclaiming a
gospel of
social change
rather than the
Gospel of Jesus Christ**



**What's
the
difference?**

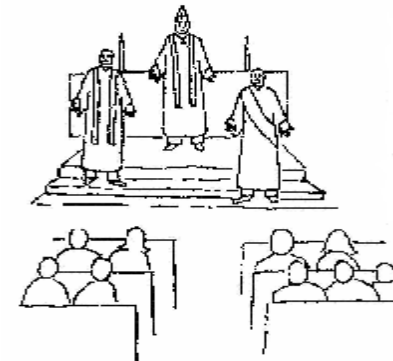
**Yet, our agreement with the
Episcopal Church
DEMANDS
we ultimately adopt ONE form of
worship — theirs.**

**This will include the three orders:
Bishops**

Priests

Deacons

and the lay people of the church,



**as well as
the form & order of worship
found in the Episcopal
Book of Common Prayer.**

Is that what
we believe as
Lutherans?



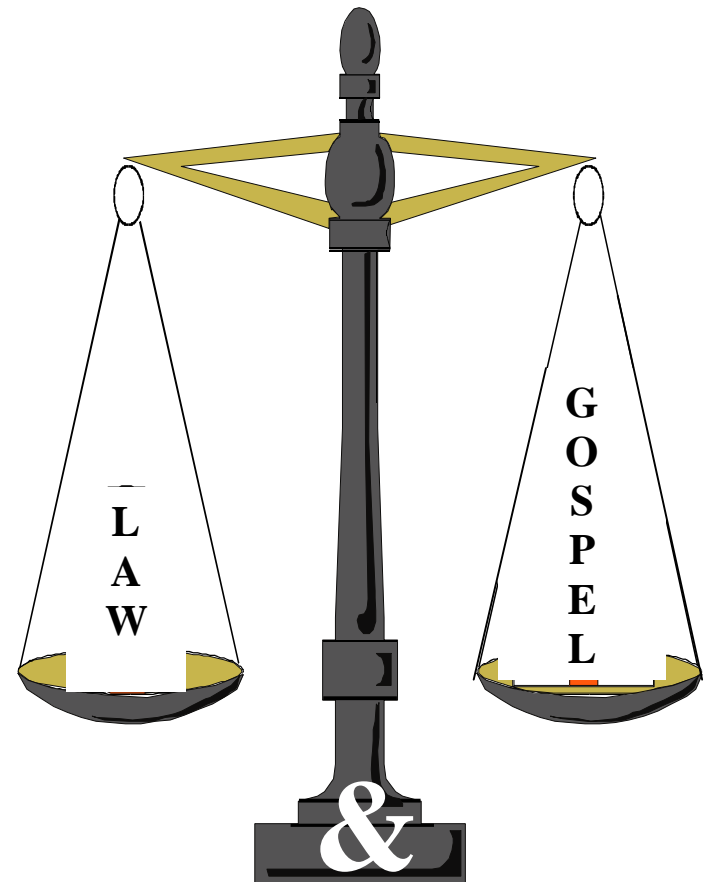
NO !

As it states in the Formula of Concord,
Solid Declaration, Article 10, Principle 5:

We also reject and condemn the procedure whereby matters of indifference are abolished in such a way as to give the impression that the community of God does not have the liberty to use one or more ceremonies at any time and place, according to its circumstances as may in Christian liberty be most beneficial to the church.

This is our confessional position!

Luther also intended
preaching
to be a balance
between



More worship changes are coming!

**New worship resources are offering wedding liturgies which are gender neutral for use by same-sex couples.
(Renewing Worship 4, pp.12-13)**

**New Worship resources will eliminate “offensive” masculine language for God because it is a serious deterrent to worship.
Familiar hymns will update language.
God as heavenly Father will cease.**

New worship resources will encourage placing confidence in good works done by people instead of the saving action of God.

Our confessional statements, based on the Bible, are quite clear.

“As soon as we weaken Christian liberty and human commandments are forcibly imposed on the church as necessary and as though their omission were wrong or sinful, the door has been opened to idolatry, and ultimately the commandments of men will be increased and be put as divine worship not only on par with God’s commandments, but even above them.”

(Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article 10, paragraph 9)

This is where our new worship is taking us!

**Our agreement with the Episcopal Church
DEMANDS**

**that only a priest or bishop preside over
the Sacrament of Holy Communion**

because

**ONLY THEY have the POWER to make
Jesus present in the Bread and Wine.**



**It means
lay people are not worthy or
qualified to lead communion.**

**WORSE, it means that
the power of the priest is more
important & greater than
Christ, God's Son.**

That's just wrong!



**Our hymnal is
changing, too,
in the hymns,
their language,
& their tone.**

**Some change is fine,
BUT**

**when we require the words
Jesus spoke,
the Words of Institution,
to be diminished
by making them
a part of a prayer
in which we emphasize
our human actions,
it takes the initiative
from God
&
gives it to the church**

Then,
The Lord's Supper becomes the
church's supper.