

Becoming A Liturgical Lutheran

Exploring the Journey of American Evangelicals
into Confessional Lutheran Liturgy

By
Rev. Matt Richard

Table of Contents

Preface

Introduction

 The Problem Identified

 The Purpose Identified

 Survey Overview

A Lutheran View of Worship

Who Are These American Evangelicals?

Misunderstandings of the Rites of the Lutheran Liturgy in the Agenda and Altar Book

 The Rite of Holy Baptism

 The Rite of Holy Communion

 Confession and Absolution

 The Rite of Confirmation

Misunderstandings with the Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy

 The Sign of the Cross

 The Liturgical Chanting

 The Kneeling and Bowing

 The Sacred Vessels and the Vestments

Conclusion

Appendix A: Section from Luther's Large Catechism

Appendix B: Research Analysis Results

Bibliography

Note: A special thank you to Rev. Dr. Kent J. Burreson for his oversight of this study at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Preface

I grew up attending a low-church pietistic Lutheran congregation. The worship services at this church were modeled after the old revival services of the nineteenth-century and it wasn't uncommon to have altar calls every month where the same people would go forward for fervent rededication of their lives. Most of the music in the worship service came out of the Revivalist Movement too and focused on mankind's commitment to God. Lyrics like, "Trust and obey for there is no other way!" and "I have decided to follow Jesus!" were very common. Along with the revival songs, I was also exposed to music that came forth from Calvary Chapel's Maranatha Music movement (i.e., praise and worship songs).

In my college years of working at an Evangelical Christian bookstore I began listening to Christian rock worship music. This Christian rock worship music had a little more of an edge than the revival music, yet it tried to embrace an essence of a worshipful flavor. I not only knew the top 10 chart of the newest Christian music, but I proudly sold it as well. Furthermore, through music festivals like the Son-Shine Music Festival, I worshipped with 15,000 other people to the beats of Audio Adrenaline, Jars of Clay, and Michael W. Smith.

My first call out of seminary placed me in Southern California where I served in a church that had a professional praise and worship band. The music at this church certainly didn't have the revivalistic feel that I was used to, yet it was a little tamer than the rock concerts that I had come to embrace.

Looking back at my worship experiences, the range of worship that I participated in varied from the revival songs played on the organ, Christian rock on the electric guitar, and Maranatha music played on the synthesized electric piano. However, nothing prepared me for

the jolt that I experienced as I began to encounter the Liturgical Worship of the Lutheran Church. Frankly, everything was different and backwards to me. Some of the language of the Lutheran liturgy was in Latin and Greek. There was a strong emphasis on the sacraments. The organ was in the back of the sanctuary. Finally, the main focus of the divine service was all about God giving me gifts, not me giving my best to God.

As I have been brought along in this journey into Confessional Lutheranism and its liturgy, I have come to realize that I am not the only one who is on this journey. This has prompted me to study the journey from American Evangelicalism into Confessional Lutheran thought. Over the last year I have been studying this journey as a part of my major applied research project at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The parameters of my research project are only focusing on what is going on in the realms of epistemology, worldview, linguistics, and emotions; it is not focusing on the liturgy. The decision not to focus on the liturgy was due to the general case that a journeying Evangelical will not fully encounter the Lutheran liturgy until 'after' they make the jump into Lutheranism (i.e., become a member and start regular attendance in a liturgical church). Thus, this 'Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Research Study', in the pages to follow, can be thought of as a follow-up to my major applied research project, a 'rest of the story' if you will.

Introduction

Two years ago Christian Smith's book titled, *How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in Ninety-Five Difficult Steps*, was released. A year later Robert Plummer served as the general editor to the book, *Journeys of Faith: Evangelicalism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism*. Both of these books examine the spiritual journey of Evangelicals into these new

faith traditions. More specifically, Smith's book description on Amazon.com states the following,

American evangelicalism has recently experienced a new openness to Roman Catholicism, and many evangelicals, both famous and ordinary, have joined the Catholic Church or are considering the possibility. This book helps evangelicals who are exploring Roman Catholicism to sort out the kinds of concerns that typically come up in discerning whether to enter into the full communion of the Catholic Church. In simple language, it explains many theological misunderstandings that evangelicals often have about Roman Catholicism, and suggests the kind of practical steps many take to enter the Catholic Church. The book frames evangelicals becoming Roman Catholic as a kind of "paradigm shift" involving the buildup of anomalies about evangelicalism, a crisis of the evangelical paradigm, a paradigm revolution, and the consolidation of the new Roman Catholic paradigm. It will be useful for both evangelicals interested in pursuing and understanding Roman Catholicism and Catholic pastoral workers seeking to help evangelical seekers who come to them.¹

The book description for Robert Plummer's work states the following,

Research indicates that on average, Americans change their religious affiliation at least once during their lives. Today, a number of evangelical Christians are converting to Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Anglicanism. Longtime Evangelicals often fail to understand the attraction of these non-Evangelical Christian traditions. *Journeys of Faith* examines the movement between these traditions from various angles. Four prominent converts to Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Evangelicalism and Anglicanism describe their new faith traditions and their spiritual journeys into them. Response chapters offer respectful critiques. Contributors include Wilbur Ellsworth (Eastern Orthodoxy), with a response by Craig Blaising; Francis J. Beckwith (Roman Catholicism), with Gregg Allison responding; Chris Castaldo (Evangelicalism) and Brad S. Gregory's Catholic response; and Lyle W. Dorsett (Anglicanism), with a response by Robert A. Peterson. This book will provide readers with first-hand accounts of thoughtful Christians changing religious affiliation or remaining true to the traditions they have always known. Pastors, counselors and students of theology will gain a wealth of insight into current faith migration within the church today.²

¹ Amazon.com, "How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in Ninety-Five Difficult Steps," <http://www.amazon.com/Evangelical-Committed-Catholic-Ninety-Five-Difficult/dp/1610970330> (5 June, 2013).

² Amazon.com, "Journeys of Faith: Evangelicalism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism," <http://www.amazon.com/Journeys-Faith-Evangelicalism-Catholicism-Anglicanism/dp/031033120X> (5 June 2013)

Two things can be easily gleaned from these book descriptions. The first is that the journey from one faith tradition to another is difficult. Secondly, we are living in a time where there is religious affiliation change occurring, especially with individuals leaving Evangelicalism. Thus, it is important to examine what is occurring within the sphere of Lutheranism, especially in the realm of a former Evangelical adapting to the church's liturgical practices. Otherwise stated, what is going on when individuals journey out of American Evangelicalism and begin to encounter the Lutheran liturgy?

The Problem Identified

What is going on in the journey from American Evangelicalism into Confessional Lutheran thought? The research results from the major applied research project at Concordia Seminary are showing that the journey is a long, difficult, and sometimes scary road. The shift from American Evangelicalism into Confessional Lutheranism is neither something that just happens overnight, nor is it an easy shift. The shift has linguistic, emotional, worldview, and epistemological challenges that accompany it, thus producing a great deal of anxiety, stress, and uncertainty for the individual. The specific question we will explore is, 'do American Evangelicals encounter struggles when they encounter the Lutheran liturgy?' The simple answer is yes. According to the Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Survey there is a degree of struggle. Out of those surveyed, 63.2% of participants agree or strongly agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into the Lutheran liturgy in regard to the ritual/agenda and altar book of the Lutheran liturgy (i.e., the rite or order of service of the Eucharist, or Holy Baptism, or confirmation, or matrimony, or burial, etc...). Furthermore, 67.2% of participants in the

Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Survey agree or strongly agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into the Lutheran liturgy in regard to the ceremonies of the Lutheran liturgy (i.e., bodily expressions, speaking, singing, kneeling, bowing, making the sign of the cross, outward observances of the church year, ornaments, symbols, material objects employed in the church's worship, the church building, the altar, crucifixes, candles, vestments, etc...).

As we can see from above, one not only experiences ideological shift (i.e., as indicated from the major applied research project at Concordia Seminary), but one also experiences misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the changes from non-liturgical worship settings to the worship practices of the Lutheran liturgy (i.e., as expressed from the survey results to the Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Research Project). Therefore, all of these changes/shifts may present a challenge for Lutheran pastors in knowing how to minister to parishioners and for parishioners themselves as they come out of American Evangelicalism into the Lutheran liturgical parish.

The Purpose Identified

The original purpose of the Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Survey was to identify specifically the common misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles of American Evangelicals who have or are joining liturgical Lutheran Churches. From the survey results it is very evident that the following areas prove to be the top areas of misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles:

Regarding Ritual/Agenda and Altar Book

- The rite of Holy Baptism (67.8% agree and strongly agree)
- The rite of Holy Communion (61.4% agree and strongly agree)
- Confession of sin and absolution (59.5% agree and strongly agree)

- The rite of confirmation (46% agree and strongly agree)

Regarding the Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy

- The sign of the cross (56.7% agree and strongly agree)
- The liturgical chanting (54.0% agree and strongly agree)
- The kneeling and bowing (53.2% agree and strongly agree)
- The sacred vessels and vestments (52.7% agree and strongly agree)

In the later portions of this paper, the specific concerns will be more thoroughly explored in light of the participant comment feedback, as well as the Lutheran liturgy. The intention of the following sections is to aid pastors in their ministry to former American Evangelicals, as well as help former American Evangelicals to better understand the root of their confusion and the reasons for the Lutheran rituals and/or ceremonies.

Survey Overview

The 'Becoming a Liturgical Lutheran Survey' was conducted using an internet survey tool called, Survey Monkey between the dates of May 6th of 2013 to May 20th of 2013. It was completed by 125 participants. Assuming a population of 100,000 individuals who have journeyed and/or are journeying from American Evangelicalism into Lutheranism, 125 participant responses yield the statistical confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 8.76%.

A Lutheran View of Worship

Theology

What is a Lutheran view of worship? Otherwise stated, what is it that American Evangelicals will be journeying into as they encounter the divine service? While the theology embedded in the Lutheran divine service is not solely unique to Lutheranism, it will however have some very different presuppositions than what American Evangelicals will be familiar with.

In the introduction to the 1982 Hymnal of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, *Lutheran Worship*, there is a very good summary of a Lutheran view of worship. It states,

Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. . . . Saying back to him what he has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure. Most true and sure is his name, which he put on us with the water of our Baptism. . . . The rhythm of our worship is from him to us, and then from us back to him. He gives his gifts, and together we receive and extol them. We build one another up as we speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Our Lord gives us his body to eat and his blood to drink. Finally his blessing moves us out into our calling, where his gifts have their fruition.³

As it can be seen from above, Lutherans view worship as God revealing Himself by coming to people in Word and Sacrament. God speaks first and the people then respond to the gifts of Salvation. The thanks and praises of the congregation are a *response* for the very things that people have heard in the Word and receive in the Sacraments. Thus God receives their worship because He is the one that is truly worthy of praise. In worship, God is both the subject and the object of worship. Worship is not man-centered; man is a part of this circle of worship. Therefore, it is now very understandable why Lutherans call their Sunday morning worship, *divine service*. The divine service (i.e., liturgy) is God the Divine speaking to and giving to, and essentially, serving mankind.

The Liturgy

*"The liturgy, as a true service, is that which aids both the proclamation of and the hearing of the Gospel for the sake of faith, this is true worship."*⁴ The liturgy of the Church

³ *Lutheran Worship* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), 6.

⁴ Montana District Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, "Theses on Worship," <http://www.mtdistlcms.org/president/papers/> (15 June 2013)

builds a framework for the worshiper to live the life of faith. The liturgy of the church, as found in the Lutheran Service Book, teaches the full counsel of God because it is based on God's very Word given in the Scriptures. The liturgy, which includes Scripture readings, teaches the full counsel of God's saving action toward us by giving (sending) His Son to die in our place upon the cross, rise victorious over sin, death, and the devil, and He gives this all to us. Vilmos Vajta speaks about liturgy the following way,

Rites and ceremonies indeed form a training school of faith. To this extent, the pedagogical view is true to Luther. While ceremonies cannot create the faith, they can point to it. They are the scaffolding needed for building the church, but must not be confused with the church itself. They can serve to bring the immature (the young and simple folk) in the orbit of the Word and Sacrament where faith is born. As long as man is 'external,' such outward orders will be needed for the sake of love, for love and order belong together.⁵

Keep in mind that the liturgy does not simply respond to every blowing wind of culture.

Rather, in the formation of the liturgy great care has been taken in choosing its forms, rites, and ceremonies knowing that they either support or hinder true worship.⁶

I have found that a common misconception among American Evangelicals is that practice is often viewed as neutral, thus it is deemed acceptable to separate doctrine and practice. This division between doctrine and practice allows for the de-emphasis of practices of the liturgy. However, Klemet Preus in his book, *The Fire and the Staff*, states,

Doctrine and practice are more closely related, even interdependent, than is often realized. Doctrine affects practice and practice affects doctrine. The two are so

⁵ Vilmos Vajta, *Luther on Worship: An Interpretation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 175.

⁶ AC XXIV, 3 and AP XV, 20.

intimately woven together that when you change one, you will inevitably change the other, sometimes without realizing what has happened.⁷

Doctrine not only provides knowledge to one's epistemological framework, but practice is also a source of knowledge for one's epistemological framework as well. They are connected.

Furthermore, practice is not neutral, it contains theological presuppositions. While embracing different methodologies, for pragmatic reasons, a church can allow the theology of heterodox practices to bleed false truths back into the church's core theology. If practices are altered, inevitably the doctrine will be changed. Conversely, if doctrine is altered, practice will also be affected.

What of the times when practice is not changed but instead the liturgy and theology are kept separated (e.g., when doctrinal indifference or doctrinal apathy hollow out the liturgy making the divine service vacuous). Detrimental results will again follow. Regin Prenter comments on this detrimental effect saying,

If liturgy is separated from theology, i.e., if it is no longer in its essence 'theology' or true witness to the revelation of God, it then becomes an end in itself, a 'good work,' performed with the intention of pleasing God. . . . If, on the other hand, theology is separated from liturgy, i.e., if it is no longer seen as a part of the liturgy of the Church, part of the living sacrifice of our bodies in the service of God and our fellow men, it too, becomes an end in itself, a human wisdom competing with and sometimes even rejecting the revelation of God. . . . These two dangers arising out of the neglect of the essential unity of liturgy and theology are, I think, imminent in our present situation in the Lutheran Church.⁸

⁷ Klemet Preus. *The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology In Practice* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004), 14.

⁸ Regin Prenter, "Liturgy and Theology," in *Liturgy, Theology, and Music in the Lutheran Church*, edited by Mandus A. Egge (Minneapolis, MN: International Choral Union, 1959), 141.

So this understanding that practice is in fact, not neutral but rather intertwined with doctrine, is foundational to the preservation of right teaching in churches. Thus it is most apparent there is a need for preserving sound practice of liturgy, neither separating nor believing the liturgy is neutral. This need is met through liturgical catechesis, as well as through the repetitive, common, and routine use of the Lutheran Service Book.

Who Are These American Evangelicals?

So who are these American Evangelicals that are struggling with these concepts and changes? I agree with Carl R. Trueman who asserts that twenty-first-century American Evangelicalism is difficult to clearly define and study.⁹ It is difficult to study because it is often described as a large melting pot of spirituality, including but not limited to: Pelagianism, Pietism, Fundamentalism, and Pentecostalism. Due to American Evangelicalism's wide breadth, lack of official denominational lines, and very minimal doctrinal confessions, for the sake of this study I will be thinking of Evangelicalism as the current national-cultural form of American Christianity.

Even though there is vagueness to the larger context of American Evangelicalism, the participants of this study thoroughly identified themselves. Besides identifying themselves with the current national-cultural form of American Christianity, they stated that they were impacted by 3.72 different movements and influences. Movements and influences such as: revivalism (62.9%), fundamentalism (62.9%), dispensationalism (56.0%), and pietism (55.2%). Furthermore, they stated that before beginning the journey towards Lutheran liturgy that they

⁹ Carl R. Trueman, *The Real Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2011), Kindle Edition Location 109-219 of 560.

were in American Evangelicalism for 10-30 years (63.7%). While in American Evangelicalism, 84.5% stated that they were unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with the Lutheran liturgy.¹⁰ However, after joining a Lutheran Church the same participants stated that they are now 96.6% familiar or very familiar with the Lutheran liturgy.

From the previous paragraph we can see that these journeying Evangelicals must sort through the impacts of approximately 4 movements/influences, 10-30 years of being in non-Lutheran worship services, while coming from a rather naïve perspective of the liturgy to a place of being somewhat to very familiar with the liturgy. This journey is not without its hesitations, struggles, and misunderstandings.

The following pages are going to be looking more specifically at the areas of confusions for American Evangelicals entering Lutheran liturgy. The following sections will be highlighting the main concerns, as well as providing responses.

Misunderstandings of the Rites of the Lutheran Liturgy in the Agenda and Altar Book

As previously mentioned, 63.2% agree and strongly agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into the Lutheran liturgy. The following four sections cover the top misunderstandings.

The Rite of Holy Baptism

The top misunderstanding was the Lutheran Church's view and practice of baptism (67.8%). More specifically, participants expressed that their general confusion was not with the

¹⁰ Generally speaking the participants stated that before they journeyed into Lutheran liturgy that their opinions of it were merely based on external perceptions. However, as they peeled the layers back and learned about the liturgy, their perceptions of the Lutheran liturgy changed drastically.

actual rite of baptism, but namely the theology of baptism. One participant stated, “It took a long time to ‘unlearn’ bad theology about this.” From other studying on this subject with Evangelicals the confusion is most likely with which way the arrow is aimed when it comes to the sacraments. In other words, are the sacraments something that we do toward God (i.e., arrow pointing up?) as a way of showing our obedience OR are the sacraments the way that God shows His commitment to us and gives grace to us (i.e., arrow pointing down)? Are the sacraments things that we observe in response to hearing the Gospel (i.e. fruits of faith) OR are the sacraments ways that God responds to our sinfulness with the Gospel; are they a result of His compassion and pursuit of sinners? Do the sacraments belong in our discussions on man’s obedience OR do the sacraments belong in the discussion of God’s justifying grace? Who ‘does the verb’ in the sacraments?

Besides American Evangelical’s theological confusions with baptism, there is something that is indeed worth noting and that is the *central role* of baptism in the Lutheran Church. Otherwise stated, because baptism is a central focus in the Lutheran Church and is mentioned a lot, Evangelicals coming into Lutheranism are not able to avoid the teaching and implications of baptism. They are confronted by it many times throughout the liturgy and the life of the Lutheran Church. Philip Pfatteicher comments on the central role of baptism stating,

Baptism is nothing less than a dramatic presentation of the gospel and the Christian life. As Luther puts it in the Large Catechism: ‘Thus a Christian life is nothing else than a daily Baptism, once begun and ever continued.’¹¹ It is death and resurrection, and it is the center of life and therefore the center of the church’s liturgy. The lives of Christians are constantly related to the foundation upon which they are built, the sacrament by which we are adopted as children of God. . . . Such a rich baptismal theology requires, for

¹¹Theodore G. Tappert, ed. And trans. *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1959), 445.

adequate expression, a rite of initiation which shows clearly and dramatically its centrality, importance, and richness and which enables its participants to see and to sense the central importance of Holy Baptism. . . . The depth of this understanding of what it means to be brought into the Christian community suggests the appropriateness of remembering the event that changed one's relationship to God and to the world. Most of all we remember and make use of our baptismal covenant by returning to it through daily repentance.¹²

The centrality of baptism in the life of Lutheranism is also practiced in the following ways,

Observing the anniversary of one's baptism can help one remember that event and impel one to practice what it requires. The general and public remembrance of baptism is done at the Easter Vigil, which relates our baptismal dying and rising to Christ's death and resurrection. There we renew vows we once made (or which were made by our sponsors) and bind ourselves anew to the faith and life of the church. . . . In addition, of course, we remember that we have been baptized whenever we make the sign of the cross, confess our sins and receive absolution, celebrate evening and morning prayer, and struggle valiantly and confidently to live the life God expects of his children—drawing strength from the knowledge “I have been baptized.”¹³

Thus it is conceivable that the very reason why baptism is indeed a point of struggle for many Evangelicals is not only due to its theology but also because of its central role in the liturgy and life of the Lutheran Church.

The Rite of Holy Communion

Like baptism, participants in the survey expressed that they struggled with the theology of Holy Communion (61.4%), namely the doctrine of the real presence. Furthermore, the other concern that was identified was the Lutheran Church's issue of closed communion. For example, whereas the Lord's Supper functions as a symbolic remembrance that is celebrated 4-6 times a year in many Evangelical settings, in the Lutheran Church it is a closed supper that is celebrated 24-50 times a year in the divine service to only those who have been catechized and

¹² Philip H. Pfatteicher, *Commentary on the Occasional Services* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983), 16.

¹³ Ibid.

recognize the real presence. Otherwise stated, "...Holy Communion is not a separate service (as it became in the reforms of Zwingli and Calvin). It is the culmination and completion of the Service of the Word. As in the church building the chancel is not a separate structure, but the head and crown of the entire edifice, so in the liturgy the Service of the Word finds its crown and completion in the celebration and reception of the Sacrament."¹⁴

In regard to the issue of the real presence, this theological issue has been debated for some 500 years going all the way back to the conversations between Luther and another reformer named Zwingli. For the sake of time, this paper does not have the time or space to expound all the intricacies of this debate, therefore, to summarize the issue of the real presence in the Lord's Supper let it be said, *"If Christ is truly present, all this is true; if he is not present all is vain and false. This is why the Lutheran attaches so much importance to the doctrine of the real presence."*¹⁵ Thus it is very understandable why both baptism and communion function as the top two areas of misunderstanding for American Evangelicals entering Lutheran Churches. Both are central to the Lutheran faith and both are practiced consistently in the Lutheran Church.

A section on the Lord's Supper from Luther's Large Catechism has been posted in Appendix A covering the issues of the real presence and closed communion.

Confession and Absolution

The next issue of misunderstanding for American Evangelicals entering the Lutheran liturgy is the practice/teaching of confession and absolution (59.4%). Like baptism and

¹⁴ Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1947), 321.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 231.

communion the respondents stated that they were unfamiliar with the theology lying behind the Lutheran practice of confession and absolution. In other words, by not understanding the office of the keys, American Evangelicals coming into the Lutheran Church will find the words of absolution coming from the pastor as very difficult to hear and possibly view this practice as even blasphemous.

So what is the importance of confession and absolution? Confession and absolution are separate from the service proper. They are an,

...invariable introductory office which provides a helpful preparation for each day's worship. . . . The Service of the day properly begins with the Introit, but before this it is fitting to seek a purification of spirit, turn from ourselves to God in penitence and prayer and receive his assurance of mercy and grace.¹⁶

Through confession we will see ourselves as sinners (damned by our thoughts, words and deeds), thus coming to church to hear the Gospel Word of absolution and to be gifted the forgiveness of sins in the Sacraments. However, if we reject original sin and see ourselves as morally neutral, we will go to church to be encouraged in our pursuit of being more moral, achieving an anthropocentric goal, and actualizing our purpose. In the first scenario, the churchman goes to church hungry knowing that he will receive free warm bread. In the second scenario, the churchman goes to church denying both his need of the free bread and the gift of the warm bread, yet wanting recipes and pointers on how to make the bread himself. Therefore, confession and absolution are a helpful precursor in placing the congregation into the right context.

In regard to absolution specifically, it is of utmost importance to understand that,

¹⁶ Ibid, 256.

...in absolution the forgiveness of sins is not merely announced to, or invoked upon, men, but actually conferred and conveyed, John 20, 23, just as this is done in the Gospel in general, Luke 24, 47. Moreover, it is God who absolves from sin in absolution. There is not a twofold absolution, one pronounced by God and the other by man; but the absolution spoken by men is God's absolution, pronounced by men in His stead.¹⁷

Thus, in the Lutheran view of absolution the pastor does not have inherent powers that confers and delivers grace. Rather, the pastor is the mouth piece of God. Just as the water in baptism and the bread and wine in communion are powerful due to the word attached in and with, the power in absolution is derived from the very word of God that the pastor proclaims to the congregation.

From a Lutheran standpoint, the written and spoken word of the Gospel and the sacraments are the means of grace by which the Holy Spirit offers us all the blessings of Christ and creates faith. It is interesting to note that the survey respondents identified the three means of grace (i.e., baptism, communion, and the absolution) as areas of confusion when entering the Lutheran liturgy. This area of tension may be due in part to a general viewpoint within American Evangelical worship in which the congregation is encouraged to focus on coming to God in order to demonstrate and give their acts of devotion/worship rather than a focus on receiving what Christ has already accomplished.

The Rite of Confirmation

Though not as quite as high of percentage as baptism, communion, and absolution, the rite of confirmation was the fourth area of concern for American Evangelicals entering the Lutheran Church (46%).

¹⁷ John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1934), 460.

Briefly, it is worth noting Matthew 28:18-20 where Jesus says,

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[a] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

While many American Evangelicals will adamantly embrace the idea of making disciples of all nations, they may find their struggle lies in how this is to be done. As we look to the passage in Matthew we need to keep in mind that the words ‘make disciples’ in this verse function as the main verb. How are disciples to be made? Breaking down the sentence structure we see that they are to be made by baptizing and teaching. Baptizing and teaching participate in the main action of the verb, in other words, they are the participles to the main verb which in this case is ‘make.’ “Confirmation, by Lutheran definition, is a public rite which follows a time of instruction designed to help *baptized* Christians identify with the life and mission of the Christian community.”¹⁸ We can easily see that the Lutheran view of confirmation flows naturally out of the Matthew passage.

With that said however, from a biblical and historical perspective we must state that confirmation:

- is not a sacrament.
- does not in any sense complete baptism.
- is not a ratification of the vows or promises made by sponsors at Baptism.
- does not add any special form of God’s presence or gifts that the baptized person does not already enjoy.
- does not confer special privileges.
- is not a prerequisite to Holy Communion.

¹⁸ *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation: Kindle Edition* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), Loc 3208-3209.

- is not essential to the Christian life.¹⁹

This leads to the question of, ‘what exactly is confirmation?’ Very simply confirmation functions as 2-3 years of teaching, equipping and helping youth contemplate what God has done for them in their baptism. It is a time to understand what it means to be God’s child. It is a time to understand what it means to be forgiven, adopted, renewed, cleansed, converted, justified, regenerated, and so forth. “Confirmation is only an episode, the stage along the way, a progress report in the Christian’s walk of sanctification.”²⁰ In other words, confirmation is just one aspect, though quite important, of the participle ‘teaching’ that shall continue throughout the life of the individual as they daily live in the context of their baptismal grace.

Misunderstandings with the Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy

Regarding the ceremonies of the Lutheran liturgy, 67.2% of participants strongly agree or agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into Lutheran liturgy. The following four sections cover the top misunderstandings.

The Sign of the Cross

The top area of concern regarding ceremonies was that of the sign of the cross (56.7%). The biggest concern among respondents regarding the sign of the cross is the belief that it is, “too Roman Catholic.” While it is certainly true that the practice of making the sign of the cross was found in the medieval Catholic Church and continues to be

¹⁹ Frank Klos, *Confirmation and First Communion* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1968), 142.

²⁰ Donald L. Deffner, “Confirmation.” In *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice*, edited by Fred L. Precht (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 395-396

practiced in the Catholic Church today, it must be noted that the origins of the sign of the cross can be traced to the early apostolic church. Luther Reed in his book on the Lutheran liturgy shares several references from the church fathers that show that this ceremony had its beginning in the second century.²¹

So what is the purpose of the sign of the cross? Paul H.D. Lang states,

Making the sign of the cross is another ceremony that has come down to us from apostolic times. We employ it in blessing persons and things. In the Order of Holy Baptism we use it with the words, 'Receive the sign of the holy cross, both upon the forehead and upon the breast, in token that thou hast been redeemed by Christ the Crucified.' When the minister pronounces the Benediction, he blesses the people with the sign of the cross. In the Holy Communion Service the celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the bread and the cup.²²

Why is the sign of the cross integral in the theology and liturgy of the Lutheran Church?

To answer that question let's start with a common accusation against Lutheran thought. Many Christians may regard Lutherans as being very one-sided or narrow in their theology. The accusation is that Lutherans shrink the church year together into Good Friday. In other words, Lutherans are often blamed for making every day Good Friday, while ignoring the other major themes of the church year. Lutherans are accused of failing to move beyond the cross to the resurrection. So, what shall be a Lutheran response? Is the choice between the cross and the resurrection? Are there only two options, the cross and the rest of the Bible's doctrines? If so, should there be a fight for the cross at the expense of diminishing other Biblical themes? Or should there be a diminishing of Luther's *theologia crucis*? Thankfully the choice is not

²¹ Luther Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, 253.

²² Paul H.D. Lang, *Ceremony and Celebration* (Fort Wayne, IN: Emmanuel Press, 2012), 71.

between the cross and other Biblical themes, for this would be an example of an either-or logical fallacy. The choice is not between two alternative doctrines as the only possibilities. Herman Sasse responds to these apprehensions saying, “Obviously the ‘theology of the cross’ does not mean that for a theologian the church year shrinks together into nothing but Good Friday. Rather, it means that Christmas, Easter and Pentecost cannot be understood without Good Friday.”²³ Sasse goes on to state, “Always it is from the cross that everything is understood, because hidden in the cross is the deepest essence of God’s revelation.”²⁴ What this means is that we don’t avoid the themes of Creation, the work of the Holy Spirit, the Resurrection, and so forth. Rather, when we speak of these themes we do so with seeing the cross in the background and we do so within the shadow of the cross. Otherwise stated, we embrace these Biblical themes, preach them, and teach them while we understand them in light of the Cross, but never apart from the Cross which is why this ceremony is such an important part of divine worship.

The Liturgical Chanting

Of the 54.0% of survey participants who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with liturgical chanting, generally speaking the majority of their struggle was due to their lack of experience with chanting.

It is important to keep in mind that liturgical chanting has its roots all the way back to the 8th century and it could even be argued that the music of the church dates all the way back to the synagogues and even back to Old Testament times. In regard to the liturgical chanting

²³ Hermann Sasse, *We Confess: Anthology* translated by Norman Nagel (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 38.

²⁴ Ibid, 39.

that is now present in the Lutheran Church it is worth noting that the utmost significance is that it clothes the text in distinguished melodic form.²⁵

The Kneeling and Bowing

The third area of concern has to do with kneeling and bowing (53.2%). Very simply, bowing or genuflecting²⁶ occurs when the pastor or lay person approaches or departs from the area of the altar. As one approaches the altar, one does so with respect. When one leaves the altar, one turns around and bows in respect not turning their back to the altar. This is done because the, “altar itself is the symbol of God’s presence in the church.”²⁷ Bowing and genuflecting are obviously signs of respect and reverences.

One further thing to note is the positioning of the pastor. “When the Officiant stands before the altar, he faces the altar for all sacrificial acts and the Congregation for all sacramental acts.”²⁸

The Sacred Vessels and the Vestments

The final area of misunderstanding as indicated by the survey participants was with the vestments worn by the pastors in Lutheran liturgical services. May it be noted that the Lutheran Church has long considered the vestments of clergy to be a matter of adiaphora.²⁹ So, why use vestments? There are several reasons for the use of vestments.

²⁵ Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy*, 62.

²⁶ i.e., one touches the ground with the right knee.

²⁷ Paul H.D. Lang, *Ceremony and Celebration*, 68.

²⁸ Arthur Carl Piepkorn and Charles McClean, *The Conduct of the Service* (Fort Wayne, IN: Redeemer Press, 2006), 1.

First, the vestments are the official clothing of the church. Second, they demonstrate the office of the pastor. Just like a police officer has attire that frames him within his specific vocation, it is the same with the pastor and the vestments that he wears. Finally, the vestments cover and hide the man thus giving consistency from church to church

Conclusion

With all the focus on the misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with journeying from American Evangelicalism worship practices into the Lutheran Liturgy, one must ask if there is anything positive or good about the journey? Generally speaking the participants from the survey stated that the best thing about their journey into Lutheran liturgy was the continuity, consistency, and clarity of the divine service. Participant #1 stated that the best thing is,

Being in a church where I don't have to worry if I'm going to hear the Word of God each week. In my evangelical church, I never knew what I was going to get. It was never consistent. My Lutheran church is stable, and I know exactly what I'm going to get: Word and Sacrament, law and gospel, repentance and faith, historic Christianity. I don't dread Sundays anymore.

Furthermore, there was a great appreciation for the historic heritage of the liturgy. Participant #10 stated, *"I am connected to a story and a way of worship that is as old as the church. I am catholically connected with sacramental Christians the world over."* Finally, there was a great appreciation for the privilege of being able to attend a divine service where they could 'receive' from God and 'hear' a Christ-centered message.

So, what advice, encouragements, thoughts, and/or insights can be gleaned from those who have gone through the journey from worship settings of American Evangelicalism into the

²⁹ Timothy H. Maschke, *Gathered Guests: A Guide to Worship in the Lutheran Church* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 208.

Lutheran liturgy? Generally speaking the participants would like to share with others going through this journey into the Lutheran liturgy that they can relax and be patient, for the journey takes time. Participant #23 states, *“Don’t expect to understand it all at once, and even if you don’t get everything right in worship, it doesn’t mean you’ve broke anything. God’s Word still works.”* Furthermore, the survey participants would like encourage those journeying into the Lutheran liturgy to be open minded by asking a lot of questions to their new Lutheran pastors, as well as to read, read, and read as much as they can about the Lutheran faith and the Lutheran liturgy. Participant #35 says, *“Ask lots of questions, even after the divine service, about things that confuse you even if it’s for silly things.”*

What advice might be gleaned for Lutheran pastors that find themselves ministering to American Evangelicals? Generally speaking the survey participants would like to share with these pastors that former American Evangelicals coming to the Lutheran Church need pastors to be patient as they teach them. Participant #36 says to pastors, *“Teach your people what it means to be confessional, and what it means to worship in Spirit and Truth. Don’t mess with the liturgy to dumb it down or make it easier or less boring! Do you kiss your wife every day? Is that boring?”* Furthermore, pastors need to be prepared for many questions. Participant #22 says to pastors, *“When they [former Evangelicals] ask, don’t take it as a challenge to your authority but as a seeker looking to understand.”*

May the faithful and merciful God sustain American Evangelicals journeying into the Lutheran liturgy by filling their hearts with the love of the Word, and a patient desire to learn the rich, historic liturgy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as well as the pastors that have been called to proclaim his Word to them. Soli Deo Gloria.

Appendix A

Luther's Large Catechism on The Sacrament of the Altar

Source: <http://www.bookofconcord.org/lc-7-sacrament.php>

1] In the same manner as we have heard regarding Holy Baptism, we must speak also concerning the other Sacrament, namely, these three points: What is it? What are its benefits? and, Who is to receive it? And all these are established by the words by which Christ has instituted it, 2] and which every one who desires to be a Christian and go to the Sacrament should know. For it is not our intention to admit to it and to administer it to those who know not what they seek, or why they come. The words, however, are these:

3] Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

4] Here also we do not wish to enter into controversy and contend with the traducers and blasphemers of this Sacrament, but to learn first (as we did regarding Baptism) what is of the greatest importance, namely, that the chief point is the Word and ordinance or command of God. For it has not been invented nor introduced by any man, but without any one's counsel and deliberation it has been instituted by Christ. 5] Therefore, just as the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed retain their nature and worth, although you never keep, pray, or believe them, so also does this venerable Sacrament remain undisturbed, so that nothing is detracted or taken from it, even though we employ and dispense it unworthily. 6] What do you think God cares about what we do or believe, so that on that account He should suffer His ordinance to be changed? Why, in all worldly matters every thing remains as God has created and ordered it, no matter how we employ or use it. 7] This must always be urged, for thereby the prating of nearly all the fanatical spirits can be repelled. For they regard the Sacraments, aside from the Word of God, as something that we do.

8] Now, what is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer: It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and under the bread and wine which we Christians are commanded by the Word of Christ to eat and to drink. 9] And as we have said of Baptism that it is not simple water, so here also we say the Sacrament is bread and wine, but not mere bread and wine, such as are ordinarily served at the table, but bread and wine comprehended in, and connected with, the Word of God.

10] It is the Word (I say) which makes and distinguishes this Sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is, and is called, the body and blood of Christ. For it is said: *Accedat verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum*. If the Word be joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament. This saying of St. Augustine is so properly and so well put that he has scarcely said anything better. The Word must make a Sacrament of the element, else it remains a mere element. 11] Now, it is not the word or ordinance of a prince or emperor, but of the sublime Majesty, at whose feet all creatures should fall, and affirm it is as He says, and accept it with all reverence, fear, and humility.

12] With this Word you can strengthen your conscience and say: If a hundred thousand devils, together with all fanatics, should rush forward, crying, How can bread and wine be the body and blood of Christ? etc., I know that all spirits and scholars together are not as wise as is the Divine Majesty in His little finger. 13] Now here stands the Word of Christ: Take, eat; this is My body; Drink ye all of it; this is the new testament in My blood, etc. Here we abide, and would like to see those who will constitute themselves His masters, and make it different from what He has spoken. It is true, indeed, that if you take away the Word or regard it without the words, you have nothing but mere bread and wine. 14] But if the words remain with them, as they shall and must, then, in virtue of the same, it is truly the body and blood of Christ. For as the lips of Christ say and speak, so it is, as He can never lie or deceive.

15] Hence it is easy to reply to all manner of questions about which men are troubled at the present time, such as this one: Whether even a wicked priest can minister at, and dispense, the Sacrament, and whatever other questions like this there may be. 16] For here we conclude and say: Even though a knave takes or distributes the Sacrament, he receives the true Sacrament, that is, the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who [receives or] administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God. And as no saint upon earth, yea, no angel in heaven, can make bread and wine to be the body and blood of Christ, so also can no one change or alter it, even though it be misused. 17] For the Word by which it became a Sacrament and was instituted does not become false because of the person or his unbelief. For He does not say: If you believe or are worthy, you receive My body and blood, but: Take, eat and drink; this is My body and blood. Likewise: Do this (namely, what I now do, institute, give, and bid you take). 18] That is as much as to say, No matter whether you are worthy or unworthy, you have here His body and blood by virtue of these words which are added to the bread and wine. 19] Only note and remember this well; for upon these words rest all our foundation, protection, and defense against all errors and deception that have ever come or may yet come.

20] Thus we have briefly the first point which relates to the essence of this Sacrament. Now examine further the efficacy and benefits on account of which really the Sacrament was instituted; which is also its most necessary part, that we may know what we should seek and obtain there. 21] Now this is plain and clear from the words just mentioned: This is My body and blood, given and shed for you, for the remission of sins. 22] Briefly that is as much as to say: For this reason we go to the Sacrament because there we receive such a treasure by and in which we obtain forgiveness of sins. Why so? Because the words stand here and give us this; for on this account He bids me eat and drink, that it may be my own and may benefit me, as a sure pledge and token, yea, the very same treasure that is appointed for me against my sins, death, and every calamity.

23] On this account it is indeed called a food of souls, which nourishes and strengthens the new man. For by Baptism we are first born anew; but (as we said before) there still remains, besides, the old vicious

nature of flesh and blood in man, and there are so many hindrances and temptations of the devil and of the world that we often become weary and faint, and sometimes also stumble.

24] Therefore it is given for a daily pasture and sustenance, that faith may refresh and strengthen itself so as not to fall back in such a battle, but become ever stronger and stronger. 25] For the new life must be so regulated that it continually increase and progress; 26] but it must suffer much opposition. For the devil is such a furious enemy that when he sees that we oppose him and attack the old man, and that he cannot topple us over by force, he prowls and moves about on all sides, tries all devices, and does not desist, until he finally wearies us, so that we either renounce our faith or yield hands and feet and become listless or impatient. 27] Now to this end the consolation is here given when the heart feels that the burden is becoming too heavy, that it may here obtain new power and refreshment.

28] But here our wise spirits contort themselves with their great art and wisdom, crying out and bawling: How can bread and wine forgive sins or strengthen faith? Although they hear and know that we do not say this of bread and wine, because in itself bread is bread, but of such bread and wine as is the body and blood of Christ, and has the words attached to it. That, we say, is verily the treasure, and nothing else, through which such forgiveness is obtained. 29] Now the only way in which it is conveyed and appropriated to us is in the words (Given and shed for you). For herein you have both truths, that it is the body and blood of Christ, and that it is yours as a treasure and gift. 30] Now the body of Christ can never be an unfruitful, vain thing, that effects or profits nothing. Yet, however great is the treasure in itself, it must be comprehended in the Word and administered to us, else we should never be able to know or seek it.

31] Therefore also it is vain talk when they say that the body and blood of Christ are not given and shed for us in the Lord's Supper, hence we could not have forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament. For although the work is accomplished and the forgiveness of sins acquired on the cross, yet it cannot come to us in any other way than through the Word. For what would we otherwise know about it, that such a thing was accomplished or was to be given us if it were not presented by preaching or the oral Word?

Whence do they know of it, or how can they apprehend and appropriate to themselves the forgiveness, except they lay hold of and believe the Scriptures and the Gospel? 32] But now the entire Gospel and the article of the Creed: I believe a holy Christian Church, the forgiveness of sin, etc., are by the Word embodied in this Sacrament and presented to us. Why, then, should we allow this treasure to be torn from the Sacrament when they must confess that these are the very words which we hear every where in the Gospel, and they cannot say that these words in the Sacrament are of no use, as little as they dare say that the entire Gospel or Word of God, apart from the Sacrament, is of no use?

33] Thus we have the entire Sacrament, both as to what it is in itself and as to what it brings and profits. Now we must also see who is the person that receives this power and benefit. That is answered briefly, as we said above of Baptism and often elsewhere: Whoever believes it has what the words declare and bring. For they are not spoken or proclaimed to stone and wood, but to those who hear them, to whom He says: 34] Take and eat, etc. And because He offers and promises forgiveness of sin, it cannot be received otherwise than by faith. This faith He Himself demands in the Word when He says: Given and shed for you. As if He said: For this reason I give it, and bid you eat and drink, that you may claim it as yours and enjoy it. 35] Whoever now accepts these words, and believes that what they declare is true, has it. But whoever does not believe it has nothing, as he allows it to be offered to him in vain, and refuses to enjoy such a saving good. The treasure, indeed, is opened and placed at every one's door, yea, upon his table, but it is necessary that you also claim it, and confidently view it as the words suggest to you 36] This, now, is the entire Christian preparation for receiving this Sacrament worthily. For since this treasure is entirely presented in the words, it cannot be apprehended and appropriated in any other way than with the heart. For such a gift and eternal treasure cannot be seized with the fist. 37] Fasting and prayer, etc., may indeed be an external preparation and discipline for children, that the body may keep and bear itself modestly and reverently towards the body and blood of Christ; yet what is given in and with it the body cannot seize and appropriate. But this is done by the faith of the heart, which discerns this treasure and desires it. 38] This may suffice for what is necessary as a general instruction respecting this

Sacrament; for what is further to be said of it belongs to another time.

39] In conclusion, since we have now the true understanding and doctrine of the Sacrament, there is indeed need of some admonition and exhortation, that men may not let so great a treasure which is daily administered and distributed among Christians pass by unheeded, that is, that those who would be Christians make ready to receive this venerable Sacrament often. 40] For we see that men seem weary and lazy with respect to it; and there is a great multitude of such as hear the Gospel, and, because the nonsense of the Pope has been abolished, and we are freed from his laws and coercion, go one, two, three years, or even longer without the Sacrament, as though they were such strong Christians that they have no need of it; 41] and some allow themselves to be prevented and deterred by the pretense that we have taught that no one should approach it except those who feel hunger and thirst, which urge them to it. Some pretend that it is a matter of liberty and not necessary, and that it is sufficient to believe without it; and thus for the most part they go so far that they become quite brutish, and finally despise both the Sacrament and the Word of God.

42] Now, it is true, as we have said, that no one should by any means be coerced or compelled, lest we institute a new murdering of souls. Nevertheless, it must be known that such people as deprive themselves of, and withdraw from, the Sacrament so long a time are not to be considered Christians. For Christ has not instituted it to be treated as a show, but has commanded His Christians to eat and drink it, and thereby remember Him.

43] And, indeed, those who are true Christians and esteem the Sacrament precious and holy will urge and impel themselves unto it. Yet that the simple-minded and the weak who also would like to be Christians be the more incited to consider the cause and need which ought to impel them, we will treat somewhat of this point. 44] For as in other matters pertaining to faith, love, and patience, it is not enough to teach and instruct only, but there is need also of daily exhortation, so here also there is need of continuing to preach that men may not become weary and disgusted, since we know and feel how the devil always opposes this and every Christian exercise, and drives and deters therefrom as much as he can.

45] And we have, in the first place, the clear text in the very words of Christ: Do this in remembrance of Me. These are bidding and commanding words by which all who would be Christians are enjoined to partake of this Sacrament. Therefore, whoever would be a disciple of Christ, with whom He here speaks, must also consider and observe this, not from compulsion, as being forced by men, but in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to please Him. 46] However, if you say: But the words are added, As oft as ye do it; there He compels no one, but leaves it to our free choice, answer: 47] That is true, yet it is not written that we should never do so. Yea, just because He speaks the words, As oft as ye do it, it is nevertheless implied that we should do it often; and it is added for the reason that He wishes to have the Sacrament free, not limited to special times, like the Passover of the Jews, which they were obliged to eat only once a year, and that just upon the fourteenth day of the first full moon in the evening, and which they must not vary a day. As if He would say by these words: I institute a Passover or Supper for you which you shall enjoy not only once a year, just upon this evening, but often, when and where you will, according to every one's opportunity and necessity, bound to no place or appointed time; 48] although the Pope afterwards perverted it, and again made a Jewish feast of it.

49] Thus, you perceive, it is not left free in the sense that we may despise it. For that I call despising it if one allow so long a time to elapse and with nothing to hinder him yet never feels a desire for it. if you wish such liberty, you may just as well have the liberty to be no Christian, and neither have to believe nor pray; for the one is just as much the command of Christ as the other. But if you wish to be a Christian, you must from time to time render satisfaction and obedience to this commandment. 50] For this commandment ought ever to move you to examine yourself and to think: See, what sort of a Christian I am! If I were one, I would certainly have some little longing for that which my Lord has commanded [me] to do.

51] And, indeed, since we act such strangers to it, it is easily seen what sort of Christians we were under the Papacy, namely, that we went from mere compulsion and fear of human commandments, without inclination and love, and never regarded the commandment of Christ. 52] But we neither force nor compel any one; nor need any one do it to serve

or please us. But this should induce and constrain you by itself, that He desires it and that it is pleasing to Him. You must not suffer men to coerce you unto faith or any good work. We are doing no more than to say and exhort you as to what you ought to do, not for our sake, but for your own sake. He invites and allures you; if you despise it, you must answer for it yourself.

53] Now, this is to be the first point, especially for those who are cold and indifferent, that they may reflect upon and rouse themselves. For this is certainly true, as I have found in my own experience, and as every one will find in his own case, that if a person thus withdraw from this Sacrament, he will daily become more and more callous and cold, and will at last disregard it altogether. 54] To avoid this, we must, indeed, examine heart and conscience, and act like a person who desires to be right with God. Now, the more this is done, the more will the heart be warmed and enkindled, that it may not become entirely cold.

55] But if you say: How if I feel that I am not prepared? Answer: That is also my scruple, especially from the old way under the Pope, in which a person tortured himself to be so perfectly pure that God could not find the least blemish in us. On this account we became so timid that every one was instantly thrown into consternation and said to himself: Alas! you are unworthy! 56] For then nature and reason begin to reckon our unworthiness in comparison with the great and precious good; and then it appears like a dark lantern in contrast with the bright sun, or as filth in comparison with precious stones. Because nature and reason see this, they refuse to approach and tarry until they are prepared, so long that one week trails another, and one half year the other. 57] But if you are to regard how good and pure you are, and labor to have no compunctions, you must never approach.

58] We must, therefore, make a distinction here among men. For those who are wanton and dissolute must be told to stay away; for they are not prepared to receive forgiveness of sin, since they do not desire it and do not wish to be godly. 59] But the others, who are not such callous and wicked people, and desire to be godly, must not absent themselves, even though otherwise they be feeble and full of infirmities, as St. Hilary also has said: If any one have not committed sin for which he can rightly be put out of the congregation and esteemed as no

Christian, he ought not stay away from the Sacrament, lest he may deprive himself of life. 60] For no one will make such progress that he will not retain many daily infirmities in flesh and blood.

61] Therefore such people must learn that it is the highest art to know that our Sacrament does not depend upon our worthiness. For we are not baptized because we are worthy and holy, nor do we go to confession because we are pure and without sin, but the contrary, because we are poor miserable men, and just because we are unworthy; unless it be some one who desires no grace and absolution nor intends to reform.

62] But whoever would gladly obtain grace and consolation should impel himself, and allow no one to frighten him away, but say: I, indeed, would like to be worthy; but I come, not upon any worthiness, but upon Thy Word, because Thou hast commanded it, as one who would gladly be Thy disciple, no matter what becomes of my worthiness. 63] But this is difficult; for we always have this obstacle and hindrance to encounter, that we look more upon ourselves than upon the Word and lips of Christ. For nature desires so to act that it can stand and rest firmly on itself, otherwise it refuses to make the approach. Let this suffice concerning the first point.

64] In the second place, there is besides this command also a promise, as we heard above, which ought most strongly to incite and encourage us. For here stand the kind and precious words: This is My body, given for you. This is My blood, shed for you, for the remission of sins. 65] These words, I have said, are not preached to wood and stone, but to me and you; else He might just as well be silent and not institute a Sacrament. Therefore consider, and put yourself into this You, that He may not speak to you in vain.

66] For here He offers to us the entire treasure which He has brought for us from heaven, and to which He invites us also in other places with the greatest kindness, as when He says in St. Matthew 11:28: Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 67] Now it is surely a sin and a shame that He so cordially and faithfully summons and exhorts us to our highest and greatest good, and we act so distantly with regard to it, and permit so long a time to pass [without partaking of the Sacrament] that we grow quite cold and hardened, so that we have no

inclination or love for it. 68] We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved. Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death?

69] To be sure, it is true that those who despise it and live in an unchristian manner receive it to their hurt and damnation; for nothing shall be good or wholesome to them, just as with a sick person who from caprice eats and drinks what is forbidden him by the physician. 70] But those who are sensible of their weakness, desire to be rid of it and long for help, should regard and use it only as a precious antidote against the poison which they have in them. For here in the Sacrament you are to receive from the lips of Christ forgiveness of sin, which contains and brings with it the grace of God and the Spirit with all His gifts, protection, shelter, and power against death and the devil and all misfortune.

71] Thus you have, on the part of God, both the command and the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides this, on your part, your own distress which is about your neck, and because of which this command, invitation, and promise are given, ought to impel you. For He Himself says: They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that be sick; that is, those who are weary and heavy-laden with their sins, with the fear of death, temptations of the flesh and of the devil. 72] If, therefore, you are heavy-laden and feel your weakness, then go joyfully to this Sacrament and obtain refreshment, consolation, and strength. 73] For if you would wait until you are rid of such burdens, that you might come to the Sacrament pure and worthy, you must forever stay away. For in that case He pronounces sentence and says: 74] If you are pure and godly, you have no need of Me, and I, in turn, none of thee. Therefore those alone are called unworthy who neither feel their infirmities nor wish to be considered sinners.

75] But if you say: What, then, shall I do if I cannot feel such distress or experience hunger and thirst for the Sacrament? Answer: For those who are so minded that they do not realize their condition I know no better counsel than that they put their hand into their bosom to ascertain whether they

also have flesh and blood. And if you find that to be the case, then go, for your good, to St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, and hear what sort of a fruit your flesh is: Now the works of the flesh (he says [Gal. 5:19ff]) are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.

76] Therefore, if you cannot feel it, at least believe the Scriptures; they will not lie to you, and they know your flesh better than you yourself. Yea, St. Paul further concludes in Rom. 7:18: I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. If St. Paul may speak thus of his flesh, we do not propose to be better nor more holy. 77] But that we do not feel it is so much the worse; for it is a sign that there is a leprous flesh which feels nothing, and yet [the leprosy] rages and keeps spreading. 78] Yet, as we have said, if you are quite dead to all sensibility, still believe the Scriptures, which pronounce sentence upon you. And, in short, the less you feel your sins and infirmities, the more reason have you to go to the Sacrament to seek help and a remedy.

79] In the second place, look about you and see whether you are also in the world, or if you do not know it, ask your neighbors about it. If you are in the world, do not think that there will be lack of sins and misery. For only begin to act as though you would be godly and adhere to the Gospel, and see whether no one will become your enemy, and, moreover, do you harm, wrong, and violence, and likewise give you cause for sin and vice. If you have not experienced it, then let the Scriptures tell you, which everywhere give this praise and testimony to the world.

80] Besides this, you will also have the devil about you, whom you will not entirely tread under foot, because our Lord Christ Himself could not entirely avoid him. Now, what is the devil? 81] Nothing else than what the Scriptures call him, a liar and murderer. A liar, to lead the heart astray from the Word of God, and to blind it, that you cannot feel your distress or come to Christ. A murderer, who cannot bear to see you live one single hour. 82] If you could see how many knives, darts, and arrows are every moment aimed at you, you would be glad to come to the Sacrament as often as possible. But

there is no reason why we walk so securely and heedlessly, except that we neither think nor believe that we are in the flesh, and in this wicked world or in the kingdom of the devil.

83] Therefore, try this and practise it well, and do but examine yourself, or look about you a little, and only keep to the Scriptures. If even then you still feel nothing, you have so much the more misery to lament both to God and to your brother. Then take advice and have others pray for you, and do not desist until the stone be removed from your heart.

84] Then, indeed, the distress will not fail to become manifest, and you will find that you have sunk twice as deep as any other poor sinner, and are much more in need of the Sacrament against the misery which unfortunately you do not see, so that, with the grace of God, you may feel it more and become the more hungry for the Sacrament, especially since the devil plies his force against you, and lies in wait for you without ceasing to seize and destroy you, soul and body, so that you are not safe from him one hour. How soon can he have brought you suddenly into misery and distress when you least expect it!

85] Let this, then, be said for exhortation, not only for those of us who are old and grown, but also for the young people, who ought to be brought up in the Christian doctrine and understanding. For thereby the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer might be the more easily inculcated to our youth, so that they would receive them with pleasure and earnestness, and thus would practise them from their youth and accustom themselves to them. 86] For the old are now well-nigh done for, so that these and other things cannot be attained, unless we train the people who are to come after us and succeed us in our office and work, in order that they also may bring up their children successfully, that the Word of God and the Christian Church may be preserved. 87] Therefore let every father of a family know that it is his duty, by the injunction and command of God, to teach these things to his children, or have them learn what they ought to know. For since they are baptized and received into the Christian Church, they should also enjoy this communion of the Sacrament, in order that they may serve us and be useful to us; for they must all indeed help us to believe, love, pray, and fight against the devil.

Appendix B

Becoming A Liturgical Lutheran Analysis Summary

Exploring the Journey of American Evangelicals into Confessional Lutheran Liturgy

Prepared by: Rev. Matthew Richard

© 2013 Matthew R. Richard All intellectual material in this paper, unless otherwise stated, is the property of Matthew R. Richard. Copyright and other intellectual property laws protect these materials.
www.pastormatrichard.com

General:

Survey conducted using: Survey Monkey

Summary: The survey was conducted among American Evangelicals who are or recently have entered a liturgical Lutheran Church in order to assess their misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the Lutheran liturgy.

Problem Thesis:

The journey for American Evangelicals into Confessional Lutheranism is a long, difficult, and sometimes scary road. The shift from American Evangelicalism into Confessional Lutheranism is neither something that just happens overnight, nor is it an easy shift. The shift has linguistic, emotional, worldview, and epistemological challenges that accompany it, thus producing a great deal of anxiety, stress, and uncertainty for the individual. Not only does one experience this shift ideologically, but one also experiences misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the changes from non-liturgical worship settings to the worship practices of the Lutheran liturgy. All of these changes/shifts present a challenge for Lutheran pastors in knowing how to minister to parishioners coming out of American Evangelicalism into their parish.

Objective of Survey:

The purpose of the survey is to identify the common misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles of American Evangelicals who have or are joining liturgical Lutheran Churches. From the survey results, future work and study will occur to help Lutheran pastors better serve former Evangelicals, as well as future work and study will occur to help former American Evangelicals better understand the Lutheran liturgy.

Date of Survey:

Begin Date: Monday, May 6th of 2013

End Date: Monday, May 20th of 2013

Survey Participant Response:

Total Response: 125 participants

Of the 125 participants, 117 are now currently worshipping in a Liturgical Lutheran Church, while the remaining 8 are not consistently worshipping in a Liturgical Lutheran Church. For the sake of the following survey analysis, the data results will be based on the 117 participants. Special attention will be given to the other 8 individuals in the special focus portion of this analysis paper.

Statistical Accuracy:

Assuming a population of 100,000 individuals who have journeyed and/or are journeying from American Evangelicalism into Lutheranism, 125 participant responses yields the following statistical confidence:

-A confidence level of 95%

-A confidence interval of 8.76%

Survey Results (Quantitative):

1. What is the church affiliation background of American Evangelicals who have journeyed into liturgical Lutheran Churches?
 - a. Generally speaking, American Evangelicals journeying into Lutheran liturgy have slightly more than one Evangelical denomination in their background (i.e., approximately 1.6 denominational backgrounds).
 - b. The two most common American Evangelical backgrounds of those journeying into Lutheran liturgy were the Baptist denomination (i.e., 56.1%) and Non-denominational churches (i.e., 45.8%).

2. Which movement and influences have participants been impacted by within American Evangelicalism?
 - a. Generally speaking, American Evangelicals journeying into the Lutheran liturgy have 3.72 different movements and influences that they have been impacted by.
 - b. The top movement and/or influence responses are:
 - i. 62.9% were impacted by Revivalism.
 - ii. 62.9% were impacted by Fundamentalism.
 - iii. 56.0% were impacted by Dispensationalism.
 - iv. 55.2% were impacted by Pietism.
 - v. 47.4% were impacted by the Church Growth Movement.

3. Before beginning the journey towards Lutheran thought, how long had participants been in American Evangelicalism?
 - a. 63.7% of participants marked that they were in American Evangelicalism for 10-30 years.
 - b. The other 36.3% of participants varied from less than a year to over 50 years.

4. In reflecting on familiarity:
 - a. 84.5% of participants said that they were unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with the Lutheran liturgy before beginning their journey into it.
 - b. 96.6% of participants said that they are currently familiar or very familiar with the Lutheran liturgy.

5. Regarding the Rituals/Agenda and Altar Book of the Lutheran Liturgy (i.e., the rite or order of service of the Eucharist, or Holy Baptism, or Confirmation, or Matrimony, or Burial, etc...):
 - a. 63.2% agree or strongly agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into Lutheran liturgy.
 - i. More specifically, the top ritual misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles existed with:
 1. ...the rite of Holy Baptism (67.8% agree and strongly agree)
 2. ...the rite of Holy Communion (61.4% agree and strongly agree)
 3. ...Confession of Sin and Absolution (59.5% agree and strongly agree)
 4. ...the rite of Confirmation (46.0% agree and strongly agree)
 - b. 29.4% disagree or strongly disagree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into Lutheran liturgy.
 - i. More specifically, the top least ritual misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles existed with:
 1. ...the offering (88.7% disagree and strongly disagree)
 2. ...the Lord's Prayer (83.4% disagree and strongly disagree)
 3. ...the benediction (82.5% disagree and strongly disagree)

6. Regarding the Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy (i.e., bodily expressions, speaking, singing, kneeling, bowing, making the sign of the cross, outward observances of the church year, ornaments, symbols, material objects employed in the church's worship, the church building, the altar, crucifixes, candles, vestments, etc...):
 - a. 67.2% agree or strongly agree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into Lutheran liturgy.
 - i. More specifically, the top ceremonial misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles existed with:
 1. ...the sign of the cross (56.7% agree and strongly agree)
 2. ...the liturgical chanting (54.0% agree and strongly agree)
 3. ...the kneeling and bowing (53.2% agree and strongly agree)
 4. ...the sacred vessels and vestments (52.7% agree and strongly agree)
 - b. 30% disagree or strongly disagree that they experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles in their journey from American Evangelicalism into Lutheran liturgy.
 - i. More specifically, the top least ceremonial misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles existed with:
 1. ...the singing (67.3% disagree and strongly disagree)
 2. ...the linen cloths (53.1% disagree and strongly disagree)
 3. ...the church building and its ornaments (50.7% disagree and strongly disagree)

Survey Results (Qualitative):

1. General Observations:

- a. Generally speaking the participants stated that before they journeyed into Lutheran liturgy that their opinions of it were merely based on external perceptions. However, as they peeled the layers back and learned about the liturgy, their perceptions of the Lutheran liturgy changed drastically. Participant #7 stated,

“All of the pieces of the liturgy confused me until I understood the structure and meaning behind them, all of which point to God’s work for us through Christ. I was not familiar enough with my Bible to know that all of the liturgy came from it, and had a reason for being used in worship. I began searching to learn more about the liturgy because when we left the fundie church for a confessional church, a friend from the fundie church wrote an 18 page letter to us explaining what was evil and wrong about the Lutheran church...mainly that it was closely tied with the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and so was associating with the whore of Babylon. Written prayers and the liturgy, he maintained, were dead works and not spiritual, so I began researching to see if he was correct. Needless to say, once I found out that the liturgy was God’s Word spoken all throughout the service, and understood that the Divine Service is simply a reception of God’s gifts, with our responses of thanks and praise to Him for His mercy through Christ, I never wanted to leave.”

Many participants stated that as they continually learned about the liturgy their presuppositions also continually changed. Participant #11 states,

“The outward appearance of confessional Lutheranism seemed to me formal and archaic. Yet, once I began to learn more about the historic church, I came to deeply appreciate the reverence and awe that came from following the pattern of sound words that have been passed down for centuries. The outward forms of reverence (kneeling/bowing/sign of the cross/chanting/etc...) may vary from congregation to congregation, but the Divine Service takes on such meaning and significance once one realizes what these things are and why we have them. Similarly, the candles, vestments, and other objects have no meaning unless one knows WHY they are there. I had no idea why they were used until my curiosity drove me to research and now I can view them as wonderful tools in teaching the meaning of God’s Word. The fact that everything has a purpose in the Divine Service is lost on many sitting in the pews, and that is a sad fact indeed. Worship is ever so much richer when we understand why we’re doing what we’re doing (and why the Church has done these same things for centuries).

2. Qualitative results regarding the Rituals/Agenda and Altar Book

- a. Of the 67.8% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of Holy Baptism, generally speaking their confusion existed not with the

rite and/or order of the ritual but with the theology of baptism (i.e., namely infant baptism). One participant stated, *"It took a long time to 'unlearn' bad theology about this."*

- b. Of the 61.4% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of Holy Communion, generally speaking their confusion existed not with the rite and/or order of the ritual but with the theology of communion. One participant stated, *"It's a long road from a symbol using grape juice to Words of Institution and True Body/True Blood. Lots of teaching is needed to re-learn."* Furthermore, participants noted that issues of closed communion were difficult to understand and accept.
- c. Of the 59.5% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the rite of Confession of Sin and Absolution, generally speaking their confusion existed due to Confession and Absolution being extremely foreign to their former Evangelical context and/or Evangelical understanding. As one participant stated, *"I was clueless!"* As noted by participants the cluelessness was due to them not understanding the office of the keys and how a pastor could forgive sins in God's stead.
- d. Note: It is interesting to note that the top three ritual confusions were all means of grace. It is also interesting to note that the general struggles were due to the theology embedded in each of these means of grace.

3. Qualitative results regarding the Ceremonies of the Lutheran Liturgy

- a. Of the 56.7% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the sign of the cross, generally speaking their hesitations were due to believing that it was too Roman Catholic. As one participant stated, *"I thought only Romans Catholics did it, but once I learned that it wasn't just for field goals and extra points in overtime, I now think all Christians should do it."* Another participant stated, *"I feared it because I thought it was Catholic. However, I came to realize that it was a mark of true Christianity."*
- b. Of the 54% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with liturgical chanting, generally speaking their struggle was due to their lack of experience with chanting. One participant stated, *"I cannot read chant music yet; though I play the violin. It is not intuitive to me."* Even though this struggle existed, generally speaking there was a very favorable opinion of chanting from the participants. Commenting favorably one participant said, *"I love to hear the prayers chanted. It makes me sad to visit other LCMS churches and to see how few pastors chant."*
- c. Of the 53.2% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the kneeling and bowing, generally speaking their struggle was due to simply not being exposed to it before. Participant #28 stated, *"Other than at the communion rail, I have never seen this."*
- d. Of the 52.7% of those who experienced misunderstandings, hesitations, and struggles with the sacred vessels and vestments, generally speaking their struggle was due to not understanding or being familiar with it. In fact one participant even said that,

“Lifelong Lutherans seem to have little understanding of the significance of the garments.”

4. What has been the best thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?
 - a. Generally speaking the participants stated that the best thing about their journey into Lutheran liturgy was the continuity, consistency, and clarity of the divine service. Participant #1 stated that the best thing is,

“Being in a church where I don’t have to worry if I’m going to hear the Word of God each week. In my evangelical church, I never knew what I was going to get. It was never consistent. My Lutheran church is stable, and I know exactly what I’m going to get: Word and Sacrament, law and gospel, repentance and faith, historic Christianity. I don’t dread Sundays anymore.”
 - b. Furthermore, there was a great appreciation for the historic heritage of the liturgy. Participant #10 stated, *“I am connected to a story and a way of worship that is as old as the church. I am catholically connected with sacramental Christians the world over.”*
 - c. Finally, there was a great appreciation for the privilege of being able to attend a divine service where they could ‘receive’ from God and ‘hear’ a Christ-centered message.

5. What has been the worst thing about the journey into Lutheran liturgy?
 - a. Generally speaking the participants stated that the worst thing about their journey into Lutheran liturgy was the loss of friends and family, as well as the fear of persecution and the persecution itself. Participant #1 shares that the worst part of the journey is, *“The fear of being misunderstood by my Baptist parents, of them thinking I’ve gone off the deep end... The fear of being ostracized by my former church.”*
 - b. Furthermore, participants noted that it was difficult dealing with lifelong Lutherans who did not appreciate the gift of their liturgy. Participant #40 speaks to this saying, *“Dealing with lifelong Lutherans who aren’t as passionate about their faith and who want to jump into the muck of Evangelicalism. I am made to feel like a troublemaker for not approving of or wanting to jump into the muck with them. I’ve been there and it is not pretty.”* Participant #45 comments on this saying that one of the worst parts of this journey is, *“Seeing lifelong Lutherans not understanding what they have and become bored with it or wanting what they think would be exciting.”*
 - c. Finally, participants shared that one of the struggles with the journey into Lutheran liturgy has been the tremendous learning curve; there is just simply so much to learn.

6. What advice, encouragements, thoughts, and/or insights can you give to those that are currently going through the journey into Lutheran liturgy?
 - a. Generally speaking the participants would like to share with others going through this journey into the Lutheran liturgy that they can relax and be patient, for the journey takes time. Participant #23 states, *“Don’t expect to understand it all at once, and even if you don’t get everything right in worship, it doesn’t mean you’ve broke anything. God’s Word still works.”*

- b. Furthermore, they would like encourage those journeying into the Lutheran liturgy to be open minded by asking a lot of questions to their new Lutheran pastors, as well as to read, read, and read as much as they can about the Lutheran faith and the Lutheran liturgy. Participant #35 says, *“Ask lots of questions, even after the divine service, about things that confuse you even if it’s for silly things.”*
7. What advice, encouragements, insights, and/or thoughts can you give to Lutheran pastors so that they might better minister to former Evangelicals joining their liturgical churches?
- a. Generally speaking the participants would like to share with pastors that former Evangelicals coming to the Lutheran Church need pastors to be patient as they teach them. Participant #36 says to pastors, *“Teach your people what it means to be confessional, and what it means to worship in Spirit and Truth. Don’t mess with the liturgy to dumb it down or make it easier or less boring! Do you kiss your wife every day? Is that boring?”*
 - b. Furthermore, pastors need to be prepared for many questions. Participant #22 says to pastors, *“When they [former Evangelicals] ask, don’t take it as a challenge to your authority but as a seeker looking to understand.”*

Special Focus:

In comparing the 117 participants who are currently attending a Lutheran Church that upholds the Lutheran Confessions as expressed in the Book of Concord and practices the historical liturgy with the 8 respondents who are not currently attending a liturgical church, one significant thing needs to be noted. Both the 117 participants and the 8 participants noted that they are currently familiar or very familiar with the Lutheran liturgy (Specifically 96.6% of those currently attending say that they are very familiar or familiar with the liturgy, whereas 75% of those not currently attending a liturgical Lutheran Church say that they are very familiar or familiar with the liturgy). However, when participants were asked about specific items of the liturgy (i.e., the Nunc-Dimittis, The Pax Domini, The Sanctus, The Salutations and Collect, Etc...) those who are not attending a liturgical church scored much higher in the realm of not understanding these terms and concepts. Therefore it may be concluded that a person’s definition and degree of familiarity with the liturgy may be directly tied to whether or not they are attending a liturgical church. Thus it is plausible that one can familiarize himself with the Lutheran liturgy to a certain degree theoretically speaking, but without attending and participating in the Lutheran liturgy through a congregation, one’s familiarization may still be lacking or incomplete.

Bibliography

Amazon.com. "How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in Ninety-Five Difficult Steps," <http://www.amazon.com/Evangelical-Committed-Catholic-Ninety-Five-Difficult/dp/1610970330> (5 June, 2013).

_____. "Journeys of Faith: Evangelicalism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Anglicanism," <http://www.amazon.com/Journeys-Faith-Evangelicalism-Catholicism-Anglicanism/dp/031033120X> (5 June 2013)

Deffner, Donald L. "Confirmation," in *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice*, ed. by Fred L. Precht. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1993.

Klos, Frank. *Confirmation and First Communion*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1968.

Lang, Paul H.D. *Ceremony and Celebration*. Fort Wayne, IN: Emmanuel Press, 2012.

Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation: Kindle Edition. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008.

Lutheran Worship. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1982.

Maschke, Timothy H. *Gathered Guests: A Guide to Worship in the Lutheran Church*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2009.

Montana District Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, "Theses on Worship," <http://www.mtdistlcms.org/president/papers/> (15 June 2013)

Mueller, John Theodore. *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1934.

Pfatteicher, Philip H. *Commentary on the Occasional Services*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1983.

Piepkorn, Arthur Carl and Charles McClean. *The Conduct of the Service*. Fort Wayne, IN: Redeemer Press, 2006.

Prenter, Regin. "Liturgy and Theology," in *Liturgy, Theology, and Music in the Lutheran Church*, edited by Mandus A. Egge. Minneapolis, MN: International Choral Union, 1959.

Preus, Klemet. *The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology In Practice*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004.

Reed, Luther D. *The Lutheran Liturgy*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Muhlenberg Press, 1947.

Sasse, Hermann. *We Confess: Anthology*, trans. by Norman Nagel. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003.

Tappert, Theodore, trans and ed. *The Book of Concord*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1959.

Trueman, Carl R. *The Real Scandal of the Evangelical Mind: Kindle Edition*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2011.

Vajta, Vilmos. *Luther on Worship: An Interpretation*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004.