

The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association
149 Glenview Drive, New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

November 2015
Volume 8, Issue 2

Reasons for Forming a Synodical Union

One of the casualties of language is that it can train us to miss something that is right in front of our eyes. For example, when we make the “Synod” a noun, we may miss an important aspect our forefathers intended us to live in. The phrase used in the preamble to the Constitution of the LCMS offers a healthy alternative to our current institutional narrative. The title of the preamble reads, “Reason for the Forming of a Synodical Union.” In that context “Synod” becomes an adjective qualifying the Union. I wish to submit, in this brief article, that we would be far better off if we emphasized the “Union” than we are by our current practice of emphasizing the institution of the “Synod.”

If we were to focus on the union God has given us, we would be forced to admit that it is based not on structure, tradition or habit, but on the confession of the true Word, as found in the Scriptures and Confessions. Our “Walking Together” would then be defined as the practice of our union. What kind of a “union” have we been given? It is a “synodical” union, where we walk together in practice. The union of our confession is what we should be emphasizing. That is what the Union was formed to accomplish.

This is what the texts of our Constitution and Bylaws clearly state. But, we are no longer functioning as a “Synodical Union.” In practice we function as a federation of Districts, and this to our peril. In an earlier article I bemoaned our incapacity to deal with heresy. [*The Lutheran Clarion*, July 2015 ; see <http://lutheranclarion.org/images/NewsletterJul2015.pdf>.] If there is a greater threat to the institution of the LCMS than our inability to deal with heresy, it is our propensity to ignore the Union and function as if the Synod consists of independent Districts. Our inability to deal with heresy is partly a function of the practice of independent districts.

The Synodical Union does not consist of Districts. It consists of congregations and church workers, those who are making the good confession, and walking together in the practice of that confession. Congregations are the funda-

“When [Districts] act independently they actually degrade the capacity of the Union to carry out its purposes.”

mental unit of the Synod. Districts were not designed to be independent. They are necessary administrative components of the Synod, designed to support the union of the confession. When they act independently they actually degrade the capacity of the Union to carry out its purposes.

The purposes of the Synod are variously stated in the Constitution and Bylaws, but nowhere more clearly than in Bylaw 1.3.3.

The Synod, including its component parts [i.e. Districts, 1.3.2], is regarded as an extension of the congregations to the extent and for the purposes determined by the congregations acting through conventions. The Synod and its component parts are designed to assist congregations and their members in conserving and promoting the unity of the faith and in carrying out their mission and ministry. The Synod, including its component parts, also serves as the structure through which congregations carry out certain functions that can be performed more effectively and efficiently together with other member congregations.

Please note the two clear reasons for forming a Synodical Union.

1. The Synod is designed to assist congregations in promoting the union of its confession.
2. The Synod serves the practice of that confession by assisting in those functions which individual congregations cannot carry out on their own.

When we allow Districts to function as independent parts of a federation, certain results are predictable.

1. District Presidents will think of themselves as representatives of their “constituents” rather than as representatives of the Union.
2. Districts will form their own systems for educating church workers.
3. Districts will form their own systems for sending missionaries
4. Districts will form their own systems for publishing materials.

As a result, and almost inevitably, Districts will develop their own confession of faith. The degree to which these things are already occurring demonstrates how far from the

In this Issue of <i>The Lutheran Clarion</i>	
Reasons for Forming a Synodical Union.....	1
Reforming LCMS Polity and Practice	2
Controversy over Translating the Bible, Part III	3
Presenters at the 2016 LCA Conference.....	8
2016 LCA Conference Registration Form	9

Union we have strayed.

Is there a human or “institutional” fix for this problem? Possibly, but it is radical. And it is highly unlikely to overwhelm the stanchions of entrenched power currently existing within our Union. Nevertheless, since Districts are the creations of Synod, it is possible that the Synod could realign the Districts so that they were of uniform size. This could accomplish a number of valuable goals. If Districts were limited in size so that the District President could regularly visit, know and love his congregations and workers, he could actually function as an ecclesiastical supervisor, supporting and promoting the union of the confession of faith. Secondly, having Districts of uniform size would eliminate the institutional fear of “losing” one of the bigger, more powerful, more influential Districts, if it didn’t get its way. Thirdly, Districts of limited size would not have the capacity to “compete” with the Union in terms of developing their own educational, publishing, or missional systems. Fourthly, such limitations can help stave off the institutional creep whereby an entity, such as a district, seeks to assume more responsibilities as a way of defending its reason for existing.

Perhaps such a radical fix is asking too much. Since words are very powerful, perhaps we should be satisfied if the members of our Union were trained to speak a little less about the “Synod” and a little more about the “Union.”

Rev. Terry Forke

Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Harlowton, MT
President, Montana District LCMS

Thank You **Balance-Concord, Inc.**

Balance-Concord, Inc., has been a most faithful contributor to **The Lutheran Clarion** in honor of the sainted **Rev. Raymond Mueller** and the sainted **Rev. Edgar Rehwaldt**, both of whom faithfully served the Synod and Balance-Concord, Inc., for many years.

The Clarion is most appreciative of such continued support from Balance-Concord, Inc., as well as the wonderful support of our readers. These contributions make it possible to bring you substantive articles by respected and qualified authors on issues affecting YOUR Synod. Please continue your support. It is both appreciated and needed.

Reforming LCMS Polity and Practice

[Three Suggested Overtures]

In 1985, the President of the LCMS Montana District, Dr. George F. Wollenburg, published an article titled “An Assessment of LCMS Polity and Practice on the Basis of the Treatise.”¹ In that article he noted how the conflicts of the 1970s had led, especially in the 1981 and 1983 conventions, to the centralization of synodical power and authority in certain offices and commissions. Then he asked

“the question of whether we are creating a synodical structure which will in the future make any kind of reformation in the synod an impossibility.”²

Dr. Wollenburg’s essay is now thirty years old. Since 1985 the synod has seen continuous restructuring and the gradual, almost imperceptible, centralization of power and authority.³ Although the synod has been blessed by an orthodox servant in President Matthew Harrison, most of the “checks and balances” that once constrained his office have been removed over the past thirty years. The

“Most disconcerting to pastors and laymen are the synodical districts that are veritable havens of heterodoxy...protected there by district presidents who have a phalanx of supporters in their district.”

Commission on Constitutional Matters has vast powers of binding interpretation over most every synodical decision—and their decisions are very difficult to appeal. Most disconcerting to pastors and laymen are the synodical districts that are veritable havens of heterodoxy. Heterodoxy is protected there by district presidents who have a phalanx of supporters in their district. Laymen often despair of finding a confessional Lutheran church in such districts, much less reforming those districts, and they often leave our synod permanently as a result.

What to do about this? We have a synodical convention coming up that can address some of these issues through the adoption of appropriate resolutions (see endnote 4 for downloadable copies of the recommended overtures).⁴

The problem of district presidents who protect heterodox pastors or professors is addressed by **Overture One (To Support Proper Ecclesiastical Supervision in Synodical Districts)**. This refers to the case of Rev. Dr. Matthew Becker,⁵ which resulted in his resignation from the LCMS. As that case demonstrated, the district presidents presently have the capability of protecting heterodox pastors and professors with impunity. Thus **Overture One** is offered to reform that problem.

Overture Two (To Require that District Presidents give Church Worker Information to Congregations and School Call Committees when Requested) addresses district presidents who are attempting to preserve heterodoxy in their districts by controlling the call process of congregations. I know about this problem personally. A call committee of a congregation—let’s call it St. James’ congregation—that is seven miles away from the congregation of my childhood and teenage years, recently put me on their call list to serve as their pastor. When the information came back from the district president’s office to St. James, my PIF and SET forms were not in the stack of forms received. PIF (Pastor’s Information Form) and SET (Self Evaluation Tool) are what congregations receive from district offices when evaluating candidates for calls. When

he was asked why my name was excluded, the district president said that I was excluded “for cause,” but would not explain what that cause was. That was enough to prejudice St. James against me, so I did not receive their call. I did not know there was a vacancy at St. James and did not know that I was being considered by the committee, until after these events occurred and another pastor had been called. At first I didn’t give this much notice, since I was not intending to “move” and have not expressed such a desire to my own district president, or to anyone else. But then I found out that the district president who had excluded me “for cause” had done similar things to other pastors who were being considered by call committees in his district, and that this has happened in other districts too. I don’t know whether I would have been a “good fit” for St. James congregation, but that is not the point. The point is that the CALLING CONGREGATION is the group that must make a decision about “good fit,” under the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit. The district president does not have the right, according to LCMS polity, to decide whether a pastor is a “good fit.” Thus I think **Overture Two** is necessary to reform this bad behavior by district presidents before it becomes commonplace.

The many problems of centralization of power and authority in the bylaws are complex and are best reviewed by a Task Force elected by the synod. **Overture Three** (*To Review the Powers of the Synodical President, Synodical Secretary, Commission on Constitutional Matters, and District Presidents*) intends to address that, and so reform LCMS polity and practice back toward the original ideas of C.F.W. Walther and his peers.

You are encouraged to read through these overtures, and submit them to your congregation, which may adopt them and forward them to the synod.⁶ Congregations are highly encouraged to submit overtures by February 1, 2016 to the office of the synodical president. The final deadline is February 20, 2016.

Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland
Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Evansville, Indiana

As noted above, three suggested overtures are at <http://lutheranclarion.org>. Don’t forget, the deadline is **February 20, 2016**.

- 1 George F. Wollenburg, “An Assessment of LCMS Polity and Practice on the Basis of the Treatise” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 49 #2-3 [April-July 1985]:87-116, available at: <http://media.ctsfw.edu/Text/ViewDetails/2076> ; accessed September 18, 2015.
- 2 Ibid., 110.
- 3 See, e.g., John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., “On Our Way to Episcopacy,” available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20041204103522/http://www.consensuslutheran.org/downloads/wohlabemelrosepark2004.pdf> ; accessed September 18, 2015.
- 4 See the three overtures for the 2016 convention at <http://lutheranclarion.org> ; accessed September 18, 2015.
- 5 See articles about this case in the *Lutheran Clarion*, the issues of March 2015, May 2015, July 2015, and September 2015; available for free online at: <http://lutheranclarion.org> .
- 6 Other information about the submission of overtures may be found

The Lutheran Clarion—Please Help!

We are in our eighth year of publication. We sure could use your help as we strive to focus on presenting and upholding the truth of God's Holy Word.



If you would like to help with the cost of publishing a solid, Confessional Lutheran periodical, there's an enclosed envelope so you can mail your check to Lutheran Concerns Association, 149 Glenview Drive, New Kensington PA 15068-4921. Do it now. **Thank you!!**

here: <http://www.lcms.org/convention/overtures> ; accessed September 18, 2015.

Controversy Over Translating the Bible (from Jerome to the Present), Part III¹

Rev. Dr. Cameron Alexander MacKenzie presented this paper on January 19, 2015, at the 2015 LCA Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

In Part I, published in the March 2015 Clarion, Dr. MacKenzie showed how tradition plays a strong role in translation controversies. Part II, in July 2015, described how text, style and ideology (theology) influence the translations. Part III continues with the modern era and the Revised Version (1881) as scholars were calling for a successor to the King James Version and the feminist movement was trying to erase gender differences.

All past issues of the Clarion are at <http://lutheranclarion.org/newsletter.html>

The Modern Era and the Revised Version (1881)

The degree to which Protestant biblical traditionalism had set in by 1611 is difficult to assess, but it was strong and clear more than two hundred fifty years later when the Church of England prepared a successor to the King James. The modern era of English Bibles began in 1881 with the publication of the Revised New Testament.⁷⁵ The Old Testament followed in 1885.⁷⁶ Ever since, there has been a more or less continuous stream of Bibles designed to replace their predecessors. Even though the revision of 1881/1885 did not unseat the King James as the standard English Bible, it raised important issues, especially regarding the Greek text, that undermined confidence in the Authorized Version and paved the way for subsequent versions.

By the middle of the 19th century, English Bible scholars were starting to call for a new Bible, especially a New Testament, on the grounds that the Greek text available in the 16th century was in many instances an inaccurate representation of the original. Prompted by the discovery of many more manuscripts, including Tischendorf’s Sinaiticus

from the fourth century,⁷⁷ and equipped by the development of textual criticism, by the 19th century New Testament scholars were printing Greek New Testaments, designed to replace the *textus receptus* of previous centuries.⁷⁸ One consequence was a decision by the Church of England in 1870 to prepare a new version of the Bible.⁷⁹

At that time, however, the force of traditionalism was so strong that the decision was made only to produce a *revision* of the King James and not a brand new Bible. Rule #1 for the revisers required them “to introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness”; and Rule #2 ordered the revisers “to limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English versions.”⁸⁰ The result then was a deliberately archaic version of the Scriptures – based on a “modern” Greek text (the Hebrew remained basically the same) but translated into old-fashioned English. Such a proceeding seems strange to contemplate at this late date, but such was the pull of translation traditionalism.

Of course, the Revised Version was an extreme example. Nevertheless, the shadow of the King James Version hovers over subsequent versions of the English Bible to this very day and its influence defines an entire family of vernacular Scriptures, the so-called Great Tradition,⁸¹ each member of which has committed itself in some degree or other to retaining the language and style of the King James Version. The Preface to the most recent addition to the family, the English Standard Version (2001), described itself as standing “in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium” that began with William Tyndale.⁸² To those who were raised in this tradition, the ESV is a Bible that still “sounds like” the Bible, e.g., “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Ps. 23:1); “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Is. 53:3); “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Mt. 5:5); and “In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered” (Luke 2:1). *Registered?* Well, you can’t have everything – but you get the idea. In versions like the ESV, translators have not chosen an English style that perfectly reflects a modern idiom but one that retains the “sound” of previous Bibles.

But the commitment to traditional language, present to one degree or another throughout the Great Tradition, was not enough for some translation traditionalists. Already in the 19th century, the Revised Version provoked a backlash, led by John W. Burgon, an eminent scholar and Dean of Chichester Cathedral.⁸³ Even before the Revised New Testament appeared, he had already tangled with textual critics over the authenticity of the “last twelve verses of Mark,”⁸⁴ so he was the perfect scholar to comment on an entire New Testament that rested on a non-traditional text. Burgon’s review of the new version⁸⁵ was comprehensive, and he attacked style and theology as well as the text. But

Thank You, Dr. Kuhn, for 47 Years of Service!

The **Rev. Dr. Robert T. Kuhn**, sixth vice-president of the LCMS (representing the East-Southeast Region since 2013) resigned from that position on August 20, 2015.

“God has given me the privilege of serving the church at large for 47 consecutive years,” Kuhn told the *Reporter*. “But for health reasons, I felt that it was best to tender my resignation and let someone else complete the term.”

During his long career in the LCMS, Kuhn served in a number of positions, including as a parish pastor, president of the LCMS Central Illinois District, first vice-president of the LCMS and chairman of the LCMS Board of Directors. During his second term as first vice-president, Kuhn served five months as Synod president following the 2001 death of then-President Rev. Dr. A.L. Barry.

Dr. Kuhn has been a long time supporter of LCA and he has been a presenter at LCA Conferences.

Following Synodical bylaw procedures the President appointed Rev. Christopher Esget of Immanuel, Alexandria, VA, to fill the unexpired term of Dr. Kuhn; the *Clarion* commends President Harrison for a wonderful appointment.

[Some of the above information was extracted from the *Reporter*, September 2015, page 8.]



this last point is perhaps the most important, because even today – when no one is reading the Revised Version any more – the question of the Greek text of the New Testament remains an important one. For Burgon, biblical textual criticism was both scholarly *and* theological, “I... strenuously insist that *the consentient voice of Catholic Antiquity* is to be diligently inquired after and submissively listened to [emphasis original].” To determine what that “voice” is demands scholarly expertise but “submissively” to listen to it is a theological position.⁸⁶

First of all, Burgon rejected the textual criticism of his day as entirely too subjective. He dismissed efforts to explain variant readings by trying to answer the question, What is a copyist most likely to have written, as hopeless, “We venture to declare that inasmuch as one expert’s notions of what is ‘transcriptionally probable’ prove to be the diametrical reverse of another expert’s notions, the supposed evidence to be derived from this source may, with advantage, be neglected altogether.”⁸⁷

For Burgon, one should rely exclusively on the external evidence, not just the extant manuscripts and ancient versions but also the testimony of the Church fathers who frequently quoted the New Testament and so represented additional witnesses to the original text.

It...stands to reason that we may safely reject any reading which, out of the whole body of available authorities – Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers – finds support

nowhere save in one and the same little handful of suspicious documents. For we resolutely maintain, that *external Evidence* must after all be our best, our only safe guide...we refuse to throw in our lot with those who, disregarding the witness of *every other* known Codex – *every other* Version – *every other* available Ecclesiastical Writer – insist on following the dictates of a little group of authorities, of which nothing is known with so much certainty as that often, when they concur exclusively, it is to mislead [emphasis original].⁸⁸

But what is it that led Burgon to placing confidence in the majority of the witnesses instead of the earliest? Was it a kind of textual democracy? The variant reading with the most votes wins? Not really. Instead, the preponderance of that evidence was the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who not only inspired the text but has also preserved it!

The provision, then, which the Divine Author of Scripture is found to have made for the preservation in its integrity of His written Word, is of peculiarly varied and highly complex description. First, by causing that a vast multiplication of copies should be required all down the ages beginning at the earliest period, and continuing in an ever-increasing ratio until the actual invention of printing, He provided the most effectual security imaginable against fraud...it is a plain fact that there survive of the Gospels alone upwards of one thousand copies to the present day.⁸⁹

Finally, Burgon also believed that “under the Providence of God,” the Reformation era editors of the text, limited though they were to a relative handful of manuscripts, produced a printed Greek text whose “general purity...is demonstrated by all the evidence which 350 years of subsequent research have succeeded in accumulating.”⁹⁰ In other words, Burgon’s attack on the critical text of his day amounted also to a defense of the basic Greek text upon which the King James Version stood and was supported by a careful examination of all the evidence that God in His goodness had preserved.⁹¹

So, how persuasive were Burgon and his allies in defending the traditional text? On the one hand, neither the Revised Version nor its American cousin, the American Standard Version (1901), replaced the KJV in most homes and churches.⁹² So from that perspective, perhaps one could declare Burgon and company the winners. However, when the Revised Standard Version (1946, 1952) came along and began a new period of translation proliferation, only one of the better known versions, the New King James,⁹³ used anything other than a modern, critical text of the Greek New Testament. Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad did succeed in printing a “majority text,”⁹⁴ but so far no major translating effort has followed it – not even those arising from the more conservative elements of American Christianity like the Southern Baptists.⁹⁵

Feminism and the English Bible Today

However, as we noted at the outset, the underlying text is only one issue that concerns translation traditionalists. They are often concerned about terminology and style as well. But the issue that trumps them all is ideology – the perception that translators are using a new Bible in order to promote new doctrine. And sometimes, as we have seen, the critics are correct. Recalling this point is important as we take a brief look at the present era of Bible translations that began in the 1980’s with the first attempts at accommodating *feminist* interests in English Bibles.

Feminists scored a major victory when the New Revised Standard Version (1989) appeared.⁹⁶ Still another representative of the Great Tradition, the New RSV incorporated many changes that arose from purely textual and linguistic considerations, but it was also motivated by changes in English style. In the preface “to the reader,” Bruce Metzger, chairman of the translation committee, described their task this way, “to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage.” As a result, Metzger continued, “the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) remains essentially a literal translation.” In general, this characterization is true of other versions in the Great Tradition as well.

However, Metzger went on to devote an entire paragraph to what the New RSV translators viewed as one of their most pressing stylistic challenges, dealing with “linguistic sexism,” i.e., “the inherent bias of the English language towards the masculine gender.”⁹⁷ As a result,

the New RSV employed a series of linguistic gymnastics in order to escape a literal rendering of the text if it would involve using the inclusive “he,” “him,” or “his.” Among other techniques, this meant replacing the singular by the plural, personal statements by impersonal ones, third person pronouns by second and first person, and direct quotations by indirect discourse. This new sensitivity also meant that the New RSV would avoid masculine terminology for masculine originals in order to accommodate feminist concerns, e.g., “brother” became “brother or sister,” “neighbor,” “kin,” “believer,” and “another member of the church.”⁹⁸ What had been standard English style and terminology a generation previously – and for countless generations before that – now had to go.

“...the assault upon traditional English went far beyond Bible translations and was a part of a larger feminist agenda that aimed at radical social equality for men and women.”

Want to Read *The Clarion* Online?



If you would rather receive a digital version of *The Clarion* in your electronic mailbox, please send your email address to Ginny Valleau at gzolson2000@yahoo.com. We will remove your name from the hard copy mail list and add it to the email list.

Of course, the assault upon traditional English went far beyond Bible translations and was a part of a larger feminist agenda that aimed at radical social equality for men and women.⁹⁹ But it clearly had theological ramifications as well. For example, just a few years prior to the appearance of the New RSV, feminist theologian Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza had called for new translations of the Bible as part of reworking the entire Christian tradition in the interests of liberating women “from oppressive patriarchal texts, structures, institutions, and values.”¹⁰⁰ But reworking the biblical text in the interests of a theological agenda, she insisted, was already evident in the Bible itself: “The early Christian authors have selected, redacted, and reformulated their traditional sources and materials with reference to their theological intentions and practical objectives.”¹⁰¹ Furthermore, she contended that since the communities that produced the New Testament documents were themselves “patriarchal” and “androcentric,” contemporary readers could not simply accept such documents at face value but had to read them “in such a way that they can provide ‘clues’ to the egalitarian reality of the early Christian movement.”¹⁰² Fiorenza believed that “every translation is also an interpretation influenced by the contemporary perspective of the translators.”¹⁰³ Therefore, she advocated producing a Bible that would invite feminist interpretations of the Christian tradition. With the New RSV, Fiorenza was on her way.

And not just with the New RSV. Many other major Bible translations have accepted feminist conventions regarding English style to one degree or another. These include the Revised English Bible (1989), Today’s English Version (1992), the Contemporary English Version (1995), the New Living Translation (1996), and finally, the New International Version (2011).¹⁰⁴ However, by 2011, in all fairness, the argument was no longer between those who wanted to change the English language for ideological reasons and those who did not, but between those who believed that the language had now changed in a feminist direction and those who nevertheless wanted to defend their Bibles from the feminist ideology behind the changes.

So have the feminists won their crusade against traditional English? Without putting it quite this baldly, the Committee on Bible Translation for the NIV has contended that contemporary usage now necessitates a wide array of changes from the 1984 NIV.¹⁰⁵ But these also happen to be changes that better accommodate a feminist agenda to erase gender differences. True enough, one can still use the 2011 NIV to prove male headship in home and church, e.g., by means of Ephesians 5:22-24 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15. For conservative Christians, this is very important and should not be neglected when evaluating the new NIV. Nonetheless, there are also numerous changes in the 2011 NIV from the 1984 version that look like accommodations to gender egalitarians – accommodations that are difficult to justify on the basis of the original text.

A clear example of such a change and evidence also of a certain ambiguity in the approach of the new NIV to gender

questions is the treatment of the Greek word for “son,” *huios*, in Galatians 3:26-4:7. All the way through this passage, the apostle calls the faithful “sons,” not because they are males but because they have been clothed with Christ in baptism and because God has sent His Son into the world in order to effect their adoption as sons. In other words, Christians have the same status as Jesus Himself before their heavenly Father. This is as true of female believers as it is of male believers. Now, on the one hand, the new NIV correctly translates “adoption to sonship” and “because you are sons” in 4:5-6, but everywhere else in these verses the new NIV calls believers “children.” True enough, but that’s not what the Greek says. It says we are “sons,” so the new NIV is muting the theological intent of the original.

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, an evangelical organization committed to maintaining traditional, biblical distinctions between men and women,¹⁰⁶ has carefully compared the 1984 version of the NIV to the 2011 version and has found the more recent version wanting in many passages. Here are some of their findings.¹⁰⁷

- (1) Incorrectly changing “father” to “parent” or something else.
 - 1984 NIV: *Proverbs 15:5* “A fool spurns *his father’s* discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.”
 - 2011 NIV: *Proverbs 15:5* “A fool spurns *a parent’s* discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.”

The Hebrew word is *’ab*. In the first several chapters of Proverbs, the new NIV correctly translates “father” (as well as “son”), e.g., “The LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in” (3:12). So why the change here – and in fifteen other verses?
- (2) Incorrectly changing “son” to “child.”
 - 1984 NIV: *Proverbs 13:24* “He who spares the rod hates *his son*, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”
 - 2011 NIV: *Proverbs 13:24* “Whoever spares the rod hates *their children*, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.”

The Hebrew word is *ben*. In 33 places, the new NIV changes the gender-specific “son” to something else. Why?
- (3) In at least one instance, this has Christological significance.
 - 1984 NIV: *Psalms 8:4* “What is man that you are mindful of him, *the son of man* that you care for him?”
 - 2011 NIV: *Psalms 8:4* “What is mankind that you are mindful of them, *human beings* that you care for them?”

In Hebrews 2:6 this passage is applied to our Lord and so the 2011 NIV cites the verse with “son of man” language in spite of the fact that that phrase is not present in the 2011 NIV Old Testament. Why the confusion? Is it really necessary?
- (4) Incorrectly changing “man” to some gender-neutral term when the original clearly intends a masculine person.
 - 1984 NIV: *1 Kings 9:5* “I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have *a man* on the throne of Israel.’”
 - 2011 NIV: *1 Kings 9:5* “I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have *a successor* on the throne of Israel.’”

The Hebrew is *’ish*. In 278 places in the new NIV, mascu-

line words like this have been translated in a gender neutral way. Why?

- (5) Incorrectly changing “brother” to “brother or sister” or some other non-family word.

- 1984 NIV: *Luke 17:3* “So watch yourselves. If your *brother* sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.”
- 2011 NIV: *Luke 17:3* “So watch yourselves. If your *brother or sister* sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.”

New Testament Greek is perfectly capable of saying, “brother or sister,” as it does, for example, in James 2:15. But our Lord chose not to do so in this particular passage. So why did the 2011 NIV decide to translate *adelphos* in this way – and similarly in 62 other passages?

These are just a few of the 2,766 such changes that the CBMW has documented.¹⁰⁸ And it may very well be that the answer in each case is just this: By 2011, we no longer talked that way! In which case, the traditionalists must either concede that feminist ideologues have won the battle over language or else insist that in translating the Scriptures, the end product should reflect the world of the Bible and not the world of the reader.

These are not easy issues to resolve, nor by treating them so summarily do I wish to suggest that they are. For each of the examples cited above, there is a reasonable response and the advocates of the 2011 NIV are not all “flaming liberals.” The point of this paper is rather different and that is simply to show that translation issues are perennial, and we have just scratched the surface. For example, ignoring the whole controversy over the RSV when it first appeared is almost inexcusable, since it was a real donnybrook and featured such episodes as one preacher publicly torching the offending text and others renaming it, the “Revised Standard Perversion” of the Bible.¹⁰⁹ But even without exploring that controversy, we can see that arguments over text, style, and ideology (or theology) arise right along with new translations. There’s no escaping it. And it’s not just a case of traditionalism although a conservative temperament certainly helps to explain some of the resistance to new Bibles through the centuries. More importantly, however, the Bible is basic to Christianity. So translating the Bible is one of the most important tasks that Christians can ever undertake, and debating the results of that enterprise will always follow. It has to as long as we confess the Holy Scriptures as God’s Word. How can we not be concerned about new attempts to express that Word in our own language? Personally, we may not enjoy the fight but we have no choice. After all, at least for now, we are still a part of the Church militant!

Rev. Dr. Cameron Alexander MacKenzie

Chairman of Historical Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana

“...we may not enjoy the fight but we have no choice. After all, at least for now, we are still a part of the Church militant!”

- 1 An earlier version of this essay appeared in *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* 53 (2013):15-41.
- 75 *The New Testament...translated out of the Greek: being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised A.D. 1881* (Cambridge: University Press, 1881).
- 76 *The Holy Bible translated out of the original tongues: being the version set forth A.D. 1611 compared with the most ancient authorities and revised... 5 vols.* (Oxford: University Press, 1885).
- 77 Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 62-65.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 152-85.
- 79 For the story of the Revised Version, see Bruce, 135-52, and David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 2:218-61.
- 80 For the rules regarding translation, see Norton, *Bible as Literature*, 2:219-20.
- 81 My first exposure to the term, “Great Tradition,” for the King James family of translations was in the title of Arthur L. Farstad’s *The New King James Version in the Great Tradition* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989).
- 82 “Preface” to *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, a Division of Good News Publishers, 2001), vii.
- 83 For Burgon’s biography, see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 61 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. “Burgon, John William.”
- 84 John William Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark Vindicated against Recent Critical Objectors and Established* (Oxford: J. Parker, 1871).
- 85 John William Burgon, *The Revision Revised: Three Articles Reprinted from the Quarterly Review* (London: John Murray, Albemarle St., 1883). I have used the electronic edition available at <http://books.google.com/books?id=nXkw1TAatV8C&pg=PA556&ots=NzPAkekfgn&dq=Revision+Revised>. Accessed on 10/17/12. An abridged version is available in David Otis Fuller, ed., *True or False? The Westcott-Hort Textual Theory Examined* (Grand Rapids, MI: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1973), 123-215.
- 86 Burgon, “Preface,” *The Revision Revised*, xxvi.
- 87 *Ibid.*, 252.
- 88 *Ibid.*, 19.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 8-9.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 250.
- 91 But Burgon did not think the *textus receptus* was beyond improvement. See Doug Kutilek, “What did John Burgon Really Believe about the Textus Receptus and the King James Version?” electronic reprint from *As I See It* 1 (1998):n.p. http://www.kjvonly.org/doug/kutilek_burgon_textus_pr.htm. Accessed 10/11/12.
- 92 Bruce, 152.
- 93 The “Preface” of the New King James identifies its New Testament text as the *Textus Receptus*. See *Holy Bible: The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982), v.
- 94 Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, eds., *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982).
- 95 The preface to the *Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2004), ix, identifies its New Testament text as the Nestle-Aland, 27th edition.
- 96 *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989).
- 97 Bruce M. Metzger, “To the Reader,” NRSV, [ix].
- 98 For numerous examples of all of these, see Wayne Grudem, “What’s Wrong with ‘Gender Neutral’ Bible Translations?” (n.p.: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 1996), available at http://theresurgence.com/files/pdf/wayne_grudem_1997_whats_wrong_with_gender-neutral_bible_translations.pdf. Accessed 10/13/12. See also my “The English Bible in a Post-Modern Age” in Paul T. McCain and John R. Stephenson, eds., *Mysteria Dei: Essays in Honor of Kurt Marquart* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1999), 155-63.
- 99 For a very helpful overview, see Jennifer Saul, “Feminist Philosophy of Language,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/feminism-language/>. Accessed 10/13/12. For some of the concrete feminist “corrections” to traditional English that are later to be found in English Bibles, see Casey Miller and Kate Swift, *The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing* (New York: Lip-pincott and Crowell, 1980).
- 100 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Her Memory: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1983), 33.
- 101 *Ibid.*, 49.
- 102 *Ibid.*, 41.
- 103 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 104 See William W. Combs, “The History of the NIV Translation Controversy,” (n.p.: Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 14. <http://www.dbts.edu/pdf/macp/2011/Combs,%20History%20of%20NIV%20Translation%20Controversy.pdf>. Accessed 10/13/12. Combs’s entire essay is a well-documented presentation of the entire controversy.
- 105 “One of the main reasons the task of Bible translation is never finished is the change in our own language, English. Although a basic core of the language remains relatively stable, many diverse and complex linguistic factors continue

to bring about subtle shifts in the meanings and/or connotations of even old, well-established words and phrases." "Preface," *Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), vi.

- 106 See their self-description at <https://www.cbmw.org/>. Accessed 10/13/12.
- 107 "An Evaluation of Gender Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible: A Report from the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood," (Lexington, KY: Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 2011), 10-13. <https://www.cbmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/cbmw-final-analysis-of-2011-niv.pdf>. Accessed 10/13/12. These are just a few of the examples cited in the report, but for the data in detail, see also http://www.slowley.com/niv2011_comparison.
- 108 "An Evaluation," CBMW, 4.
- 109 See, for example, Peter J. Thuesen, *In Discordance with the Scriptures: American Protestant Battles over Translating the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 93-119).

Presenters at the 2016 LCA Conference

Rev. Dr. Roland F. Ziegler - *The Foundations Must Stand—Contemporary Issues in the Doctrine of Inspiration*

Dr. Roland Ziegler is Associate Professor for Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS). A native of Germany, he studied at the Universities of Tübingen, Erlangen, and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Oberursel. A scholarship enabled him to study as an exchange student at CTS in Fort Wayne. Dr. Ziegler received his Dr.Theol. from the Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen in 2011.

Dr. David Menton - *Implications of Evolutionism: Should the Christian make Peace with Darwin?*

A former professor at Washington University School of Medicine, Dr. Menton received his PhD in Cell Biology from Brown University, Providence, RI, and his BS from Mankato State University, Mankato, MN. Dr. Menton is Technical Advisor for the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, CA. After retirement, he joined Answers in Genesis, which operates the Creation Museum at Petersburg, KY, near Cincinnati, OH. Dr. Menton has lectured throughout the United States and Canada on anatomy and during recent years on the creation-evolution controversy.

Dr. Jack Kilcrease - *Matthew L. Becker's Theological Vision: Revisionist and Provisionist*

Dr. Kilcrease is an LCMS layperson and an adjunct professor of theology at the Institute for Lutheran Theology and of philosophy at Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI. He attended Luther College in Iowa (B.A. History and Religion) and Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN (M.A. Doctrine and Theology). In 2009, he graduated from Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, with a Ph.D in Systematic Theology. He has published articles in *Lutheran Quarterly*, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, *Pro Ecclesia*, *LOGIA*, and *Concordia Theological Quarterly*. He lives in Grand Rapids, MI, with his wife Bethany and daughter Miriam.

Rev. John T. Pless - *Women's Ordination: Test Case for Biblical Authority in Global Lutheranism*

Rev. John T. Pless is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at CTS, where he also serves as Director of Field Education. He is a graduate of Texas Lutheran College, Sequin, Texas (B.A.) and Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH (M.Div.). With LCMS President Rev. Matthew Harrison he is editor of *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*. He served on the Agenda Committee for the *Lutheran Service Book*. He is book review editor for *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* and a member of the editorial council of *Lutheran Quarterly*.

Rev. Dr. Martin Noland - *A Brief History of the Justice and Disciplinary System of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*

The Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Evansville, IN. He was the Director of Concordia Historical Institute, Saint Louis, MO, from 2002 to 2008. He received his Ph.D. degree in 1996 from The Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, and his S.T.M. in 1986 from CTS. He was on the Board of Directors of the Luther Academy from 1993 to 2008. Since 1996, he has been an associate editor of *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology*. He has written over two hundred articles on the Lutheran church, its history, its theology, and related topics. Dr. Noland's wife is Karla Noland nee Kuhlman and they have three teenage daughters.

Mr. Walter C. Dissen, Esq. - *Reconciliation, Adjudication, and Appeal Pre-July 1992—A Gold Standard Trashed*

Mr. Dissen received his Juris Doctor from the University of Akron, OH. He served on the Board of Control and Secretary, at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, 1971-83; on the Synodical Commission on Appeals 1983-1995; and as Secretary and Chairman, Board of Regents and Secretary, CTS, Fort Wayne, 1995-2007. In 2013, Mr. Dissen was elected to the Board of Regents, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis. He is on the Board of Trustees, Concordia Theological Foundation; Rev. Dr. E.C. Weber and he submitted reports to Synodical President J.A.O. Preus that appear in the well-known *Blue Book* and in the 1973 Synodical Convention Workbook that summarized what was being taught and tolerated at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis.

Rev. William R. Kilps - *Reconciliation – A Kingdom Matter but Which One?*

In November 1982, Rev. Kilps was awarded the Masters of Divinity degree from CTS. He received his first call to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Marengo, WI. In 1986, he accepted a Call to Zion Lutheran Church in East Moline, IL. During his ministry there, Rev. Kilps was a Circuit Counselor, Second Vice President of the Central Illinois District, a Synodical and District Reconciler, and on the Synod President's panel for dialogue with RIM (Renewal in Mission). In 1999, Pastor Kilps accepted a call to his present congregation, Good Shepherd in Two Rivers, WI. He also serves as an adjunct instructor at Concordia University – Wisconsin. Rev. Kilps is married to Lori Louise Gottschalk. The Lord has blessed the Kilps with two sons—Nathanael and Billy.

Mr. David Hawk, Esq. - *The Dispute Resolution Process: Who does it serve?*

Mr. Hawk is the senior member of the law firm of Hawk, Haynie, Kammeyer & Smith LLP and has been engaged in the general practice of law in Fort Wayne since 1973. He served on the Synod's Board of Directors 2001-2007. Elected to the Concordia University System Board in 2010, Mr. Hawk serves as Vice Chairman. He was recently appointed to the Board of Regents of CTS and he is President of the Concordia Theological Foundation. He has been a voting delegate to District and Synodical conventions. Mr. Hawk and his wife are members of St. Paul's in Fort Wayne. They have three married children (who are lawyers), and nine grandchildren ages 6 to 16.

Good News Magazine

Have you ever read *Good News* magazine? It is a wonderful publication that is edited by Rev. Wallace Schulz, of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and a former second vice-president of the LCMS. Each issue is beautifully illustrated and simply, yet thoroughly, explains basic Lutheran doctrines. To subscribe and give your support, see www.lhfmmissions.org or call 800-778-1132. LCA whole-heartedly endorses the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and encourages your prayers and financial support.

LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Monday, January 18, 2016

LCA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

...[T]hy Word is truth. [John 17:17]

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...* [2 Timothy 3:16-17]

[T]he Word of the Lord endures forever. [1 Peter 1:25]

6:40 a.m. - Registration Opens
7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. - Bible Study
8:00 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. - Opening Devotion
8:10 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. - Welcome and Greetings from the LCA (Mr. Walter Dissen, Esq.) and the LCMS Indiana District
8:20 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. - Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler - The Foundations Must Stand—Contemporary Issues in the Doctrine of Inspiration
8:50 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. - Questions and Answers
9:20 a.m. to 9:35 a.m. - Break
9:35 a.m. to 10:05 a.m. - Dr. David Menton - Implications of Evolutionism: Should the Christian make Peace with Darwin?
10:05 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Dr. Jack Kilcrease - Matthew L. Becker's Theological Vision: Revisionist and Provisionist
11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Questions and Answers
11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon - Dr. John Pless - Women's Ordination: Test Case for Biblical Authority in Global Lutheranism
12:00 noon - 12:10 p.m. - Questions and Answers
12:20 p.m. to 1:20 p.m. - Lunch Served in the Meeting Room
1:20 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. - The LCMS Reconciliation System and the former Adjudication System Rev. Dr. Martin Noland - A Brief History of the Justice and Disciplinary System of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Mr. Walter Dissen, Esq. - Reconciliation, Adjudication, and Appeal Pre-July 1992—A Gold Standard Trashed Rev. William Kilps - Reconciliation – A Kingdom Matter but Which One? Mr. David Hawk, Esq. - The Dispute Resolution Process: Who does it serve?
3:10 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. - Questions and Answers
3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Panel Discussion with All Presenters
5:00 p.m. to 5:10 p.m. - Closing Remarks and Closing Prayer
5:30 p.m. - LCA Annual Business Meeting (Paid Members Only)

The conference will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. The rates are \$85.00 + taxes for a single; \$95.00 + taxes for 2-4 per room. When making your reservation, mention that you are attending **THE LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CODE: GROUP #117**. To be guaranteed a room, reservations must be made by December 17, 2015. There is free airport shuttle service from the airport to Don Hall's. At the time of check-in, breakfast and dinner coupons (free breakfast and free dinner) will be given for each room (maximum two of each per room). A free lunch will be served in the meeting room (if registration is postmarked by 12/13/2015). You must make your own Guest House reservation.

REGISTRATION FORM

LCA Annual Conference · January 18, 2016

Don Hall's Guest House · 1313 West Washington Center Road · Fort Wayne, IN 46825

260-489-2524 · 800-348-1999 · www.donhallsguesthouse.com

Annual LCA Membership: \$35.00

I will attend the meeting:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

LCMS District _____

Lunch Preference: Swiss Steak Chicken

Annual membership fee (\$35) enclosed _____.

Paid LCA member conference registration fee: \$55 if postmarked by 12/13/2015; \$60 if postmarked thereafter. Enclosed _____.

Non-member conference registration fee: \$65 if postmarked by 12/13/2015; \$70 if postmarked thereafter. Enclosed _____.

Half day (AM or PM) registration fee is 50% less of above fee. If lunch is desired, add \$10; must be postmarked by 12/13/2015.

Enclosed _____.

Seminary students and personnel will have the registration fee waived, but to receive **lunch for \$10**, registration must be postmarked by 12/13/2015.

I will pay at the door _____.

A free lunch will be served to early registrants who pay the applicable registration fee by 12/13/2015, or at the door.

Make check payable to **LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION**. Please detach this registration form & send to Lutheran Concerns Association · 149 Glenview Drive · New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

The Lutheran Clarion

The official publication of the Lutheran Concerns Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.
Circulation: 5,400



Published regularly to support issues and causes within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which build faithfulness to true Confessional Lutheranism and to be a clear voice of Christian concern against actions and causes which conflict with faithfulness to the One True Faith.

The address for all matters pertaining to the LCA is:
149 Glenview Drive
New Kensington, PA 15068-4921

Editorial Board: Mr. Walter Dissen (Chairman)
Mr. Scott Meyer
Rev. Jerome Panzigrau

Mrs. Ginny Valleau: Layout, Printing & Mailing

Faithful Lutheran individuals who are members of LCMS congregations are invited to submit articles of approximately 500 words for consideration. Inquiries are welcome. Manuscripts will be edited. Please send to: Mr. Walter Dissen

509 Las Gaviotas Blvd, Chesapeake, VA 23322
(757-436-2049; wdissen@aol.com)

The Board of Directors for the LCA:

Mr. Walter Dissen (President)
Mr. Scott L. Diekmann (Vice-President)
Rev. Jerome Panzigrau (Secretary-Treasurer)

Rev. Dr. Kristian Kincaid Rev. Andrew Preus
Mr. John Klinger Rev. David Ramirez
Mr. Scott Meyer Mr. Leon L. Rausch
Rev. Dr. Martin Noland Mr. Donald Zehnder

<http://www.lutheranclarion.org>

Lutheran Concerns Association
November 2015



Lutheran Concerns Association
149 Glenview Drive
New Kensington, PA 15068-4921