

“Called to Confess”

(A Free Conference of Confessing Pastors and Laity of the NOW District)

November 16, 2005

Dear Brothers in Christ:

Jesus says, *“if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand”* (Mark 3:25). It is manifest that a number of theological issues are causing some troubling divisions within our Synod. Some of these issues are not new to our Synod, but have been around for some time. Others are of a more recent vintage. In either case, we believe that whether the issues are new or old, each generation of believers in Christ is **Called to Confess**. While that certainly includes their personal belief in Jesus and their understanding of His mission and work, it is much more than that. For Lutherans, especially, such a **Call to Confess** has historically been understood as publicly contending for *“the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”* (Jude 3).

The insert that comes with this letter contains six “talking points” to help us begin to think through the issues that are dividing our Synod. We believe these issues touch on doctrines having eternal consequences, and hence are most serious indeed. So much so that we believe every member of Synod should be aware of them. Hence we ask that you prayerfully consider sharing the enclosed insert with these talking points with your congregation by including them in a future bulletin.

We recognize that because we are sinful human beings, we may have “blind spots” of our own. Thus, we desire to be *“quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry”* (James 1:19). Yet, we also believe that *“slow to speak”* does not mean **never** to speak. Indeed, as Christians we have been called to *“speak the truth in love”* (Ephesians 4:15). Therefore, *“in love”* we have endeavored to “put the best construction” on the actions of others and we have consciously avoided pointing fingers at anyone. We simply see ourselves as **Called to Confess**. And *“in love,”* we pray that, if we are in error, you would, *“in love,”* show us our error from Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

If you do not agree with the positions stated here, we ask that you at least consider the arguments and put the best construction on our actions, our motivation, and our concern to fulfill the great commission by *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you”* (Matt. 28:20). Our goal is not division, but that once again our Synod be united under the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in The Lutheran Confessions. May God bless you and lead you to recognize that all of us are **Called to Confess**.

If you would like an electronic version of this insert, please send a note requesting such to: CalledToConfess@yahoo.com.

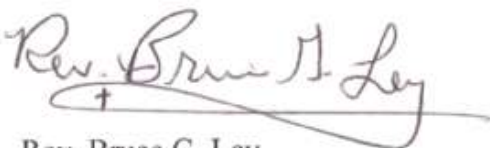
In an endeavor to "live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8), and to walk together in the light, we have signed our names lest we appear to hide under the cover of darkness. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7).



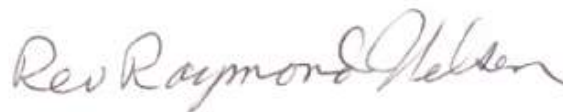
Rev. Daniel L. Freeman



Rev. Eric Lange



Rev. Bruce G. Ley



Rev. Raymond Nelsen



Loyd Harris



Jerry Stillwell

The following individuals were unable to sign this letter, but have asked that their name be attached.

Rev Harold Bauder
Rev James Jenson
Rev Tim Pauls
George Schaefer
Vivian Harris

Suzanne Penney
Mike Beath
Ruby Merkel
Solveig Peck
Dagny Reque
Hal and Norma Siemer