

In Nomine Jesu

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PUBLIC LETTER V

To the Church; especially those who also have been harmed

Easter Tuesday

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Servant Leaders for the Lord of the Church,
Grace and Peace - Concord,

The PCW Conferences are coming up. In fall, we heard the DP of the CNH. He spoke of the cultural issues we face. It seems we are in a new paradigm and need to find new ways. To me he was confirming how we feel with declining membership. Yet I noted we had a number of Africans with us who in their lives have seen explosive growth of the Lutheran Church. I do not think many feel the discouragement we feel. We sang in the worship "Built on the rock the Church shall stand even when steeples are falling." That was written when people abandoned the Lutheran Church in Norway. It was orthodox, confessional, Evangelical in theology. The people did not experience loving care, personal evangelical conduct from their clerical masters. wiki/Hans_Nielsen_Hauge

Look around, there are many growing churches, ask your members who leave for them why? What they find there that they did not find in your Church? The Church Growth Gurus affirm it is not worship music and style. Liturgical Worship can be very attractive, alive. The old image of the Pastor as "pater familias", "Seelsorger", is one of deep affection and respect, because the people knew how deeply he cared for them. His orthodox words are seen in orthodox evangelical action. The most important task of a Christian leader is to model, en flesh, put into action, the healing, saving love of God - Gospel, Your members learn to act the way they see you act to them. Loved people love and the Church grows in love.

The Sign of Concord

Soli Deo Gloria

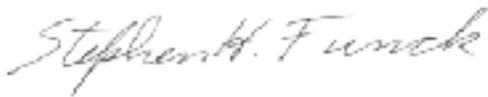
He died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves,
but for him who died and was raised for them. 2 Cor. 5:15

Over a number of years the LCMS and CNH spent about \$1.5 million attempting to seize the large church and school complex of Our Redeemer in Oakland CA. They spent \$750,000 in defense because of the many legal motions the LCMS filed. Finally, just before the April 2011 trial was to begin and unable to prolog further, the suit was dropped. http://thesignofconcord.com/uploads/LCMS_Law-suit_Oakland_Congregation.pdf From the beginning Synod affirmed it has no property claim on the member congregations. Few of the sister congregations noticed, few brothers cared. “They didn’t come for me.” “We proclaim the pure Gospel. We are the orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Book of Concord, so there is no worry, our god has promised his eternal blessings.” Or are we in grave danger - “to whom much is given much is expected.” “Let not many become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.”

Church Growth Evangelism is about bringing them in yet Church Growth studies show the key of growth is not getting more in the front door but preventing them from leaving out the back door. How long has it been since we heard talk about that? Shepherding, loving the flock we have. Happy sheep have lambs that stay in the family, happy sheep attract other sheep to join. Shepherds with the heart of Christ are happy because they know they are loved and love to love. They listen to pain, comfort, they do not turn hurting folks away they even love those who are enemies and draw them back into fellowship. They practice reconciliation. They defend, protect, wounded sheep and restore them to the flock.

I am sure some of you are unhappy with me. However no one has identified anything I have said or done that is not true or in violation of the scripture. You are hurting. When one part of the body hurts, the whole body hurts. President Denninger assured me, he would treat any of you the same way as he has treated me. Would you be pleased with your brothers in the SED, if they ignored your pain?

In the name of one called by God to proclaim His Love for all,



Stephen H. Funck

Ezekiel. 3:16ffc

PS: Prior Public Letters with supporting documentation are posted at http://thesignofconcord.com/Pastoral_Ministry.php . I did not want to do any of this but I felt I had not other option and after much prayer that seemed supported by the Spirit and the Word. No one has suggested there was a different path that would have led to reconciliation. The website was created for my books King of Kings and Jail Ministry. They are my joy, please take a look at them. In 1999 a report was made on clergy shortage in the LCMS. It detailed by many pastors and teachers had been driven away. <http://cslmedia.org/DMin/Pubs/Forms/clergy%20shortage.pdf>