
The Service of Women in Congregational Offices, 1969 to 2007

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Rev. Schurb is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Moberly, Missouri. In this article, using convention proceedings, reports of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, and other documents, he traces developments and changes in the position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod regarding the service of women in the church.

In the fall of 2005 I was invited to speak to an LCMS regional pastoral conference on “Women in the Church.” During the question and answer period, I conducted an impromptu poll. I asked: “If I had been at the registration table writing down your responses when you arrived at this conference, how many of you would have told me that our Synod’s theological position on women in the church *changed* in 2004?” Of the 60 or 70 pastors seated before me, only six or seven raised their hands.

At its convention in 2004 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adopted Resolution 3–08A, “To Affirm the Conclusions of the 1994 CTCR Report: *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*.” These conclusions are (1) “that women on the basis of the clear teaching of Scripture may not serve in the office of pastor nor exercise any of its distinctive functions, and (2) that women may serve in humanly established offices in the church as long as the functions of those offices do not make them eligible to carry out ‘official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.’”¹ By adopting Res. 3–08A the Synod has “affirmed” this conclusion. In other words, without adopting the underlying CTCR report, the 2004 convention made the second conclusion the position of the Synod no less than the first.²

The Synod thereby changed its theological position. But how can any change be scrutinized, evaluated, or even adequately appreciated if it is not *recognized*? My 2005 pastoral conference experience alerted me to the fact that many people in the Missouri Synod, including pastors, have a limited acquaintance with its recent history. The present paper therefore has a modest aim: to show that the Synod’s theological position concerning women in the church actually changed in 2004, and to sketch the contours

of this change. What follows is an analytical account of how the new position came into being over just a few recent decades. Hopefully, the present recounting can prove instructive as the Missouri Synod and other church bodies continue to deal with this and other subjects.

1969 Resolution 2-17

Nearly 40 years ago, at the convention where J. A. O. Preus was initially elected synodical president and where altar and pulpit fellowship was declared with The American Lutheran Church, the Synod adopted a resolution “To Grant Woman Suffrage and Board Membership.” This 1969 resolution, and a bit of its immediate background, serves as the starting point for the present account.

The resolution contained four “declarations” which the Synod accepted as guides. Declaration three attracted most of the attention at the time, for it said that Scripture does not prohibit women from voting in congregational or synodical assemblies. Comparatively speaking, the other three declarations in 1969 Res. 2–17 have been little noticed. The first was:

1. Those statements of Scripture which direct women to keep silent in the church and which prohibit them to teach and to exercise authority over men, we understand to mean that women ought not to hold the pastoral office or serve in any other capacity involving the distinctive functions of this office.³

This first declaration referred to 1 Corinthians 14:34ff and 1 Timothy 2:11–15. Notably, it does not contain the word “only,” or anything similar. The Synod was *not* saying that these biblical texts mean *only* that women ought not be pastors or serve in capacities involving the distinctive functions of the pastoral office. While the Synod held that the Bible passages mean this much, it did not say this is *all* they mean. In sum, 1969 Res. 2–17 first declared that the Bible says women are not to be pastors or do the things that only pastors should do.⁴ The second declaration continued:

2. The principles set forth in such [biblical] passages, we believe, prohibit holding any other kind of office or membership on boards or committees in the institutional structures of a congregation, only if this involves women in a violation of the order of creation . . .⁵

Here 1969 Res. 2–17 went on to address positions in congregations besides those previously mentioned in declaration one. In declaration two the Synod was distinctly referring to *other kinds* of positions—that is, positions of kinds that did not involve their incumbents in the distinctive functions of the pastoral office—and it envisioned the possibility that women could be involved in violating the order of creation by holding such

positions.⁶ If so, a woman's holding the position was prohibited, the Synod said, prohibited by the Bible itself.

The convention was taking its cue from the 1968 CTCR study on *Woman Suffrage in the Church*. After mentioning that women should not be pastors or elders, in that document the CTCR went on to say, "To this point we would need to *add* the observation that some offices in the congregation implicitly expect the exercise of authority over others, including men. [Women h]olding such offices might indeed be in violation of what has been called the order of creation or of preservation."⁷ In 1968 the CTCR clearly was not of a mind to state that the biblical prohibition against women exercising authority over men could be violated if and only if a woman held the office of pastor or performed the distinctive functions of that office. Nor was the Synod saying this in 1969. The fourth and final declaration of 1969 Res. 2-17 stated:

4. We therefore conclude that the Synod itself and the congregations of the Synod are at liberty to alter their policies and practices in regard to women's involvement in the work of the church according to these declarations, provided the polity developed conforms to the general Scriptural principles that women neither hold the pastoral office nor "exercise authority over men."

These two "general Scriptural principles" were summarized quite briefly at the end of declaration four. This brevity was possible because the principles had already been mentioned in declarations one and two, respectively. Most arresting is the way declaration four reflected 1 Timothy 2:12, which says: "I do not permit a woman (a) to teach or (b) to exercise authority over a man." Resolution 2-17 was roughly equating (a) not teaching, with not holding the pastoral office, as in declaration one.⁸ It was roughly equating (b) not exercising authority over a man, with not otherwise violating the order of creation, as in declaration two.⁹ Clearly, the Synod held that two discrete things are prohibited.

It is significant that 1969 Res. 2-17 quoted 1 Timothy 2:12. Thereby the Synod underlined the biblical nature of its concern about women possibly violating the order of creation. Declaration two had already affirmed that the concern arose from biblical passages. Declaration four added, in effect, that one of the passages where the Bible says that the order of creation should not be violated is in the 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibition against women exercising authority over men in the church.

1970 CCM Opinion

In 1970 the Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) was asked by President Preus and others to provide guidance on the parish level

implementation of 1969 Res. 2–17. The CCM responded by composing a model paragraph for congregations wishing to incorporate provisions based upon the resolution into their constitutions or bylaws. This model paragraph provided that women of appropriate age

may hold voting membership in the congregation and serve as officers and as members of boards and committees as long as these positions are not directly involved in the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching, the public administration of the sacraments, church discipline) and as long as this service does not violate the order of creation (usurping authority over men). Accordingly, they shall not serve as pastor, as a member of _____ [the board of elders or “corresponding board directly involved in the functions of the pastoral office”], as chairman or vice-chairman of the congregation, or as chairman of _____.”

In the last blank, the CCM noted, “the congregation may list at its discretion those major policy and decision-making boards or standing committees, if any, whose chairmanship the congregation might wish to restrict to men.”¹⁰

The CCM model paragraph reflects the Synod’s determination to prevent women from violating the order of creation in ways other than holding the pastoral office or carrying out its distinctive functions. This model became the Synod’s policy.¹¹ The CCM is a *constitutional* commission, and in its 1970 opinion, the commission was carrying out an assignment to interpret a synodical resolution. It was not directly engaging in biblical exegesis.

However, the CCM’s work was not unrelated to the Bible, for in 1969 Res. 2–17 the Synod was interpreting and applying biblical texts. It quoted 1 Timothy 2:12. Based on principles it found in biblical passages the Synod had said that women should not hold congregational positions that would involve them in violating the order of creation. Women were not to “exercise authority over men,” as the Bible says and the Synod affirmed in Res. 2–17.

What the CCM was offering as new in 1970 was the specification of particular lay offices. Here it reported that it was “restricting itself to the position which the Synod has taken in this matter (*de iure humano* rather than *de iure divino*, by human right rather than divine right) at this point.” This disclaimer by the CCM must be read carefully. For in 1969 the Synod did not indicate that it was simply by human right that women are neither to be pastors nor do what only pastors should do. Nor did the Synod say that it was a *de iure humano* matter if women violated the order of creation by holding various positions in congregations. The prohibition of women from exercising authority over men was quoted by the Synod from a Bible passage. So what was *de iure humano*? The CCM seems to have been cautioning that the naming of specific offices (besides pastor) in the model paragraph was

de iure humano.¹² The CCM added that further definition of the Synod's position would perhaps require refinement of the CCM's own suggestions.

1985 CTCR Report on *Women in the Church*

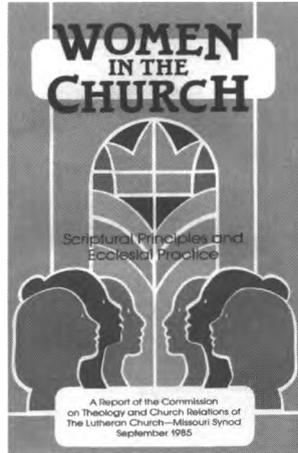
The change has its roots in the 1985 CTCR report on *Women in the Church*. This document repeatedly mentioned the order of creation. One of its stated objectives was to explain "the inclusion of woman (as well as man) in a divinely mandated order which is to be reflected in the work and worship life of the church." Therefore the report stated that "The order of redemption, while affirming that men and women are one in Christ and joint heirs of the grace of life, does not abolish the order established at the time of creation."¹³ Nonetheless, the 1985 CTCR report attenuated the order of creation, that is, it reduced the scope of the order of creation. This tendency becomes evident especially in the treatment of 1 Timothy 2:12. "The authority forbidden to women here [in this Bible passage] is *that* of the pastoral office," the document asserted in definite terms.¹⁴ With this far-reaching conclusion in mind, let us back up and examine the 1985 CTCR document more closely.

First, in turning to this Bible passage and its context, the commission claimed that the instructions it contains "are directed to the worship/church setting."¹⁵ This claim has been disputed within the CTCR since the 1985 document appeared.¹⁶

Second, there is a respect in which the 1985 CTCR document constituted a scholarly advance beyond the same commission's 1968 report, in the recognition that the Greek word *authentēin* in 1 Timothy 2:12 ought to be translated "exercise authority." The 1985 document noted that this word "occurs only here in the New Testament and is never used in the Septuagint." It added that the word consequently "is open to varying definitions, some of them quite incongruent with Paul's actual concern."¹⁷ In 1968 the CTCR had indicated that *authentēin* means "usurping authority, domineering, [or] lording it over" someone.¹⁸ By 1985 this sort of definition was gone.¹⁹ One of the sources cited by the CTCR explained:

Until recently there were only a few known uses of the verb [*authentēin*] and it was necessary to guess whether it meant 'exercise authority' or 'illegitimately exercise authority.' Further examples of its use have shown that it does not carry with it the connotation of illicit authority, nor does it carry the connotation of 'domineer' ('act imperiously' or 'be overbearing') as some translations and even lexicons have suggested. It simply means 'have authority over' or 'exercise authority over.' What Paul disallowed therefore was

simply the exercise of authority over men, which was incompatible with submission, rather than the abuse or usurpation of authority.²⁰



1985 CTCL document Women in the Church

Although the CTCL's 1985 document did not set forth a formal definition for *authentein*, it routinely translated the word as "exercise authority."

Another trend, still more significant for the future, emerged in a different aspect of the commission's 1985 treatment of *authentein*. The CTCL commented on the meaning of this word in 1 Timothy 2:12 by leaning upon a linkage between the verbs in the passage, "teach" and "exercise authority." (As previously noted, the document concluded that "The authority forbidden to women here is that of the pastoral office.") The CTCL suggested that when the linkage between commands such as those in 1 Timothy 2:11–15 is not recognized, then "both the text and women are abused." It asserted that "a careful review of this passage indicates that the terms 'teach' and 'exercise authority' parallel each other. They are intentionally linked. The kind of teaching referred to in the passage is tied to exercising authority."²¹

This was the entirety of the evidence offered by the commission.²² The 1985 document included no "careful review of this passage." Further on, this statement appeared: "It has been shown that the prohibition in 1 Tim. 2:11–12 of woman's exercising authority is not a concept independent of 'to teach.'"²³ Although such an idea had been *asserted* earlier in the document—and more strongly than in this summary—no attempt had been made to *demonstrate* it.

The next page indicated that "The theological matrix for the apostle's inspired teaching on the silence of women in the church and the exercise of authority is, again, the order of creation." After rehearsing some of the details of 1 Timothy 2:13 and 14, the CTCL went on: "The conclusion

drawn is that the leadership of the official, public teaching office belongs to men.”²⁴ That was not precisely the conclusion St. Paul drew, certainly not the only one. For in Paul’s treatment “the operative distinction . . . is not between laymen and clergy, but between women and men.”²⁵ However, it definitely was the conclusion drawn by the commission, which again employed a definite article: “*the* conclusion.” The commission was limiting the biblical application of the order of creation with respect to congregational life. By the time the 1985 document was finished with 1 Timothy 2, its point about the order of creation had been pretty much restricted to the pastoral office.²⁶ It said that “in the New Testament sense” neither congregational committees nor their chairmen “have authority over men.”²⁷

Immediately the 1985 report went on: “The *only stricture* would have to do with anyone whose official functions would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office (e.g., elders, and possibly the chairman of the congregation).”²⁸ These words are very important.²⁹ With them, the commission was carrying through on its earlier assertion about women exercising authority: “*The* authority forbidden to women here is that of the pastoral office.”³⁰ The commission kept consistent with this direction. Throughout its 1985 document it made no mention of a woman even potentially violating the order of creation by holding a congregational office outside of pastor or a related position. The chairmanship of a congregation “possibly” remained in the category of “stricture,” but only if it carried “official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.”

The commission differed with the 1970 CCM opinion concerning women serving in board or committee chairmanships and concerning women serving in the position of chairman (and, presumably, vice-chairman) of a congregation. The CTCR was also disagreeing with an affirmation made by the Synod, based on “the principles set forth in . . . [biblical] passages,” specifically the Synod’s recognition in 1969 Res. 2–17 that women could violate the order of creation in congregational offices other than those involving the distinctive functions of the pastoral office. Without saying so explicitly, the CTCR in 1985 was calling for the Synod to make a theological change.

The CTCR’s wording must be examined still more closely: “The *only stricture* would have to do with anyone whose *official functions would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.*” The italicized phrase seems to have been coined in the 1985 CTCR report.³¹ It was eventually employed by the Synod via quotation in 2004 Res. 3–08A.

But who has “public accountability for the function of the pastoral office”? Is it (1) pastors themselves? Or is it (2) the pastor along with anyone else who directly assists, for example, with distributing the Lord’s Supper? Or is it (3) the pastor along with anyone who by position is responsible to the congregation for giving support and counsel to the pastor as he carries

out his duties? Or can the scope be wider still, including (4) the president or chairman of a congregation who will bear major responsibilities on behalf of the congregation if a problem arises with a pastor or there is a vacancy in the pastoral office? In its *Women in the Church* report the CTCR basically said that the first two of these were instances of public accountability for the function of the pastoral office, while the fourth was not intrinsically such an instance. Number three remained more or less up in the air.

Whatever thoughts the CTCR may have had about these matters in 1985, though, the phrase “official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office” subsequently proved itself quite ambiguous and difficult to handle even within the commission itself. In 1995 the CTCR Executive Committee told the Synod that “In the CTCR’s five years of work on this assignment, perhaps no topic has been the subject of more attention and discussion” than this phrase. “There was considerable confusion, for example, about the meaning of the term ‘public accountability’ and about who was being spoken of as being ‘accountable’ to whom.”³²

The confusing phrase figured prominently in 1989 Res. 3–13A, where the Synod made the assignment to the CTCR that resulted in the 1994 document on *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*. Although the phrase did not appear in any of the overtures cited on the resolution’s reference line, it found its way into the resolution first via quotation from the CTCR’s 1985 document. With slight variations, the phrase reappeared in the next three paragraphs, including the first *resolved* which assigned the CTCR to “prepare a study on the eligibility of women for service in all offices of the congregation, including that of chairman, vice-chairman, and elder and District and synodical boards where their official function would in effect involve public accountability for the function(ing) of the pastoral office.”³³

1994 CTCR Report on *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*

The CTCR adopted its brief report on *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices* in November 1994. The Synod wanted to see the CTCR’s work a year before the 1995 synodical convention.³⁴ When the report appeared, its direction was shown in the fifth paragraph:

Simply stated, this assignment has arisen because the Synod has previously taken the position that the Scriptures themselves qualify or limit the eligibility of women for service in the church. The Scriptures do so in those passages which require that only men are permitted to serve in the office of pastor and carry out the functions which God has assigned to it (1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 2).

The question before the Commission, therefore, is this: *In applying what the Scriptures teach concerning the pastoral office and its functions, what additional limitations, if any, should Christians place upon the service of women in the church, specifically with reference to offices established in and by the church?*³⁵

The rest of the 1994 CTCR document reported no biblical limitation on the eligibility of women for service in the church outside of serving in the pastoral office or carrying out its functions.

Over a period of nine years, the limiting of the order of creation evident already in the 1985 *Women in the Church* report had reached a point where the CTCR hardly mentioned the order of creation in its 1994 report. (In fact, when five of the six theological professors on the CTCR dissented publicly from the 1994 report, they called attention to the way in which the report's Appendix sketched the history of the matter at hand so as to omit references to the order of creation made by the Synod itself in 1969 Res. 2–17.³⁶) The commission declared that

[i]n keeping with what the Scriptures teach *about the service of women with respect to the pastoral office*, women may not assume responsibility for or carry out in behalf of the congregation (that is “publicly”), and in the stead of Christ, those functions in the local congregation that would involve them in the exercise of authority inherent in this authoritative public teaching office in the church.³⁷

Immediately the commission added, “This remains the only stricture.”³⁸ In these last few words, the commission was echoing its 1985 statement that “The *only stricture* would have to do with anyone whose official functions would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office (e.g., elders, and possibly the chairman of the congregation).”³⁹

Thus, with the words in the block quote just above, the CTCR was paraphrasing its own phrase, which hardly ever appeared as such in the 1994 document.⁴⁰ Official functions involving public accountability for the function of the pastoral office amounted to functions involving one in the exercise of authority inherent in this authoritative public teaching office. Women are not to assume responsibility for such functions or carry them out, the CTCR said.

Discussing women serving in the office of elder, the commission wrote that “the principal consideration is whether the office requires that those who hold it are eligible *to perform* those functions that are distinctive to the public exercise of the ministry of Word and sacrament.”⁴¹ The earlier words “assume responsibility for or carry out” really meant nothing other than “carry out.” So the 1994 report said that women should not serve as “elders,” if this term designates “that office which has as its assigned duty assisting

the pastor in the public exercise of the distinctive functions of his office”—that is, assisting the pastor by personally being engaged in these functions.⁴²

The case was similar with respect to the chairmanship or vice-chairmanship of a congregation. The 1994 report held that if the duties of such an office “do not allow for the assumption of the distinctive functions of the pastoral office, women are free to hold this office without any Scriptural restriction.”⁴³ While in a way this statement resembles the CTCR’s 1985 declaration that “the only stricture . . . possibly” included congregational chairmanship,⁴⁴ there is a key respect in which it differs. What in 1985 had been called “public accountability for the function of the pastoral office” was in 1994 put in terms of *assuming* the pastoral office’s distinctive functions.

The 1985 CTCR document already started narrowing down the application of the order of creation so as not to include various congregational lay offices. The CTCR continued this trend in 1994 and began effectively defining its own phrase “public accountability for the function of the pastoral office” so as to include only those who actually perform these functions. Now it was becoming clear what the CTCR thought about a layperson who by position is simply responsible to a congregation for giving its pastor support and counsel and/or for monitoring his work. This layperson would not yet have “public accountability for the function of the pastoral office,” at least not in the eyes of the CTCR. The commission deemed only those who were actually performing various pastoral functions to have public accountability for such functions.

These definitions made for a significant “one-two” combination. The first limited the application of the order of creation basically to matters involving the pastoral office. The second limited the application in those matters still further, to people who actually help pastors carry out distinctive pastoral functions. These two premises undercut the Synod’s long-standing position.

The December 1994 *Reporter* quoted this statement from CTCR Executive Director Samuel Nafzger: “The Synod has never had a position on the service of women in these offices that was claimed to be by divine right, but one claimed to be by human right only.”⁴⁵ The CCM’s specification of offices in its model paragraph had been deemed a matter of human right, *de iure humano*. Nonetheless, in 1969 Res. 2–17 the Synod stated that it believed, based on principles set forth in biblical passages, that it was possible for women to violate the order of creation by holding other kinds of office besides any involving the distinctive functions of the pastoral office. This the Synod declared *de iure divino*, by divine right.

The same *Reporter* issue again quoted Dr. Nafzger: “The Bible does not give us directions for humanly instituted offices.”⁴⁶ Dr. Louis Brighton, New Testament professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in effect addressed this claim when he wrote to the CTCR shortly after the appearance of

its 1994 report. He urged the commission to recall that the relationship between Christian men and women applies to “all areas of their Christian life . . . and not only to the pastoral office.” Dr. Brighton maintained that even when an office is created *de iure humano*, those who hold it are still subject to general relationships established *de iure divino*. He continued:

While, as you correctly point out . . . [the chairmanship of a congregation] is *iure humano*, whoever fills that office must be guided by the *iure divino* relationship of man and woman. Are we now proclaiming to the world that by our permitting a woman to fill this office we are no longer obligated to follow the *iure divino* principle of the headship of man as patterned after that of Christ? Surely this [is] not your intent. But the end result of your report supports such an antiscriptural stance.⁴⁷

1995 Resolutions 3–06A and 3–10, and 2004 Resolution 3–08A

The Synod’s first opportunity to speak to the 1994 CTCR document came at its 1995 convention. In 1995 Res. 3–06A the Synod noted that the CTCR had on its agenda a 1994 request to “address concerns regarding the priesthood of all believers, the order of creation, and the Greek word *authenthein*.”⁴⁸ The Synod asked its members to study the CTCR’s 1994 report together with the dissenting opinion and respond to the commission. However many studied, almost no one responded.⁴⁹

The Synod also directed the CTCR to continue studying the issues in its 1994 report and the dissenting opinion, doing so “in consultation with the faculties of the seminaries.” The commission was to “give this topic of the service of women in congregational offices the highest priority.”⁵⁰ In a separate resolution, 3–10, the Synod directed the CTCR to “coordinate a comprehensive study of the scriptural relationship of man and woman, together with the faculties of both seminaries, making use of other persons who are competent in the area of theology, including women.”⁵¹

The CTCR’s 1998, 2001, and 2004 convention reports mentioned its work on “women in the church” issues. While some progress was made on the “comprehensive study,” none of these reports gave the Synod an accounting of any communication that the commission had sought from the seminary faculties or received from them concerning women in congregational offices.⁵² By 2004 the CTCR had released to the Synod no new study document reporting on its continued engagement with this particular subject.⁵³

The commission had not completed its work on *authenthein*, a word the Synod itself had used (in translation) in 1969 Res. 2–17. The CTCR finished this assignment in 2005, nine months after the 2004 synodical convention.⁵⁴ The commission limited itself to describing “lexical aspects (relating to

word meaning and vocabulary).” The CTCR reported that *authenthein* basically meant “to exercise authority over.” It noted that its own construal of the word in 1968 (namely, “usurping authority, domineering, lording it over”) “was based on the evidence available to the Commission at the time” and needed to be revised in light of additional references brought to light via computer databases of classical literature. However, the CTCR made it clear that it was not attempting to apply its finding on the meaning of *authenthein* to various exegetical questions about 1 Timothy 2:12, nor was the CTCR trying to apply this Bible passage to contemporary church life. For such discussion, it referred readers to the 1985 *Women in the Church* report.⁵⁵

Whatever the CTCR or anyone else had done or left undone by 2004, in that year the Synod took the massive step of adopting Res. 3–08A. As already noted, it thus affirmed “that women may serve in humanly established offices in the church as long as the functions of those offices do not make them eligible to carry out ‘official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.’”⁵⁶ The vote was relatively close: 576 in favor, 520 against.⁵⁷ Many delegates recorded negative votes.⁵⁸

The Synod adopted Res. 3–08A in response to four overtures listed on the resolution’s reference line, one of which was simply “To Affirm Scriptural Prohibition of Women’s Ordination.”⁵⁹ Stopping short of going as far as the other three overtures requested, i.e., to adopt the 1994 CTCR report or to “officially receive and approve” it, the Synod resolved simply to “affirm” this document’s conclusions.⁶⁰

Guidelines for Congregations

The Synod’s action in 2004 Res. 3–08A was evidently soon felt to need clarification. The month after the 2004 convention, synodical President Gerald Kieschnick announced that he was appointing a task force “to create guidelines for congregations and District constitution committees to follow in revising congregational constitutions and bylaws to permit women to hold congregational offices so long as their assigned responsibilities do not include ‘distinctive functions’ or ‘public accountability’ for the function of the pastoral office.”⁶¹ The confusing phrase had now been featured in a statement of the Synod’s position, and it is no wonder that this statement was coming in for special attention.

The ambiguity of the phrase has not been cleared up. In January 2005 the task force (two CTCR representatives, two CCM representatives, and a district president) said:

The Holy Scriptures teach that women are not to hold the office of the public ministry (pastoral office) or to perform those functions

. . . that are distinctive to the public exercise of the ministry of Word and Sacraments, *nor are they to carry out official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the functions of the pastoral office* (1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 2).⁶²

At the heart of its report, the task force issued this “sample paragraph for congregational constitutions”:

Women who have reached the age of _____ [“at least the required age established by state law of not-for-profit organizations”] may serve as officers and as members of all boards and committees of this congregation which do not call upon them to carry out the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching in or serving as the leader of the public worship service, the public administration of the sacraments, the public exercise of church discipline.) Accordingly, a woman shall not serve as pastor of this congregation or as _____ [“Here shall be listed those positions or offices which call for their holders to carry out the specific functions of the pastoral office as listed in this sample paragraph”].⁶³

The prohibitions on the service of women in the model paragraph all have to do with the involvement of women in carrying out functions distinctive to the public exercise of the pastoral office. The sample paragraph did not address the task force’s other principle, italicized above, that women ought not “carry out official functions [that] would involve public accountability for the functions of the pastoral office.”

Task force chairman Samuel Nafzger affirmed this fact. He added that the fifth of five principles stated by the task force amounts to a *via negativa* on the subject of official functions involving public accountability for the functions of the pastoral office. That is, the task force did not state what these functions are or might be. Instead it restricted itself to saying what they are *not*, and it specified two: voting in congregational assemblies on any subject and reading Scripture in public worship services. The task force said the Synod has declared that these two activities do not constitute official functions involving public accountability for the functions of the pastoral office, nor are they distinctive functions of the pastoral office. Beyond this, the task force did not say what are official functions involving public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.⁶⁴

The task force offered its recommendations to the Synod in 2005, in a booklet which also contained the CTCR’s 1994 *Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices* report. At its 2007 convention the Synod said nothing one way or the other about the task force’s suggested guidelines.

2007 Resolution 3–07

In 2007 the Synod observed that “some overtures submitted to this convention have called for the reaffirmation of 2004 Res. 3–08A, some have called for its rescission, and some have called for further study . . .”⁶⁵ Upon closer inspection of the proposals, the particulars are revealing. Affirming 2004 Res. 3–08A were one district (Atlantic), one district board of directors (Northwest), and two congregations.⁶⁶ Specifically calling for 2004 Res. 3–08A to be rescinded were five districts (Indiana, Iowa West, Central Illinois, Minnesota North, and Missouri), joined by a pastors’ conference in Missouri and three congregations.⁶⁷ Similar were the South Dakota District’s call to suspend implementation of 2004 Res. 3–08A pending further study,⁶⁸ an overture from the Southern Illinois District, a circuit forum, and three congregations to “reject” the 1994 CTCR document,⁶⁹ and a circuit forum’s overture to “repeal” 2004 Res. 3–08A.⁷⁰ Perhaps the most interesting overtures were those calling for some sort of further study. Three districts (Northern Illinois, Rocky Mountain, and South Wisconsin) harkened back to the assignment given by the Synod to the CTCR in 1995, asking the Synod basically to re-assign this task to the CTCR.⁷¹ The New England District called for further study, while the Southeastern District Board of Directors urged that the CTCR complete and publish a single-volume comprehensive study on the biblical relationship between man and woman before the 2010 synodical convention.⁷² The Texas and Southern districts urged the 2007 convention to “study and clarify the applicability of various Scripture passages” including texts on the order of creation and the Office of the Public Ministry.⁷³ As the Texas District put it, “Confusion continues regarding the proper roles of service of women in the church.” There were many more expressions of concern about this matter than there were voices raised in support for the step that the Synod took when it adopted 2004 Res. 3–08A, and a number called for undoing that very step.

What the Synod decided to do was wait. With the CTCR’s promise that its “comprehensive study on the scriptural relationship of man and woman” including “further guidance on the meaning of the term ‘order of creation’” would be completed in 2008 (April of 2008, Dr. Nafzger specified), Synod resolved to await this report and undertake “thorough, synodwide” study of it upon its release.⁷⁴

In 2007 Res. 3–07 the Synod also commended to its members “for widespread study and reflection” the third section of “CTCR Response to Expressions of Dissent (2004–2006),” a report the commission adopted in December 2006 to address dissent received on this subject and others. There the CTCR declared:

If the dissenters believe that *Scripture* clearly and definitively teaches that, due to the order of creation, women are forbidden to serve in certain humanly instituted offices in the church (even when these offices do not require them to carry out the distinctive functions of the pastoral office), then it is incumbent upon those dissenting to demonstrate where and how Scripture makes this clear. This, in the CTCR's judgment, the dissenters have not done.⁷⁵

This statement seeks to place a burden of proof on dissenters. Five CTCR theologians maintained in 1994 that the CTCR majority had failed to shoulder its theological burden of proof in adopting the report on *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*. The dissenting opinion said that the commission had "neglected to consider seriously important Scriptural and doctrinal issues."⁷⁶

A second point is this: the position which the Synod has abandoned was the position that the CTCR had recommended in its 1968 report. After saying that the relevant biblical passages prohibit women from holding the pastoral office or any other office where they might assist the pastor in exercising and administering the Office of the Keys, the commission went on in its 1968 document to declare that "the principles set forth in such [Scripture] passages, we believe, apply also to holding any other kind of office in the institutional structures of the church which might involve women in a violation of the order of creation."⁷⁷

Today's CTCR certainly has the privilege of disagreeing with one of the commission's previous documents. In fact, it has the *obligation* to disagree if necessary. The Synod looks to the CTCR for the clearest and most unequivocal theological guidance possible. The 2005 CTCR report on *authenthein* commented on the meaning of this word as set forth in the 1968 document, and in effect duly issued a correction to the commission's former definition. Instead of passing over the former definition in silence, the CTCR of 2005 evidently felt a responsibility to set the record straight.

The CTCR has not otherwise corrected or repudiated anything else in the 1968 document, however, even though that document helped to undergird the Synod's former position. In 2006, then, the CTCR was commenting on communications received from dissenters concerning women in congregational offices between 2004 and 2006 without mentioning that the commission itself is expressing a theological conclusion at variance with 2004 Res. 3-08A by letting the 1968 report stand. It lies within the scope of the CTCR's power, prerogative, and purview to refer specifically to the 1968 document, as it did on the meaning of *authenthein*, and tell the Synod precisely where else its 40 year old report is inadequate or wrong. But this the CTCR has not done.

The Synod certainly has changed its theological position on women in congregational offices! Now it is doubtful whether the Synod's own statement of its previous position on this matter (i.e., declarations one, two, and four of 1969 Res. 2–17) would be judged by the CTCR as expressing biblical grounds even to question the new stance.

Lessons for the future

Whatever anyone thinks of 2004 Res. 3–08A, perhaps there can be agreement that the handling of this entire matter has hardly constituted the Missouri Synod's finest theological hour. This paper therefore concludes with a few basic thoughts about good practices the Synod should use as it treats theological issues in the future.

Reservations voiced within any theological commission—not only those of theological professors, to be sure, but particularly the *Bedenken* expressed by those who have exceptional credentials—must be taken quite seriously, and so should directives issued by Synod for additional theological work to be done in difficult and troubling areas. A straightforward accounting should be offered on the efforts made to comply with such directives, and all participants ought to agree later on the steps they took. If such elementary bases are not covered, the Synod would do well to make no additional statement.

Moreover, any statement the Synod does make should be phrased in the most lucid language possible. There is nothing to be gained by wording that can be bent to suit various preferences and predilections, or by formulations that have already proven confusing. Slippery terminology will only require clarification, probably sooner than later. Clarity may be a long time coming.

Finally, any change that the Synod even contemplates in its theological position should be approached with extraordinary care. Every effort should be made to assure that the proposed change and its implications are clearly understood, and that widespread consideration is given to the various issues and arguments. Members throughout the Synod should know when a change is made.

NOTES

1. 2004 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Convention Proceedings, 132.

2. The adoption of this wording was informed by an explanation offered by CTCR Executive Director Samuel Nafzger while Res. 3–08A was under consideration at the 2004 convention. The floor committee had deferred to Dr. Nafzger to answer a delegate's question about the choice of the word "affirm" in the resolution.

3. This and all other quotations of 1969 Res. 2–17 below have as their source 1969 Convention Proceedings, 88.

4. Declaration one included the term “distinctive functions of this [the pastoral] office.” The 1968 Commission on Theology and Church Relations report on Woman Suffrage in the Church (upon which 1969 Res. 2–17 was largely based) said something a bit different. The CTCR had declared that the relevant Bible passages “indicate that women ought not to hold any other office in the church [besides pastor] whose function it is to assist the pastor in the exercise and administration of the Office of the Keys.” Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *Woman Suffrage in the Church* (N.p.: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, n.d.), 3, emphasis added.

5. Some years later, in 1985, the CTCR offered brief definitions of the terms “order of creation” and “order of redemption.” Order of creation, it said, “refers to the particular position which, by the will of God, any created object occupies in relation to others.” Further, the commission noted, “God has given to that which has been created a certain definite order which, because it has been created by Him, is the expression of His immutable will.” Order of redemption, the CTCR went on, “refers to the relationship of the redeemed to God and to each other in the new creation established by Him in Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:15; 2 Cor. 5:17) . . . It is a relationship determined by grace.” Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *Women in the Church: Scriptural Principles and Ecclesial Practice* (N.p.: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1985), 21.

Returning to 1969 Res. 2–17, for the sake of completeness it should be observed that there was a bit more to the second declaration than what was quoted above. The remainder, however, is not so important for present purposes. It reads: “We hold that they [the Bible passages] do not prohibit full membership of women on synodical boards, commissions, and committees. The manner of filling an office or establishing membership on a board or commission, in congregations or in the Synod, has no prohibitory Scriptural implications” [sic].

6. Despite the wording of declaration two, in 1995 the CTCR Executive Committee declared that “it is by no means self-evident that references to ‘the order of creation’ and to the phrase ‘exercise authority over men’ later in this resolution are to be read as ‘additional principles’ rather than being read in the light of the initial ‘declaration’ . . .,” namely declaration one. The Executive Committee went on to say, “It is precisely because of questions such as this that were left unanswered by Res. 2–17 that the Synod in subsequent years has repeatedly asked the CTCR to study and clarify further what the Scriptures teach regarding the role of women in the church.” Unquestionably, Res. 2–17 did not answer all questions, but it is rather unclear what the Executive Committee meant by “questions such as this.” Declaration two speaks for itself, particularly in its words, “any other kind of office or membership. . . .” See the Executive Committee’s “Response to the Dissenting Opinion on The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices.” Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod 1995 Convention Workbook, 314–16. The above quotes are from page 315.

7. CTCR, *Woman Suffrage in the Church*, 10, emphasis added.

8. There is no reason to think, however, that in this short summary the Synod was offering a one-for-one equation between teaching and holding the pastoral office. It was not, for example, retreating from its prohibition on women serving in capacities involving the distinctive functions of the pastoral office, as stated in declaration one.

9. Once more, this summary is brief and schematic. There was no denial that a woman holding the pastoral office would exercise authority over men and thus violate the order of creation. The Synod was indicating that there are other ways to “exercise authority over men” in terms of the biblical passage 1 Timothy 2:12.

10. This and other citations from the 1970 CCM opinion are quoted from 1971 Convention Workbook, 244.

11. At subsequent conventions the Synod affirmed not only what it had said about the service of women in congregational offices in 1969 Res. 2–17 but also the CCM’s 1970 opinion, including the contents of the model paragraph. See 1981 Res. 3–11 (1981 Convention Proceedings, 158); 1986 Res. 3–09 (1986 Convention Proceedings, 144); and 1995 Res. 3–06A (1995 Convention Proceedings, 120).

12. The CTCR Executive Committee’s 1995 “Response to the Dissenting Opinion on The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices” characterized only the specification of lay offices offered by the CCM as “*de iure humano*.” This “response” did not attempt to identify any provision of the Synod’s 1969 Res. 2–17 as “*de iure humano*.” See Executive Committee, 315. In 2004 the Synod stated that it was “by human right rather than divine right” when the CCM opined that “a woman ‘shall not serve . . . as chairman or vice-chairman of the congregation.’” Res. 3–08A, 2004 Convention Proceedings, 132.

13. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 37. One of the scriptural principles reported by the CTCR in this document was that “Distinctive identities for man and woman in their relationship to each other were assigned by God at creation. These identities are not nullified by Christ’s redemption, and they should be reflected in the church.” (CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 27, italics original).

14. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 35, emphasis added.

15. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 34. CTCR Executive Samuel Nafzger later wrote that “The key to understanding Paul’s instruction is to recognize that in each of these pericopes [1 Cor. 14: 34ff. and 1 Tim. 2:11–15] he is giving instruction for the Christian congregation gathered for public worship.” Samuel H. Nafzger, “The Doctrinal Position of the LCMS on the Service of Women in the Church,” *Concordia Journal* 18 (April 1992):128.

16. In 1991 a commission member offered a “minority report” which stated that although 1 Corinthians 14 has the worship assembly as a context, “The situation envisaged in the Timothy passage is more general” and “the exercise of authority over male has reference to church or family settings,” but not necessarily worship services as such. G. Waldemar Degner, “A Minority Report to the CTCR: ‘Do the Scriptures Teach Anything about Women Serving as Elders or Distributing the Sacred Elements in the Lord’s Supper?’” unpublished paper, 1991, 11.

Likewise, in 1994 five theological professors then serving on the CTCR joined in observing that “the context of the entire passage in 1 Tim. 2:8–15 may not be limited to a worship setting at all, as is often assumed. What Paul says concerning women’s dress and deportment in Verses 9–10 may well not concern worship practices only, especially when one compares these verses to the highly similar wording in 1 Pet. 3:3–5. This may well indicate that more general (even familial) relationship considerations are in order.” “Dissenting Opinion on Women in Congregational Offices,” 1995 Convention Workbook, 313.

17. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 35.

18. What the 1968 CTCR document had said in full was: “The report submitted to the St. Paul convention of our Synod points out that this term really means ‘usurping authority, domineering, lording it over’ someone. It is here understood in that sense.” CTCR, *Woman Suffrage in the Church*, 9. This description of the previous report is not altogether accurate. True, in 1956 the Synod’s ad hoc Committee on Woman’s Suffrage had held that *authentain* “has an opprobrious connotation.” Still, this committee indicated that the rendering “to have dominion over a man” was better than the KJV translation of 1 Timothy 2:12, “usurp authority.” The latter was passable, the committee’s report allowed, but only as “a paraphrase.” “Report of the Committee on Woman’s Suffrage,” 1956 Convention Proceedings, 563.

19. The language of “usurping authority” was not employed by the Synod in 1969 Res. 2–17. It appeared parenthetically in the CCM’s 1970 model paragraph for congregational governing documents.

20. James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 202.

21. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 35.

22. The dissenting opinion to the 1994 CTCR *Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices* document pointed out that “The 1985 ‘Women in the Church’ document’s treatment of the issue [*authentain*, etc.] is very brief, encompassing only several sentences.” *Dissenting Opinion*, 313, note 13.

23. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 43.

24. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 36.

25. This was the observation of one CTCR member: Kurt Marquart, “Response to Questions from a District Commission on Adjudication: A Proposed CTCR Minority Report,” April 17 and May 5, 1991. Marquart was writing about 1 Corinthians 14:33ff, but his statement characterizes 1 Timothy 2:11–15 as well.

26. This was not the way the CTCR had treated these matters in 1968. As noted above, the CTCR had then specified: “To this point [that women should not be pastors or elders] we would need to add the observation that some offices in the congregation implicitly expect the exercise of authority over others, including men. [Women h]olding such offices might indeed be in violation of what has been called the order of creation or of preservation.” CTCR, *Woman Suffrage in the Church*, 10. Therefore in 1969 Res. 2–17 the Synod anticipated the possibility

that women could violate the order of creation if they held some positions that did not involve them in the distinctive functions of the pastoral office.

In the “Summary” that followed the section of the 1985 report on “Scriptural Principles,” the CTCR was perhaps harkening back to its 1968 understanding by declaring that “the main application of these passages [1 Cor. 14:33b–35 and 1 Tim. 2:11–15] in the contemporary church is that women are not to exercise those functions in a local congregation which would involve them in the exercise of authority inherent in the authoritative public teaching office (i.e., the office of pastor).” CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 38, emphasis added. To call one application “main” is to make room for others. But, as will be noted presently, in the very realm of application the CTCR a few pages later took back what it had granted with this sentence. Any faint echo of 1968 was drowned out.

27. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 46.

28. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 46, emphasis added. The report continued, “The tasks of the elders in a congregation are often directly associated with the pastoral office and the public administration of the office of the keys.”

29. With these words the commission was taking back its “main application” thought from page 38. By page 46 of its report, the adjective “main” was gone. Instead there was a single (“only”) stricture about women serving in various congregational offices, and it was substantially the same as what had previously been called the “main” application.

30. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 35, emphasis added.

31. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 46, emphasis added. In 1969, Res. 2–17 had referred to “distinctive functions” of the pastoral office, but it did not contain the term “public accountability.”

32. Executive Committee, 315.

33. “To Study and Clarify Services of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices,” Res. 3–13A, 1989 Convention Proceedings, 118. In 1994 a CTCR minority cited these words from 1989 Res. 3–13A and argued that this resolution “assumes that the offices in question ‘would in effect involve public accountability for the function(ing) of the pastoral office.’” “Dissenting Opinion,” 312. The ambiguity of the ambiguous phrase could only be compounded by imprecise wording.

34. See Res. 3–05, 1992 Convention Proceedings, 114. Concern was voiced in 1994 over the adoption and release of a report which appeared later than the deadline urged by the Synod, yet still had not been adequately thought through either by CTCR’s standing Committee 2 or the full commission. See the “Procedural Concerns” in “Dissenting Opinion,” 312. To that account the present writer (a member of both the CTCR and of its Committee 2 from November 1992 until June 1994) can add the following: The drafter of *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, a CTCR staff member residing in the St. Louis area, was not made available to Committee 2 at its meetings during the year 1993. Although some of us on Committee 2 complained informally about this matter, the committee did not officially insist on the drafter’s presence for deliberations during that time. The year 1993 figured to be “prime time” for work on a report that was to be released to the Synod in the summer of 1994.

Yet much of the time of Committee 2 during 1993 was spent on subjects such as gambling, i.e., CTCR assignments which had no particular deadline attached to them.

35. Commission on Theology and Church Relations, *The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 1995 Convention Workbook, 310, emphasis added. This CTCR report was not issued as a discrete pamphlet like others until 2005. Instead, the month after its approval by the commission, it appeared in the December 1994 issue of *Reporter*. At the request of synodical President A. L. Barry, the same issue also carried, as a “notice,” the “Dissenting Opinion on Women in Congregational Offices,” signed by five theological professors on the CTCR.

36. See the “Historical Concerns” in the “Dissenting Opinion,” 312.

37. CTCR, *Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 310, emphasis added. This conclusion remained consistent with the CTCR’s 1985 interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12: “The authority forbidden to women here is that of the pastoral office” (CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 35).

38. CTCR, *Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 310.

39. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 46, emphasis added.

40. As noted above, in 1995 the CTCR Executive Committee reported that the phrase had proven ambiguous and confusing, and therefore “The CTCR’s [1994] report deliberately avoids this terminology.” Executive Committee, 315.

41. CTCR, *Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 310, emphasis added.

42. The commission went on to recommend that a term other than “elder” be used “for those who assist the pastor in the care of the flock, but who are not engaged in the distinctive functions of the pastoral ministry.” CTCR, *Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 310, emphasis added.

43. CTCR, *Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices*, 311.

44. CTCR, *Women in the Church*, 46.

45. *Reporter*, December, 1994, 3.

46. *Reporter*, December, 1994, 3.

47. Louis A. Brighton, to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations in care of its chairman, Dr. Richard Kapfer, Epiphany, 1995 [sic], unpublished copy. In a telephone conversation of October 18, 2004, Dr. Brighton granted me permission to quote his letter.

48. Res. 3–06A, 1995 Convention Proceedings, 120. This request was from the June 1994 Atlantic District convention.

49. In 2004 the CTCR reported that three responses were received during the 1995–98 triennium, and none after 1998. 2004 Convention Workbook, 72.

50. 1995 Convention Proceedings, 120. The Synod also resolved “That the members of the Synod continue to uphold its position on women serving in congregational offices and to abide by the position as stated in the 1970 opinion of the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) that congregations may allow women to hold all congregational offices except those of chairman, vice-

chairman, elder, and any other board or policy-making committee ‘whose chairmanship the congregation might wish to restrict to men.’” 1995 Convention Proceedings, 120.

51. Resolution 3–10, 1995 Convention Proceedings, 124.

52. See 1998 Convention Workbook, 50; 2001 Convention Workbook, 44–45; 2004 Convention Workbook, 71–72. A report on “Biblical Revelation and Inclusive Language” was adopted by the CTCR in February 1998 (1998 Convention Workbook, 357–366). See David O. Berger, “Resolution 3–08A, the Service of Women in the Church: An Historical Overview,” *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* 14 (Easter 2005):49–52.

53. The closest the commission came was responding to the Minnesota South District, which in 2003 had requested a recommendation regarding women serving as an executive director, president, assistant director, or vice president in a congregation. This opinion was adopted at the CTCR’s April 2004 meeting, too late for inclusion in the 2004 Convention Workbook. (It appeared in the 2007 Convention Workbook, 66–68.) Nonetheless, this opinion was cited twice in 2004 Res. 3–08A. The CTCR later declared that “Res. 3–08A strongly affirms and repeatedly cites the CTCR’s April 2004 opinion on the service of women in congregational offices” [“CTCR Response to Expressions of Dissent (2004–2006)” (N.p.: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2006), 26, emphasis added]. That the resolution repeatedly cites the opinion is undeniable. All the same, it might be asked how strongly the Synod could affirm the entirety of a recent CTCR opinion that was not generally available throughout the church body at the time.

54. CTCR, “Authentein,” 2007 Convention Workbook, 377–80.

55. CTCR, “Authentein,” 379.

56. 2004 Convention Proceedings, 132.

57. 2004 Convention Proceedings, 133.

58. 2004 Convention Proceedings, 41–42.

59. Ov. 3–88, 2004 Convention Workbook, 191.

60. Overture 3–99 from the Northwest District Board of Directors stood out as particularly striking. Via the overture, this district board was notifying the Synod that on January 17, 2003, it had “officially accepted” the 1994 CTCR report and “began to implement its recommendations, including its recommendation about women serving as chairperson and vice-chairperson of a congregation.” 2004 Convention Workbook, 194. The action taken by this district board hardly accorded with the Synod’s 1995 Res. 3–06A, but the Synod in no way reprimanded the Northwest District or its board.

61. Gerald B. Kieschnick, “Pastoral Letter to Pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, August 31, 2004,” quoted in Berger, 50–51.

Curiously, at the beginning of the task force’s report the wording of the synodical president’s assignment was reported somewhat differently: to prepare “guidelines for congregations and District constitutional committees to follow in revising congregational constitutional constitutions and bylaws to permit women

to hold all congregational offices so long as their assigned responsibilities do not include distinctive functions of the pastoral office” (2007 Convention Workbook, 373, emphasis added). The word all is new. Also, there is no mention here of the ambiguous phrase “public accountability for the function of the pastoral office.”

The absence of the phrase is curious because the phrase appeared both in 2004 Res. 3–08A and also in the task force’s assignment as the president reported it to the Synod. Moreover, in a letter appointing the task force, President Kieschnick had written: “For the sake of maintaining unity of doctrine and practice in all the districts of the Synod, it is imperative that the congregations of our Synod understand clearly what this resolution says and does not say, what it allows and does not allow, in order to prevent widely varying interpretations of such phrases as ‘the distinctive functions of the pastoral office’ and ‘public accountability for the pastoral office.’” Quoted in the LCMS News release, “Task force to offer guidelines on women’s service,” posted Oct. 14, 2004.

62. 2007 Convention Workbook, 373, italics added. The task force bracketed the word “that,” probably reflecting 2004 Res. 3–08A.

63. 2007 Convention Workbook, 373. Contrast the model paragraph developed by the CCM in 1970, quoted above.

64. Dr. Nafzger’s remarks were made to the Missouri District Board of Directors, May 3, 2007. See 2007 Convention Workbook, 373 for the task force’s five principles.

65. Res. 3–07, 2007 Convention Proceedings, 122.

66. Ovs. 3–60 to 3–63, 2007 Convention Workbook, 175–76.

67. Ovs. 3–68 to 3–73, 2007 Convention Workbook, 177–79.

68. Ov. 3–74, 2007 Convention Workbook, 179–80.

69. Ov. 3–76, 2007 Convention Workbook, 180–81.

70. Ov. 3–80, 2007 Convention Workbook, 181.

71. Ovs. 3–62, 3–75, and 3–77, 2007 Convention Workbook, 175–76, 180, and 181.

72. Ovs. 3–66 and 3–65, 2007 Convention Workbook, 176–77.

73. Ovs. 3–78 and 3–79, 2007 Convention Workbook, 181.

74. Res. 3–07, 2007 Convention Proceedings, 122.

75. “CTCR Response,” 25–26, emphasis original.

76. 1995 Convention Workbook, 313.

77. CTCR, *Woman Suffrage in the Church*, 3.