

# Study of Concordia - The Lutheran Confession of Faith

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## The Unaltered Augsburg Confession

### Article XIV - Order in the Church



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#### Review/Summary:

The Augsburg Confession is the specific Lutheran confession of the Christian faith which we believe, teach, and confess in our churches according to God's Holy Word. It was written by Philip Melancthon in consultation with Luther and others and presented to the Diet of Augsburg on June 25, 1530 AD. The aim of the confession was to present as fully as possible the doctrinal articles of the Orthodox Christian faith, as taught in Scripture and the "Church catholic" (universal). Rome had charged Luther and "the Lutherans" of teaching heresy. The Lutherans presented their case before Emperor Charles V, and the confession was accepted making it "legal" to be Lutheran Christians because our teachings did not dissent from the Orthodox Christian teaching of Scripture.

It consists of 28 articles of which the first 21 deal with the "chief articles of faith"— most following the model of Thesis-Antithesis. That is each states the belief we hold and then states the false beliefs which are condemned (as heresy). The last 7 articles are the abuses which had been corrected by the Lutherans, showing why Rome was actually guilty of heresy and justifying the changes made by the Lutherans with regard to customs and ceremonies.

**Article I: Of God**— This article proceeds from the creeds (especially the Nicene council) and teaches that there are three persons in the God-head who are of the same essence and power and who are co-eternal.

**Article II: Of Original Sin**— All men are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence (desire for sin); and this disease, or vice of origin is truly sin.

**Article III: Of The Son of God**— Christ Jesus, true God and true man, suffered and died to reconcile the Father unto us and be a sacrifice for all sins of men. He sends the Holy Spirit.

**Article IV: Of Justification**— The righteousness of Christ is imputed to those who believe.

**Article V: Of The Ministry**— In order that we may be brought to faith in Jesus Christ the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted by God.

**Article VI: Of New Obedience**— Faith must bring forth good fruits/works.

**Article VII: Of The Church**— There is one holy Church. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered. It is enough for the true unity of the Church to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments (primary marks).

**Article VIII: What the Church Is**— Though the Church is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless there are many hypocrites and evil persons in its midst. The sacraments and the Word are effectual by reason of the institution and command of Christ even if they be administered by evil men.

**Article IX: Of Baptism**— Baptism is necessary to salvation. Children are to be baptized and through baptism they are received into God's grace.

**Article X: Of The Lord's Supper**— The body and blood of Christ are truly present in, with, and under the bread and wine in the sacrament.

**Article XI: Of Confession**— Confession and private absolution ought to be retained in the Church, though enumeration of all sins is not necessary.

**Article XII: Of Repentance**— Repentance is necessary, and consists of contrition and faith.

**Article XIII: The Use of the Sacraments**— The sacraments are not only marks of professions among men, but signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, and are instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them

## Article XIV Order in the Church

Our churches teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call.

Note: When this article speaks of a rightly ordered call, it refers to the Church's historic practice of placing personally and theologically qualified men into the office of preaching and teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments. No one in the Church can take such authority for himself or bestow such authority on his own. The ministry is conferred by means of a formal, public, and official call from the Church. At the time this article was presented, it was understood that a minister's first call is publicly ratified and confirmed by means of prayer and the laying on of hands, ordination, a practice that dates back to the time of the Apostles. In the Lutheran Confessions, "ordination" is a term often used as shorthand for both the call and ordination. (See also Ap XIV; SA III X.)

### **Terms Defined:**

Ordination— The word is based on the word "order." When a person is set apart to serve in the public office of ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church, often referred to as the "ordained ministry."

Priesthood of Believers— The Reformation principle that declares that the privilege and freedom of all believing Christians is to stand before God in personal communion through Christ, directly receiving forgiveness without the necessary recourse to human intermediaries. (Romans 14:12)

Ordained pastors, in turn, are not different from other believers in spiritual status but only in vocation, function, and appointment

This article relates back to Articles VII (of the Church) & VIII (What the Church Is). Remember The Church is the congregation, or assembly, of all believers in Jesus Christ among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. Yet Articles I through IV remind us that because of our sinfulness, we often want to preserve and perpetuate our own personal goals and ideas. We stand in need of God's pardon, which he grants to us in Jesus Christ who forgives our sins and justifies us before God. In order that we may be brought to and strengthened in this faith in Jesus Christ the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted by God (Article V) in order to deliver His Means of Grace (Articles IX through XIII) to gather his Holy people to live in fellowship and service. That this may be done among us in an orderly and god-pleasing way (1 Corinthians 14:40) the Church has established "Ordination" for the Office of Holy Ministry.

**Questions:**

*The word “ordained” is based on the word “order.” Why is it important to have “order” in the Church when it comes to the Pastoral Ministry?*

*How does the training, evaluation, and endorsement of candidates for ordination by the larger church (for us the Synod) help to produce a “rightly ordered” public office of the Holy Ministry?*

*How does 1 Timothy 3:1-13 reflect a concern for good order?*

*What are some expectations listed for those in leadership positions of the church?*

*Ought Christian leaders be held to a higher standard than laity? (James 3:1, Hebrews 13:17)*

*How does Ephesians 4:11-16 reflect the order in the Church?*

*Church & Ministry quote from C.F.W. Walther:*

“No one can deny that every Christian has God’s Word and is taught and anointed of God to be a priest, as Christ says...

Here then we are again assured that a Christian does not only have the right and authority to teach the Word of God, but also that he is in duty bound to do so at the peril of losing his soul and God’s grace. You may say: ‘But how? If he has not been called to do so, as you yourself have often taught, he dare not preach.’ To this I reply:

Here you must place a Christian in two places. First, if he is where there are no Christians, he needs no other call than that he is a Christian, inwardly called by God and anointed. There he owes it to the erring heathen or non-Christian to preach and teach them the Gospel, moved by Christian love, even though no Christian has called him to do so. Thus St. Stephen did as we are told in Acts 7:1-53; though the apostles had not entrusted him with the office of preaching, yet he preached and performed great miracles among the people (Acts 6:8). So also did Philip the deacon, Stephen’s partner (Acts 8:5), though also to him the ministry had not been entrusted. So also did Apollos (Acts 18:25-26). In such cases a Christian out of Christian love has compassion on the distress of the poor, perverted souls and does not wait until he receives a command... hence Christian love makes it one’s duty to help, where otherwise there is no one who helps or should help.

In the second place, if the Christian is where there are other Christians who have the same power and right as he, he should not put himself forward but let others call and put him forth so that he might preach and teach in the place and at the command of the others (AC XIV).

*How does God “Call” a person to public ministry in the Church? How would a person know? Is this a private or public event? What means does God use to extend this call?*

### **Scripture Passages Cited:**

#### **1 Timothy 3:1–13 (ESV)**

##### **Qualifications for Overseers**

**3** The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

##### **Qualifications for Deacons**

<sup>8</sup> Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup> Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

#### **James 3:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

#### **Hebrews 13:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

#### **Ephesians 4:11–16 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.