

A Survey of

**AMERICAN  
GERMAN LUTHERAN  
ORDERS  
of  
SERVICE**

(ca.1850 – ca.1925)

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It has been said that our beloved Wisconsin Synod stands in “a liturgical age of the Judges, when everyone does what is right in his own eyes.” To be sure, the Lord has preserved among us amazing purity and unity of preaching, but the orders of service that surround and adorn that proclamation of the Word sometimes seem to be as many as the congregations themselves. Some congregations retain the use of *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Some congregations use the orders of service in *Christian Worship* and its companion volume, *New Service Settings*, all modifications of the historic Western Rite and the Western church’s daily office. Some congregations use pure homespun, stitched together on the desks and computers of the pastor, and assembled anew each week into service folders. Still other congregations use what are known as contemporary services, which, although rarely scripted word-for-word, often follow a similar pattern from week to week. The quip about everyone doing what is right in his own eyes is neither inaccurate nor inappropriate.

To those who grew up worshipping with naught but *The Lutheran Hymnal*, this situation may seem like a cause for concern. Truly those years of liturgical unity within the Synodical Conference were happy and blessed, but with an eye towards history, keeping in mind the piecemeal origins of our synod, one is led to ask, “Are things any different now than they were then?” Was the almost universal use of *The Lutheran Hymnal* for thirty to forty years an anomaly in our Synod’s history?

If so, what kinds of orders of service were in use in our churches before TLH bound us all together? And ultimately, how does what we do now compare to what our forefathers did a hundred or more years ago? Are we honoring our Lutheran heritage in our orders of service?

These last questions are what directed the research the fruit of which you see before you. This paper intends to compare and contrast orders of service published in America, available for use by our Synod’s congregations, and (as most of our congregations worshipped exclusively in

German even into the 20<sup>th</sup> century) written in German. It is the hope of the author that seeing such a comparison will lead the reader to appreciate the Lutheran liturgical heritage preserved for us by our forefathers.

Fourteen orders of service will be examined and analyzed. Each analysis will include brief historical background information regarding the hymnal or agenda in which it was published. After the individual analyses, the orders will be compared and contrasted, and unique features and recurring trends will be identified. Lastly, the discussion will turn to our time, and what we can gain from this study.

The orders of service to be examined are:

1. *Deutsches Gesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten*, 1849  
(Pennsylvania, New York, and West Pennsylvania Synods)
2. *Evangelisch-Lutherisch Gesang-buch*, 1858 (first edition 1842)  
(Buffalo Synod)
3. *Kirchen-Gesangbuch für Evangel.-Lutherische Gemeinden*, 1847, 1865, 1872, 1892 (Missouri Synod)
4. *Kirchen-Agende für Evangel.-Lutherische Gemeinden*, 1856  
(Missouri Synod)
5. *Agende für Gemeinden des Evangelisch-Lutherischen Bekenntnisses*, 1863  
(Ohio Synod)
6. *Agende (im Abzug)*, 1870  
(Ohio Synod)
7. *Evang.-Lutherisches Gesangbuch*, 1870  
(Wisconsin Synod)
8. *Kirchenbuch*, 1877  
(General Council)
9. *Agende*, 1896, 1911  
(Wisconsin Synod)
10. *Evang.-Lutherisches Gesangbuch für Kirche, Schule, und Haus*, 1907  
(Wisconsin Synod)
11. *Gesangbuch der Evangelischen Kirche*, 1909  
(General Synod)
12. *Kirchengesangbuch für Evangelische-Lutherische Gemeinden*, post-1909  
(Missouri Synod)
13. *Gesangbuch für Gemeinden des Evangelisch-Lutherischen Bekenntnisses*, 1915  
(first edition, 1870) (Ohio Synod)
14. *Agende*, 1926  
(Wisconsin Synod)

One disclaimer is in order. It is possible to analyze the contents of these orders of service and to compare and contrast them. It is much more difficult, with a century intervening, to determine how or even whether these orders were used on a regular basis in Wisconsin Synod churches. This author can simply report the contents with the simple conclusion that such resources were available for use in our churches at a given time.

One will also note that the discussion in this paper is limited to the orders of service, not to any other contents of these hymnals or agendas, such as hymn selection, prayers, enchiridions, lectionaries, Passion histories, the Augsburg Confession or the history of the destruction of Jerusalem. Other bookworms are free to devour that material on their own.

***Deutsches Gesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten, 1849, (Pennsylvania, New York, and West Pennsylvania Synods)***

Background

A history of the orders of service used in the Wisconsin Synod cannot begin with orders of service written by the Wisconsin Synod. The Wisconsin Synod was founded already in 1850, but did not publish its own order of service until decades later. The Germans gathering together into the early congregations of the Wisconsin Synod had to use resources available to them. The 1849 Pennsylvania Synod hymnal could easily have been one of the resources they found.

Pious immigrants from Europe would surely have traveled to the New World with hymnals in hand. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany however, many principalities published their own hymnals, sanctioned by the king or duke or margrave. When immigrants from across Germany

settled together in the New World, or as many early German immigrants called it, the *Abendland* (western land, literally, evening land), the desire grew for new hymnals, for their own hymnals.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg had his Pennsylvania Ministerium using its own hymnal by 1786. After sixty years, however, the hymnal had outlived its usefulness. The Pennsylvania (now) Synod, its sister the New York Synod, and its descendant the West Pennsylvania Synod collaborated to publish *A German Hymnal for the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in North America* in 1849. The preface speaks in glowing terms of the old beloved Muhlenberg hymnal, but laments the situation that because of unfamiliar tunes, great treasures of Lutheran hymnody were no longer being used by congregations.

#### Order of Service

As we will see in several more hymnbooks, the 1849 Pennsylvania hymnal contains no order of service. It is conceivable that congregations could use a hymnal and no more, simply piecing together a service of Word and hymns. J.P. Koehler's *History of the Wisconsin Synod* mentions that the early Wisconsin Synod was looked down on for using the Pennsylvania Agenda.<sup>2</sup> The trend in the earliest days of American worship was to publish a complete agenda that contained a full order of service, but not to print that order of service in a hymnal. Even if congregations were using this agenda for their order of service, the 1849 Pennsylvania hymnal offers no way for the congregation to participate in such an order, unless it learned the responses

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<sup>1</sup> Muhlenburg wrote in the preface to his 1786 hymnal: "It should be noted what has kept our singing from perfect harmony up till now. There are so many kinds of hymnals that in almost every one, little changes are made, and in some there are many hymns, in others just a few. If there were one hymnal in all the American congregations, in which you could find the best of the old and new spiritual songs, then things would be much more comfortable and harmonious." *Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherische Ministerium. Erbauliche Lieder-Sammlung*. (Philadelphia: G. & D. Billmeyer, 1814), (In this paper all citations from works titled in German are translated by the author.)

<sup>2</sup> J.P. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, trans. Albert Meier, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Sauk Rapids, MN: Sentinel Printing Company, 1981), 70.

by rote.<sup>3</sup> This hymnal does not appear to provide many options to a congregation when it comes to an order of service. For congregations using this hymnal, simplicity was probably the rule.

**Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gesang-buch, 1858 (first edition 1842) (Buffalo Synod)**

Background

J.A. Grabau reports in the preface his great pleasure that in the fifteen years since its first edition, his little hymnal is still being used, even outside his little synod. He also reports his great plans to keep on improving it, notably for our purposes, by the inclusion of the liturgical responses currently printed only in the Agenda.<sup>4</sup>

Order of Service

Again, we find in this hymnal no printed order of service. It offers prayers to use upon entrance into church, a confession and absolution (followed by a retention of sins to the impenitent), and a few general prayers of the church, but no prescribed order. It also contains elements of liturgical song scattered throughout the regular body of hymns: chants and antiphons for the festivals, even some printed in Latin. The overall testimony of this hymnal, although quiet, is that there was a liturgical life in Grabau's churches, with a regular order of service and congregational responses learned by rote. But again, if a Wisconsin Synod congregation latched on to a set of these hymnals without the agenda, there would be little liturgical action there.

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Spaude evaluated several orders of service by saying "the laity attended services to witness the performance of the pastor." Paul W. Spaude, *The Lutheran Church under American Influence* (Burlington, IA: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1943), 80.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Lutherische Synode von Buffalo, Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gesang-buch*, 3rd Ed. (Buffalo, NY: Friederich Reinecke, 1858). Iii.

*Kirchen-Gesangbuch für Evangel.-Lutherische Gemeinden, 1847, 1865, 1872, 1892 (Missouri Synod)*

Background

The Missouri Synod published several different editions of hymnals under the full title: A Hymnal for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, in which are contained commonly-used church songs by the blessed Dr. Martin Luther and other Spirit-filled teachers. The hymnal first appeared in 1847. It predates the founding of the Missouri Synod in 1847; the copyright is held by the “German Evangelical Lutheran *Congregation* Unaltered Augsburg Confession at St. Louis,” Walther’s church [emphasis added]. The Saxons came to Missouri ready to worship, considering the long discussions recorded in the minutes of Martin Stephan’s immigrant group over what kind of headgear he should wear to reflect his office of bishop, and the report that the Perry County immigrants lost their liturgical vestments with the ship that failed to make the crossing. That they had produced a hymnal within ten years of their arrival speaks to their commitment to organized public worship.

Order of Service

The Missouri Synod followed the pattern of the Pennsylvania and Buffalo Synods previously discussed. While we of this day grew up following an order of service such as in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, where all was scripted, it is evident that there was liturgical life even in churches whose hymnals contained no order of service. The Missouri Synod’s 1856 agenda, which we will examine next, calls for responses from the congregation at various points throughout the service, but these responses are not printed out in any of the hymnals. The only orders of service these hymnals contain are acrostic antiphons and a Preface to Holy Communion. This preface consisted only of the ancient preface and the common preface (“It is truly good and right...”) along with proper prefaces for Christmas Day, the Feast of the

Epiphany, Lent, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Holy Trinity, followed by the Sanctus.

This hymnal would have been commonly found in the Midwest, as it was published by the burgeoning Missouri Synod. Wisconsin Synod congregations could easily have gotten their hands on a set to use in worship. But again, the same possibility existed that if there was no agenda present, or if the congregation did not learn responses by rote, liturgical life would have been slim. The next section will show how different things could be if an agenda was on hand.

### **Kirchen-Agende für Evangel.-Lutherische Gemeinden, 1856 (Missouri Synod)**

#### Background

The Saxons came to Missouri ready to worship. But once they were firmly planted, they turned their attention to building their own forms of worship. Their first step was the *Kirchen-Gesangbuch* of 1847 just discussed. Next they turned their attention to an agenda. In 1856 the Missouri Synod press published A Church Agenda for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, assembled from the old orthodox Saxon Church Agendas. The Saxons had brought with them the rationalistic, pietistic Saxon *Kirchenbuch* of 1812. This new work of the Missouri Synod hearkened back to the agendas of Herzog Heinrich (1539) and Kursachsen (1580).<sup>5</sup>

J.P. Koehler makes the generalization that due to the growing ties between Wisconsin and Missouri in the 1860's, "where unsound forms were in use, the Missouri book of agenda generally replaced them."<sup>6</sup> It will perhaps be a surprise, despite Koehler's evaluation of this

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<sup>5</sup> James L. Brauer and Fred L. Precht, eds., *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1993), 92.

<sup>6</sup> Koehler, 164.



agenda as “liturgically less-embellished,”<sup>7</sup> and, “meager,”<sup>8</sup> how involved this order of service will seem compared to those already examined.

### Order of Service

This work is a true agenda. It offers complete orders of service for the following ministerial acts: Infant Baptism, Affirmation of Baptism, Adult Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Communion of the Sick, and a rite of ordination in the appendix. It also offers the following orders of service for worship: Sunday service (*Hauptgottesdienst*), afternoon and weekend service, catechism examination, a prayer service, a confessional service, “Early Communion” (when a group of people could not remain for the communion as part of the regular service) Burial, and Day of Repentance. After the orders appears a lengthy list of Collects and prayers of the church for the seasons of the church year and for various circumstances of life. The antiphons printed in the agenda correspond to the antiphons in all versions of the *Kirchen-Gesangbuch*.

We will outline the *Hauptgottesdienst*, and make brief comments about the other orders. It will be generally noted that every order contains specific rubrics, and most begin with the suggestion of a specific hymn.

### *Hauptgottesdienst*, on Sundays and Festival Days with Communion

1. Hymn: *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*
2. Pastor sings : “*Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe*“
3. Hymn: *Allein Gott in der Höh’ sei Ehr’*
4. Antiphon (Two on festival days)
5. Pastor sings “*Lasst uns beten*” and sings the Collect for the season and the collect for regular Sundays.
6. Announcement of the Epistle, (congregation stands), Reading of the Epistle<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 228.

7. Announcement of the Gospel, Reading of the Gospel
8. Hymn: *Wir Glauben all' an einen Gott*
9. Lengthy Rubric for Sermon Introduction: (Apostolic Greeting/*ex corde* prayer on festival days, hint at sermon theme, silent Lord's Prayer, Sermon Hymn, Pastor kneels for silent Lord's Prayer, re-reading of the Gospel (congregation stands), statement of theme and parts, *ex corde* prayer on regular days)
10. Sermon
11. Confession
12. Absolution
13. Prayer of the Church, with intercessions and thanksgiving
14. Offering
15. Lord's Prayer
16. When there are no communicants:
  - a) Short hymn
  - b) Antiphon
  - c) Collect
  - d) Congregation sings Aaronic Benediction
  - e) Closing Verse
17. Congregation stands and sings: *Schaffe in mir ein reines Herze*
18. Ancient Preface
19. Proper Preface
20. Sanctus (sung in German)
21. Pastor sings Lord's Prayer (congregation sings doxology)
22. Words of Institution (rubrics to touch the Paten and Chalice at "Bread" and "Cup", and to make the sign of the cross at "Body" and "Blood")
23. Distribution (Pastor's words for distribution printed: "...*das ist der wahre Leib...das wahre Blut...*")
24. 1 Corinthians 11:26 responsively
25. Collect for Communion
26. Pastor speaks Aaronic Benediction
27. Hymn suggestion: *Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet* or another Closing Verse
28. Silent Lord's Prayer

Some comments regarding the other orders:

#### Afternoon and Weekend Service

A brief order, beginning with a hymn (one each is suggested for general use, Christmas, Lent, and Eastertide) followed by a sermon and a general prayer (with a rubric suggesting seasonal prayers from that section of the agenda).

#### Catechism Examination

As we will see, a common feature in these German agendas. The order calls for a hymn and prints out the questions and answers of the catechism, beginning with the winsome invitation: "Let us confess the holy catechism with each other" and

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<sup>9</sup> A historical curiosity: In the copy used for research, the two pages that contain the service from this point to the beginning of the Prayer of the Church are most obviously weather-worn and thumb-worn compared to the rest of the agenda. This copy is in the WLS Rare Book Room.

carries a stern note at the conclusion of the service: “These questions and answers are not child’s play, but prescribed by the worthy and pious Dr. Luther for young and old in all seriousness. Let everyone look to it, and regard it with all seriousness, for St. Paul said to the Galatians in chapter six, “Don’t be deceived, God is not mocked!”

#### Early Communion

A very simple communion service. After the words of the institution the Agnus Dei appears (sung in German), whereas it does not appear in the *Hauptgottesdienst*. The service closes with Antiphon, Collect, Blessing, and Closing verse.

#### Day of Repentance

This service is prescribed for the Friday before the last Sunday of the church year. A morning service and afternoon service are included. The morning service follows this progression:

1. Hymn: *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*
2. Antiphon, Collect, Selected Old Testament Reading
3. Penitential Hymn
4. Selected New Testament reading
5. Hymn: *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*
6. Hymn: *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*
7. Lord’s Prayer
8. Sermon
9. Pastor and congregation kneel and read a Litany responsively (not provided in the *Kirchen-Gesangbuch*)
10. Blessing
11. Closing Verse (Hymn 11 or 12 suggested – these are doxologies)

At the close of the agenda, musical lines for the Pastor’s chant of the Gloria, the Preface, the Lord’s Prayer, the Words of Institution, 1 Corinthians 11:26, the Collect, and the Benediction are included.

One would hardly imagine, upon looking at any of the versions of the *Kirchen-Gesangbuch*, (bearing in mind that no complete order of service appeared in it in the first sixty years of its printing) that the churches using them also had available to them, through their synod, an order of service as extensive as the one this agenda contains. It reveals a true sense of Lutheran heritage, even during the wild frontier years of the Lutheran church in the Midwest. As easily as congregations could be of a mind to use no order of service at all, they could just as easily choose to make use of this tremendous resource. It would require the congregations to

learn their responses by rote, but this seems to be so customary that no special instruction was made for it. Probably because of that, congregational responses are minimal, usually consisting of hymns. Even so, the presence of this agenda from the mid-1850's is enough to forestall attempts to conclude that the early Wisconsin Synod must have been as liturgically lifeless as the pietistic churches from which it descended.

**Agende für Gemeinden des Evangelisch-Lutherischen Bekenntnisses, 1863 (Ohio Synod)**

Background

In 1855 the Pennsylvania Ministerium improved their agenda, removing some of the elements that had been criticized for their rationalistic leanings. There were still failings, though. In 1857 Wisconsin and the Ohio Synod together made an appeal to Pennsylvania to again revise the agenda.<sup>10</sup> Ohio's patience wore thin, and in 1860 commissioned the publication of an agenda. The motion of the synod convention charged a committee "to produce a collection of liturgical forms that express our church's stand."<sup>11</sup>

The preface to this agenda shows that it was quite a collection indeed. The sources consulted for this new agenda were: The Pennsylvania Synod's agenda, the Pommeranian agendas of 1536 and 1736, the Saxon agendas of 1536 and 1580, the Wuerttemberg agendas of 1784 and 1843, Loehe's 1844 agenda, an agenda from Braunschweig, and the work of Professors Schenk and Kliefoth in Germany. After a period of review by the synod's pastors, the agenda was published in 1863.<sup>12</sup>

This agenda was recommended to the member churches of the Wisconsin Synod in 1864, probably especially because of its fine list of occasional services, which the Wisconsin Synod

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<sup>10</sup> Koehler, 70.

<sup>11</sup> *Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Ohio und andern Staaten. Agende fuer Gemeinden des Evengelsch-Lutheran Bekenntnisses* (Columbus, OH: Reinhard and Fieser, 1864), iii.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

had identified as a need. Apparently, though, the closer relations with the Missouri Synod encouraged Wisconsin to lean towards that synod's 1856 agenda, and finances also not cooperating, the Ohio agenda was not aggressively pursued by Wisconsin.<sup>13</sup>

### Order of Service

Two Formulae are provided for the *Hauptgottesdienst*, the first with congregational responses, which we will outline. The second contains no congregational responses at all, but provides a place to sing the hymns "*Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend*" (or another fitting song), and "*Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'*."

The First Formula in outline:

1. Rubric encouraging silent prayer by each member
2. Luther's Sacristy Prayer (for the Pastor)
3. Opening Hymn
4. Congregation stands, Pastor speaks Trinitarian Invocation
5. Gloria Patri (sung in German)
6. Exhortation to Confession and Confession
7. Kyrie (sung in German)
8. Absolution
9. Pastor says, „*Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe*”
10. Congregation sits and sings „*Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'*”
11. Congregation stands for Introit and Collect
12. Announcement of the Epistle and reading of the Epistle
13. Prayer on John 17:17 (Pastor speaks, congregation sings)
14. Pastor reads the Gradual and congregation sings a triple Hallelujah
15. Announcement of the Gospel and reading of the Gospel
16. Gospel Acclamations, (Pastor speaks, congregation sings)
17. Invitation to the creed and Creed (any of three ecumenical creeds), followed by a sung triple Amen
18. Congregation sits for Sermon Hymn
19. Congregation stands for reading of Sermon Text
20. Greeting (Apostolic Benediction or Votum on Philippians 4:7)
21. Congregation sits for sermon (“should last 45 minutes at the most”)
22. Prayer of the Church (or another seasonal prayer on festival days, or a Litany, “or simply the Lord's Prayer) with intercessions and thanksgiving.
23. Lord's Prayer
24. Hymn
25. Rubric to include Baptisms or Communion at this point

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<sup>13</sup> Koehler, 163.

26. Congregation stands, Pastor says, "Receive with believing hearts, people of the Lord, the blessing of God."
27. Aaronic Benediction, Pastor speaks an Amen, congregation sings an Amen
28. Congregation sits for optional Closing Verse
29. Silent Lord's Prayer

The Communion service:

1. The Common Preface (congregation sings responses)
2. Sanctus (sung in German)
3. Admonition to Communion and prayer
4. Words of Institution
5. Prayer
6. Lord's Prayer (spoken by the Pastor)
7. Agnus Dei (sung in German) or *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*
8. Pastor says, „The peace of the Lord be with you all.“
9. Distribution (Pastor's words for distribution printed: "...*das ist der wahre Leib...das wahre Blut...*")
10. Rubric provides for communion songs, or "where possible, the Nunc Dimittis"
11. Pastor says Psalm 118:1, congregation responds with Triple Hallelujah
12. Collect for Communion and one responsive verse with sung triple Amen
13. Congregation stands, Pastor says, "Receive with believing hearts, people of the Lord, the blessing of God."
14. Aaronic Benediction, pastor speaks an Amen, congregation sings an Amen

The musical lines for congregational participation in the *Hauptgottesdienst* are printed at the back of the agenda.

In addition to the *Hauptgottesdienst*, the agenda contains orders for Afternoon and Weekend services, Catechism services, Baptism, Affirmation of Baptism, Adult Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Communion of the Sick, Marriage, Installation of Officers, Installation of Teachers and School Opening, Excommunication, Reception of Fallen Members, Reception of Converts, Ordination, Installation, services of opening and closing of synod conventions, Cornerstone laying, Church dedication, Organ dedication, Bell dedication, Cemetery dedication, and Burial – an impressive list. The order for Communion is not listed with the *Hauptgottesdienst*, but is listed among the other smaller services. Each order provides rubrics, but no hymn suggestions. Most of the smaller orders consist simply of long paragraphs

spoken by the pastor. When congregational responses are called for, they are usually the second half of a Scripture verse, or an Amen or Hallelujah.

### **Agende (im Abzug), 1870 (Ohio Synod)**

#### Background

Seven years after the publication of their full agenda, the Ohio Synod produced their Agenda: A Reduction. In the same year, the synod published a hymnal, the second edition of which we will examine later.

Already the Ohio Synod was feeling the pressure of being Lutheran in America: the second half of this abbreviated agenda is English. Although the English portion will escape review in this paper, let it be noted that the English orders are not merely translations of the German, but entirely different services.

#### Order of Service

The orders selected for printing in the smaller agenda are the *Hauptgottesdienst*, Afternoon and Weekend Services, Baptism, Confession, Communion, Communion of the Sick, Marriage, Installation of Officers, and Burial. All of these are slightly simplified, but nearly identical to the orders in the 1863 agenda.<sup>14</sup>

### **Evang.-Lutherisches Gesangbuch, 1870 (Wisconsin Synod)**

#### Background

The publication of the Wisconsin Synod's first hymnal was precipitated by the synod's withdrawal from the General Council in 1869. The General Council had been planning a hymnal project, the result of which was published in 1877. The Wisconsin Synod moved quickly

though, publishing their own hymnal just one year after cutting the strings and stepping out on their own.

Upon completion of the project in 1870, the contract for printing the hymnal was awarded to George Brumder, brother-in-law of past synod President Streissguth. The contract had a duration of thirty years, and with a brief hiccup over royalties, was fulfilled.<sup>15</sup>

### Order of Service

As was the trend in American German hymnals up to that time, liturgical content in this hymnal is slim. The only orders of service the hymnal contains are a list of acrostic antiphons and one page with the Preface to Communion. The contents of that brief order are:

1. The Ancient Preface
2. The Common Preface
3. Sanctus (sung in German)
4. Psalm 118:1 responsively (Pastor speaks, congregation sings)
5. Collect for Communion, with sung Amen
6. "Segen," presumably the Aaronic Benediction, followed by a spoken Amen

It has already been remarked that the synod had recommended other more complete orders of service to its congregations to accompany this hymnal. Change was coming, but slowly.

## **Kirchenbuch, 1877 (General Council)**

### Background

The 1877 *Kirchenbuch* was the product of a long study of liturgy in the churches that made up the General Council. By 1868 the General Council had already labored long to publish

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<sup>14</sup> A historical curiosity: the pages most obviously thumb-worn in the copy used for research are the pages for Baptism and Confession. This copy is in the WLS Rare Book Room.

<sup>15</sup> James C. Grasby, *A Historical Survey and Brief Examination of the Hymnbooks Used Within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (Mequon, WI: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Essay File, 1999), 11.



the Church Book, an English order of service, which Luther Reed respects as “unquestionably the best Liturgy and Hymnal which the Lutheran Church in America had yet produced.”<sup>16</sup> Work on the German *Kirchenbuch* came next. In 1876 the English and German committees merged, and Henry Jacobs supposed the reason was to keep the two books from varying.<sup>17</sup>

One of the major figures in the construction of the *Kirchenbuch* was Beale Schmucker, who was also one of the major contributors to the Common Service of 1888. This is probably one of the reasons this service so resembles the Common Service.

### Order of Service

The *Kirchenbuch* contains three orders of service: *Haupt-Gottesdienst*, Vespers, and Matins. The elements, if not the wording of the *Haupt-Gottesdienst*, down to all the congregational responses, correspond exactly to the English Common Service of 1888. The rubrics are detailed throughout. They offer Luther’s strophic versions of the Gloria, Credo, and Te Deum as alternates to the chanted versions. Communion is attached to the regular order, with only a rubric making provision for a service without the celebration of the sacrament.

The *Haupt-Gottesdienst* in outline:

1. Opening hymn suggestion: “*O Heilger Geist kehr bei uns ein*“, congregation stands
2. Invocation and Amen
3. Exhortation to Confession
4. Adjutorium
5. Confession (Pastor speaks first part, congregation speaks second)
6. Absolution and Amen
7. Introit
8. Gloria Patri (sung in German)
9. Kyrie (sung in Latin or German)
10. Gloria in Excelsis (sung in German – Pastor speaks first line)
11. Salutation, Collect and Amen

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<sup>16</sup> Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1947), 178.

<sup>17</sup> Henry E. Jacobs, “The Making of the Church Book.” *The Lutheran Church Review* 4 (October 1912): 613.

12. Announcement of Epistle, Reading of Epistle
13. Congregation sings the Hallelujah (except in Lent) or the Verse of the Day (proprs provided in the order itself)
14. Announcement of Gospel, congregation stands
15. Reading of Gospel, Acclamations before and after
16. Nicene Creed (Rubric to use Apostle's Creed on non-Communion Sundays)
17. Hymn of the Day
18. Sermon
19. Votum on Philippians 4:7
20. Offering and Offertorium
21. Prayer of the Church (with congregational petitions, "*Erhöre uns, lieber Herrre Gott*") with intercessions.
22. Lord's Prayer
23. When the Sacrament is not celebrated:
  - a) Hymn
  - b) Collect
  - c) Salutation
  - d) Benediction
24. Hymn
25. Ancient Preface
26. Proper Preface (listed in the order itself)
27. Sanctus (sung in German)
28. Admonition to Communion
29. Lord's Prayer (already under Heading "Consecration")
30. Words of Instituton
31. Agnus Dei (sung in German)
32. "The Peace of the Lord"
33. Distribution ("*. . . das ist der Leib Christi . . . das ist das Blut des Neuen Testaments . . .*") (Rubric to suspend all music and reconsecrate if the elements run out)
34. Nunc Dimittis (sung in German)
35. Psalm 118:1 spoken responsively
36. Collect
37. Salutation
38. Aaronic Benediction
39. Silent Prayer

Surely this is the most thorough of all the orders of service we have examined. It is regrettable that because of the doctrinal stance of the General Council, Wisconsin's fellowship with them was cut off before we could be exposed to such a rich order of service that so faithfully carries on the Lutheran heritage of the European *Kirchenordnungen*.

Perhaps the second most distinguishing factor of this publication is the printing of the complete order of service in one binding with the hymnal. Up until this time, customary usage

had the order of service printed only in the agenda, and the hymns and little else printed in the hymnal. The *Kirchenbuch* combined the two, and the pattern set by this hymnal would eventually be followed by the other Lutheran church bodies.

### Agende, 1896, 1911 (Wisconsin Synod)

#### Background

The Wisconsin Synod was not completely without its own liturgical efforts. Finally by 1896, after working so long with other church bodies' orders that were never completely satisfactory, Wisconsin was ready to produce its own agenda. The work was begun by familiar names like Graebner, von Rohr, Hoenecke and Notz, but was carried on by a committee. The final result was, in Koehler's analysis, much like the Brandenburg order of Friedrich Wilhelm III. Even as the agenda was produced, there were no responses printed out in a format for the congregation to follow. As such, the congregation would have continued to learn responses by rote, but Koehler mentions that several congregations had been using some version of the Brandenburg order all along.<sup>18</sup> At any rate, this a considerable step forward in the liturgical practices of the Wisconsin Synod.

#### Order of Service

The chief service in this Agenda is the *Gottesdienst-Ordnung*. This service includes a celebration of Communion. Most impressive in this agenda is the extensive collection of prayers: alternates to the General Prayer, seasonal prayers, prayers for all circumstances of life, for days of the week. Most of these were compositions of the agenda committee. Koehler offers the opinion that this flood of new prayers obscured the older traditional collects in use by the

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<sup>18</sup> Koehler, 228.

church for centuries.<sup>19</sup> The agenda includes a Catechism service, an afternoon and weekend service, and a Confessional service. The Confessional service includes a recitation of Psalm 51, and a lengthy Admonition to Confession. Also printed in the agenda is a lengthy Admonition to Communion and paraphrased Admonition to Communion by Luther, the rubrics of which suggest its use after the Lord's Prayer during the Communion liturgy, or when Communion is served to just a few people outside of the regular service.

Almost a quarter of the work is devoted to orders for ministerial acts: Infant Baptism, Confirmation, Reception of converts, Betrothal, Marriage (2 formula), Anniversary, Communion of the sick, Burial, Deathbed services, Ordination, Installation of a pastor, Installation of a teacher, Installation of church and school officers, Congregational Assembly, Cornerstone-laying, Dedication of a church, Dedication of a school, Organ dedication, Bell dedication, and Dedication of a cemetery (Surely a list of services like this filled the need expressed in the 1860's).

Rubrics are most frequent and clear in the *Gottesdienst-Ordnung*. The ministerial acts have fewer specific rubrics. Rather complete music notes are printed in the back of the agenda, many with four-part harmony.

Outline of the *Gottesdienst-Ordnung*:

1. Hymn
2. Exhortation to Confession and Confession
3. Agnus Dei (sung in German)
4. Absolution (with an alternate) and Amen
5. Pastor says "*Ehre sei Gott in der Höh*"
6. Hymn: *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr* (1 or 4 verses)
  - a) On Festival days the congregation sings the Gloria in Excelsis in German with a triple amen, then the choir sings the full German text of the *Gloria* (If there is no Choir, the Pastor may read the Te Deum, followed by *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr*).
7. Salutation (sung responsively)

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

8. Antiphon
9. *Lasst uns beten* and Collect with Amen
10. Epistle
11. Pastor reads a Sequence with a Hallelujah (with an Amen in Lent) – Congregation responds with triple Hallelujah
12. Gospel
13. Gospel Acclamations responsively (congregation sings)
14. Pastor speaks Invitation to Creed and Apostles Creed himself, with triple Amen
15. Hymn of the Day
16. Sermon
17. Prayer of the Day, with intercessions and thanks
18. Offering
19. Lord's Prayer
20. Votum from Philippians 4:7
21. *Schaffe in mir ein reines Herz*
22. Ancient Preface
23. Proper Preface
24. Sanctus (sung in German)
25. Pastor speaks Lord's Prayer, Congregation speaks doxology
26. Words of Institution (rubrics to hold the paten and chalice<sup>20</sup> before him and make the sign of the cross at "my Body" and "my Blood")
27. Agnus Dei (sung in German)
28. "The Peace of the Lord"
29. Distribution (Pastor's words for distribution printed: "...*das ist der wahre Leib...das wahre Blut...*")
30. Psalm 118:1 responsively (or 1 Corinthians 11:26 responsively in Advent and Lent)
31. Collect for Communion with Amen
32. Aaronic Benediction with triple Amen (sung responsively)

The 1911 agenda is a slight revision of the 1896 Agenda. The antiphons in the 1896 Agenda correspond to the 1870 *Gesangbuch*. The antiphons in the 1911 agenda correspond to the 1900 *Gesangbuch*. Besides these and a few other wording changes in the confession of sins, the order is also laid out in the book to better facilitate use in worship. The conclusion of the service with no Communion is printed before the long section of prayers and alternate prayers, and other more frequently used parts of the service were moved forward in the book. The *Gottesdienst-Ordnung* also suggests *Gott sei gelobet und gebenediet* as the closing verse.

**Evang.-Lutherisches Gesangbuch für Kirche, Schule, und Haus, 1900 (Wisconsin Synod)**

Background

This hymnal is a slight revision of the 1870 hymnal that had been printed almost unchanged by George Brumder until 1900. In that year, Brumder's contract expired, and Northwestern Publishing House took charge of the printing of the hymnal. Typographical errors that Brumder had been printing for thirty years were corrected.<sup>21</sup> The new hymnal was printed regularly until 1931, when Northwestern Publishing House issued its first English hymnal, *Book of Hymns*.

Order of Service

All of the antiphons were changed. These new antiphons found their way into the 1911 Agenda. The Preface to communion remained unchanged, exactly as it appeared in the 1870 hymnal. Even though the 1896 Agenda had been in print for four years, no efforts were made to incorporate any of the orders of service into the 1900 hymnal. Wisconsin still hadn't caught the trend the General Council started in 1877.

**Gesangbuch der Evangelischen Kirche, 1909 (General Synod)**

Background

The General Synod apparently found the greatest need for a revised hymnal not in liturgics, but in hymn selection. This 1909 *Gesangbuch* replaced an 1862 hymnal, and the preface tells of a concentrated effort to retain the best of the old and bring in the best of the new.

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<sup>20</sup> A historical curiosity: four of the five copies used for research, that had all obviously seen use in a congregation, have small circular brown stains on these pages. The author's supposition is that these stains, which appear nowhere else in the books, come from spilled wine.

<sup>21</sup> Grasby, 12.

### Order of Service

This hymnal follows the growing trend in Lutheran church bodies when it prints, on pages 647-650 (just after the hymns), at least the congregational *responses*, with music, from the order of service. The General Synod had never produced a German order of service that was satisfactory to orthodox Lutheran church bodies, and the order to which these responses correspond could not have been exemplary. The responses fit under eight Roman numerals:

- I. (After the first prayer) “Amen”
  - II. (After the Confession of sins) Kyrie or Agnus Dei in German
  - III. (After the Absolution) *Allein Gott in der Höh’ sei Ehr’*
  - IV. (After the words: “The Lord be with you”) “And with your spirit”
  - V. (After the words: “Lift up your hearts”) “We lift them up to the Lord”
  - VI. (After the prayer) “Amen, Amen, Amen”
  - VII. (After the Scripture Lesson and the words, “Blessed are” etc.) “Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah”
  - VIII. (After the Confession of Faith) One of three strophic doxologies
- Lastly, one of two Closing Verses

The Wisconsin Synod was well established with its own Agenda and hymnal by 1909, but this order of service is brought into this comparison to help show the state of Wisconsin’s worship over against a major Lutheran church body of the day.

### ***Kirchengesangbuch für Evangelische-Lutherische Gemeinden, post-1909 (Missouri Synod)***

#### Background

There are literally dozens of *Kirchengesangbücher* in the library of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The copies that bear the copyright date of 1892 also bear print dates running up until 1909, at which point all dates disappear from all subsequent copies. At that time, the format of the hymnal undergoes its first major change since 1847: an order of service is added. The order in this hymnal is not the order of the 1856 agenda, and not the Common Service. In 1895 a

Missouri Synod scholar published an appeal to improve the order of service along the lines of the Common Service, and this order is the fruit of that labor.<sup>22</sup>

### Order of Service

Only one order of service is included in this hymnal: *Ordnung des Hauptgottesdienstes*.

It is not a complete order; some elements are abbreviated and the musical lines are not included.

Its outline:

1. A prescribed silent prayer upon entering the church
2. Congregation sings *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*, Hymn 7
3. Pastor sings, “*Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe!*“
4. Congregation sings *Allein Gott in der Höh’ sei Ehr’*, Hymn 1 or 142
5. Responsive Introit
6. *Lasst uns beten*, Collect with Amen
7. Epistle
8. Hymn of the Day
9. Gospel
10. Congregation sings *Wir glauben all’ an einen Gott*, Hymn 183 or 184
11. Apostolic Greeting or Prayer
12. Sermon
13. Pastor says Confession of Sins and Absolution
14. Prayer of the Church with intercessions and thanksgiving
15. Lord’s Prayer
16. Announcements
17. Votum
18. Short Hymn
19. Antiphon
20. Pastor sings a Collect, congregation an Amen
21. Pastor sings the Benediction, congregation an Amen
22. Closing Verse
23. Silent Prayer

An order for Communion begins on the next page, to begin after the Votum:

1. *Schaffe in mir ein’ reines Herz, Gott*, Hymn 209
2. Ancient Preface
3. Proper Preface
4. Sanctus (sung in German)
5. Pastor says Lord’s Prayer, congregation says doxology
6. Pastor sings the Words of Institution
7. *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, Hymn 69

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<sup>22</sup> Reed, 175.



8. Distribution (Communion Hymn)
9. 1 Corinthians 11:26 responsively
10. Pastor sings the Communion Collect, congregation sings Amen
11. Pastor sings the Benediction, congregation sings Amen
12. *Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet*, Hymn 195, verse 1; or another fitting Closing Verse
13. Silent Prayer

While the order printed in this hymnal does not give us the complete order, it is still much more in line with the Common Service of 1888 than the 1856 Missouri agenda. Those calling for change would have been pleased.

***Gesangbuch für Gemeinden des Evangelisch-Lutherischen Bekenntnisses, 1915 (first edition, 1870) (Ohio Synod)***

Background

It will be remembered that the impetus behind the publication of the Ohio Synod agenda of 1863 was the lack of an order of service with a pure doctrinal stand. That same need drove the publication of the Ohio Synod *Gesangbuch* of 1870: the word “pure” appears four times in the opening paragraph of the preface to the first edition.<sup>23</sup> This hymnal underwent a test period of three years before it was finally published. This preface and the preface to the 1863 agenda give clear testimony to the Ohio Synod’s commitment to remain pure in doctrine and practice.

The 1915 revision of this hymnal adds fifty hymns and, following the aforementioned trends in liturgics, includes the complete order of service.

Order of Service

It will also be remembered that the 1863 Ohio agenda was a thoroughgoing agenda: it contained two dozen orders for worship and other ministerial acts. This hymnal reflects a commitment to participation in those minor orders and acts. In addition to the

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<sup>23</sup> *Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Ohio und andern Staaten, Gesangbuch fuer Gemeinden des Evangelisch-Lutheran Bekenntnisses*, 2nd ed. (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1915), iii.

*Hauptgottesdienst*, complete orders are printed for Communion, Afternoon, Evening and Weekend services, a Catechism service, a Confessional service, Marriage, Burial, Cornerstone-laying, Church dedication, Cemetery dedication, synod convention opening as well as opening of sessions at synod convention (also good for pastoral conferences) and synod convention closing, and immediately before the hymns, an order for Emergency Baptism. All musical lines in these services are printed in four-part harmony, and the rubrics leave nothing to question, even noting frequent participation by choirs. This is a remarkably useful book.

Outline of the *Hauptgottesdienste*:

1. Rubric encouraging silent prayer by each member of the congregation, and a suggested silent prayer
2. Opening Hymn (by congregation or choir)
3. Introit
4. Gloria Patri (sung in German)
5. Exhortation to Confession, spoken by the Pastor
6. Pastor speaks the Confiteor
7. Congregation sings the Kyrie in German
8. Pastor speaks the Absolution, congregation sings Amen
9. Pastor says, "*Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe*"
10. Hymn: *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'*
11. Antiphon
12. Salutation
13. Collect
14. Epistle followed by responsive Votum from John 17:17 (congregation sings)
15. Gradual
16. Congregation sings Triple Hallelujah (In Lent, *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*)
17. Gospel followed by responsive Acclamations (congregation sings)
18. Pastor speaks invitation to confess and the Apostle's Creed
19. Congregation sings Triple Amen
20. Hymn of the Day
21. Rubric for Sermon Introduction: Pastor has Silent Prayer, followed by the Apostolic greeting, the reading of the Text, and a prayer based on the text
22. Sermon
23. Votum from Philippians 4:7
24. Announcements (then announcement of next hymn)
25. Hymn
26. Prayer of the Church with intercessions and thanksgiving (substitutes a prayer on festivals)

27. Lord's Prayer, congregation sings Amen
28. Rubric allows for Baptisms here, if not held before the Antiphon
29. Pastor speaks the Aaronic Benediction
30. Congregation sings the Apostolic Benediction (in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural)
31. Silent Prayer

The Communion service is listed next, with a rubric placing it after the Lord's Prayer if celebrated in the *Hauptgottesdienst*. In that event, this rubric permits a dismissal of non-communicants at that point with the Apostolic Benediction.

1. *Schaffe in mir, Gott, ein reines Herze* (Hymn 295)
2. Ancient Preface (Pastor speaks, congregation sings)
3. Proper Preface
4. Sanctus (sung in German)
5. Exhortation to Communion
6. Pastor says Lord's Prayer, congregation sings Amen
7. Words of Institution
8. Agnus Dei (sung in German)
9. "The Peace of the Lord," congregation sings Amen
10. Distribution (with Communion Hymns)
11. Distribution (Pastor's words for distribution printed: "...*das ist der wahre Leib eueres Herrn und Heilandes ... das wahre Blut eueres Herrn und Heilandes...*")
12. Pastor says, "Let us thank the Lord"
13. Nunc Dimittis (sung in German) or *Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet* (Hymn 300)
14. Psalm 118:1 responsively (Pastor speaks, Congregation sings, with Hallelujah)
15. Collect for Communion, Congregation sings Amen
16. Responsive Versicle
17. Pastor speaks the Aaronic Benediction
18. Congregation sings the Apostolic Benediction (in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural)
19. Silent Prayer

A word about the *Nebengottesdienste*, the Afternoon/Evening/Weekend Service: In all of the orders examined, the secondary service had very limited congregational participation. In this hymnal, the service contains the Gloria Patri and sung responses to the Salutation and several prayers and versicles. Such participation in the secondary service was probably made easier by the inclusion of the complete order in the hymnal, placing it in the hands of the people.

## Agende, 1926 (Wisconsin Synod)

### Background

Much as the Ohio Synod had done just a few years after its 1863 agenda was published, The Wisconsin Synod issued a shortened agenda in 1926. The sun was setting on the use of German in America, both because of the distance of two or three generations from immigration and the nationalistic fervor of World War I. These are the most likely reasons for the inclusion of an English agenda in the back half of this publication.

### Order of Service

The *Gottesdienst-Ordnung* is the same as in the 1911 agenda except for a few deletions and additions. This hand-held agenda does not print the festival Gloria, only provides for one lesson (either Epistle or Gospel), and calls for the 1 Corinthians response in Communion only in Lent. This agenda prescribes the Apostolic Benediction before the sermon, and calls on the congregation to stand for the Prayer of the Church.

Other services included in this Agenda are Baptism, Marriage, Communion of the Sick, and Burial.

It is interesting to note that the English “Morning Service” in this agenda follows the order of the German service but in places uses the wording of the Common Service of 1888 as well as translations of the German.

### Comparison/Contrast

A concerted attempt to contrast these orders of service with each other will only lead to majoring in the minors. While certain distinctions exist, especially in specific wording of prayers and placements of different elements within in the order, these services are remarkably similar. We may note the 1856 Missouri agenda’s elaborate form for sermon introduction, the

General Council's *Kirchenbuch*'s specific instruction to reconsecrate the elements if the supply runs out, and the Ohio Synod's unique invitation to the benediction, "Receive with believing hearts," etc., but the similarities are more noteworthy than the differences.

Almost every order of service contains a form for public confession and absolution. This speaks to the concern among our forefathers for the proclamation of the gospel, the good news of sins forgiven in Jesus. This is a heritage connecting directly to the time of the Reformation.

All of the orders make efforts to retain at least one of the songs of the Ordinary that Luther retained in the *Deutsche Messe*, often in the strophic forms that Luther wrote for easier congregational singing. Most commonly occurring is Luther's strophic Gloria, *Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr'*. Luther's strophic Credo, *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*, appears only in the Missouri orders, but all the orders contain at least the Apostle's Creed. Most orders use a simple German translation of the Kyrie (again, Missouri retained Luther's hymn). The Sanctus translated into German finds a place in every major order, even the meager Preface of the 1870 Wisconsin *Gesangbuch*. The Agnus Dei is employed variously in the Communion service or as part of the public confession. It is clear that the 19<sup>th</sup> century American German Lutherans wanted to honor the historic liturgy of the Lutheran church in their orders of service.

Where one notices a real contrast in these orders of service is over the course of time. The older German orders yield to forms closer to the Common Service, the pattern of "Agendas for the Pastor, hymnals for the people" gives way to the printing of orders of service in hymnals, and in turn, the people begin to participate more as the orders are laid out in front of them to follow along.

While this paper did not discuss it too much, the influence of the Common Service of 1888 is evident as the years go on and new orders are produced by the Midwestern synods. The orders become less like the older German orders and more like the Common Service. An

average WELS member of today who is familiar with *Christian Worship* could probably follow along with the 1856 Missouri Synod agenda, because many of the elements are similar. But the order of the service and the wording of specific prayers, along with the distinctly German flavor Luther's strophic ordinary lends to the service, would be just different enough to keep him on his toes. If today's WELSer worshipped from the 1896 Wisconsin agenda, he would probably find the flavor of an acrostic antiphon slightly different from that of a psalm with refrains, and he may be surprised to hear such a lengthy admonition to Communion. The old orders use hymns as liturgical devices: *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig* in confessional services and the frequent use of *Schaffe in mir ein reines Herz* as the opening of the Communion service, for example. As time went on, however, such elements were dropped, with the result that worship today is the same, but different.

One result of the influence of the Common Service that in this author's opinion is nothing but good is the introduction of the printed order of service into the regular hymnal. Recall that Grabau was entertaining the idea already in the 1850's, but it was not brought to reality until the General Council's *Kirchenbuch* of 1877. Even then, the Wisconsin Synod never published a German order of service in a hymnal, and Missouri and Ohio waited until after the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to follow suit. English hymnbooks of the day print the order of service as a matter of course, but it evidently took a while to convince the Midwestern Germans to do things differently than they had been done before.

Once the orders of service do make it into the hymnals however, one notices an appreciable increase in congregational participation. Responses move beyond Amens, Antiphons, Hallelujahs and hymns, and take on a more complex character. In the Missouri and Wisconsin agendas, those that resisted the influence of the Common Service the longest, the Confession of Sins and the Creed don't even pass the lips of the people! As fulfilling as it must

be for a mature Christian to speak and sing the whole order of service straight from the heart, this author would rather the whole congregation raise its voice, and if printing an order of service that for years had been learned by rote accomplishes this, so be it!

### **Lessons for Today**

This paper began by asking whether the five-decade long use of *The Lutheran Hymnal* was an anomaly in our Synod's history. While it is true that the 1870 *Gesangbuch* served for over sixty years, it certainly did not enjoy uniform use.

So now, when after only one decade into the life of *Christian Worship*, voices cry for more variety, this paper asked, "Are things any different now than they were then?" This study seems to suggest that during the first half of our history, there was variety in the order of service from one congregation to the next. It was variety, however, that had many commonalities. If a congregation in the late 1800's or early 1900's was using a different agenda than its closest neighbor, at least many of the elements would be very similar, and all the orders we have examined were striving to stay faithful to our Lutheran heritage. But the synod lived and thrived with this kind of variety in its congregations' worship lives, almost for a century. Perhaps in an age when everyone seems to do what is right in his own eyes, these orders of service call to us from the dusty shelves, "Enjoy your variety! Remember your unity!"

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