

Consensus

Volume 15

Issue 1 *Mission of the Church*

Article 1

5-1-1989

Mission of the church

Walter Freitag

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus>

Recommended Citation

Freitag, Walter (1989) "Mission of the church," *Consensus*: Vol. 15 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol15/iss1/1>

This Foreword is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Consensus by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

Foreword

The formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada in 1985, the result of most of a generation's prayer and labor by many Lutheran pastors and lay persons, marked a major step forward in the mission of Lutheranism in our country. In the language of world missions, this merger represented the achievement of the "three self" stage of missions: self-governance, self-support, and self-propagation. But since the merger, it would appear that mission as the principal function of the church has lost its focus. Perhaps another way of saying it would be to suggest that a new direction for mission, the new cutting edge of the Lutheran Church In Canada, has not yet been found. In that sense, the new church faces a crisis, the challenge of mission in particular to all people resident within the boundaries of our nation. Should it be church-centric, should it be programmed on evangelical church growth lines, or should it follow one or the other of the innovative models developed in the third world? A lot is at stake on the basis of the answer we give to this challenge.

In this issue of *Consensus*, we intend to focus on the church's mission. We begin with a statement from the Reverend Paul Nostbakken, director of the Division for World Missions, ELCIC; then there follows two articles by Dr. James Scherer, the ranking Lutheran missiologist in the United States, dealing in masterly fashion both with the changes that have occurred in missionary thinking and practice in our century and also with the related theological issues of the Christian church in mission during the period to the present time.

The article by Professor Michael Poellet, newly appointed faculty member at the seminary in Saskatoon in the field of systematic theology, presents us with an intriguing critique of missions, not so much from the point of view of "what we

have done to others but what we have done and are doing to ourselves.”

The final article of this issue from the pen of Dr. Egil Gris-lis is the third in a series of four originally delivered at the 1987 Eastern Synod/Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Leadership Conference. Entitled “The Lutheran Pastor and the Meaning of Authority”, I think the reader will discover that it not only carried meaning in the original context but also provides interesting insights into the main theme of this issue of *Consensus*.

Permit me to express my appreciation to those who submitted articles as requested; I should like to express an especial word of thanks to Dr. Scherer for his willingness to submit his lectures to a thorough revision and editing and for his forbearance in the face of certain technological glitches which occurred in connection with his material at Saskatoon.

Walter Freitag

Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon