

**Evangelical Lutheran Conference &  
Ministerium of North America, Inc.**

Survey QUESTIONNAIRE

## Scripture and the Gospel

1. Choose the item that is closest to your view of Holy Scripture. (Circle the one that best fits your understanding)
  - a. Scripture is Mankind's Word about God – Inspired by God but Influenced by the culture of the time.
  - b. Scripture is a collection of attempts by individuals to explain God and why events and situations happened and as such is not more inspired than other literature.
  - c. Only portions of Scripture are truly Inspired by God. (If you choose this category indicate which portions of Scripture in your view are the inspired portions.)
  - d. All of Canonical Scripture (Old and New Testaments) is God's Inspired Word to mankind.
  
2. What do you understand by the traditional Lutheran phrase relating to Scripture of "Norma normans, norma normata" ?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Can the "Gospel" in your view be understood separately from the Old Testament and the Word of God as Law?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. An orientation known as "Gospel Reductionism" begins with a definition of Jesus and the Gospel that is not based on Scripture and then is used to eliminate or subtract portions of Scripture that do not fit the beginning definition. Is it your view that this is a legitimate approach?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Traditional Lutheran understanding has held that all of Scripture is rightly divided between "Law" and "Gospel"? Do you view the "Law" as being as much God's Word as the "Gospel"?

6. The very conservative Lutheran groupings emphasize that all of Scripture is God's "Inerrant and infallible Word". ELCM has decided to stick with the original wording set forth in the preface to the Christian Book of Concord and to reject the "Fundamentalism" that is set forth by the Word "Inerrant." Can you agree with the ELCM statement on Holy Scripture that "All of Canonical Scripture is God's Immutable Word and as such the only infallible source and norm for Christian life"?
7. Do you feel that policies and positions of a church body or a congregation should be based on (Circle all that apply)?
- Scripture Alone
  - Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions
  - The current cultural / society trends

**The Lutheran Confessions (Christian Book of Concord)**

8. The Book of Concord is known as the "Lutheran Confessions." The Lutheran Confessions intend to merely set forth the basic doctrines of Holy Scripture. The Book of Concord was the "Consensus agreement" by the Lutheran Reformation leaders following the death of Luther. There are two basic views concerning the Book of Concord. Circle the one that is closest to your view.
- The "Quatenus" view which holds that the teachings of the various Lutheran Confession documents are only binding (authoritative) as long as they agree with the "Gospel" with the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism of Luther as the only writings of basic importance.
  - The "Quia" View which holds that all of the Documents of the Christian Book of Concord (Unaltered Augsburg Confession, Apology to the Augsburg Confession, Small Catechism of Luther, Large Catechism of Luther, Treatise on the Primacy of the Pope, Smalcald Articles of Luther, Solid Declaration, and Formula of Concord - Epitome) are a correct setting forth of the Doctrines of Holy Scripture.
9. Do you view the adherence to the teachings of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions as important for Church life as a Denomination and as a congregation in these present days?

10. ELCM holds to “Quia” understanding of the Lutheran Confessions but is not into the legalistic orientation that forbids Fellowship or contacts with others unless they agree with ELCM in every detail. Would you be able to accept this stance and approach?

**The Church – Denomination, Congregation and Pastors/Licensed Ministers**

11. select the view that is closest to your own

- a. The local congregation is the central place for Christian Mission and life and each local congregation should be totally free in Christ to make its own final decisions in all matters.
- b. “The Church” is much broader than the local congregation and the wider Church should have the dominant role relating to all matters affecting the congregation through the majority votes or super majority votes of delegates and representatives of congregations at Conventions and Assemblies.

12. Select the view that is closest to your own.

- a. The Organized Church: Congregations and the Denominations are Synonymous (identical) with “The Church of Christ.” It is therefore important that the effort be undertaken to have “all” become part of one large organization for the sake of Unity.
- b. The Organized Church: Congregations and Denominations are simply “Human Organizations” (Iure humano). The True Church of Christ (una Sancta) is already united even though invisible to the world and consists of all who truly Believe that Jesus alone is Lord and Savior.

13. Does Size of a Denomination, Association or a Congregation matter to you? If so, Why?

14. In Church Bodies that have the principle of “Majority” or “Super Majority” rule through the voting procedures would you agree that larger congregations should be give larger representation?

15. Would you accept the premise that “Majority” or “Super Majority” voting has been a main factor not only in pulling Church Bodies into various off-center orientations regarding basic doctrine and Social Policies but also has helped to disenfranchise Minorities and Silent Majorities who which to hold to Biblical and Confessional positions?
16. Do you feel that size of a Denomination or Association or of a congregation matters to God? If your answer is “NO” explain what in your view truly matters to God. If your answer is “Yes” please share why you think larger size is more important to God?
17. ELCM holds to a Consensus Model of decision making which is based upon repeated passages in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles and in the Consensus practice that developed the Christian Book of Concord. In ELCM all congregations and pastors have equal vote and no matter is adopted unless all are in agreement (consensus) in light of Holy Scripture and in light of the Lutheran Confessions. Even in matters adopted by such consensus all actions are only “Advisory” to congregations and pastors. Could you affirm this decision-making process?
18. Select the area that is closest to your view:
- a. The Pastor is basically the hired hand of the congregation. The Office of Pastor is established as a Function of the Congregation based on the Priesthood of all believers (A view that was and is predominant among some Lutheran strands originating in reaction against Hierarchicalism.)
  - b. The Pastor is called by God and is primarily answerable to God, affirmed through an official call (vote) of the congregation. The Office of Pastor is established by Christ and His Word. Members of a congregation are to judge the Pastors faithfulness to the proclamation of God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessional understanding (The old Muhlenberg and Current ELCM view).
  - c. The Pastor is basically owned and answerable to a Higher official in the Church Structure based in the notion of Apostolic Succession from the Office of the Apostle Peter with the only true calls being mediated through Bishops who are ordained in the Apostolic Confession (The Hierarchical view).

19. Regarding the process of calling a Pastor select the area that is closest to your view:

- a. Congregations should be only permitted to vote on pastors who satisfy the requirements of a Synod or District and whose names are submitted by a Bishop or President (ELCA approach).
- b. Congregations should be permitted to send their Call Committees to interview and Call any available pastor who is officially rostered with their Denomination or Association. (The old LCA and ULCA practice).
- c. Congregations should be permitted to send their Call Committees to interview and Call any Evangelical Lutheran Pastor they wish – those who hold membership in their Church Body or Association as well as pastors of other Lutheran Church Bodies. The President may submit names, but the congregation is totally free to call whomever it desires and pastors from other Lutheran Church bodies do not need to become official members of the Body to which the congregation belongs. (The ELCM practice).

20. In ELCM the Office of Pastor is held in high regard since it is established by Christ Jesus. Pastors may be elected as part of their Call as the President of the Congregation and all Pastors serving congregations are given a vote at General Conferences (Synod Conventions) of ELCM. Since all decisions are by a consensus of congregations and pastors the pastors do not have undue influence. ELCM has a balance between total freedom for congregations and also a very high view of the Office of Ministry. Could you accept this Process and balance?

21. Which of the following is closest to your view of the nature of the best Denominational or Association Structure?

- a. Highly Centralized in Control and direction sharing a common orientation on matters of Biblical, Theological, Worship and Social Policy orientation with an insistence that all hold to the same orientations in all aspects (WELS, ELS, LC-MS, CLC, AFLC, etc.). Voting in most is by majority vote of pastors and Congregational delegates. CLC and AFLC hold a Consensus approach similar to ELCM. A very narrow stance in these matters with insistence that for fellowship with others there must be total agreement in all areas.
- b. Highly Centralized in Control and direction sharing a common orientation on matters of Biblical, Theological, Worship and Social Policy orientation with an insistence that all hold to the same orientations in all aspects with allowance for what is known as a Broad Tent approach. Voting is by majority voting and is done by Synod and Church Wide Assemblies. Voting categories for Clergy and Laity at the centralized national level are determined by Sociological Category in addition to Church Bureaucratic establishment. This is the current ELCA approach with a wider variety of unbiblical orientations included (Inclusiveness).
- c. Decentralized with an allowance for a fairly broad Tent approach – Various Districts can hold very different orientations in Biblical, Theological, Worship and Social Policy orientation. Attempts to continue “Inclusiveness” approach minus one or two offensive items. Regional and Non-Geographical Districts are organized that are very different in orientation. Association Positions are determined by majority vote and super majority ratification with larger congregations having more votes. Pastors are not given vote unless elected as congregational delegates. This is the LC-MC approach.
- d. Decentralized but sharing a Common Orientation on matters of Biblical, Theological, Worship and Social Policy stances. These orientations and stances are advisory only and allow for a span of views but when consensus is achieved in specific areas the positions become the advisory stance and orientation by all member Synods to congregations and pastors. All member congregations and member pastors are given equal vote. Large congregations cannot overwhelm small congregations, congregations can not overwhelm pastors and likewise voting by pastors cannot overwhelm congregations. Regional Synods are easily organized but do not go off in their own orientations or tangents. This is the ELCM approach.

22. If your congregation decides to join ELCM and is approved by ELCM for rostered membership could you accept the ELCM approach as briefly set forth in item d. of the last question?

23. Select the item that is closest to your view of “Women in Ministry”?

- a. Women should be silent in the life of the Church and should not vote or hold office in a congregation or in the wider Denomination or Association. Women should not be pastors because of the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (The view of most of the Legalistic Church bodies – although some have now begun to allow women to vote in the congregations. Some Missouri Synod congregations allow women to vote and hold office but ELS, WELS, CLC, etc. do not)
- b. Women may vote in congregations and hold office in congregations but may not hold office in the wider Denomination or Association and may not be Ordained as Pastors because of the Words of St. Paul to the Corinthians.
- c. Women may vote in congregations, hold office in congregations, vote and hold office in the wider Denomination or Association, serve as Deaconesses, Assistants in Ministry, Directors of Christian Education, etc. but may not be Ordained as Pastors because of the Words of St. Paul to the Corinthians.
- d. Women may vote in congregations and hold office in congregations and in the wider Denomination and Association. Women of a wide variety of orientations are eligible for Ordination to the Office of Pastor and Women Pastors can be imposed or strongly urged upon congregations. (The practice of the ELCA and Liberal Protestant Churches. The approach of LCMC is still to be seen. Some in LCMC advocate that non practicing celibate Lesbian pastors be allowed and are not opposed to Feminism as an orientation of Women Pastors.)

24. In your view should all contemporary matters facing church practice be decided based upon the Scripture and upon the Lutheran Confessions? (If you believe other factors should shape the decision on the various controversial matters please share what these other factors in your view should be?)



25. Which of the following reflects a view closest to your own regarding Worship?
- a. Worship should entertain me and appeal to my emotions. I haven't really worshipped unless my emotions feel good after the Service. The Church should deliberately do entertaining things in worship in order to bring people in to the congregation.
  - b. Worshipping on a regular basis earns me the reward of Eternal Life. The Worship Service is my sacrifice to God. The Liturgy is our offering to God.
  - c. The Worship Service is understood as God Serving us (Gottesdienst) and the Liturgy is God placing His Holy Word into our ears through song and Word each week. The Sermon is to be based on God's Word to us – even when that Word does not make us feel good. In The Service God is doing us a favor and it is not we who are doing God a favor by being present. The Liturgy is God's gift to those who worship.
26. Do you think it is important that the basic parts of Lutheran Liturgical Worship (Confession and forgiveness, portions of the Common Service – tradition or reworked in contemporary fashion, the reading and preaching of the Word, etc.) be present in the Worship services of all Lutheran congregations?
27. The Charismatic orientation is very popular in these days. Those who practice special orientations such as “speaking in tongues,” “Prophecy,” “Healing,” “Lifting up their hands in prayer,” etc. often believe that the persons doing this have moved to a higher spiritual level than those who do not do such things. Do you see this focus upon the so called “Gifts of the Spirit” rather than upon the means of Grace (Word and Sacrament) “Christ Alone” as:
- a. a danger or
  - b. as a strength?

28. Which of the following best reflects your view?

- a. God Loves me and died for me but I must first through my own Free will make a decision to accept Jesus into my life. I must co-operate with God in order to obtain salvation.
- b. I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord or come to Him; but through the hearing of the Word the Holy Spirit of God has worked on me and enabled me to believe and trust in Jesus Only.
- c. I believe that I must do Pious Works and practice Piety by refraining from drinking Beer, from smoking, from playing cards, from dancing, etc. in order to gain my salvation and in order to keep my salvation.