The ministry is a problem and the doctrine of the ministry has been, for Lutheran theology, an insoluble problem. Perhaps the root of the problem is more ecclesiastical than ecclesiological. Robert Paul has suggested that "for every kind of ecclesiology there is a related form of ordained ministry." The Lutheran doctrine of the church is clear (although we have some problems defining and numbering sacraments and thus the marks of the church); but our church polity is confused --to say the least. Current discussions of Lutheran unity and possible merger under three different types of organization reflect that lack of clarity.

So it isn't just out of politeness, born out of the current ecumenical and liturgical movements, that we examine the work of Christian sisters and brothers; we do so out of our own deep need. After all, we Lutherans have been adopting and adapting ecclesiastical polities for generations now. Perhaps we can also learn something about ordination and ministry from our fellow Christians!

I am suggesting a typology that parallels not only various doctrines of the church, ministry, and ordination but also roots them in differing Christological themes and differing ecclesiastical polities. I admit the topic is complex enough without any unnecessary multiplication of concepts. Occam's razor may yet be needed to cut out excess ideas, but let us see if we can set forth this typology rather quickly with the help of a chart.

The Reverend Dr. Ralph W. Quel'e is Associate Professor of History and Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.
The three major types of polity are (1) episcopal, (2) presbyterian, and (3) congregational. The parallel biblical images are (1) the church as people of God or kingdom of Christ which fits with episcopal polity; (2) the church as body of Christ, which matches presbyterian polity; and (3) the church as family of God or fellowship of believers, which supports a congregational polity. Now to be sure all Christians would claim all these pictures of the church; but it is my contention that, in fact, the doctrines and polities that have grown up in the churches have tended to zero in on one or another biblical image of the church. I think the same thing can be argued concerning Christology. The episcopal structure is built on Christ as king; the presbyterian structure is rooted in Christ as priest; the congregational structure is based on Christ as prophet. As the chart attempts to indicate, there is some overlapping of these Christological offices.
One fairly traditional way of portraying the different conceptions of ministry is to speak of two major views: (a) one, the ordained minister as a "personal representative" --who, in his or her person, represents God to the community. An example could be Undersecretary of State Warren Christopher who acted as President Carter's personal ambassador plenipotentiary --one with power to act, though never independently of the source of power. The other view of ordained ministry could be an "official functionary". Like the Godfather's lawyer, such a functionary makes us offers we cannot refuse. Such a spokesman operates with words --albeit threatening words. The ambassador bears gifts --sometimes in the billions!

John Wilkey in his study of the Methodist doctrine of the ministry isolates three competing models of ministry that stand in the following relationship to Methodist ordination:

1. a priestly or Anglican model where ordination authorizes one to do something (viz. the sacraments);
2. a functional or Calvinist model where ordination authorizes one to say something (which came in with lay preachers);
3. a charismatic model where ordination recognizes that a person is something (viz. an example to the community).

Wilkey suggests that the complex Methodist requirements of an inner call, education, conference relationship, and hierarchical order indicate the complicated mixture of these three models in Methodism today.

I would like to suggest rather that the three ecclesiastical polities, with their attendant ecclesiologies and Christologies, provide us with a way of looking --not just at one group like Methodists or Lutherans--but a perspective on all our models of ministry and rites of ordination. (The chart hopefully has made visual the connections I am trying to draw.) The episcopal model sees ministry as order. The presbyterian model sees ministry as office. The congregational model sees ministry as function. I am trying to show the overlap in these several views in the diagram to indicate that there are office and function aspects to the episcopal view, etc. (What Paul in Corinthians sets forth as charismatic ministries --paralleled by lay preachers, contemporary "prophets" etc.-- belong, in my view, to ministry of the whole church and is therefore not at issue in this discussion of ordained
ministries of word and sacrament. The freedom of the Spirit then and now to "gift" people as it pleases God is affirmed.)

Robert Paul has suggested that in "ordination the minister represents to the church the nature of its own essential and corporate ministry to the world...." 6

In order to discern how the doctrines of church and ministry are reflected in contemporary ordination rites, I have chosen the Roman Catholic, the Episcopal, and the United Methodist churches as representative of the episcopal type of church. One is struck by the amazing similarity in the current or proposed rites of these three churches. All call the rite "ordination" whether for deacons, presbyters, and bishops, except for Methodist bishops who are consecrated. Interestingly enough, this may root in the medieval designation of the episcopacy as a "consecration" and not an order. Even now the heart of the Roman and Episcopal rites, the laying on of hands, is called "consecration". The difference roots in Methodist history, especially in America, where there were no bishops to ordain. It is also based on Wesley's view that presbyters and bishops belong to the same order --not unlike the view in the Lutheran confessional writings. 7

The structure of the rites is the same, beginning with the presentation. However where the Roman rite has an "apostolic letter" from the Holy See, 8 the Episcopal rite has the bishop-elect's statement concerning Scripture and the "doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church". 9 Here the Methodists simply announce the election and reenact the ritual election with the ancient cry, "He is worthy!" Roman Catholics and Episcopalians have dropped this dignus est. It is interesting that the old Wesleyan view of sanctification appears in the collect which asks: "...replenish them with innocency of life and fill them with the power of your Holy Spirit...." 10

After lessons and sermon comes the Examination. In the Episcopal and Methodist charges the theme of oversight dominates. In the Methodist rite the bishop is called a "pastor to pastors". The Methodist rite, unlike the Episcopal, does not call Scripture "the Word of God", 11 but retains the other Anglican phrase, i.e. Scripture contains "all things
necessary to salvation." The Roman rite makes no explicit reference to Scripture here, but rather to "the deposit of faith...professed by the church everywhere and at all times". The Roman rite also asks allegiance to the pope and the Examination ends with an allusion to the bishop's task as a "good work" which God is asked to "bring to fulfillment". The Methodist rite has a similar phrase but in good evangelical fashion shies away from calling the work "good". I am reminded of the Lutheran pastor who told those gathered around his deathbed that he had assurance of salvation because he had been careful his whole life long never to do a good work! Actually, the Methodist examination ends with a nice phrase, similar to the proposed Lutheran rite: "May the God who has given you the will to promise all these things grant you also the grace to perform them...."

In the Roman rite, the prayer before the laying on of hands asks: "Anoint your servant with the fullness of priestly grace and bless him with spiritual power in all its richness." In the prayer of consecration that follows, all three rites have an epiclesis with the kingly emphasis I suggested earlier. The Roman rite has all the consecrating bishops sing:

So now pour out upon this chosen one that power which is from you, the governing Spirit, whom you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Spirit given by him, to the holy apostles, who founded the church in every place to be your temple for the unceasing glory and praise of your name.

The Episcopal epiclesis prays for "your princely Spirit" and the Methodist for "your sovereign Spirit." Similarly and surprisingly, all three rites equate the episcopal office with exercising "high priesthood". In the Roman church, this reflects a tension between episcopal theory and presbyteral practice, according to Frank Quinn. Until Vatican II implemented the collegiality of the bishops with the pope, the ruling function of bishops was only theoretical: the church was in fact run by priests. The Roman rite lifts this out for added emphasis in the words accompanying the anointing of the bishop's head: "God has brought you to share the high priesthood of Christ." The miter, given in silence, and the pastoral staff are symbols of the shepherd-king. The Episcopal rite allows other symbols besides Scripture but the Methodist rite discourages such.
The ordination of priests or elders (in Methodist terminology) also shows remarkable similarity in the three rites.

The most remarkable thing about contemporary Roman ordination is the dropping of the imperative formula introduced in the Middle Ages -- the words, "Receive the Holy Spirit...." Until Pius XII, this formula had been regarded as the "form" (in the sense of matter-and-form) of the sacrament of ordination. Cranmer retained the imperative formula and it was restored in the 1662 Anglican ordination rite after its rejection by the Puritans. Wesley also retained the formula, though he dropped the language of John 20:23 about forgiving sins. The imperative formula remained through the 1964 rite.

In 1792, Episcopalians in America devised an alternate formula, "Take thou the authority to execute the office of a priest...." But the language of bestowing the Holy Spirit remained among most Anglicans until the 1928 proposed revision of the Book of Common Prayer which reintroduced the ancient epiclesis. Since 1928 Anglican churches throughout the world have recaptured the pattern of praying for the Holy Spirit -- the language of beseeching, rather than bestowing the Spirit! The change was also made by the Methodist churches and the Church of Rome -- a striking example of the episcopal churches of the West following the lead of Lutheran, Calvinist, and Eastern Orthodox churches. This reflects, on the one hand, the return to an older tradition; but on the other hand it seems to reflect a more modest and more appropriate understanding of the bishop's role in ordination -- as a representative for the one who alone can give the Holy Spirit, rather than the bishop himself being the giver of the Spirit.

Another striking thing about the new Roman rite is that the traditional dogmatic language about the gift of power to transubstantiate, sacrifice, and forgive is reduced to a word in the collect before the laying on of hands:

... pour out upon these servants of yours the blessing of the Holy Spirit and the grace and power of the priesthood.

No reduction is priestly power is implied, but it is certainly not stressed.
The suggested Roman homily picks up Peter's language about the church as a royal priesthood. So also Vatican II describes the whole people of God as prophetic, priestly and kingly. But though the priesthood of the faithful is recognized, the hierarchical priesthood differs from it "in essence and not only in degree". The homily picks up those same Christological offices and applies them all to the priest as teacher, priest and pastor/shepherd.

Anglican theology attempts to bridge this gap between the royal priesthood and what used to be called the "sacrificing priesthood" by designating ordained ministry as a "service of leadership." Hence the ordained ministers do not perform functions in place of the church or even in behalf of the church! Rather, deacons enable others also to serve; priests function to make the priesthood of all believers possible; and bishops exercise responsible oversight over all such ministries.

It is fascinating to study the appended homily by Martin Bucer in the proposed Methodist ordinal. Bucer uses the images of "messengers, sentinels, and stewards", but the dominant image is of the shepherd. "Teaching" and "proclaiming" are singled out, but pastoral language predominates --with very little that could be characterized as priestly, at least in the Roman sense. In the charge to the ordained in the contemporary Methodist rite, roles in liturgy and social concern are added to the traditional roles of proclamation and pastoral care.

Some of the power of the exhortation is lost in the Methodist rendering:

> Understand the meaning of what you are to do; practice what you profess.

The Roman version is clearer and stronger:

> Meditate on the law of God, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and put into practice what you teach.

All the rites ask cooperation with the obedience to the bishop. All ask the candidates willingness to preach, teach, and lead the celebration of the sacraments. Where the Roman rite simply asks, "Will you consecrate your life to God...?" the Episcopal and Methodist rites spell this out in terms of prayer, study, and patterning one's
personal (and, if applicable, family) life as a wholesome example. In the course of their admission to full membership in the annual Conference (which one Methodist writer regards as more important than ordination), the candidate is asked by the bishop:

2. Are you going on to perfection?
3. Do you expect to be made perfect in this life?
4. Are you earnestly striving after it?

It is also interesting that in their bilateral dialogs, Methodists and Roman Catholics were able to agree on the topic of "perfection." This strong emphasis on sanctification is seen in the parallel benedictions which close the Roman and Methodist examinations:

May the God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment.

May the One who has given you the will to do these things, give you grace to perform them, that the work which God has begun in you may be brought to fulfillment. Faithful is God, who calls you and will not fail you.

As the Methodist version avoids the language of "good work", so the Episcopal version is more modest concerning "fulfillment." Perhaps this mirrors what the Methodist writer Wilkey calls Methodists' concern more for "apostolic success" than "apostolic succession." The Episcopal version simply reads:

May the Lord who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them.

It should further be noted that the concern for social action seen in the Methodist charge is also made explicit in one of the questions in the Examination. This certainly mirrors an understanding of the presbyteral task that does not leave such service to the diaconate. On the other hand, in Roman and Episcopal rites the deacon's job-description remains highly liturgical and is not clearly distinguished from priestly ministry. Such overlapping job descriptions may be a major part of the problem of the renewal of the diaconate. Yet if this liturgical function centers on the proclamation of the gospel, this then is another dimension of the deacon's prophetic witness. Christ as prophet is thus seen as the root of the deacon's function of preaching the word.

We now turn to the ordination of deacons. As in other rites, at the point of the Presentation, only the Episcopal rite has a confessional statement regarding Scripture and ecclesiastical doctrine. The
Episcopalians and Methodists call for any known impediment to ordination to be stated, and all the rites end with a ritual "election."

In the Roman homily liturgical duties are emphasized. "Serve... mankind in love and joy", deacons are told. In the Episcopal rite, the ordained is told: "You are to interpret to the church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world....in serving the helpless, [Christ's people] are serving Christ himself." The Methodist rite gives the most stress on the diaconal character of the "special ministry [of] servanthood in the church and in the world. In the name of Jesus Christ you are to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely." This goes far beyond the earlier Methodist diaconal rite which focused on liturgical and proclamatory functions. One of the questions asked, both new and unique to the Methodist rite for elders is:

Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, represent to the people of God their own responsibility to serve others by an active concern for peace, justice and freedom for all people?

Here the elder is asked to lead what the deacon is asked to do! Again the elder is asked to care for "strong and weak, rich and poor", whereas the deacon's duty is "to serve the needs of the poor, the sick and the oppressed". The distinction is subtle, but significant, and the Methodists have been able to define, at least on paper and in the rite, clear differences in the offices!

It is in respect to ordination for diaconal service that Geoffrey Wainwright's observation is most relevant: "Ordination reinterprets authority as service." It contrasts sharply with what Hughes says has been the dominant Roman view from the Council of Trent to Vatican II, i.e. "the priest as holy man...endowed with special cultic powers to consecrate, to offer sacrifice, and to forgive sins...." The criticism that the new Roman ordinal is vague and general leads Hughes to say: "It is illegitimate to look for precise dogmatic statements in liturgical rites." I assure you that reality has caused me no end of anxiety and difficulty in carrying out the assignment of this lecture! But to show that our Roman brothers are not the only ones whose rites lack dogmatic precision, someone has said that the ILCW
rite is an exercise in studied ambiguity. Perhaps that is as it should be. (That is probably the only part of this lecture Christian News will be interested in quoting!)

Unlike the other rites, the Roman rite adds a "commitment to celibacy" --though not necessarily for "permanent" deacons.

In the Roman and Methodist rites, the laying on of hands occurs before the prayer of consecration with its epiclesis. It is significant that in earlier Episcopal and Methodist rites, the imperative formula was not, as for priests or elders, "The Lord pour out upon thee the Holy Spirit." Rather, the deacon was told, "Take thou authority to execute the office of a deacon...." In the Episcopal rite, the bishop prays, as he lays hands on the deacon: "...give your Holy Spirit to N.; fill him with grace and power." The Methodist Book of Discipline uses a phrase to describe these three orders that will serve to point to a certain commonality of understanding among these three episcopally governed churches: representative ministry. All utilize the imagery of Christ's high priesthood for bishops and point to their governing oversight. The homily in the Roman rite goes so far as to suggest that the bishop personifies the image of God the Father in the church --as well as in Son's role of teacher, priest and shepherd.

One other fascinating possibility is that the orders of presbyter and deacon are the models the rest of Protestantism uses for its ministerial offices. Thus the Presbyterian and Reformed churches have only one office of ordained ministers of the word, though they "ordain" lay deacons and elders, and that one office is that of presbyters or "teaching elders." Similarly the congregational churches such as the Baptists also have only one office of minister of the word, which I should like to suggest is patterned after the deacon's office --given the fact that such preachers of the word traditionally have no "sacrament" to administer but only "ordinances." But they also ordain lay "deacons." We will deal with Lutherans and the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) under separate rubrics!
As we turn to the Presbyterian churches, we find shorter rites, which still follow a similar structure of presentation, examination and laying on of hands.62

The examination adds questions about being instructed and guided by the confession of the church.63

The ordination prayer asks "give him special gifts to do his special work; and fill him with the Holy Spirit...."64 After a joint prayer said by all the moderator declares:

_, you are now a minister of the word in the church....Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.65

It should be noted that (lay) elders --but not deacons-- may participate in the laying on of hands.66 This mirrors very clearly the ecclesiastical polity of Presbyterians centered in the presbytery which is composed of teaching elders (i.e. pastors) and ruling elders (i.e. "ordained" lay persons). But it muddies the historic principle which Reformed churches traditionally held: that one cannot pass on an office he does not possess.67 The current Presbyterian practice seems to mirror the position of their prophet of COCU, Eugene Carson Blake, who wrote:

The specialized ministry of word and sacrament...in the church is derived from, and supportive of, both the ministry of Christ and that of all the people of God.68

Von Allmen contends that the sixteenth century Reformed view was that "the minister is not created by the church which will be entrusted to him; rather he should be received by her as coming from 'elsewhere'."69

I think that, in spite of this mysterious and undefined "elsewhere," such a view is better than Blake's idea of "derivation"; or, for that matter, the American Lutheran Church's "delegation", or ancient Missouri Synod's "transference!"70

The ordination rite of the Christian Reformed Church --conservative Dutch heirs of Calvin-- contains a lengthy charge which presents a full doctrine of the ministry.71 Four major aspects of the "office of the ministers of the word" are set forth: (1) preaching the Gospel;
(2) administering the sacraments; (3) to lead God's people in the service of prayer; (4) finally, along with the elders, to shepherd the people with guidance, counsel, and exhortation for the sake of good order and discipline. This constitutes their exercise of the keys of the kingdom. This latter duty reflects the assertion of most of the sixteenth century Reformed confessions that discipline is one of the marks of the church. The total job-description reflects what von Allmen calls the fundamental or essential ministries: doctoral, episcopal, presbyteral, and pastoral -- all embodied in the minister of the word.

The examination asks whether the ordained believes he is called by the church and therefore by God himself. A question regarding Scripture as the word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice is then asked. Interestingly enough, in spite of the church's strong confessionalism, no confessional question is asked of ordinands. A final question is asked concerning a godly life and willingness to submit to ecclesiastical discipline. Unlike the less conservative Reformed Church of America, the Christian Reformed rite uses an imperative formula rather than the prayer form which, von Allmen says, is characteristic of Reformed churches since the Reformation. The Christian Reformed Church (CRC) rite reads:

God our heavenly Father, who has called you to this office, enlighten you with his Spirit, strengthen you with his hand...

Even though this is not quite the language of bestowing the Holy Spirit of the older episcopal rites, the imperative, benediction-like formula is striking! In the concluding prayer an epiclesis appears: "Send now thy Holy Spirit upon him."

The Reformation understanding of preaching is embodied in the charge to the congregation: "Remember that through him God himself speaks to you." The goal is this: that "You who receive this man...shall receive...through faith in Jesus Christ, the inheritance of eternal life."

In the sixteenth century, according to von Allmen, ordination for the Reformed meant consecration, legitimation, epiclesis and "spiritual
engenderment," i.e. "the ingrafting of a man into the line of his pre-
decessors" by laying on of hands by pastors only. Calvin's emphasis on ordination as consecration is seen more in the fact of vows than of the content. All that was left of Calvin's *cor meum tibi offero* ("my heart I offer thee, promptly and sincerely") in the older CRC rite was the ordinand's answer: "I do with all my heart!"

The divine --even messianic-- origin of the ministry comes out clearly in the older CRC rite's assertion: "The pastoral office is an institution of Christ." This is less explicit in the Presbyterian rite --probably reflecting the ambiguity most biblical scholars would see in such a simple assertion.

Von Allmen contends that the teaching of the Second Helvetic Confession, unlike Eugene Carson Blake, roots the doctrine of the ministry in the apostolate, not the priesthood. Hence Bullinger, like Luther, writes, "...the priesthood and the ministry are very different from one another. For the priesthood...is common to all Christians; not so the ministry."

This distinction is both affirmed and muddied by having different rites for ordaining *lay* elders and deacons. It is muddied because they are ordained. The distinction is affirmed because they are ordained with a different rite to a task that is clearly not the ministry of Word and sacraments. The place where the tasks overlap is in the area of discipline, where ruling elders have major responsibilities within the congregation. The episcopal function of exercising oversight over congregations and pastors is given over to presbyteries, composed of pastors and ruling elders. Thus "the work of elders is that of ruling." So also deacons are clearly ordained to the service of the needy by ingathering offerings and distributing gifts in relief of the distressed. After their examinations in the CRC rite, the "ordination" proceeds without laying on of hands, without an epiclesis, and with the blessing: "The Almighty God and Father replenish you all with his grace."

Such ordinations of lay leaders do not induct them into a ministry of proclamation of the word, much less administering the sacraments (not even baptisms in emergencies). This, I believe, simply underlines my
point that in Reformed circles there is but one ministry and that is presbyteral, i.e. the office of minister of the word. Some functions of "episcopal" oversight (described as matters of order and discipline) are included in this pastoral office and shared with the "ruling elders". The relegation of "diaconal" service to part-time laity came to a crisis in the 1960's when many ministers wanted to set aside word-and-sacrament duties to be change-agents in "diaconal" social action as community organizers or counsellors. The dilemma of one office with basically one function remains.

Another unique feature of these Reformed rites is that the rites of ordination and installation are interchangeable, except that the laying on of hands is not repeated in installation. This probably grew out of the strong bond between the minister of the word and the congregation in which he served. Ordination was conceived, as in nineteenth century Missouri Synod circles, as one's first installation. The Reformed rites are careful to guard against the idea of a second ordination. But the almost complete parallels between ordination and installation reinforce the understanding of the ministry of the word as a single presbyteral office with the singular focus of proclaiming the word in a congregation.

Since the heirs of Puritanism --the Congregationalists-- have merged into the United Church of Christ with some heirs of the continental Reformation, the chief representatives of congregationalism in America are the Baptists. To get at their doctrine or liturgy is a little more difficult. Since "ordination is by the local church...details of the ordination program are in the hands of the ordaining church, in consultation with the candidate to be ordained and a committeeman from the examining council." Thus H. Wheeler Robinson wrote that there are "no prescribed or indeed very uniform orders for ordination". Robinson went on to describe his own practice which included having the candidate kneel at the communion table for prayer with the laying on of hands. He calls this a "rite of identification", having "no magic transference of power". So laying on of hands was often forgotten or regarded with suspicion, at least by British Baptists. The American Baptist McNutt agrees that ordination merely "empowers" the pastor to administer the ordinances of baptism and Lord's Supper.
Beyond this, the pastor has no power that other members do not have, including presumably the authority to preach.

The closest thing to a Baptist ordination rite I was able to find in the library of the Schools of Theology in Dubuque was the rubric-like description of an ordination service in *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice* by Norman Maring and the historian Winthrop Hudson from the American Baptist Convention. The outline is as follows:

1. Reading the recommendation by the ordination council
2. A sermon
3. A charge to the ordinand
4. Ordination vows (sometimes)
5. An ordination prayer, invoking God's blessing, with laying on of hands by ordained ministers and "rarely but appropriately" by lay deacons
6. Welcome to the ministry
7. A benediction by the newly ordained

The ordination rite of a local Southern Baptist pastor included sermonic charges to the candidate and congregation, along with a free ordination prayer and laying on of hands with blessings and words of wisdom by each participant. In this instance the unusual practice of interrogating the candidate was done publicly and members of the congregation could ask questions.

This rather sketchy presentation will have to suffice for Baptist ordination rites. Its ecclesiology roots in the Anabaptist insistence on a gathered, regenerate church membership, undergirded by believer's baptism and discipline, with the local congregation representing and embodying the church universal. Such local churches are self-governing but are obliged to express their interdependence with other churches. "All the Baptist confessions have affirmed" that the life of the church requires "the word of God to be rightly preached, ...baptism and the Lord's Supper to be truly administered, and... discipline to be duly executed." The church is further characterized as a worshipping, teaching, witnessing, ministering community. The heart of the pastor's work is said to be teaching. Leading corporate worship and "performing the sacraments" is delegated to him by the congregation in ordination. Care of individual souls and administrative leadership are the other major duties of a pastor.
The language in this Manual does not support my contention but I have the impression that in many Baptist churches the pastor is primarily a "preacher". Reformed theology has heavily influenced Baptist churches and the high ecclesiology of "sacraments" is evident in some conventions. I cannot document my suggestion that the paradigm of the Baptist preacher is the traditional deacon; it can only be suggested for further consideration and investigation. It is interesting, however, that the "ordained" lay officer in Baptist churches is known as a deacon. His responsibilities for care and nurture lie somewhere between those of ruling elders and deacons in presbyterian polity.

For our purposes it is fascinating to see how this strong congregationalism has influenced Lutheranism, from the Missouri Synod's transference theory of ordination to the American Lutheran Church's delegation and self-definition of itself as a "union of congregations." And when the Baptist Manual described how ordination rites were put together, I confess it reminded me of some of our Wartburg graduates who regard ordination as "their day" and put together their own rites "with all the rights and privileges appertaining unto" a Master of Divinity! And perhaps less rarely than in the American Baptist Convention, laity from Grandma, to Aunt Tillie, to spouses, to Sunday School teachers and Luther League sponsors, join in the laying on of hands. In the Southern Baptist Convention the only lay persons to participate in the laying on of hands would be "ordained" deacons. I suppose if we tried to give Baptists back the congregationalism we adopted and adapted, they wouldn't take it!

If my thesis is correct, that the doctrine of ministry reflected in contemporary ordination rites mirrors ecclesiology, Christology and ecclesiastical polity, the COCU and the Lutherans present unique problems. First, let us look at the Lutherans.

The Lutheran situation is unique in that Lutherans have not contended that any particular form of church government was God-ordained, (not even their own disorganization!). While tending to regard the issue as an adiaphoron and disdaining those who thought it belonged to the essence (the esse or perhaps even the plene esse of the church), Lutherans fell into all sorts of organizational patterns: control by kings and their appointed archbishops, or by princes and their super-
intendents and consistories, or by government ministers and bureaus. Internally, most Lutherans in Europe were organized more-or-less episcopally --even in Germany where the title of bishops wasn't generally used till the twentieth century. Also in recent times the salutary influence of the more democratic Reformed churches brought some of their synodical structure and representative government into the Landeskirchen. Meanwhile in America, not only did the synodical forms of Presbyterianism make tremendous inroads among Lutherans, so also did congregationalism. Congregational government struck a responsive chord among Norwegian and Danish pietists and met a critical need for Missourians left without their bishop.

The upshot in America has been the unique blend of ecclesiastical polities which all the Lutheran bodies have adopted --though not always consciously so! One might expect then to find a mix of order, office, and function in the Lutheran understandings of the ministry of the word and sacraments. Let us examine the ordination rites to see whether this seems true.

First of all we should note that, for Lutherans, elders and deacons are lay offices. There seems to be little similarity from congregation to congregation as to what is expected or done by these persons. Also because the Lutheran Confessions virtually equate the pastoral and episcopal offices, Lutherans in America are wary of doing anything but "installing" their bishops. Both "ordination" and "consecration" seem to undercut the confessional position. The question remains whether Lutherans embody in their ordination rites the episcopal functions of oversight, the presbyteral task of ruling or discipline, and the diaconal role of service. Or to put the question differently: does "order," as well as "office" and function, belong to the Lutheran understanding of ministry? Arthur Carl Piepkorn has made a strong case that a concept of the holy ministry as "holy orders" is to be found in the Book of Concord. It could also be argued that, while most Lutherans have denied the higher clerical status that seems to be implied in the concept of an order, we have embodied in it "der Herr Pastor!"
We should also note that there are some Lutherans who are even uncomfortable with the concept of office, feeling that even it connotes too much of a special position for pastors. Such Lutherans tend to speak solely in functional terms and often argue that laity should be allowed to administer the sacraments and preach. In terms of ordination --if they support it at all-- they often insist that laity should participate in the laying on of hands. I trust this documents some of the confusion among Lutherans that I referred to at the outset of this lecture.

Lutheran ordination rites since the Reformation have both reduplicated and reversed the history of the rite in the Western church. Whereas the ancient church's rites had an epiclesis, the Roman rite introduced the language of giving the Holy Spirit in the middle ages. This was retained until the twentieth century. Lutherans, on the other hand, utilized an epiclesis from Reformation times until the early twentieth century. In the 1921 Synodical Conference rite, the ordaining pastor said: "The Lord pour out upon thee his Holy Spirit for the office", apparently borrowing from the Anglican Ordinal. The 1962 Occasional Service Book of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) utilized a similar formulation: "The Lord bestow upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a minister in the church of God...." Within the space of fifty years virtually all American Lutheranism had borrowed a medieval formula which Anglicans and Roman Catholics had dropped during the same time period. Officially, until new rites are approved, that is where it stands today. The old joke about Lutherans carrying into their churches what Catholics are carrying out is literally true at this point! The *Service Book and Hymnal* (SBH) ordination and confirmation rites both "bestow" the Holy Spirit, which the SBH baptismal rite does not do. This would seem to make ordination and confirmation the chief sacraments of the Lutheran Church.

Another innovation in twentieth century Lutheran rites comes rather directly from the pen of Wilhelm Loehe:

> We commit to you herewith, through the laying on of our hands, the holy office of word and sacraments of the triune God, and ordain and consecrate you a minister of
the holy church in the name of the Father, and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. 109

Language like "I" or "we commit to you...the holy office and ordain
you... in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy
Ghost," became characteristic of most of the twentieth century Lutheran
rites. There is plenty of precedent for such formulae in Lutheran
liturgies: "I baptize you..."; "I forgive you..."; "I now pronounce
you man and wife...." Here I am simply pointing to the fact that in
ordinations this is a relative innovation in Lutheran liturgies. The
SBH Occasional Service Book ordinal uses basically Loehe's formula
but renders it in the passive.

Since the Task Force on Occasional Services work is still in process
and The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod has published nothing yet,
we shall analyze the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship (ILCW) as re­
presentative of some contemporary Lutheran thinking on ordination.
I expect that the ALC and LCA will resemble the ILCW rite at most
significant points, though there already have been and will continue
to be changes in the complex review process.

After the presentation, the ILCW rite moves directly to the biblical
authorization of continuing our Lord's ministry in the Johannine and
Matthean great commissions. (Note that, unlike the episcopal rites
and like the presbyterian rites, there is no ritual election at this
point.) Then follows the examination. The initial question reads:
"Are you persuaded that the Lord has called you to the ministry of
word and sacraments, and are you willing to assume this office. 110
I should say that this question is likely to be changed so that the
focus is away from the "inner call" and more on willingness to accept
the church's call as God's call.

The second question states the church's only "judge, rule and norm
of faith and life" to be the holy Scriptures as written word of God.
It continues: "We believe, teach, and confess the Apostles', Nicene,
and Athanasian Creeds and acknowledge the Lutheran Confessions [which
may be named] as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the holy
Scriptures." Then the candidate is asked: "Will you preach and teach
in accordance with holy Scripture and these confessions?" 111
The third question asks about the ordinand's willingness to use the means of grace personally as well as pastorally, to pray and to lead God's people in faithful service and holy living. Much criticism focused on the last phrase as if it might imply leading without living holily! Perhaps, in the wake of the 1960's, faithful diaconia is also being called into question: are pastors to do it or lead it? Another question grows out of a certain understanding of the renewal of the laity and the priesthood of all believers: why can't lay persons preach the word, lead celebrations of the sacrament, and join in the laying on of hands at ordination? Both questions, I believe, are rooted in confusion that seems almost built into our Lutheran situation. For the questions grow out of our inability to distinguish between presbyteral and diaconal service. We cannot decide what pastor and laity are really supposed to do. Out of legitimate concern to affirm the royal priesthood, we confuse the laity by implying that if they are really to do significant service they should be able to "get their hands on" the sacrament and preach the word publicly. Yet we still try to tell them their vocation and service in the world really matters! That is a classic double message!

At any rate, the ILCW rite has only the clergy involved in the imposition of hands. The presiding minister prays: "Eternal God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon this your servant...whom you have called to the pastoral office."112

There follows a somewhat belated ritual election: "Let it be acclaimed that Jennifer is ordained a minister of the word and sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ." "Amen! Thanks be to God", the people respond.113 For some reason the word "acclaimed" has brought all sorts of stuff out of the woodwork --as if Lutherans had therewith suddenly imported an entire alien theology.

The Lohe tradition is honored but modified in the following "committal" of the office:

To her is committed the pastoral office, with authority to preach the word and administer the sacraments, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.114
The "I commit" or regal "we commit" has been dropped in favor of the passive voice.

The symbols of the office are limited to Bible and stole. Two of the shepherd texts are used in the charge to pastors which concludes with these words:

Care for God's people; bear their burdens, not betraying their confidences. So discipline yourself in life and teaching that you preserve the truth, giving no occasion for false security or illusory hope. And be of good courage, for God himself has called you, and your labor in the Lord is not in vain.115

The congregation, instructed that it speaks for the whole church, is then asked to receive the ordinand. The rite concludes with the Hebrews benediction, "Now may the God of peace...."116

The ILCW rite is clearly designed to bring Lutherans back to the mainstream Christian tradition from which they wandered in the twentieth century, following the lead of Rome and the Anglicans. Meanwhile the Anglicans and Roman Catholics had returned to the early church's practice --leading Lutherans who had left their Reformation roots standing alone out in the cold. Yet I would argue that the ILCW rite is not so monolithic as to establish a new and exclusive doctrine for Lutheran ministry. This is not the purpose of a liturgical rite, though lex orandi has been and can be shaped by lex credendi. I would contend that the ILCW rite in its so-called "studied ambiguity" can be harmonized at most points with the descriptive study done by the Lutheran Council in the United States of America (LCUSA) entitled, "The Ministry of the Church: A Lutheran Understanding." In that study, a functional understanding of ordained ministry clearly is presupposed. Except for a footnote suggesting that the logic of the Lutheran position would allow for reordination, the document is not at loggerheads with the ILCW rite.117 Clearly, however, the ILCW and LCUSA groups had different presuppositions and concerns. The strongest indication of "order" thinking I find is the fading image of "der Herr Pastor" among Lutherans. One breakthrough by the LCUSA commission could be of real value in freeing Lutheranism from our particular "congregational" hangup regarding the call from a congregation as a necessity for ordination. The rigidity with which this has been understood could almost have prevented us
from sending any missionaries without three years of parish experience, which we still require of virtually all "specialized ministries." Fortunately we were able to invent the "fiction" that a call from a board of world mission was the same as a call from a congregation. The LCUSA study recognizes that not only does the church as congregation call, but the church as denomination sends! If we can be freed from our absolute, theoretical "congregationalism" at this point, we may be able to look afresh at our one-office understanding of the ministry of word and sacrament. A doctrine of ministry which is strictly congregational and functional causes no end of bureaucratic gameplaying by which we try to justify the continuance of denominational bureaucrats, college administrators, social service staff, as well as other counsellors, Bible camp directors, etc. Such folks might even be ordained to a parallel, separate-but-equal, diaconal ministry, without the demand of "three years in the parish" for which they may not be qualified and/or in which they may not be interested!

But at this point I am just fantasizing! Perhaps we could even dream of bishops who do not grow white around the gills when one suggests they should be pastors to pastors. As for pastors, they discover that if they are just enablers or facilitators, the pastoral task does not get done! Or if they function primarily as administrators or executive secretaries, the organization may operate smoothly and move efficiently toward spiritual bankruptcy. And then, if pastors see themselves as social prophets, far out ahead of their flocks, they may find themselves cut off from the very ones they are to feed and tend! So to prevent this from becoming a nightmare, it must be seen that administration ("oversight"), and social concern ("diaconia") are both necessary, but can not be done effectively by one person in most situations along with word-and-sacrament functions!

Thus we may be driven, rather than just "led," to re-examine the one office model we have inherited. We have it adapted, as well as we could, to situations that are as new and as old as the early church. In fact, we do have lay and ordained deacons. We just call them pastors on "extended service". Calling them what they are would help clarify our doctrine of ministry. Ordaining them for their task
might take away some of the legitimate criticism from the pietists in the wings of Lutheranism who rightly complain that we have not implemented the priesthood of all believers.

In many ways the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) is the classic example of the perspective I have suggested. COCU is a courageous attempt to embody the three orders of the episcopal model of ministry. More ambitiously, it attempts to merge denominations which, in past generations, have contended vigorously that their form of church government was the only one "ordained of God". The structural task is nearly overwhelming and has almost overwhelmed COCU several times! And if my thesis is correct, that these three competing ecclesiastical polities embody three differing doctrines of ministry (as order, office and function), then the doctrinal task is even greater than the organizational one. The doctrinal basis of COCU, entitled In Quest of the Church of Christ Uniting, subtitled "An Emerging Theological Consensus," has been re-worked several times by different committees since the "plan of union" and ordinal was published in 1970. The most recent (1980) version of the Quest revised the chapter on ministry in a substantial way. The direction is a stronger statement of the church’s social responsibility and an attempt at clarifying the task of witness which is not wholly successful. Yet the structural proposal remains intact: bishops, presbyters, and deacons are to be ordained. There is its strength --if it can be made to work; for clear responsibilities and focus are given. There is still some unavoidable overlapping in job-descriptions, but priorities are evident.

Let us see what view of ministry emerges in the 1970 Ordinal of COCU. The "Ordination (Consecration)" begins with the presentation and ritual election. Then the bishop presiding prays that the bishop-elect may be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit --as in the Methodist rite-- as a sort of proto-epiclesis.

In the examination the bishop's task of manifesting unity and continuity in the church is set forth. "A Bishop is called to be a pioneer in mission, a healer of divisions among Christians, a guardian of the truth of faith and the purity of worship, a pastor to pastors, and a
wise administrator of the church's organized work of life. Finally the bishop is called "a guide and overseer of the church's common life". The questions adequately embody the description of the bishop's task.

At the consecration comes the first major break with the church's tradition: presbyters, deacons and laity all participate in the laying on of hands. Congregationalism has made its clear impact here. The ancient epiclausus is combined with nineteenth century Lutheran language: "Send forth your Holy Spirit upon your servant, James, whom we, in your name and in obedience to your most blessed will, do now ordain..." The "we ordain" is probably better when set within a prayer. I could be persuaded that the silence at this point in the Roman rite is better than the Protestant propensity to say too much --indeed to say everything that can be said!

Finally the right hand of fellowship is given and an appropriate symbol of the episcopal office may be added. The barrenness, symbolically, of this part of the service is probably not as significant as the break with tradition at the imposition of hands. One wonders whether the hands added and the symbols removed signify an altered episcopate!

In the ordination of presbyters, the people respond to the presenter's question about worthiness: "We trust that they are worthy. To God be the glory." In the examination the task of a presbyter is described: "...preaching the word, celebrating the sacraments, leading the congregation in its obedience to mission, interpreting prophetically God's acts, counseling the troubled in spirit, taking a rightful place in administration and government, and being conformed to the life of Christ..." The examination begins with a faith question, like the Methodist and Reformed rites: "Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?" Next --a bit weaker than its Episcopal or Presbyterian counterparts-- comes the biblical questions: "Are you persuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments convey the Word of God...?" The Presbyterian
influence is seen in the confessional question: "Will you be diligent in understanding the faith to which the creeds, confessions and doctrines of the church bear witness?" Next comes the call issue: "Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called?" Much like the Methodist question is: "Will you faithfully preach and teach...minister the sacraments...and care for the poor, the bewildered, and the oppressed for Christ's sake?" This question goes beyond the presbyter's job-description in the 1980 Consensus, which calls for leadership in mission, but not performing care for every human need! Moreover, this undercuts the deacon's special responsibility and adds to the confusion and guilty conscience of pastors! Weighty questions concerning discipleship and discipline end the examination.

In the ordination prayer, after the epiclesis, a crisper definition of the task comes into view in these words: "...authority to minister your word and sacraments, to declare your forgiveness to repentant sinners, and to shepherd your flock." The diaconal "care" tasks appears nowhere in the prayer.

The giving of Scriptures (and other optional symbols) and the right hand of fellowship conclude the rite.

It is hard to critique the confusion embedded in this rite without seeming to be against the pastor's responsibility for "the poor and the oppressed" --a moral issue in our land that may get worse again before it gets better. Nonetheless, the structural and theological clarity that is there in the 1980 Theological Consensus is absent from the rite, which, given its 1970 date, bears understandably the mark of the 1960's and more precisely the Presbyterian Confession of 1967's interpretation of reconciliation. This is not to say that a liturgical rite should be precise dogmatic theology. But then it should not create more problems for pastors than it solves. This I fear it does in the implicit congregational ecclesiology of laying on of hands by laity and in its blurring of distinctions between presbyters and deacons.

The rite for ordaining deacons begins with their presentation and
statement of their worthiness by the people. The charge given in
the examination reads: "It belongs to the office of deacon...to
serve, to give help to the poor, the sick and those who are in any
way afflicted or in trouble, to nurture both youth and adults in
the meaning of the Christian faith, to participate with the Presbyter
in the ministry of word and sacrament, and to extend the reign of
justice, peace and joy...in and for the world." 135 The statement's
beginning and ending indicate the clear priorities. Neither the
examination questions nor the ordination prayer amplify, add or de­
tract from this statement. The bishop prays that they be faithful,
constant, "ever skilled and ready for the works of love...." 136 I
hope that the liturgical and educational tasks would not significantly
take away from diaconal service and make the diaconate once again a
stepping stone to the presbyterate. COCU is a noble experiment within
the Reformed theological family and crossing all ecclesiastical polity
lines. As Lutherans and Roman Catholics "behold it from afar," I
hope we will learn from their mistakes and their correct moves. Thus
the Reformation motto of a church reformed yet always reforming
semper reformanda and COCU's watchwords, "truly catholic, truly evan­
gelical and truly reformed" may be more true of the whole church. 137
NOTES

Special thanks to my research assistant, Mark Luepke, for the background research on the polity and contemporary "official" positions on church and ministry. Thanks also to Barbara Larsen who typed the manuscript several times. I profited from the comments and explanations of the following colleagues in the School of Theology in Dubuque: Fr. Frank Quinn, O.P., for his insights into the Roman Catholic situation; Dr. Boyd Mather for his explanations of the Methodist polity and practice; and Dr. John Baird for his comments on the Presbyterian and Reformed section. Any errors in fact or judgment that remain are not their responsibility.


2 The bilateral dialogues --especially those between Catholics and Protestants, as well as those among Protestant denominations-- have indicated a growing theological consensus on ministry and ordination. The ordination rites that have appeared in the last fifteen years have in amazing ways reflected and furthered the theological and liturgical consensus that is emerging. In this lecture I not only want to set forth aspects of this consensus, but also attempt to explain --historically and theologically-- the differences that remain.

There are reasons why we must not give the bilateral discussions more weight than they deserve. The old question remains: Who speaks for the churches? The answer is not: theologians on ecumenical dialogues! A classic example is the 1971 statement by the Roman Catholic/Presbyterian-Reformed consultation on ordination of women. The theologians concluded that there is "no insurmountable Biblical or dogmatic barrier to the ordination of women". The consultation then declares: "We conclude that ordination of women must be a part of the church's life." I simply note that the 1979 Roman rite for the ordination of a priest does not include "he/she" options. My point is that there are serious differences that the consensus of bilateral dialogues have not yet overcome. These differences are matters of ecclesiastical polity as much as ecclesiology. Historical realities and non-theological factors play into this complex mix.


4 John Conrad Wilkey, The Meaning of Ordination in the United Methodist Church as it Relates to the Ministry of the Laity (A Disquisition Submitted to the Faculties of the Schools of Theology in Dubuque in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Ministry), p. 86.

5 Ibid., p. 88.

6 Paul, p. 335.
34 Ibid., p. 27.
35 Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, pp. 61-63.
37 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, pp. 154-156.
38 Ibid., pp. 39-41.
39 Ibid., p. 41.
40 Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, p. 62; cf. p. 55.
41 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, p. 44; Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, p. 73ff; Book of Common Prayer, p. 532.
42 Wilkey, p. 67.
44 Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, p. 65.
45 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, p. 44.
47 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, p. 43.
48 Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, p. 30.
50 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, p. 33.
51 The Book of Worship for Church and Home, p. 45.
52 Methodist Proposed Ordinal, p. 40.
53 Ibid., p. 41.
54 Ibid., p. 33.
57 Ibid., p. 227.
58 Book of Worship for Church and Home, p. 46.
60 Proposed Book of Common Prayer, p. 545.
61 Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, p. 94.
112

63 Ibid., p. 91.
64 Ibid., p. 93.
65 Ibid., p. 94.
69 von Allmen, p. 79.
72 Ibid., p. 165ff.
73 von Allmen, p. 76.
74 Ibid., p. 77.
76 Ibid.
78 von Allmen, p. 80.
80 Ibid., p. 168.
81 Ibid., p. 167.
82 Ibid., p. 168.
83 von Allmen, p. 80.
85 von Allmen, p. 76.
87 von Allmen, p. 84.


92 Ibid., p. 106.

93 McNutt, p. 81.


96 Maring and Hudson, p. 104.

97 Ibid., pp. 36-45.

98 Ibid., p. 96.

99 Ibid., p. 98.

100 Ibid., pp. 98-99. Qualification for ordination entails the natural and spiritual gifts, being prepared and examined, and being called by a congregation. Ordination then is understood as "a public affirmation by the church that an individual’s qualifications had been tested and... approved....", p. 102.


103 Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States (ed.), *Liturgy and Agenda* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 107.


111 Ibid.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid., p. 6.
114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
118 Consultation on Church Union (ed.), *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (Princeton: Consultation on Church Union, 1976).
119 Consultation on Church Union (ed.), *A Plan of Union* (Princeton: Consultation on Church Union, 1970).
121 Ibid.
122 *A Plan of Union*, pp. 97ff.
123 Ibid., p. 92.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid., p. 93.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
130 Consultation on Church Union (ed.), *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting* (Princeton: Consultation on Church Union, 1980), p. 45.54.
131 *A Plan of Union*, p. 95.
132 Ibid., p. 94.
133 Ibid., p. 95.
135 *A Plan of Union*, p. 100.20.
136 Ibid., p. 102.