

# The Assistant Pastor

June, 1930

## The Emperor's Call For The Diet At Augsburg

To the High-born John, Duke of Saxony,  
Landgrave of Thüringen and Margrave of Meissen,  
Chief Marshall of the Holy Roman Empire.  
Our Dear Uncle and Elector:

Charles by God's grace the elected Roman Emperor, etc. . . . We should like to abolish all injustice after hearing and diligently weighing every opinion and view in the honorable German nation, and to uphold what is right and honorable by the papal holiness and our imperial might, authority and permission, and thus have the Holy Empire of the German nation once more brought into unity . . .

Recently the arch-enemy of our holy faith, the Turk, has invaded the Christian Kingdom of Hungary and our Fatherland, the arch-duchy of Austria.

Therefore we, as Roman Emperor and Head of Christendom, have thought it good and useful to undertake a common Diet and Assembly, and have resolved to hold it on the eighth day of the coming month of April in our and the holy city of Augsburg. . . .

Because of the duty you owe to us and to the empire, we command you to appear in person at Augsburg on that day, together with the other princes and estates, . . . that we take up the matter of deliverance from the Turk; further, how, because of error and division, it may be possible to deal and determine in respect to the Holy Faith and the Christian Religion.

And in order that this may occur in a more wholesome way, we desire to settle the differences, abandon obstinacy, give over past erroneousness into the hand of our Redeemer, and use diligence to listen to, understand and weigh every expression, opinion and view in love and graciousness among ourselves, to compare and to bring them to a single Christian Truth, and to do away with everything that has not been explained or transacted right on both sides, that we all may hold one single and true Religion, and, as we all are and do battle under one Christ, we may thus all live in one commonwealth, one Church and one Unity. . . .

Given on the first and twentieth day of January, 1530.

CAROL.



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## The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

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## Church Directory

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor

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## Standing Services

### JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.  
Third Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.  
Saturday School every Saturday, 9:30 a. m.  
Confirmation class, 2 p. m. Fridays.

### SAUDE

Second Sunday, Norwegian, 10:45 a. m.  
Fourth Sunday, English, 10:45 a. m.  
Saturday School, 2 p. m.  
Confirmation class, 9:30 a. m. Fridays.  
*Fifth Sunday by special announcement.*

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Thus with honeyed words the call for the Diet at Augsburg, 400 years ago went out, but in his heart the determination expressed at Worms 1521 still lived, as his whole conduct of the Diet clearly proves. At Worms he said: "What my forefather established at Constance and other Councils, it is my privilege to uphold. A single monk led astray by private judgment has set himself against the faith held by all Christians for a thousand years or more, and impudently concludes that all Christians up to this time had erred. I have therefore resolved to stake upon this cause all my dominions, my friends, my body and my blood, my life and soul."

In view of such a determination on the part of the mighty emperor Charles the Fifth and arbiter of the Diet, what hope was there for the friends of the Reformation? Apparently none. Yet by the strong guiding hand of Providence the Lutheran flag, The Augsburg Confession, was unfurled and still waves in spite of mighty foes and weak if not traitorous friends.

"That the two leading personalities of the Reformation had no previous conception of the universal and immortal character of the Confession they were preparing; that many historical elements contributed, despite the unwillingness of each and all the principals on both the Lutheran and the Roman sides of the struggle, to the mighty result attained in this Confession for all time was a result unforeseen by all, and in which the labors of each, beside the clear and marvelous guidance of Providence, sink into comparative insignificance," history amply proves.

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According to the Call of the Emperor the Diet was to open April 8th. The Evangelicals, the Lutherans,

were there on time, but the Emperor did not arrive till Wednesday, June 15th.

"After some hours' waiting, clouds of dust and much noise on the other side of the bridge heralded the approach of the Emperor's soldiery. The Electors and princes were recognized by Charles with an amiable smile, and he very graciously shook hands with each. The archbishop of Mainz delivered the address of welcome. Apart from the group on a little elevation, sat the Roman Legate in purple, supported by two cardinals. When Campeggius the Legate saw the Emperor and the princes dismounted and greeting each other, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. They with the Spaniards, Italians, Netherlanders and Germans in the train, fell on their knees; but the Elector John and his fellow-Protestants stood bolt upright and refused the papal benediction. The magnificent procession, eclipsing anything heretofore seen in the empire, now entered the city, with the soldiers of the six electors in advance."

During their long wait for the Emperor the Lutherans had gathered daily for divine services. The evening of his arrival the Emperor "requested of their electoral and princely graces that they henceforth should not permit preaching in Augsburg" during the sitting of the Diet. "The Elector and the Margrave turned pale. There was silence. The Margrave spoke up: 'We beg your Majesty not to insist on your request,' he said, 'for we preach only God's pure Word, as did Augustine, Hilary and the ancient doctors. Of this your Majesty may convince himself. We cannot do without the food of God's Word, or deny the Gospel with a good conscience.'" Twice was the request repeated; twice was it refused. Turning to the Emperor, the old Margrave of Brandenburg exclaimed: "Before I would deny my God and His Gospel, I would kneel down here at your Majesty's feet and have my head struck off."

"This was the climax that night. It was the great confession at Augsburg that it is better to die than to compromise; and it foiled the Emperor for a moment. He directed the princes to transmit in writing the reason why they were unwilling to dispense with the preaching."

"But Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother, was ready with the second trap. 'Since His Majesty,' said he, 'is unable to stop your preaching, he asks that you will at least observe the custom of accompanying him in the procession of the sacrament.' The princes refused unconditionally. 'Christ,' said they, 'did not institute His sacrament to be worshipped.' The Emperor persisted in this demand, and the Protestants persisted with equal tenacity in their refusal. The princes left the Emperor's palace that night deeply stirred in soul, and the Emperor was almost beside himself with rage, which Campeggius endeavored to fan into more lurid flame."

"The Elector John became ill during the night, so when the princes and counsellors arrived at the palace, George, the old Margrave, was their spokesman. Said George to the Emperor: 'My ancestors and I have always supported you; but in the things of God, the commands of God compel me to put aside the command



of man. If, as we are told, death is to be the fate of those who persevere in the true doctrine, I am ready to suffer it.' Offering the Emperor the Opinion of the Protestants regarding taking part in the Corpus Christi procession, he said: 'We will not countenance these human traditions, opposed to the Word of God, with our presence; on the contrary, we declare unitedly that we must expel them from the Church, lest those of its members that are still sound should be affected with this deadly Poison.' To this Ferdinand replied for the Emperor: 'If the love of God will not impel you to go with the Emperor, then do so for the love of the Emperor, and as vassals and princes of the empire. His Majesty commands you. He begs you.' The Princes replied: This is an act of worship, and our conscience forbids it."

"The Emperor had taken his last step and exhausted his last resource, and now after all his planning had so far lost in his designs."

That day at noon, behind the host—alterbrød—carried by the archbishop of Maintz, the Emperor marched alone with his head bare, and a taper in his hand, with scarcely one hundred citizens of Augsburg following him in the procession of Corpus Christi. So irritated was he on his return to the palace that he threatened that he would dismiss the Lutherans to their homes the next day. But the German Catholic princes saw that this would lead to terrible war, and they supplicated his Majesty, asking him to wait till his anger should cool."

Not till June 20th was the Diet formally opened. On Friday the 24th "the Lutherans came to the Diet ready with their complete 'Statement of Grievances and Opinions' relating to the Faith, but they were not permitted to read it, the Romanists seeming to have taken measures to try to crowd it out. First of all, the sitting of the Diet did not begin until three o'clock in the afternoon. The Papal Legate was then announced, and the Emperor went to the top of the staircase to meet him. Taking his seat in front of the Emperor, Campeggius arose to speak. 'Never before,' said he, 'has the ship of St. Peter been so violently tossed in the waves.' Then addressing the Emperor, he implored his Majesty to get rid of the Protestant errors, to deliver Germany, and to save Christendom. The archbishop of Maintz replied to him, and the Legate left the Diet.

Now the Evangelical princes arose to plead their cause, but delegates from other countries who were present were given a hearing. At last the princes arose again, and Chancellor Brück declared that his party was accused of supporting heresy, their good name was compromised and their souls were in danger, and he therefore begged his Majesty to hear what the doctrines are which they profess. The Emperor declared that the hour was too late, and they should be satisfied to have their Confession delivered in writing. They declared that their souls and their honor were at stake. They were accused publicly and they ought to answer publicly. The Emperor seemed ready to yield, but Ferdinand prevented him.

Then for the third time the Elector and his party vehemently and persistently demanded that they should

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be allowed to read their Confession for the love of God, and declared that no person was insulted in it. The Emperor was surrounded with a great number of guardians and ecclesiastics, but he finally granted their request, yet said that as it was now too late, they should send him the written document, and that the next day at two o'clock the Diet would hear it privately in his own palace.

The princes refused to give up the Confession on the ground that the work had been done in great haste, and that, before formally giving over the document, it needed revision, which they would undertake during the night. The Emperor yielded, and the Protestants left the Diet with a thankful heart."

SATURDAY, JUNE 25th, 1530

"The presentation of the Confession took place in a small chapel, but a great crowd thronged the court without. Only those officially concerned and their attendants were admitted.

The Emperor requested the Confession to be read in Latin. 'We are Germans,' said the Elector of Saxony, 'and on German soil; I hope therefore your Majesty will allow us to speak German.' His Majesty acquiesced in his Grace's request. And then Dr. Beyer, one of the Electors' chancellors, read the Confession so loudly and distinctly that the multitude, gathered around the outside of the building, heard every word. The eyes of many a Roman Catholic were opened. The bishop of the city said, 'What has here been read is the pure and unadulterated truth; we cannot gainsay it.' The Legate had absented himself, lest his presence be interpreted as authorizing the reading of the Confession; and many others of the Roman clergy did not attend for fear their Church would be sharply criticised.

The Emperor accepted of Chancellor Brück the two copies, handing the German one to the Elector of Mainz and keeping the Latin for himself. The reading had consumed about two hours. The Lutherans rejoiced in having been able to make a good confession before many witnesses. The Emperor's reply was that he would further consider the matter.

The Emperor extended his hand to the Elector and said tenderly, 'Uncle, I would not have expected this from you'; and silently the Elector bowed and, with his eyes full of tears, left the Diet with the Duke of Lüneburg and the Prince of Anhalt. The Emperor departed dissatisfied and resolved to bring the Protestants to obedience both by law and force of arms.

Before parting, the Emperor descended his throne, approached the Protestant princes, and earnestly requested them in a low tone not to publish the Confession."

The above quotations give a few stray glimpses of events occurring in the spring of 1530 which culminated in the Augsburg Confession, the 400th anniversary of which the Lutheran world celebrates this year.

My hope is that these flashes of history will awaken a desire in many for a full knowledge of the contents and history of our first Lutheran Confession. The complete story of the Augsburg Confession can be secured at any Lutheran book store.

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