

Ritual Techniques in Affliction Rites and the Lutheran–Catholic Ecumenical Liturgy of Lund, 2016

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Abstract

Protest and reconciliation rituals play a contested but important role in social change. This essay analyzes how rituals of reconciliation effectively negotiate between competing factions and norms by using ritual techniques as embodied symbols. Against the horizon of theory from Victor and Edith Turner and Cas Wepener, participant observation of the Lutheran and Catholic Joint Commemoration of the Reformation “Common Prayer” in Lund, Sweden on October 31, 2016 reveals five stages: crisis/diagnosis, redress, forgiveness and acceptance, binding, and reparative mission. Each is marked by its own characteristic techniques, whereas some symbolic elements manifest the different stages throughout the liturgy. This liturgy demonstrates how one liturgy can speak to various factions and stages in the process of accommodating a new norm (Christian unity) within a contested set of identities (“Lutheran” and “Catholic”). It is in the stages of forgiveness and binding that the relationship between the ritual-symbolic realm and the real work of social reconciliation is most directly visualized.

Keywords

Reconciliation, ritual, Lutheran, Catholic, Lund 2016

1 Techniques, efficacy, and affliction rites

Ritual techniques are the embodied physical actions that address social and spiritual realities, challenging Western assumptions of the dichotomy between the material world and the spiritual, symbolic, or social world.¹ Ritual (symbolic, patterned, socially significant human behavior) both presupposes

1) Marcel Mauss, “Techniques of the Body,” *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (1973): 70–88, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147300000003>; Michel Foucault, “Sexuality and Solitude,” “The Battle for Chastity,” “Technologies of the Self,” in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth, The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. P. Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 175–84, 185–98, 223–52. I gratefully acknowledge helpful feedback from many: several classes of University of Notre Dame undergraduates in my “Holy Communion and Christian Disunity” course, my Fall 2020 “Ritual for Crisis and Healing” seminar participants, attendees of the 2021 Societas Liturgica Congress (virtual), the anonymous reviewers of this manuscript, Nathan P. Chase, and Mark

and influences a repertoire of embodied habits: postural, gestural, musical, and artistic capacities, as well as verbal and literary skills. Since one's physical organism maps also one's social organization (for instance, one's head implicitly signifies the seat(s) of social power and authority; one's hand, the transformative power of labor),² rites that address physical distress, then, also at least implicitly speak about social dysfunction.

African healing rites, for instance, challenged Western anthropologists to consider the interdependence of the biophysical body and the social body.³ Victor and Edith Turner examined the way Ndembu rites address disease, which is also linked to the social or even cosmic disorder. Human disease has biosomatic, social, and spiritual causes. For the Ndembu, treating the social and spiritual dimensions of human illness also often resulted in the relief of symptoms Westerners would categorize as strictly physical. Catherine Bell expresses this breadth: "rituals of affliction attempt to rectify a state of affairs that has been disturbed or disordered: they heal, exorcise, protect, and purify."⁴

Christian liturgical treatment usually separates healing rites addressing individuals (anointing and reconciliation) from the need to reconcile social groups that have harmed one another, but the need for social reconciliation rites raises the question of what kind of ritual techniques are found in social reconciliation. Victor Turner lays out the process of "social drama" in four parts: breach, crisis, redress, and reintegration or schism.⁵ Breach and crisis are spontaneous social processes in which factions form over a disputed issue, while redress and reintegration might be ritually mediated. Cas Wepener, however, studying social reconciliation in South Africa, has documented ritual mediation of breach and crisis as well. For example, in one community, "church council members purposely would not sit where they were intended to sit [or] members would stand up and walk out of church just before the [eucharistic] elements were consumed."⁶ This technique of refusing the stipulated ritual behavior was part of the breach phase and served "as a kind of reconciliation barometer."⁷

Wepener's observations suggest that one ritual (like the Lord's Supper described here) might be experienced in opposite manners by different members of a community: for instance, some might

Roosien. I am also thankful to Dirk Lange for a timely answer to a factual question about the origin of one of the pieces of music in the liturgy.

2) Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols; Explorations in Cosmology*, [1st American ed.]. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970).

3) For background and examples, see Ferdinand Okwaro, "Modernity and Efficacy in Kenyan Ritual Healing," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 57-79.

4) Bell, 115.

5) Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, 6. print, Performance Studies Series 1 (New York, NY: PAJ Publ, 2008).

6) Cas Wepener, *From Fast to Feast: A Ritual-Liturgical Exploration of Reconciliation in South African Cultural Contexts*, *Liturgia Condenda* 19 (Leuven [Belgium]; Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2009), 207-208.

7) Cas Wepener, "Ritual Route-Markers for Reconciliation: Insights from a South African Exploration," *Studia Liturgica* 36, no. 2 (2006): 173-84, <https://doi.org/10.1177/003932070603600204>.

experience it as a breach, crisis, or protest, while others experience it as redress. Thus, a single rite might contain multiple stages of the process; at the same time, the redress process of social reconciliation likely requires more than one ritual.⁸ Instead of stages, for Wepener, rites have a “typological” identification with aspects of social reconciliation (see Table 1). Any “micro-ritual” (even a single spoken line or a movement) might typologically enact one aspect of reconciliation, and at the same time a macro-ritual process (like a fifty-year dialogue) might all typologically be identified with one stage.

Turner: stages of ritual process	Breach	Crisis	Redress		Reintegration or schism	
Wepener’s ritual typology	Protest	Confession	Therapeutic/ healing	Acceptance/ forgiveness	Reintegration/ binding	Reparation
Lord’s Supper in South Africa	Protest rituals (e.g. walking out)		Reconciliation rituals			
New proposed stages	Breach	Crisis and diagnostics	Redress/ therapeutic	Acceptance and forgiveness	Binding or schism	Common external mission

Table 1. Typology/stages of ritual

Each column of this table captures a ritual context that might precipitate ritual action: for example, one might have protest rites early on in the process of reconciliation, when ritual agents are still demanding their needs to be taken seriously in the context of a hostile or indifferent regime. “Redressive” action from the regime might be positive (conciliatory changes in policy) or negative (repressive action). Positive action might provoke a therapeutic rite that affirms the oppressed group’s right to power and resources. Later in the process, separate rituals of acceptance or reintegration might allow the formerly oppressed group (now having equal access to power) to reimagine their narrative being bound or (re)integrated into the broader social context.⁹ At every stage of the process, ritual both reveals and changes the existing landscape: individuals enter each ritual with ideologies and goals, and ritual aids the formation and reformation of goals and the sorting and resorting of individuals into groups committed to these goals.

8) Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 140-142; see also the inclusion of confession and absolution in the Reformation Lord’s Supper liturgies, 60-62.

9) Reparation, in this context, refers to rituals that bring a social conflict to a final, symbolic conclusion, rather than, as in contemporary U.S. political discourse, to a system for the efficient redistribution of goods (Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 113).

Social drama, according to V. Turner, is precipitated by “the breach of a norm, the infraction of a rule of morality, law, custom or etiquette in some public arena.”¹⁰ A crisis results when “members of a group inevitably take sides.”¹¹ “The elders, lawmakers, judges, priests, and law enforcers” may attempt to defuse the situation, but if their interventions are inadequate, “a mounting crisis follows ... seeming peace becomes overt conflict and covert antagonisms become visible.”¹² Critically, in Turner’s work with the Ndembu, a social crisis occurred when a breach exposed simmering tensions in group life: “among the Ndembu, prolonged social dramas always revealed the related sets of oppositions that give Ndembu social structure its tensile character.”¹³ “Protest rituals,” like marches, writing, fasting, and boycotts, can be used to publicize one’s allegiance to a particular faction.¹⁴

Disputes over an alleged breach are sometimes disputes over competing norms. In healing rites, divination investigates competing potential causes of affliction¹⁵; analogously, social reconciliation rites negotiate competing norms for group allegiance.¹⁶ In healing rites, divination is done by symbolically interpreting and manipulating the patient’s own body (gestures, postures, pain, speech) and social relationships. For example, in Edith Turner’s analysis of the Ihamba rite, the patient verbally diagnoses her experience of illness, including both bodily manifestations and social dissonance.¹⁷ The elderly patient complained about being neglected by some of her adult children, who reacted to her accusations, complained about unfair divisions of labor, and attributed her anger to the ill-will of an afflicting spirit.¹⁸ Diagnosis and redressive action are iterative: redressive action begins but the results of that action provide ongoing diagnostic information. The intensive regard of the children who have been neglecting the patient is an act of redress, and the daughter who has done the majority of the caretaking confronts her less engaged siblings, publically revealing the injustice of the distribution of caretaking duties. The healers attempt to draw the tooth of the spirit who is afflicting the patient, but the tooth they are drawing flies away. This implies, for Ndembu participants, that social dissonance is only one part of the illness. Another layer of the ritual diagnoses a spiritual affliction stemming from the posthumous interference of a dead family member and a family history of enslavement and

10) V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 70.

11) V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 10.

12) V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 10, 70.

13) V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 70.

14) Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 113.

15) Victor Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell, 1975), 207-209. I substitute the term “diagnosis” for “divination” in my analysis.

16) Wepener’s “confession” typology, including “verbal confessions of guilt; documents such as acknowledgements of guilt,” etc., is a diagnostic technique. Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 113.

17) Edith L. B. Turner, *Experiencing Ritual: A New Interpretation of African Healing*, 3. paperback printing, Series in Contemporary Ethnography (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 60.

18) E. Turner, 61-64.

estrangement.¹⁹ Diagnostic ritual techniques crystallize the symbols of distress so as to address that distress, and diagnostics iteratively give way to redress until the distress is eased.

Ndembu practitioners do not assume they know the cause of disease, so each practitioner has significant creative agency in interpreting the disease and expressing their interpretation within the ritual. Healing and social reintegration do not depend upon perfect consensus about the causes of the affliction; rather, significant ambiguity can be tolerated by the community. The performance of the ritual in part preserves space for variant interpretations of the distress, and the relief of distress frees the community from further negotiating causes.

Does social reconciliation have analogous techniques for diagnosing and redressing social illness? In the remainder of this essay, I use the Lutheran-Catholic “Common Prayer” commemoration of the Reformation in the Lund Cathedral on October 31, 2016 as a case study to demonstrate (1) this ecumenical ritual roughly follows Wepener’s typological analysis; (2) a reconciliation ritual may include diagnostic techniques to negotiate ideological conflicts over norms; (3) one ritual may occupy multiple “stages” or “typologies” to improve group consensus; and (4) some techniques serve as “hinge points” that allow an assembly to progress towards social reconciliation.

2 Positionality and method

The Lund liturgy (1) took place among ecumenical activists personally invited in the Lund cathedral; it was (2) simultaneously broadcast live over YouTube; (3) the video archive is still available to watch on YouTube; and (4) there was a published liturgical text. I am interested in how (2), (3), and (4) engage an uninvited audience who have conflicting ideas about the normative status of Christian unity. I did participant observation of the live broadcast and the archived video. Although my experiential exposure to the liturgy is limited compared to someone who was present in person, that limitation is also pertinent to the research question about the way the liturgy reaches its broader audience. Cameras and film crew are mediating ritual experts, a fact I accept without making it the focus of this article.²⁰

I am a liturgical theologian and ritual theorist who is actively engaged in ecumenical work in the United States, serving as a Roman Catholic representative on two national dialogues and one exploratory dialogue. As such, I am deeply informed by and engaged in the ecumenical movement.

19) E. Turner, 74-82.

20) For more on participation in recorded liturgy, see Kimberly H. Belcher, Kevin G. Grove, and Sonja K. Pilz, “Recording as the Re-Membering Work of the People: A Catholic-Jewish Dialogue on the Body and Liturgical Memory,” *Studia Liturgica* 51, no. 2 (September 2021): 122-42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00393207211033997>; for more on the ways online or virtual ethnography transforms researcher positionality, see Sladjana V. Nørskov and Morten Rask, “Observation of Online Communities: A Discussion of Online and Offline Observer Roles in Studying Development, Cooperation and Coordination in an Open Source Software Environment,” *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 12, no. 3 (September 16, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.3.1567>.

The reflexive work I have done in this participant observation, then, consisted especially of bracketing some of these commitments to engage the ways the Lund liturgy speaks symbolically beyond the community of ecumenical insiders. My identity as teacher or teacher-scholar is probably just as influential (though more invisible) as that of ecumenist and theologian. Students, mostly undergraduate non-theology majors, watched the liturgy in class or in homework over the course of six years and asked questions from quite different locations, amplifying my critical distance. I enter Lund as a native and activist participating observer.²¹ I am “studying up,”²² since subjects of this study and ritual experts in ecumenism have ample opportunities to publish their own interpretations.

As in the work of Ronald Grimes, this case studies is a short term study of an unusual rite that illuminates distinctive aspects of the methods of participant observation and the structures and limits of ritual theory.²³ Here I evaluate, expand, and refine theoretical work on ritual reconciliation and social drama.

3 The Lund liturgy: ritual reconciliation

The Lund liturgy takes its place in a long-standing historical social drama and negotiates internal social dramas in both Lutheran and Catholic circles. 100 years ago, both Lutherans and Catholics interpreted the schism between them as irrevocable, final, and justified. During the 20th century, a new norm for unity arose based on (1) extensive reflection on John 17 and other scriptural texts about unity²⁴ and (2) the growing understanding of baptized believers in Christ outside one’s own church as “other Christians” rather than as heretics.²⁵ This new norm calls into question older norms about doctrinal purity, ecclesial superiority, and confessional identity.²⁶ The words “Lutherans” and “Catholics” in the rite are umbrella terms that ritually negotiate the conflict between normative unity and purity.

21) For further discussion of these terms, see for instance, Kirin Narayan, “How Native Is a ‘Native’ Anthropologist?,” *American Anthropologist* 95, no. 3 (1993): 671-86; Harry F. Wolcott, *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing* (Rowman Altamira, 1999).

22) Laura Nader, “Up the Anthropologist--Perspectives Gained From Studying Up,” in *Reinventing Anthropology*, ed. D. H. Hymes (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 284-311.

23) Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory* (Waterloo, Canada: Ritual Studies International, 2010), 1-2.

24) “The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” John 17:22-23.

25) Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017; Report* (Leipzig: Bonifatius, 2013), chapter V.

26) See for example Kimberly Hope Belcher, *Eucharist and Receptive Ecumenism: From Thanksgiving to Communion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Not every Lutheran or every Catholic accepts this new norm.²⁷ The rite and the report *From Conflict to Communion* (see footnote 25) negotiate subsidiary conflicts between Catholics who see the Reformation as a heretical break and ecumenical Catholics, between Lutherans who see it as a heroic revolution and ecumenical Lutherans. “Even today, many Catholics associate the word »Reformation« first of all with the division of the church, while many Lutheran Christians associate the word »Reformation« chiefly with the rediscovery of the gospel, certainty of faith and freedom.”²⁸

The Lund liturgy negotiates its primary breach (between “Lutherans” and “Catholics”) in its *ordo*, wherein symbolic words, actions, and persons are manipulated *dynamically*: in this sense, each part,

	0	1	2	3	4	5
New proposed ritualized stages	Breach	Negotiating competing accounts of crisis; diagnosis	Redress/ therapeutic	Acceptance and forgiveness	Binding or schism	Mission
Ritual Technique		Representation of factions and identities, symbols of potential causes of breach	Narrating the past, creative reinterpretation	Physical gesture, emotional valence, participation, present	Unitive action together, projecting a future	Acting together in the world outside
Lund liturgy: fixed or recurrent symbols		Visual equality of presiders; mixed choirs and seating	“The centripetal force of Baptism”; the Holy Spirit; the shedding of blood and refugees	Shared music; the Lund cross; the shared liturgical space; members of the dialogue	Global spread of the Gospel; Children; the long journey	God’s mercy; Refugees from violence
Lund liturgy: structural phases of the liturgy		Opening, thanksgiving, and repentance	Narrative building about the Reformation; Repentance section; proclamation of the Gospel	“Sign of forgiveness and peace”; proclamation of the Gospel; Creed	Five Imperatives	Fifth Imperative; Signing of joint document

Table 2. Stages of the Lund liturgy as a rite of social reconciliation.

27) For example, there are Lutheran churches that are not members of the Lutheran World Federation in part because of their distrust for the ecumenical movement; there are schismatic Catholic churches who do not approve of ecumenical overtures to Protestants. There are also members of LWF member churches and of the Roman Catholic Church who disapprove of ecumenism.

28) *From Conflict to Communion*, 13, #9.

text, or action of the liturgy might represent a particular stage of progress toward unity. There are also *fixed or recurrent symbols* of unity that remain active throughout the rite, such as the ministers, vestments, and liturgical environment. At the same time, some of these permanent symbols address the secondary breach and crisis of the dispute over what “Lutheran” and “Catholic” mean; whether unity between Lutherans and Catholics is a norm against which the schism can be understood as a breach. The diachronic symbolism of the structure of the liturgy creates an ecumenical narrative that tells of ecumenical progress; the fixed symbols express core messages of redress, forgiveness, and binding (the shared foundation of baptism, the trust in God’s mercy, and hope for the future) to be retrieved synchronically throughout the rite and afterwards by means of visual memory. In the analysis to follow, I will distinguish between fixed or recurrent features that perdure through the whole liturgy and dynamic symbols that manifest various stages successively.

3.1 Breach, crisis, and diagnosis techniques

The critical question negotiated or diagnosed by each communion in the Lund liturgy is whether confessional identity depends on rejecting the ecumenical other, or whether it can instead be maintained by rapprochement and embrace of the other. The ongoing tensions activated by the Lund liturgy can be visualized as an open trapezoid, and symbolic ritual techniques can “tip” the weight of the diagram in one direction or another (Figure 1). Catholic identity can be performed as an opposition to Lutheran identity, for instance by a singular emphasis on the Pope in white, or as an openness to other Christians, as at Lund by having Pope and Catholic and Lutheran bishops and other ministers together. In managing the overt breach between Lutherans and Catholics, the liturgy also activates tensions between ecumenical and enclave understandings of Lutheranism and Catholicism.²⁹ Commemorations have played a significant role in tipping the symbolic balance of identity: “In 1617 . . . the conflicts of the Reformation period were re-enacted during the first centenary; old bad images of the other were re-activated and mutual hostility increased.”³⁰ *From Conflict to Communion* also acknowledges that previous commemorations tipped the momentum of the churches away from unity with one another.³¹

29) Theodor Dieter explains how the “commemoration” (instead of “celebration”) of the Reformation likewise negotiates these internal tensions: “The Ecumenical Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in Western Europe,” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 17, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1474225X.2017.1296629>; see also Theodor Dieter, “Der ökumenische Gottesdienst in Lund am 31. Oktober 2016. Ein theologischer Kommentar,” *Theologie der Gegenwart* 60 (2017), 301-314. On “enclave theology,” see George Hunsinger, *The Eucharist and Ecumenism: Let Us Keep the Feast* (New York: Cambridge, 2008), 1.

30) Dieter, “Ecumenical Commemoration,” 11-12; the dialogue document names these challenges in *From Conflict to Communion*, 12, #6.

31) “Because these accounts of the past were mostly oppositional, they not infrequently intensified the conflict between the confessions and sometimes led to open hostility.” *From Conflict to Communion*, 12, #8.

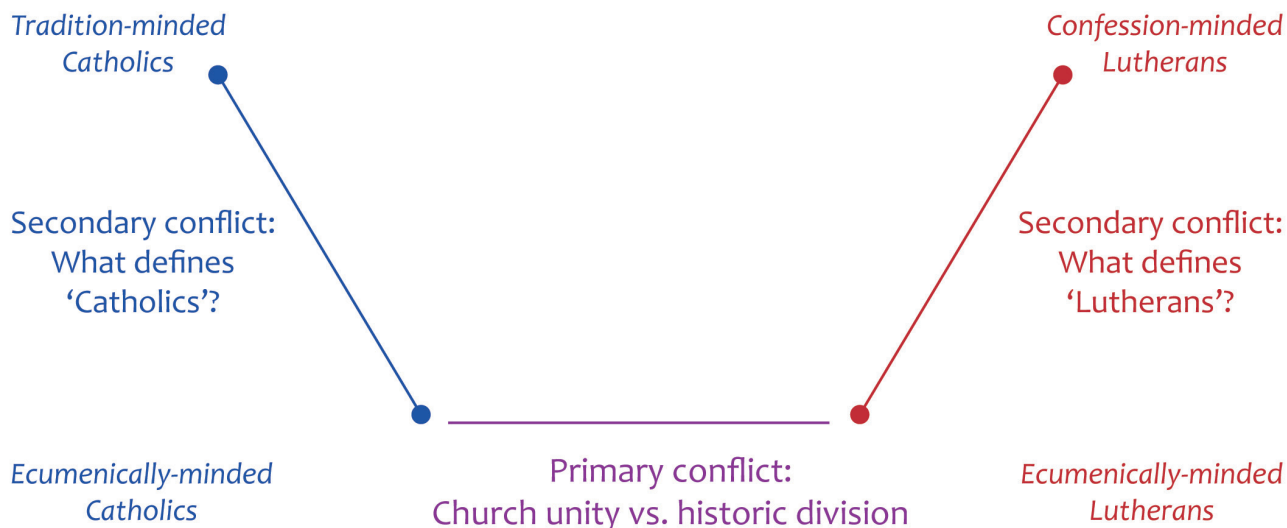


Figure 1. Interconnected primary and secondary conflicts negotiated in the Lund liturgy.

From Conflict to Communion renarrates Reformation history through the lens of mutual love and respect between contemporary Catholics and Lutherans. “Historical remembrance always selects from among a great abundance of historical moments and assimilates the selected elements into a meaningful whole.”³² Renarration is a literary technique that recombines symbolic events and persons from history to align with the norm of Christian unity. The Lund liturgy, in turn, performatively enacts this new history.

In the Lund liturgy, the visible space of the rite is one important fixed symbolic technique for diagnosis of the crisis. The procession capitalizes on the symbolic condensation of the key leaders of each church (Pope Francis and Cardinal Kurt Koch for the Roman Catholic Church, then-President Munim Younan and then-General Secretary Martin Junge of the Lutheran World Federation for Lutherans). For the diagnostic and redressive part of the liturgy (dynamic symbolism), the space at the front of the church is punctuated by the four presiders, the two choirs, the five candles, and the Salvadoran cross (Figure 2). The top level of Lutheran and Catholic leadership are visually set apart and aligned with one another as co-presiders, representing a norm of incipient unity, while the other ministers of the rite are not identified as Lutherans or Catholics by their dress.

For the liturgy to be effective as a symbol of the unity norm, Lutherans and Catholics as broadly as possible across the “secondary conflict” spectra must be able to identify the primary presiders with their tradition. Thus, the four presiders process together and are seated together on the dais before the altar table, carefully coequal, alternating between Catholic and Lutheran presiders, with The Reverend Munim Younan (then-president of the Lutheran World Federation) and Pope Francis (bishop of Rome and head of the Roman Catholic Church) in the center. Francis and Kurt Cardinal Koch (president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity) wear zucchetos (skullcaps), visu-

32) *From Conflict to Communion*, 12, #8.

ally “Catholic.” Koch is in his everyday cardinal’s dress (“Catholic”), but the other three presiders are all wearing white albs or surplices with a red stole, the proper liturgical color for Reformation Day in the Lutheran churches. The pope is a powerful symbol of Catholic identity; his wearing the same vestment as the Lutheran co-presiders communicates the Lutheran church’s equal dignity and ecclesial status, negotiating within the Catholic secondary conflict. For Lutheran confessional identity, the Pope’s red stole signifies an entrance into the properly Lutheran liturgical calendar.³³ The visual appearance of the presiders thus communicates an ecumenical norm.

The visible and audible evidence of the global diversity of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church also symbolically relativizes the historic division that began in Northern Europe. Two of the three presiders were from the Southern Hemisphere and a third was a refugee; the illuminated cross was made for the celebration by a Lutheran El Salvadoran refugee; the music included a wide range of global instrumentation and languages; and choir members were dressed in a variety of folk costumes from throughout the world. As a result, the sensory and symbolic impact of the rite serves as a reminder of the way these two traditions have transcended the context of their schism.

The text and actions during the first three parts of the rite (opening, thanksgiving, and repentance) also balance the horizontal Lutheran-Catholic ecumenical relationship with negotiation of subsidiary questions about Lutheran and Catholic identity. Younan, as Lutheran main presider, gave the initial welcome, marking the Lutherans as hosts, but Koch finished his sentence: “On this journey, mutual understanding and trust have grown” (Yunan). “So it is possible for us to gather today” (Koch).³⁴ This performance of ecumenical nearness, however, is followed by acknowledgment of a full spectrum of emotional responses: “We come with different thoughts and feelings of thanksgiving and la-



Figure 2. Overview of the liturgical space during the opening part of the liturgy. Photo: The Lutheran World Federation/Mikael Ringlander, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lutheranworld/32914960505/in/album-72157678779580530/>. This and all photos of the Lund liturgy in this article are distributed by the Lutheran World Federation and authorized for use with credit (see note and link to the Flickr collection at <https://www.lutheranworld.org/lund2016>, accessed September 28, 2022).

33) Wepener mentions the role of “temporal symbolic” markers in *From Fast to Feast*, 208.

34) *Common Prayer*, 11-12.

ment, joy and repentance, joy in the Gospel and sorrow for division.”³⁵ Acknowledging various starting points, Koch goes on to articulate the joint purpose of the liturgy: “remembrance, in thanksgiving and confession, and in common witness and commitment.”³⁶

The rite performatively rereads Lutheran thanksgiving and Catholic lament. Junge continues the opening rite with a quotation from *From Conflict to Communion*:

[W]hen Lutheran *Christians* remember the events that led to the particular formation of their churches, they do not wish to do so without their Catholic *fellow Christians*. In remembering with each other the beginning of the Reformation, they are taking their baptism seriously. (my emphasis)³⁷

Speaking as one in authority and with gravity, Junge represents Lutheranism in ecumenical relationship, and the text reinforces this with its repetition of “Christians ... fellow Christians.” The mention of baptism reminds participants of the value of baptism for both Lutherans and Catholics, as well as of the importance of the mutual recognition of baptism that has played such an important role in the 50-year journey to this point.

The section on thanksgiving renarrates thanksgiving for the Reformation as a gift offered by Lutherans to other Christians, rather than celebrated by Lutherans against other Christians. Again Junge reads the text:

Lutherans are thankful in their hearts for what Luther and the other reformers made accessible to them: the understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and faith in him; the insight into the mystery of the Triune God who gives Himself to us human beings out of grace and who can be received only in full trust in the divine promise; the freedom and certainty that the gospel creates; in the love that comes from and is awakened by faith, and in the hope in life and death that faith brings with it; and in the living contact with the Holy Scripture, the catechisms, and hymns that draw faith into life. Lutherans want to share this gift with all other Christians.³⁸

In his role as General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Junge here *performs* a transition from remembering the Reformation as a fight between Lutherans and Catholics to seeing it as a gift from Lutherans to the whole Christian church.

Koch’s following reading quotes from authoritative Second Vatican Council document *Unitatis Redintegratio*, an emphasis on authority echoes by his rank and his position as head of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity. Like Junge’s address, this text shifts the rite’s performance of Catholicism towards the ecumenical end of the diagram. His reading continues, “In this spirit,

35) *Common Prayer*, 12.

36) *Common Prayer*, 12.

37) *From Conflict to Communion*, 80, #221.

38) *Common Prayer*, 13; quoting from *From Conflict to Communion*, 81 - 82, #225-226.

Catholics and Lutherans embrace each other as sisters and brothers in the Lord. Together they rejoice in the truly Christian gifts that they both have received and rediscovered in various ways through the renewal and impulses of the Reformation. These gifts are reason for thanksgiving.”³⁹ This statement, beginning “Catholics and Lutherans,” marks a hinge point. Before this point, Catholics and Lutherans are two speakers in the rite, and there is explicit mention of different feelings; after this the two groups are always treated as one liturgical actor in the rite, expressing the same feelings to God together. This hinge point initiates the work of redress, forgiveness, binding, and common mission, even as the negotiation over subsidiary conflict continues through the repentance section.

The Repentance section gives “room for both Lutherans and Catholics to experience the pain over failures and trespasses, guilt and sin in the persons and events that are being remembered.”⁴⁰ In place of blame for the other, the repentance section emphasizes shared responsibility and mutual regret:

Lutherans and Catholics often focused on what separated them from each other rather than looking for what united them. They accepted that the Gospel was mixed with the political and economic interests of those in power. Their failures resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. We deeply regret the evil things that Catholics and Lutherans have mutually done to each other.⁴¹

The mention of interdenominational violence challenges anti-ecumenical Catholics and Lutherans with the possible results of enclave confessionalism.⁴²

3.2 Redressive ritual techniques

Redress (V. Turner) in social drama is a social containment on the extent of the breach, with the goal of preventing a final schism:

In order to limit the contagious spread of *breach* certain adjustive and redressive mechanisms ... are brought into operation by leading members of the disturbed group ... Such ritual involves a ‘sacrifice,’ literal or moral, a victim as scapegoat for the group’s ‘sin’ of redressive violence.⁴³

Wepener’s ‘healing or therapeutic or purification’ rituals include creative reinterpretations like telling

39) *Common Prayer*, 13.

40) *Common Prayer*, 14, *From Conflict to Communion*, 80, #228.

41) *Common Prayer*, 14 (read by Koch).

42) These quotations come from comments from students in my classes (both Catholics and Lutherans) who were exposed to anti-ecumenical confessionalization but had not heard of ecumenism before my undergraduate course, which begins by watching parts of the Lund liturgy. This reading is inevitably identified as an effective admonition against anti-ecumenical confessionalization.

43) V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 70-71.

narratives and making art as well as symbolic reversals of the damage (exorcisms and gathering at spaces remembered for injustice).⁴⁴

Redress is communicated in the Lund liturgy by recurrent motifs of baptism, the Holy Spirit, and martyrdom. These are recognized as ecclesial qualities among Lutherans by Catholic official documents and vice versa. The proclamation of the Gospel of mercy, too, is a redressive motif, inasmuch as both Gospel and mercy are central Reformation themes that are very important to Pope Francis. Junge explicitly rejects an enclave reading of John 15:1-5: “we have seen one another as branches separated from the true vine, Christ.”⁴⁵ Rather, those who chose, even before the beginning of official dialogues, to see one another as partners should inspire contemporary Catholics and Lutherans: “I feel deep gratitude for those bold prophets. As they lived and witnessed together they began to see one another no longer as separated branches but as branches united to Jesus Christ... even in those periods of history when dialogue was broken between us, Christ continued talking to us.” Junge exhorts Lutherans and Catholics today “to rely trustfully on the centripetal force of Baptism” (45:45).

The Repentance section of the liturgy is especially dedicated to the work of redress. It follows the jubilant “Reamo Leboga” (a Botswanan thanksgiving) and is composed of three parts: first, the readings already mentioned in 3.1; second, a prayer of repentance in three parts with a repeated response known as the “Kyrie from Syria, as taught by Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, Syria”; third, the sharing of peace. Each of these elements redresses aspects of Lutheran-Catholic alienation.

In the Repentance section, creative renarration of the Reformation continues: Lutherans along with Catholics lament the schism and the history of violence associated with it. Shared narrative and shared emotive expression⁴⁶ that allows Lutherans and Catholics to speak of their divisive history in a unitive way. The prayers “lament ... unintended negative consequences,” “*traemos ante ti el peso de las culpas del pasado*,”⁴⁷ and “confess” the ongoing perpetuation of division. In a nuanced fashion, these prayers acknowledge shared institutional responsibility without suggesting that contemporary Christians are guilty of their predecessors’ sins. Rather than the “scapegoat” that appears in V. Turner’s theory, the sacrifice of Lund presupposes a theology of participation. Christian unity is a participation in the unity of God, such that what is sacrificed in ecumenical reconciliation is the attachments Christians have to past narratives and attitudes of division. “*Traemos ante ti*” suggests that letting go of the past is a moral sacrifice, while the assembly’s standing posture and the Kyrie serve as a sym-

44) Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 113.

45) Junge’s homily was delivered in Spanish, as was Francis’s. This translation is the official one provided in a split screen. I am not a native speaker, but my Spanish is adequate to understand this liturgy.

46) See Roman Jakobson, “Closing Statements: Linguistics and Poetics,” in Thomas A. Sebeok, *Style In Language* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1960), 350-377. The Lund liturgy also depends on the production of a shared context, channel, and code.

47) *Oración Común*, 15. Official English translation: “We bring before you the burdens of the guilt of the past when our forebears did not follow your will that all be one in the truth of the Gospel,” *Common Prayer*, 15.

bolic offering.⁴⁸ Freed from these burdensome attachments, Christians are better able to participate in God’s unitive Spirit. This theological point is explicitly acknowledged in the transition to the Peace: “In Christ, we receive forgiveness and reconciliation and we are strengthened for a faithful and common witness in our time.”⁴⁹

3.3 Acceptance and forgiveness ritual techniques

At first glance, “acceptance and forgiveness” and “binding or schism” stages may seem difficult to differentiate. Indeed, both fall under V. Turner’s “reintegration or schism” stage. Wepener distinguishes them by representative examples: acceptance or forgiveness is marked by “embracing; shaking hands; prayers; smoking; blessing; washing of hands; the use of crystals” and reintegration or binding rituals are marked by “eating and drinking together; declarations; register of reconciliation; symbolic funeral; sprinkling (with blood, for example); dancing.”⁵⁰ The ritual techniques of acceptance and forgiveness seem to be directed towards one another by representatives of those who were previously at odds with one another; ritual gestures of binding (or of schism) have to do with common action with one another, but not necessarily towards one another.

The Lund liturgy supports this distinction: acceptance and forgiveness stretches from the blessing and sign of the cross after the Kyrie through the Creed; binding enacts the Five Commitments that were published in *From Conflict to Communion*. Acceptance gestures are offered to one another; binding commits to act together in future. The sign of forgiveness and peace is a familiar ritual technique for both Lutherans and Catholics. While the choir sang, the presiders exchanged peace with one another and with the readers with an embrace of one another’s upper arms, two cheek kisses, and a few inaudible words (Figure 3). Their bearing towards one another was warm. They proceeded to greet other ministers as the song continued. Meanwhile, in the assembly, the greeting was relatively briefer. Since the pews were roped off, assembly members were also limited in the range of their greetings, so that the peace in the as-



Figure 3. The sign of peace. “_ECU3211,” Photo: The Lutheran World Federation/Marie Renaux, Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lutheranworld/32534743450/>.

48) The Kyrie was taught to the ecumenical community by Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim of Syria, the Syrian Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo, who was kidnapped by ISIS in 2013 and is still missing.

49) *Common Prayer*, 15.

50) Wepener, *From Fast to Feast*, 113. There is significant overlap between the latter category and Wepener’s “reparation” category: “symbolic graduation ceremonies; the return of property; verbal acknowledgement.”

sembly was much shorter than on the dais.

The effectiveness of the sign of forgiveness and peace as a ritual technique of acceptance and forgiveness rested on three of its elements. First, it was an embodied ritual gesture readily interpreted in both traditions. Second, it allowed for improvisation that allowed both participants and viewers to verify the emotional register of reconciliation: when Francis and Younan embrace, their handgrip and Francis's smile are visible on the camera, confirming the emotional valence of mutual acceptance and love. Third, it united both representation and participation: the gestures on the dais between representatives were very visible, but the assembly also exchanged the peace. On the Lutheran World Federation YouTube channel, there are two comments from viewers who were touched by watching this moment. One of them described the limitations of the roped-off pews from the perspective of a viewer: "we missed a great opportunity to come together across the aisle during the sharing of the peace ... with their brothers and sisters in Christ."⁵¹ The word "we" reveals the effective representation and participation of the sign, despite its limitation. Each of these elements roots the symbolic performance of the liturgy in real action outside the liturgy: confirming the connection between the Lund liturgy and the liturgical life of the two churches; confirming those leading the ecumenical movement feel true respect and mutual care for one another; and confirming that the representatives truly represent a rapprochement in which other Lutherans and Catholics participate.

The fixed symbol of the Lund cross made by Christian Chavarría Ayala represents the acceptance and forgiveness motif, manifesting partial unity between common baptism and a shared eucharistic table. At the bottom, the font and the vine emphasize Lutheran and Catholic mutual recognition of one another's baptism and being grounded in the one vine. At the top, Christ raises his arms in an invitation to the table. A diverse crowd responds to this invitation with various postures of rejoicing and praise, but no one is yet eating and drinking together. The colorful walls are coming down, but they are not gone. The cross represents the present state of ecumenical relationships between Lutherans and Catholics.⁵²

It is the stage of acceptance and forgiveness in the Lund liturgy that the ritual techniques visibly correspond to real, lasting commitments that transcend the ritual environment. The ritual techniques communicate this by the assembly's participation in physical, familiar, emotional actions paradigmatically performed by their representatives.

51) John Nelson, comment on Lutheran World Federation YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plkK6zNHP_o&lc=UghuglDO_CKLnXgCoAEC, accessed September 28, 2022. Perhaps this comment assumes, as some of my students did, that Lutherans and Catholics are seated on opposite sides of the church, which is not the case; perhaps he simply meant that a larger gesture would have been appropriate here.

52) See "The Salvadoran Cross," October 25, 2016, <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/salvadoran-cross>, accessed September 28, 2022.

3.4 Binding (or schism) ritual techniques

For V. Turner, either binding (“the reintegration of the disturbed social group—though, as like as not, the scope and range of its relational field will have altered”) or schism (“the social recognition of irreparable breach”) may be ritually marked.⁵³ The Lund liturgy, without enacting a final reconciliation of Lutherans and Catholics, publicly performs the Five Commitments of *From Conflict to Communion* as the binding of the rite. This unique ritual complex begins during the Apostles’ Creed, when a child pours water into a small baptismal font in the center of the nave. A large candle beside the font echoes the Paschal Candle, a sign of the one shepherd, Christ. Font, water, creed, candle, and children strongly evoke the mutual recognition of baptism that grounds the commitments. Each commitment is read aloud by a Lutheran and a Catholic, including members of the dialogue team that produced the document, grounding the liturgy in extra-ritual work. The introduction explicitly acknowledges the forward-looking character, and the commitments about the future, like Commitment 2: “Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith.”⁵⁴

After each commitment is read aloud, a child processes, carrying a lit taper, down the long nave, up two steps, around the altar table and past the four seated presiders, up fourteen more steps to the level where the Lund cross and the five tall candles are standing. Two children need the assistance of a taller server to light the large candle. The first child’s *transitus* takes two full minutes. She is wearing a black and white dress that reads “Hope,” and she walks deliberately, solemnly, and rhythmically, as the children’s choir sings “Give us light, O Lord,” in several languages. At 1:12:46, she hesitates because the flame of her candle, has suddenly shrunk. The flame flickers back, and she proceeds up the steps (Figure 4). The second child has to gather her choir robe in one hand to climb the steps. The physical challenges of managing the lit candle and the tall steps, with the children’s solemnity and care, powerfully evoke responsibility and futurity.

This ritualization of the Five Commitments symbolically condenses the slow, painstaking progress of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue and the urgency of its continuation into the future. Whereas in the sign of peace, the assembly participated, watching these young people carry their flames



Figure 4. Five commitments. “DSC_5018,” Photo: The Lutheran World Federation/Magnus Aronson, Flickr. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lutheranworld/32874700726/>.

53) Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 71.

54) *Common Prayer*, 17. Read in Spanish during the liturgy.

and navigate a space that seems too big for them encourages another kind of co-responsibility and investment. Every symbol of this part of the rite, from the font to the joint readers to the children and the large candles, symbolically speaks of a shared identity and responsibility: binding.

The binding of Catholics and Lutherans in this rite is symbolic and aspirational, not institutional. Rituals of social reconciliation manifest how individuals, factions, and groups within institutions are also engaged at particular stages of the process, so that the “stage” of reconciliation is a dynamic ritual negotiation between a rite and its participants. The symbolic elements that speak of binding and a bright future with regard to the primary breach negotiated in the Lund liturgy also protest disunity for Lutherans and Catholics who take it as a mundane, neutral fact; they may even feed schism for enclave groups. The emotional power of this part of the rite is a plea for the contested norm. Often, people ask what the good is of ritual practice towards reconciliation if it does not immediately lead to institutional and complete unity, but the Lund liturgy seduces viewers to a global, diverse, uplifting, confident, and solemn future, as a challenge and a task. Such images of the future facilitate consensus around the developing norm.

3.5 Reparative mission

The Fifth Commitment, unlike the first four, concerns the relationship of Lutherans and Catholics jointly to the outside world: “Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.”⁵⁵ This provides a hinge between binding (a shared future with repaired relationship) and a turn towards the outside world (recognition as one actor by other groups). “Redress” renarrates the past; “acceptance” reaches the other in the present; “binding” looks toward the future; but “reparative mission” concerns working with the other in the world. Perhaps this is specific to the Christian understanding of “church” as an instrument of service to the world,⁵⁶ or perhaps it holds in other social contexts. Here my analysis departs from Wepener’s, where “symbolic graduation ceremonies” occupy the final position (“reparation”). In the Lund liturgy, the binding has the sense of a symbolic graduation, but the final step is a turn towards a shared responsibility for the world.

After the Fifth Commitment, while the children’s choir sang the final refrain of “Give us light, O Lord,” a table dressed in white cloth was set in the front of the nave. Bishop Helga Haugland Byfuglien, then-Vice President of the Lutheran World Federation, introduced the “Joint Statement on the occasion of the Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation.”⁵⁷ The statement echoes the

55) *Common Prayer*, 17.

56) Second Vatican Council, “Lumen Gentium (‘Dogmatic Constitution on the Church’),” 1964, #9.

57) Francis and Munib A. Younan, “Joint Statement on the Occasion of the Joint Catholic-Lutheran Commemoration of the Reformation” (Lutheran World Federation, January 27, 2017), <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resources-joint-statement-occasion-joint-catholic-lutheran-commemoration-reformation>, accessed September 28, 2022.

Lund cross in looking forward to an eventual celebration of communion: “Many members of our communities yearn to receive the eucharist at one table as the concrete expression of full unity. We long for this wound in the body of Christ to be healed.” Two binders were set before Francis and Younan, who turned to the last page and signed, then passed each document across, while the camera closed in on each man’s hand for one signature. As they stand, the assembly broke into applause. Younan handed one binder to Francis and embraced him (Figure 5). Francis and Younan wave, and the assembly stands, still clapping. The four chairs are restored, and Junge and Koch rejoin Francis and Younan in front of the altar, while the table and chairs are removed from the nave level.

The Lund liturgy continues with prayer for the world: “‘Ecumenical engagement for the unity of the church does not serve only the church but also the world so that the world may believe.’ Let us now pray for the world, the church and all those in need.”⁵⁸ The prayers focused on situations in need of healing and flourishing⁵⁹ and were read in a variety of different languages. Each petition closed with “Show us your mercy” and was followed by the sung response “Kyrie eleison.” Most of the readers were young adults serving as cross- or torch-bearers. After this litany, the assembly prayed the Lord’s Prayer, each in her or his own language, a murmuring cacophony.

The experience of mission, in evangelization of manifold cultures and in provision for the material and immaterial needs of the poor throughout the world, has long been a spur for ecumenism. Diversity of culture and language, solidarity and support for human and ecological suffering, manifests Lutherans and Catholics as partners in service. The second half of the event, at the Malmö Arena, verified and continued this dimension of the liturgical structure by means of the signing of “Together in Hope,” the Declaration of Intent between Caritas Internationalis and The Lutheran World Federation – World Service, which concretizes the Fifth Commitment in work for refugees and migrants, humanitarian aid, peace efforts, and interfaith work.⁶⁰



Figure 5. Younan and Francis embrace. “_MR19363,” Photo: The Lutheran World Federation/ Mikael Ringlander, Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lutheranworld/32874684766/in/album-72157678779580530/>.

58) *Common Prayer*, 18; quoting *From Conflict to Communion*, 88, #243.

59) According to the published English booklet.

60) “Together in Hope: Declaration of Intent between Caritas Internationalis and The Lutheran World Federation – World Service,” Lutheran World Federation and Caritas Internationalis, Malmö, Sweden, November 1, 2016, https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/2015/declaration_of_intent_caritas_internationalis_and_lwf_en.pdf, retrieved September 28, 2022.

Conclusion

The Lund liturgy shows several ritual techniques in social reconciliation rites. First, a single rite can encompass multiple stages of social drama, negotiating for each participant between competing factions, goods, and norms. Communities are usually at multiple stages of the process, and often perform rituals that simultaneously speak at all stages. Some complex rituals might contain all the parts of the process, while some stages might require many rituals to move the process forward. In addition to dynamic elements that express the diachronic character of the process of social drama, complex reconciliation rites contain fixed or recurrent elements that express aspects of the process in a synchronic way. This initiates new persons or factions and facilitates the acceptance of specific norms by members who are yet undecided.

The ‘crisis’ aspect is marked by diagnostic ritual that claims specific norms and performs particular interpretations of the contested identity. Diagnosis and ‘redress’ can be iterative: each act of redress responds to a specific interpretation of the crisis. Redress may take the form of creatively retelling a narrative of the past or of symbolically reversing the damage. Redress might uncover additional damage or misinterpretation, which will naturally spark new diagnostic ritual techniques. If redress is satisfactory to enough influential representatives of both parties, the process might proceed to ‘acceptance and forgiveness’, marked by a direct turn towards the other and rejection of past hostility. The gestures in this stage of the rite are familiar, emotive, and symbolize protracted redress outside the realm of ritual. This transparency to real redress likewise holds for ritual ‘binding’, which envisions a shared future. Compared to ‘redress’ and ‘acceptance’, ‘binding’ ritual actions no longer visually differentiate the two parties, but rather act together as one rather than towards one another.

The ‘reparative mission’ of the Lund liturgy is quite different from the ‘reparation’ found in the South African liturgical context. It is marked by a turn together outward towards the world, preferentially towards those who are materially suffering. More study is needed to determine whether this is idiosyncratic and contextual, particular to the character of Lutheran-Catholic schism and dialogue (as is the emphasis on baptism and mercy), or whether it is a broader ritual phenomenon. Perhaps the stages after redress are more fluid (as V. Turner’s picture of social drama might suggest) and turning outward is an aspect of binding/schism/reparation, which can be performed in various orders and configurations.

In the Lund liturgy, the norm of Christian unity competes with anti-ecumenical understandings of “Lutheran” and “Catholic” identity. The rite negotiates for a vision of Lutherans and Catholics as partners, each marked by global diversity, on a journey towards a shared eucharistic table. Symbolic allies for this interpretation include linguistic and cultural variety, baptism, God’s mercy, and the Holy Spirit. The global and multilingual character of Lutheran and Catholic faith, expressed together in multilingual and multicultural worship, relativizes the continental European character of the historical division, suggesting a way forward that need not be dominated by European disputes. The end of the

ritual action turns toward the needs of the poor and the oppressed and the joint call of Lutherans and Catholics to meet those needs, again a broader view is substituted for the view dominated by division.⁶¹ The ritual negotiates contesting viewpoints on religious identity and ecumenical engagement, not only as a capstone on five hundred years of Reformation and fifty years of dialogue, but also as an invitation to a new stage of Lutheran-Catholic joint engagement.

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61) “Catholics and Lutherans will underline that their pledge to leave conflict behind will not only remain among these two communions, but bear fruit in compassionate and loving service to the neighbor in a world wounded and fragmented by conflict, violence and ecological destruction,” Lund 2016 program introduction, 6.