

hymn and made comparisons with other forms of Lutheran sanctoral literature.

*Jeannine Olson* (Rhode Island College) offered comparisons between the tradition of the Genevan Psalter and the Lutheran hymn tradition. Noting obvious differences in musical practice, the seminar discussed whether or not emphases on praise and proclamation respectively characterized the Reformed and Lutheran theology of song.

*Christopher Brown* (Boston University, USA) presented on the schoolmistress Magdalena Heymair as a self-conscious imitator of Luther in theology and in hymn-writing. Her engagement with the Gnesio-Lutheran controversies, self-presentation, and support from

Lutheran clergy were explored as one sample of the influence of Luther's hymns and example on the following generations.

*Scott A. Moore* (Universität Erfurt) presented on his work with the renovations, especially of the font, at Luther's baptismal church in Eisleben. In this connection, the seminar focused in its final discussion of Luther's catechetical hymns on *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam* and its depiction of the relationship between word, sign and sight, and faith, pointing to the simultaneous theological depth and clarity of Luther's hymns and their continuing richness as a resource for modern liturgy and theological reflection.

## Luther's Critical Concept of Church

Seminar Leader: Kirsten Busch Nielsen

Reporter: Kirsten Busch Nielsen

In Luther's early writings (1520–1523) on church and ministry, an understanding of church is put forward which is both critical and »up-building,« complex and simple. Departing from an analysis of selected

key passages of these texts, it was the aim of the seminar *Luther's Critical Concept of Church* to discuss issues which seem crucial to any contemporary Lutheran »theory of the church.« Participants were in-

vited to propose relevant Luther texts for discussion and to present papers on the subject of the seminar.

On August 6, *Christine Pöder* (Aarhus/Tallinn) gave a paper on »Karl Barth's reception of Luther in his *Epistle to the Romans* with particular reference to the critical concept of religion and of the church.« Through the discussion recurring issues were the differences between the early and the later theology of both Luther and Barth. Repeatedly, the negative rhetoric of the *Epistle to the Romans* was questioned as to how the transition from negativity to the positive communication should be reflected and, more generally, as to its fundamental theological capacity in the long run – thereby recognizing the fact that Barth eventually had to take leave of it and find another mode of doing theology. The affinity to the early Luther which Christine Pöder demonstrated in the presentation was discussed in some detail, and one participant pointed to the existence of a particularly radical reformed church that, rejecting Barth's theology, had a certain affinity to the early Luther. In the further discussion, the participants particularly questioned critically the overall radicalism of Barth's *Epistle to the*

*Romans* which was to a certain extent attributed to the historical situation and, particularly, to the German intellectuals supporting the war policy of Germany at the beginning of the First World War. The consequent eschatology and the affinity to mysticism were commented on. Finally, a participant pointed out the similarity between Barth and the theologians of the Swedish Luther renaissance which, contrary to the German Luther renaissance, would not interpret Luther extensively but rather use him as inspiration and authority for their own theology.

In the second session, on August 7, *Carl Axel Aurelius* (Lund/Copenhagen) under the heading »Luther's Understanding of *ecclesia abscondita*« presented a paper examining Luther's use of different characteristics when speaking of the church such as *invisibilis*, *abscondita* and *spiritualis*. Carl Axel Aurelius chose examples from Luther's early exegetical and polemical writings, not the least *Operationes in psalmos*. He stressed that these characteristics have their biblical setting. It means that for example Luther's talk about the hidden church (*ecclesia abscondita*) has to be seen in the light of his exploration of the 9<sup>th</sup> psalm of the

Book of Psalms. These early writings of Luther also present an understanding of the *notae ecclesiae* which later on was further developed in the writings *Von den Konziliis und Kirchen* and *Widder Hans Worst*. The discussion of the paper in the seminar dealt mainly with the meaning and the function of these signs or *notae*. Aurelius underlined the pastoral concern of Luther when developing his teaching on the *notae* as the answer to a question raised by »ein armer irriger Mensch.«

On August 8, Kirsten Busch Nielsen (Copenhagen) gave a paper on »Communio in Luther's 1519-sermon *Von dem hochwürdigen Sakrament des heiligen wahren Leichnams Christi* and in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Sanctorum Communio* (1927/1930).« A thematic move was taken from invisibility and hiddenness of the church in the previous discussions to the church as *communio*/»community« in this session. This move was motivated by the wish to investigate whether the critical interpretation of church which the notions invisibility and hiddenness in Luther's writings express is also part of Luther's interpretation of the church as *communio*. Kirsten Busch Nielsen briefly outlined the role of Luther's theol-

ogy in Bonhoeffer's writings. Drawing upon both Oswald Bayer and Joachim von Soosten she further showed in detail how the understanding of Christian community in the 1519-sermon is taken up by Bonhoeffer in one of the key chapters of *Sanctorum Communio*. What mostly inspired the young Bonhoeffer in his much debated »ecclesiological maximalism« thus was exactly the debated ecclesiology (and theology of sacraments) of the young Luther. The discussion dealt with the possibility of developing ecclesiology in a Lutheran context without giving up the difficult idea of the church as community. The participants particularly focused on Bonhoeffer's use of *notae* (as effective, heuristic and critical) and further unfolded the idea of vicarious representation.

In the final session, which took place on August 9, Josef Freitag (Erfurt) introduced a discussion of *Von Konziliis und Kirchen* (1539). For a start, he contextualized the text posing the leading questions, firstly regarding the concept of councils, questioning how the council could be enforced having no actual authority, and, secondly, how, then, unity of the church could be achieved, thereby pointing to the ecumenical significance of the text.

The discussion dwelt mainly on the meaning of the *notae ecclesiae*, being the subject of the chosen text excerpt. Particularly, the point was emphasized that the *notae* obviously were not regarded as criteria which the church had to meet in order to be church, but rather as means of sanctification (»heutstück Christlicher heiligung« thus substituting the debated sacramental terminology), as well as means of recognition – they are heuristic, as one participant pointed out, but they are not offering any security, being subject to eschatological re-

servation. Finally the participants discussed at some length the seventh sign of the cross, marking the transition of the signs of the church to the works of love. Particularly the notion of self-sacrifice was questioned. On one hand, it might be significant in the case of e.g. political resistance against totalitarianism. On the other hand, it might take the shape of self-imposed or meaningless suffering. It was concluded that the cross as a sign would (in contrast to self-chosen sacrifice) essentially be marked by absence of self-righteousness.

## Philosophical Psychology in Luther's Theology

Seminar Leader: Pekka Kärkkäinen

Reporter: Pekka Kärkkäinen

Throughout his career Luther showed a thorough acquaintance with the academic psychology of his time. This acquaintance sometimes expressed itself in his harsh criticism of scholastic applications of Aristotle's *De anima* in theology. During the last years of Luther's career, however, psychology was incorporated again into the curriculum of the University of

Wittenberg. The main idea of the Helsinki seminar was to read and discuss some of Luther's texts in comparison with texts on philosophical psychology found in certain natural philosophy treatises written by Luther's colleagues in Wittenberg.

The seminar sessions were based on discussions of particular themes and source texts related to