

Rev. Dr. Pat Ferry's Response

to a layperson's request for a statement regarding the newly-published annotated Luther's Large Catechism and the controversy about it in the LCMS

Dear [REDACTED],

There has been plenty of very animated discussion among us about the controversy over the CPH publication of the Large Catechism with Annotations and Contemporary Applications. No one would have expected such a stir given the scholarly credentials of editors and contributors, the thorough theological review process, and the strong endorsement of our church's leadership.

Unfortunately, this series of events underscores and exacerbates tensions and divisions that exist among us. To be sure, a lot of damage has been done—to the reputation of scholars, authors, editors—theological leaders in our church. Damage has also been done to our confidence in following well established processes for addressing grievances and complaints.

I would prefer not to weigh in on the Large Catechism publication crisis, and I am not interested in piling on President Harrison for his handling of the matter.

In the end, I believe he did the right thing by withdrawing the halt to publication and acknowledging that he had overstepped his authority in his original action. I am also glad that he addressed the overreach of those who attacked the scholarly integrity and personal character of contributors and editors.

There are enough substantive areas of differentiation for us to consider without casting a spotlight on this regrettable situation.

At the same time, I would continue to appeal to us all avoid tribalism, strive to walk closer together in unity and trust, and more intentionally to avoid those whose objective not only engenders chaos and confusion, but also deviates from the Church's Gospel proclamation.

While this response may not align with your own perspective on the matter, I am grateful for your question and your willingness to reach out to me.

Yours in Christ,

Pat Ferry