

The Influence of the *Deutsche Messe* on the Lutheran Liturgies That Followed

by Rev. Jerald P. Dulas
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Doctor Martin Luther wrote two Church Orders: The *Formula Missae* and the *Deutsche Messe*. Both of these Orders had an effect on the liturgies that would follow them in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. The *Formula Missae* was the more conservative in nature and was the basis of the Order of Service for the churches in Central and Northern Germany. Where the Lutheran Church came in touch with the Papists and the Calvinists—in Southwest Germany—the liturgies followed more the outline of the *Deutsche Messe*. In honor of the five hundredth anniversary of the publishing of the *Deutsche Messe*,¹ this paper will examine its influence on the other liturgies of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, not only in Germany, but also in the Scandinavian countries. This examination will have as its end goal what influence the *Deutsche Messe* has, if any, on the Lutheran liturgy that we have today.

The influence of the *Deutsche Messe* must be understood first from the perspective of the

¹ The *Deutsche Messe*, the German Mass, was first used at the parish church in Wittenberg on October 29, 1525. The following Sunday, Trinity 21, Luther explained to the congregation after the sermon the new Mass with these words: “We have begun to attempt to establish a German Mass. You are aware that the Mass is the chief external office appointed for the comfort of the true Christian. Therefore I beg you Christians to beseech God that this may please Him—if one does not himself order and establish, he may know that it pleases God. One should not fall into the idea that if he does not begin a thing himself, nothing will come of it. Therefore I have also so long restrained myself with reference to the German Masses, that I might give no cause to the evil spirits who thoughtlessly jump in without concern as to whether God wishes it. Now, however, since so many from all countries beseech me with letters and writings, and even bring worldly force to bear upon me, we can no longer excuse ourselves and protest, but must believe that it is God’s wish. If we produce something of our own, it shall perish and smell, even if it have the appearance of being beautiful and great. If, however, it be something of God’s, it must succeed, even though it appear foolish. All things which God does, even if they please no one, must have the right of way. Therefore I beseech you that you pray God, that if it be a rightly ordered Service, it may go forth to His praise and honor.” (*Works of Martin Luther*, Vol. 6, p. 111). Luther then continued to work on the liturgy, until it was used in its completed form on Christmas Day, 1525. The *Deutsche Messe* was officially published in early 1526. The *Formula Missae* continued to be used on weekday Services, and the *Deutsche Messe* was used, at least in parts, on Sundays in Wittenberg.

influence of the German Mass upon Martin Luther himself. Martin Luther was not the first to attempt and put forth a German Evangelical Mass. Although he had begun the movement for a vernacular service, claiming its necessity for the people, he was not the first to introduce a German Mass. It was the introduction of other German Masses that led to Luther's reluctance to publish one himself. The German Evangelical Masses that were put forth did not meet with Luther's approval. An example of this is the actions of Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt, the archdeacon and preacher of the Castle Church in Wittenberg.

He began reforms of the Roman rite as early as 1519, very gradually. Luther's presence in Wittenberg both encouraged Carlstadt to begin reforms, and also restrained him from making radical changes to the liturgy. After the Diet of Worms, however, when Luther was hidden away in the Castle of Wartburg, Carlstadt started making very radical changes to the Roman rite. Luther had secretly visited Wittenberg in December 1521 and sensed the unrest. The final straw for him regarding Carlstadt's reforms was when Carlstadt on Christmas Eve, 1521, conducted the entire Mass in German, and in street clothes. This led to Luther leaving the Wartburg on March 1st, 1522² to return to Wittenberg that he might preach what have come to be known as the "*Invocavit* Sermons." These are eight sermons during the week of *Invocavit* in 1522 addressing the radical reforms of Carlstadt, and other abuses that Luther observed.³

The actions of Carlstadt, because they confused and upset the laity, influenced Luther to hold off on introducing a German Mass. In fact, he restored the Latin Mass to its prior use after his return to Wittenberg from Wartburg Castle.

² He told the Elector that he no longer required his protection, because he had protection from a higher authority.

³ These can be found in *The Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes. Vol. 2*, pages 284-315, and in *Luther's Works, vol. 51*, p. 69ff. The topics addressed were: the chief things in Christianity, things necessary and free, marriage of priests and nuns, abuse of images, fasting, the right use of the Sacrament, the fruits of the Sacrament, and confession. These sermons were not published by Luther himself. He would later write a treatise "The Reception of Both Kinds in the Sacrament" which elaborated upon the principles of which he preached in the *Invocavit* sermons.

Another influence on Luther regarding the introduction of a German Mass was the introduction of several “Evangelical Masses” in various towns and cities.⁴ There were quite a few by the end of 1522. This prompted Luther to counsel moderation and delay. He even criticized some of the forms that were introduced. Part of this was that Luther never desired a completely vernacular Mass. He wanted Latin to be retained, at least in part, for the teaching of the language to the young, and for the benefit of those who understood Latin. Luther also believed that there needed to be a perfect marriage of text and tune. It was not enough to just translate the Latin rite into German and use the old chants.⁵

The third influence of Martin Luther to produce a German Mass was the proliferation of German Masses.⁶ In many cases these German Masses were highly influenced by the radical Reformers, who desired to create something that did away with everything from the historic rite, even that which was good. This proliferation of German Masses led to the proposal by Nicholas Hausmann to create a German Council to discuss a German Mass for all areas. When Luther learned that the intent was to make it mandatory for all places, he refused to meet. He told Hausmann, if that was the case, he could do it himself. This is another thing that influenced Luther’s reluctance to produce a German Mass. He believed that if he published a German Mass that everyone would believe that this should be the Mass for everyone. He did not desire complete uniformity. He did not desire to make a new law regarding worship like they had under

⁴ The first person to publish a German Mass was Kaspar Kantz, prior of the convent in Nördlingen. He introduced his in 1522. There were also German Masses in Basel by Wolfgang Wissenberger, and in Pforzheim by Johann Schwebel. Vernacular services appeared in twenty or more widely scattered districts in Germany.

⁵ An example of this is Thomas Münzer who published a German Mass, Matins, and Vespers in Alstädt. He put German words to the Latin plainsong melodies. This service was widely used in Brunswick and after some slight revisions became known as the “Erfurt *Kirchenamt*.” This service did not sound right to Luther who preferred German words set to German music.

⁶ In addition to the ones introduced in 1522 and 1523, by 1524 there were German Masses in Reutlingen, Wertheim, Königsberg, Nuremberg, and Strassburg. The first complete Mass in German was held in St. John’s Chapel of the Münster in Strassburg on Tuesday, February 16th, 1524. This Order introduced the *Nunc Dimittis* as the replacement for the Post-Communion.

the papacy.⁷

Luther did, however, eventually enlist Johann Bugenhagen and Justus Jonas to help with his German Service that was published in 1526. These two gentlemen, along with Johann Brenz, influenced most of the German Church Orders in the Sixteenth century.⁸ Johann Bugenhagen wrote seven Church Orders,^{9,10} including his Church Order of 1524, from which much of the *Deutsche Messe* finds its structure. Johann Brenz wrote five Church Orders.¹¹ Justus Jonas wrote four Church Orders.¹² Martin Luther wrote two, the *Formula Missae* (1523) and the *Deutsche Messe* (1526). These two Church Orders of Luther influenced many of the other Church Orders of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries.¹³ Indeed, when one examines the Church Orders of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, they see influences from both of Luther's Church Orders. More will be said about this throughout this paper.

⁷ See the author's paper, "I Desire to Make No Law" delivered at the April 2022 ELDoNA Colloquium.

⁸ Other notable names of those who wrote Church Orders are Philip Melancthon, Osiander, Spalatin, Cruciger, Myconius, Bucer, and Aurifaber. Although they differed in minor points, there is a unity of purpose and plan that can easily be grouped into families so that one can trace the influence upon each other. There are three main groups of Church Orders: Central Saxo-Lutheran, Ultra-conservative, and Mediating or Radical. When one talks about the Church Orders of the "greatest weight" it is the Orders in the Central Saxo-Lutheran group to which is referred. The Ultra-conservative sought to retain as much of the Roman rite as possible and still be called Lutheran. The Mediating or Radical sought to adopt as much of the Reformed influence as possible and still be called Lutheran.

⁹ The term "Church Order" refers to more than just the Order of Service. They contained lengthy statements of doctrine, regulations concerning church administration, organization of schools, care of the poor, preservation of church property, and detailed directions for worship. The latter was confined to what was called an "Agenda." These were often published separately.

¹⁰ Bugenhagen's Orders include Brunswick (1528), Hamburg (1529), Lübeck (1531), Pomeranian (1535), Denmark (1537), Schleswig-Holstein (1542), and Hildesheim (1544). His Wittenberg Order (1524) was an unpublished Order only used in Wittenberg. He also co-wrote the Wittenberg Order (1533) with Justus Jonas.

¹¹ His most notable and influential one is the Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) which he co-wrote with Osiander. This is the second most influential Church Order of the Sixteenth century, behind the Saxon Visitation Articles which served as the foundation for this Church Order. He is also responsible for the Württemberg Orders of 1553 and 1559. The Württemberg Orders are characterized by liturgical poverty being in the Mediating or Radical group of Church Orders. These Orders were, however, very influential Orders, influencing the Orders of Schwäbisch-Hall (1543), Baden (1556), Pfalz (1557), and Worms (1560). They did not, as Edward T. Horn puts it in "The Lutheran Sources of the Common Service", page 243, "follow the Lutheran type Service."

¹² His most influential Church Order, in addition to Wittenberg (1533) which was co-written with Bugenhagen, is the Duke Henry of Saxony (1539). This Order became the standard bearer for Saxony and was still in use in towns like Dresden and Leipzig, with small variations, in the time of Johann Sebastian Bach.

¹³ See in the Appendix "A Table of Relationships" of Sixteenth century Church Orders. One can see the main branch of Luther's works, and all the branches that grew out of it.

As mentioned above, Luther was opposed to centralization of authority and rigid uniformity. This led to a situation where there was no oversight or control. After the Diet of Spires (1526) made it clear that the bishops were not going to institute any reforms, a territorial form of church government was introduced. This left it up to the individual Protestant princes and civil authorities to determine what was to be done regarding worship in their own regions and cities. There was also, besides the Lutherans, the Reformed and the Papists having influence in various regions and cities. Between 1523 and 1555 no fewer than one hundred thirty-five (135) Church Orders appeared. The total amount of Church Orders produced in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries was one hundred seventy-five (175). Eminent theologians were commissioned by their princes and civic leaders to produce Church Orders for their regions and cities. These often relied on what was already published to serve as a foundation. Close associates of Luther were the ones actively engaged in writing many of these *Kirchen Ordnung*.¹⁴ This served to aid in spreading the *Deutsche Messe*'s influence upon the Church Orders of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries.

The *Deutsche Messe* had direct influence on several Church Orders. These are Brunswick (1528),¹⁵ The Saxon Visitation Articles (1528),¹⁶ and the village services of central and northern Germany.¹⁷

The Brunswick (1528) Church Order was also influenced by the *Formula Missae*. This Order retained the Latin of those portions which contained texts sung by the choir. The rest was a practically complete vernacular service in German. Bugenhagen, a Pomeranian or *Plattdeutscher*

¹⁴ See footnote 8 for a list of names associated with Luther that wrote these *Kirchen Ordnung*.

¹⁵ Written by Johann Bugenhagen.

¹⁶ Written by Philip Melancthon. Since Luther prepared a Preface to those Articles this Church Order is usually associated with Luther. Bugenhagen also approved of these articles and incorporated them into his Church Orders. This work does not strictly speaking contain a liturgy, but it does give instructions on the daily worship life of the congregation. This was the most influential Church Order of the Sixteenth century.

¹⁷ These adopted the use of the *Deutsche Messe* pretty much as Luther details it.

himself, prepared the Order in Low German to reflect the dialect of the people of Brunswick. A High German translation appeared in Nuremberg in 1531. The High German version was in eight volumes of three hundred seventy (370) pages. Like Luther in the *Deutsche Messe*, where he urged that the people be not “perplexed and offended by these differences in liturgical usage,”¹⁸ Bugenhagen also urged that the essentials of the traditional service must be retained and that novelties should not be introduced without necessity.¹⁹ This Order follows the outline of the *Deutsche Messe*²⁰ with several notable differences. Where the *Deutsche Messe* has a German hymn in place of the Gradual, the Brunswick (1528) retains the historic Gradual. It also makes provision for the traditional Sequence hymns sung on the High Feast days (Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost). The Sequence hymn was sung by the choir in Latin followed by the congregation singing it in a German translation. The paraphrase of the Lord’s Prayer in the *Deutsche Messe* is replaced by an exhortation to pray for the state (*die Obrigkeit*). This was followed by a German hymn or Psalm. The Exhortation to Communion was given after the laity, men on the right and women on the left, entered the chancel for the distribution. The minister would prepare the elements and then give the Exhortation according to a fixed form. The historic Preface in Latin followed with the use of Proper Prefaces for festivals, and the Trinity Preface for ordinary Sunday. The choir sang the *Sanctus* in Latin, and then the Minister would chant the Lord’s Prayer in German with the congregation singing the Amen.

As was the suggestion in the *Deutsche Messe* to consecrate and distribute the bread first and then the wine,²¹ the same is done in the Brunswick Church Order (1528). The Minister

¹⁸ Luther’s Works, Vol. 53, p. 61.

¹⁹ Reed, Luther. *The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 92.

²⁰ The outline of the *Deutsche Messe* is as follows: German Psalm, *Kyrie Eleison* (sung in German), Collect, Epistle, German Hymn, Gospel, Creed (sung to *Wir glauben all’ an einen Gott*), Sermon, Paraphrase of Lord’s Prayer and Admonition, Words of Institution, *Sanctus*, Thanksgiving, Benediction.

²¹ This was Luther’s attempt to allow those who were not ready to receive the Lord’s Supper in both kinds time to get used to the idea.

would consecrate the bread, distribute it to the people, while they sung a German hymn,²² then he would consecrate the Cup, and distribute that to the people, while the congregation sang the remaining stanzas of the hymn. The communicants who returned to their seats would either kneel or remain standing until the dismissal. The *Agnus Dei* would be sung in German,²³ and the Minister would pray Luther's Thanksgiving Collect and give the Aaronic Benediction.

The Brunswick Church Order influenced several Church Orders,²⁴ but its influence on the Wittenberg (1533) is most notable. This Order was directly influenced by the Saxony Visitation Articles (1528), which is associated with the Church Orders of Martin Luther. The Wittenberg (1533) in turn influenced the Duke Henry of Saxony (1539), which was the main Church Order in use in Saxony for more than the next two centuries.²⁵ The Saxon Visitation Articles (1528) also served as the foundation for the Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) Church Order. This Order, like the Duke Henry of Saxony (1528), was either used by parishes in that region, or influenced the use of other Church Orders in that region of Germany.²⁶ Therefore, the two most influential Church Orders were the Saxony Visitation Articles (1528), and the Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) Orders, both of which find their foundation in the principles of the *Deutsche Messe*. These two Orders served as the foundation for much of Northern and Central Germany where the Orders of the "greatest weight" found their use.

The Duke Henry of Saxony (1539) Order was born out of the Wittenberg (1533), which

²² *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, "Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior" ASBH 207.

²³ *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God" TLH 147.

²⁴ Among these are Hamburg (1529), Göttingen (1530), Lübeck (1531), Pomerania (1535), Hannover (1536), Denmark (1537), Schleswig-Holstein (1542), Osnabrück (1543), and Hildesheim (1544). Bugenhagen having a hand in writing several of these Church Orders.

²⁵ This Order influenced the Mecklenburg (1552), the Reformation of Cologne (1543), the Brandenburg (1540) (both which were also influenced by Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533)), Prussia (1544), Halle (1541), Waldeck (1556), Lindau (1573), and Electoral Saxony (1580).

²⁶ The influence of Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) includes Wurttemberg (1536), the Reformation of Cologne (1543), Brandenburg (1540) (both of which were also influenced by Duke Henry of Saxony (1539)), Cassel (1539), Austria (1571), Mecklenburg (1540), and Brandenburg-Luneburg (1542).

was born out of the Saxony Visitation Articles (1528). The Wittenberg (1533) was also influenced by Brunswick (1528). It is therefore influenced by Luther, Melancthon, and Bugenhagen, and was written by Justus Jonas and George Spalatin. All of these being associated with Wittenberg and the worship of that city. In it we see the use of both of Luther's Church Orders. This is the liturgy that would be most used in Saxony Germany for the next century. It began with the *Introit* for the Day or Festival sung by the choir of boys and men. The *Kyrie* (a nine-fold) followed. The minister would intone the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the choir would respond with *Et in terra pax*, etc. The minister would then intone a German or Latin Collect. He would sing the Epistle and Gospel in German, the choir singing a Sequence or German Psalm²⁷ in between them. After the readings the congregation would sing *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*, or the choir would sing the Latin *Credo*.²⁸ Then the sermon would follow on the Gospel for the Day. After the sermon the minister gave a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer and an exhortation to communion, after which he sang the Words of Institution. During the distribution the congregation would sing either *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, or *Gott sei gelobet*. Collects and the Benediction concluded the Service.

This Order of Service differed on Feast Days, however. On the High Feasts, the minister would chant the Latin Prefaces, using the traditional plain song melodies. These were concluded with the *Sanctus*. The Lord's Prayer and Words of Institution were sung in German. The *Agnus Dei* was either sung in Latin, or the hymn *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, or Psalm 111 in German was sung during the distribution. The service would conclude as on other Sundays with Collects and the Aaronic Benediction.

As one can see, one of the features of the *Deutsche Messe* was the use of German hymns

²⁷ This was omitted in the 1540 version.

²⁸ This was added in the 1540 edition.

or Psalms in place of some of the parts of the Liturgy which were traditionally sung by the choir in Latin.²⁹ The *Introit* is replaced by a German Psalm sung to tone one.³⁰ The Gradual is a German hymn, usually *Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist*, “We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost.”³¹ The Creed was sung in German to *Wir glauben all’ an einen Gott*, “We All Believe in One True God.”³² During the distribution of the Host the German *Sanctus* (*Jesaia, dem Propheten, das geschah*, “Isaiah, Filled with Deep Prophetic Awe,”³³) or, *Gott sei gelobet*, “May God Be Praised Henceforth,”³⁴ or, *Jesus Christus, unser Heiland*, “Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior”³⁵ were sung. During the distribution of the Cup, the rest of stanzas of one of these hymns was sung, or the German *Agnus Dei, Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, “O Christ, Thou Lamb of God.”³⁶ These are features that are either retained or ignored by the Church Orders that followed the *Deutsche Messe*.

Often one sees the use of *Wir glauben all’ an einen Gott* in place of the historic Creed in the liturgies that followed the *Deutsche Messe*. It is clear they desired to teach the congregation to sing the Creed. Indeed, that many of the parts of the liturgy were set to music, or sung to German hymns, shows that the liturgy is meant to be sung. In fact, in Luther’s *Deutsche Messe* only two parts of the liturgy were not sung: the Sermon, and the Paraphrase of the Lord’s Prayer and Exhortation to Communion.³⁷ Some of the Church Orders that retained the singing of *Wir*

²⁹ The Roman Mass involved little to no congregational participation. It was a spectator sport; the priest and choir did everything while the congregation looked on. The *Deutsche Messe* changed that, so that now the congregation fully participated in every aspect of the Mass.

³⁰ In the *Deutsche Messe* Luther recommends Psalm 34.

³¹ ASBH 296

³² ASBH 38

³³ ASBH 197

³⁴ ASBH 236

³⁵ ASBH 207

³⁶ TLH 147

³⁷ The same holds true today. The only two parts of the liturgy which have not been set to music, or have been given recommendation to be sung, are the Sermon and the General Prayer. The Confession of Sins is not included in this assessment, since it was not a part of the *Deutsche Messe*.

glauben all' an einen Gott in place of the historic Creed include:³⁸ Brunswick (1528), Hamburg (1529), Lübeck (1531), Nürnberg (1531), Brandenburg-Nürnberg (1533), Wittenberg (1533), Duke Henry of Saxony (1539),³⁹ Mark Brandenburg (1540), the Reformation of Cologne (1543),⁴⁰ Mecklenburg (1552), Wittenberg (1559), and others.

In many cases we see these parts sung in German side by side with their historic counterpart in Latin. This is the case with the Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) Church Order.⁴¹ It shows the influence of both the *Formula Missae* (1523) and the *Deutsche Messe* (1526). There were both a Latin Mass and a German Mass published for use by the minister in this Order. The form of the Latin Mass was this: the minister recites the *Confiteor*, or whatever his devotion suggests, at the altar. He quietly read the *Introit*, while it was sung by the choir of boys and men. The minister would then read the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria in Excelsis* while these were sung by the choir. Then followed the usual Salutation, and *Oremus* in either Latin or German. Followed by a German Collect, or Collects. The Epistle⁴² was sung in German. Then the Gradual was sung in Latin by the choir. The Gospel was then sung in German. Following the Creed, sung in Latin, the sermon would be preached on the Gospel. Then an Exhortation to Communion was spoken in

³⁸ This is not a complete list. This is just a small sampling out of the 175 Church Orders written in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. In many of these Orders, the Latin Nicene Creed was sung by the choir first, and then the congregation sang *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*. This was the case with many of the German hymn replacements outlined in the *Deutsche Messe*, the part of the liturgy was sung in Latin, and then the German by the congregation.

³⁹ An expanded edition of this Church Order appeared in 1540. This edition also replaced some of the parts sung in German with the historic Latin parts. The 1540 allowed the use of the Latin *Credo* sung by the choir in place of the *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*.

⁴⁰ This Order states that the Offerings were to be received during the singing of *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*. This Order had several theologians work on it. It was commissioned by Archbishop Hermann von Wied, archbishop-elect of the large diocese of Cologne (22 deaneries and 875 parishes). There is an interesting paper by Henry E. Jacobs about how he attempted to make his entire diocese Lutheran through the introduction of this Church Order. He was prevented by Charles V, who he helped become emperor, and was excommunicated by Pope Paul III in 1546. Although not introduced in Cologne it was used in Hesse, Nassau-Saarbrücken, and parts of Alsace. It also influenced the First Prayer Book of King Edward VI (1549). See the bibliography for this article.

⁴¹ This Order was begun by Andreas Osiander and finished by him and Johann Brenz. In addition to these two main authors, in between the initial draft and the finished Order, it was also expanded and improved by other theologians in the region, and was then sent to Wittenberg for the faculty's advice.

⁴² It was a *lectio continua*, not the historic Pericopes. The same was true of the Gospel.

German at the altar. The Words of Institution in German would be next. Then the *Sanctus* and Lord's Prayer in Latin. The Lord's Prayer would be introduced by the traditional *Praeceptis salutaribus moniti et divina institutiona formati audemus dicere*.⁴³ The *Pax Domini* would lead into the distribution. During the distribution the minister would say as he gave the Host, "*Nimm hin und iss, das ist der Leib Christi der für dich gegeben ist*."⁴⁴ He would say as he gave the Cup, "*Nimm hin und trinck, das ist das Blut des Neuen Testaments das für deine Sünde vergossen ist*."⁴⁵ The celebrant would administer the Host, the deacon would give the Cup. The choir would sing the *Agnus Dei* in Latin during the distribution. If necessary, a Latin responsory would also be sung by the choir if there were many communicants. An expanded version of Luther's Thanksgiving Collect from the *Deutsche Messe*⁴⁶ would be sung in German after the distribution. The *Benedicamus* and the Benediction concluded the Service.

The German Mass began with a German hymn,⁴⁷ or the *Introit* in German, sung while the minister says the *Confiteor*, or another devotion. The minister would read the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria in Excelsis* in Latin while the congregation sang the corollary parts in German, as it was done in the *Deutsche Messe*. The Salutation followed. Then a German Collect, a chapter from an Epistle (*lectio continua*), and then the minister would read the Gradual in Latin, if the choir of boys did not sing it. A chapter from either one of the Gospels (*lectio continua*) or the book of Acts was read, and then the minister would say the Latin *Credo*, while the congregation sang it in German.⁴⁸ Then came the Exhortation to Communion, the Words of Institution, the *Sanctus*, the Lord's Prayer, the *Pax Domini*, and the distribution which was done the same as during the

⁴³ Taught by Thy saving precepts and guided by the divine institution, we make bold to say.

⁴⁴ Take and eat, this is the Body of Christ given for you.

⁴⁵ Take and drink, this is the Blood of the New Testament shed for your sins.

⁴⁶ This was also an option for use.

⁴⁷ *Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist*

⁴⁸ *Wir glauben all' an einen Gott*

Latin Mass. During the distribution the congregation would sing a German hymn.⁴⁹ The Post-Communion was the same as in the Latin Mass. This was the Service in use until the end of the Seventeenth century in this part of Germany.

Thus, we see the influence of both of Luther's two Church Orders upon the liturgical life of Germany, especially in Central and Northern Germany. Now it remains to see its influence in other parts of the world, specifically in the Scandinavian countries. The country most influenced by the *Deutsche Messe* was Denmark. King Christian III, in 1536, ordered that an authorized and uniform Church law, governing the whole sphere of the ministerial and pastoral activity, should be prepared and disseminated. He requested the Elector of Saxony to send Johann Bugenhagen and Philip Melancthon to Denmark to assist in this endeavor. They answered that they were too busy to come. Bugenhagen, however, did go to Denmark in the summer of 1537 to help. Before he arrived, twenty-nine ministers and theologians formed a committee to draw up this new Church law. This document was called the "Ordinance of Christian III." When this was completed, it was then sent to Martin Luther and the Wittenberg faculty for their approval. It was adjudged by them to be "good and right." When Bugenhagen arrived he further revised it, and it was published in Latin that same year.⁵⁰ This Ordinance directed how the Church Service was to be conducted in the kingdom of Denmark, and in the Duchies of Sleswig and Holsten.

This document, founded upon the principles of the *Deutsche Messe*, was also adopted in all of its essentials in Norway in 1607. It was also eventually adopted in Iceland. It actually became the law in 1538 in Iceland, but because both bishops were staunch papists, they ignored the royal order as "dead and impotent" measures. It was not until the death of these two bishops

⁴⁹ *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*

⁵⁰ It did not become the law of the land until 1539 when it was translated into Danish by Peder Palladius. It was officially adopted at the Diet of Odense on June 14th, 1539.

that it was officially adopted.⁵¹ The “Ordinance of Christian III” remained in use in Scandinavian lands until the end of the Seventeenth century. It was then replaced by the “Ritual.” The “Ritual” was the “Ordinance” without the sections on Church government. This is but a brief summary of the influence of the *Deutsche Messe* upon lands other than Germany.

The main contribution of the *Deutsche Messe* to the liturgical life of Germany was the use of German hymns in place of the Latin parts of the historic Mass. In the small villages of Central and Northern Germany, where there were no choirs to sing these parts in Latin, the *Deutsche Messe* was adopted without much change. In larger cities, where there were schools and universities, we see more of a commingling of the *Formula Missae* and the *Deutsche Messe*. Parts of the liturgy were sung in both Latin by the choir, and in German by the congregation. This is seen in the few Church Orders presented in this paper. This was the practice in Germany until the end of the time of Bach, when different spirits began to raise their ugly heads, the spirits of rationalism and pietism. Then the Church Orders adopted the false spirit of these movements. They still effect the Church today. As does the virtue of the Old Roman Mass, where the congregation is a spectator to all the things happening up front. The true Lutheran principle of the Divine Service is one where the congregation has full participation, both in the use of the liturgy and the singing of the hymnody. This is one of the traits of the *Deutsche Messe*, it gave the liturgy back to the people, as it was in the Early Church.

Since this is the five hundredth anniversary of the publishing of the *Deutsche Messe*,⁵² the question remains, what, if any, use does the *Deutsche Messe* hold for us today? Certainly, its

⁵¹ Fun fact: both bishops had proteges that they were grooming to take over their bishopric after they were gone. Unbeknownst to both of them, their two students were staunch Lutherans. These were Gizur Einarsson who took over the bishopric of Skalholt in the south, and Oddur Gottskalksson who would become the bishop of Holar in northern Iceland.

⁵² See footnote 1.

most significant influence for us today is the use of the Liturgy in the vernacular. But does it serve any other purpose? There is a trend today, usually on the Festival of the Reformation, to use the *Deutsche Messe* in its full capacity as Luther wrote it. The thought is that this is the true Lutheran Service, because Luther wrote. The same thing Luther warns against in the *Deutsche Messe* himself. He did not want it to become universally used. He also believed that this Order was to be used “as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful.”⁵³ In other words, until something better comes along.

One may wonder why Luther did not go back the liturgies of the Early Church when purifying the Mass. Were not they formulated before all the corruptions that were imposed upon the Liturgy? The answer is that Luther understood that several centuries of Church usage had occurred. Even if one can assume that the Early liturgies were pure, they were not what the people were used to. Luther developed his Church Order based upon what was in use at that time. The same should hold true today.

Edward T. Horn in “The Lutheran Sources of the Common Service”⁵⁴ shares what are the parts and order of the “Normal Lutheran Service.” This was established by the three General bodies at the report of the join Committee in Philadelphia in May 1885. Of these eighteen parts⁵⁵ he points out that the *Formula Missae* omits two, and changes the place of another. In the *Deutsche Messe* there are four that are omitted and one that is in another place. Horn goes on to list the Sixteenth century Church Orders that contain these parts of the Liturgy.⁵⁶ He shows that

⁵³ Luther’s Works, Vol. 53, page 61.

⁵⁴ The Lutheran Quarterly, Vol. 21 (1891), no. 2, pages 239-268.

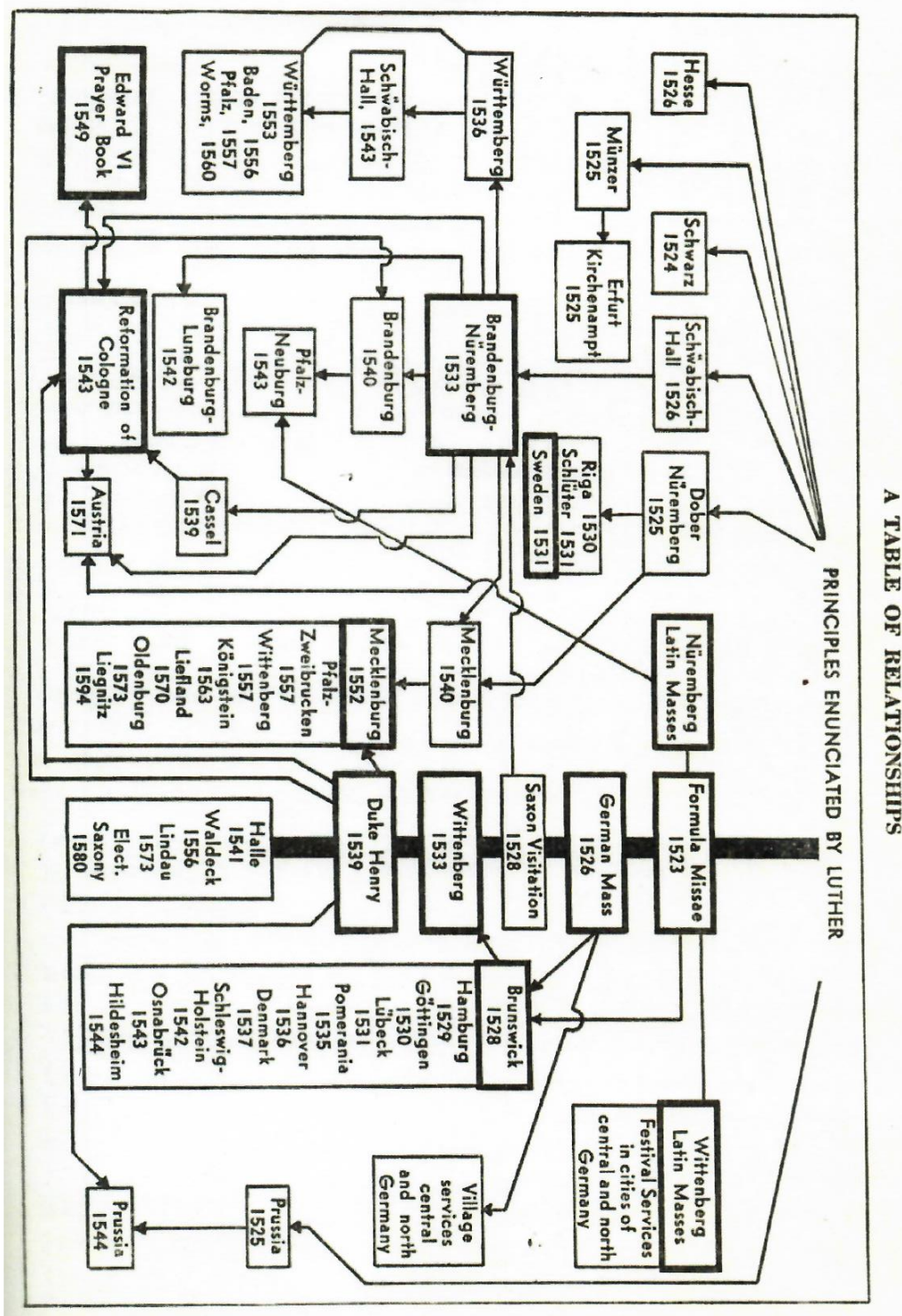
⁵⁵ 1. *Introit*, 2. *Kyrie*, 3. *Gloria in Excelsis*, 4. *Collect*, 5. *Epistle*, 6. *Alleluia*, 7. *Gospel*, 8. *Creed*, 9. *Sermon*, 10. *General Prayer*, 11. *Preface*, 12. *Sanctus* and *Hosanna*, 13. *Exhortation to Communicants*, 14. *Lord’s Prayer* and *Words of Institution*, or *Institution and Lord’s Prayer*, 15. *Agnus Dei*, 16. *Distribution*, 17. *Collect of Thanksgiving*, 18. *Benediction*.

⁵⁶ Wittenberg (1533), Visitation Articles (1533), Brunswick (1528), Brandenburg-Nuremberg (1533) (has all but the *Preface*), Pomerania (1535), Duke Henry of Saxony (1539) (has all but the *General Prayer*), and Mecklenburg

even with all the diversity of the various Orders, there is still much in agreement. What we have been handed down in the Common Service is the truly Lutheran Service. It has as its foundation both of the Church Orders of Martin Luther. It also has as its foundation all of the Church Orders that were influenced by these two Church Orders. It builds upon what was used in the past, but continues to use that which is familiar to the congregation. We can give thanks to Doctor Martin Luther for giving us a truly evangelical vernacular Service. We can thank him for establishing the use of hymnody in the Church. While his replacement of the main parts of the Liturgy served their purpose in the Sixteenth century, the use of the historic forms, now put to a happy marriage of text and tune as Luther would have desired, now take precedent. Luther may not have been the first person to publish an evangelical vernacular Service, but he did establish a structure that others took and built from that foundation. These Church Orders that were written in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century, and that were influenced by Luther's *Deutsche Messe*, became the basis for a normal Lutheran Service. That Service is the Common Service, which we still use today. Like the various Church Orders of the Sixteenth century which had elements unique to their time and place, our Liturgy also fits our time and place in history. It builds upon the past, but is its own unique creature. Luther's *Deutsche Messe*, although it is not meant to be used as it is written, is the past cornerstone establishing how we worship today.

Soli Deo Gloria!

(1552). These have all the parts, with either additions, or a rearrangement of the parts. He lists other less influential Church Orders that show that of these Orders the vast majority agree on content and arrangement.



⁵⁷ This chart is taken from Luther Reed's *The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 90. This is a re-casting of the relationship chart of Edward T. Horn in "The Lutheran Sources of the Common Service," *The Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 21 (1891), no. 2, page 242.

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