# A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN PROTESTANT CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

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# A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN PROTESTANT CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Statement of the Problem

The great heritage of Evangelical Protestantism goes beyond the Reformation to the New Testament.

At the Reformation, "The great structure of the mediaeval church, with its accretions of five centuries, was exchanged for a simple revelation -- God speaking through His Word to the individual heart and judgement."[1]

The method used by the greatest Teacher was not one which demanded ceremonies, ritual or formalism, but only an open heart -- "one which willeth to know His will."[2] The belief in the hearts of His disciples was a belief in the work which He had been sent to do, and more than that, a belief in Him, i. e., in His person. They were acquainted with the Living Christ. The whole essence of Christianity lies in individuals who know Him. The spread of the gospel across the globe began when, in their hearts, they proposed to go into all the world and make disciples of all peoples and were sealed to that commission when they were filled with the Holy Spirit.[3]

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1. John Buchan and George Smith: The Kirk in Scotland, p.13.
2. John 7:17.
3. Cf. Acts 2:1-4.

Their means of delivering this gospel was by witnessing[1] not only His example and His teachings, but to His very person itself.

When this gospel of the Living Christ was preached in a pagan and Judaized world, its reality and power were strong enough to win both pagans and Jews. This new religion was powerful and propagative, not because of a unified organization, but because it was preached by men who knew the truth. By the beginning of the fourth century it had combatted paganism and Judaism and had won the emperor to its side.

However, when Constantine established Christianity as a state religion and it had no longer to fight for its existence or to exhibit its peculiar characteristics in order to develop, the early fathers, who desired the establishment of the Church, began to organize and enlarge it. Later churchmen added sacraments, increasing the number from the original two to seven, and when they began to take over the responsibility of life after death, they opened the Christian faith to insincerities and superstitions. The development of a purgatory needed a complete system of priests and altars, and when the papacy was at its height during the Medieval period, the Catholic Church was the most powerful struct-

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1. Cf. Acts 1:8

ure of the religio-political system. The simple message of faith and repentance the apostles had preached was hidden from sight.

But during these same years, there were men here and there who dared to believe in personal Christianity. When superstition was deepest and darkest, small dim fires of the true gospel burned in different sections of Europe.

The German Renaissance in the fifteenth century opened the way for a translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular and the precursors of the Reformation began the movement which later, through Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, swept all of Europe.

The Reformation was not, as some would believe, of independent action. The principles of the Reformation were a return to the New Testament -- a return in the hearts and lives of men. The Reformers were men who had been able, by the reading of their Bibles and intelligent appraisal, to make a return to the simplicity and faith of the apostles.

Because these men broke away from Catholicism, they knew what they were leaving and toward what they were striving. When they organized their orders of service and built, or rebuilt, their houses of worship, the elements they were omitting and the elements they were adding, as well as the purpose of each, were clear to

them.

The innovation the Reformers made, in moving the Communion table from its altar position to the front of the chancel, or even into the nave, was not without its reason. At first the whole service was conducted from the table, except the sermon, but because of the acoustic difficulties in the older churches, which were, for the most part, Gothic structures, the gravitation of the minister from the table to the pulpit took place. Since that period, however, the Reformed churches have not changed this general arrangement until recent years.

But Evangelical Protestantism today is exhibiting a trend toward a more formal and liturgical type of service. This is exemplified in one way, by a return of the chancel. This trend is held by some to be a return to the pre-Reformation emphasis upon sacramentarian worship. On the other hand, there are those who believe that the heritage of the Eastern and Western churches belongs to Protestantism as well as to Roman Catholicism. This trend involves most directly, the chancel and the position of the table and the pulpit.

This thesis is an endeavor to discover the origin and meaning of the Communion table and pulpit, to investigate and evaluate the influences which led the Reformers to their positions and to summarize the gains and losses of this changing architecture of the Evangel-

ical churches since the Reformation.

This study is an attempt to investigate history, assemble facts and draw fair and sound conclusions.

### B. Delimitation of the Subject and Definition of Terms

The center of worship is the focal point of the physical structure of the church.

This center of worship is made up of many elements but only those influences which are especially pertinent to this part of the sanctuary will be included; namely, the Communion table, the altar, the pulpit and the lectern. The author recognizes that the place for the choir is related to these issues, but this study will not undertake to investigate this phase of the problem.

Worship is defined as "an actual experience in which the worshipers adore, praise and petition the Worshiped and in which God returns to the worshipers more than can be humanly bestowed of Divine satisfaction and help."[1]

The pulpit is the place of preaching and preaching will be regarded as a part of worship.

The lectern is the place of reading only.

Because the words altar and Communion table are so often interchanged, the distinction between the two should be understood. An altar is where the sacrifice of

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1. A. C. Wyckoff, personal conversation

Christ is offered for the sins of those who believe. The Communion table is the place of communion and fellowship with the bretheren and with Jesus Christ of the Gospels, the crucified and risen Lord.

When the term eucharist was first applied to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it expressed the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for daily bread, offered by the whole Christian congregation, rendering of acts of kindness to the bretheren and the dedication by the people of themselves. Since then, however, the meaning has been changed to the sacrament itself. Eucharist is usually used in connection with the altar, but the Lord's Supper is served from a Communion table.

The term, chancel, was originally a Latin word, cancellus, which was the name of the low screens which marked the separation of the presbyterium or choir from the rest of the church. In a later time this name came to be applied to the choir itself, and commonly means that part of the church which is raised from the floor of the nave, and contains, among other objects, the altar, pulpit and lectern. The church which has a central pulpit and a Communion table on the level of the congregation has no chancel -- there is no separation between the clergy and laity, neither is there a separation of the laity from the table itself. The church which has a chancel considers the chancel the sanctuary and the rest of the church

the nave. The church which has no chancel considers the whole room of worship the sanctuary.

### C. Method of Procedure

Part I of this study surveys the field of church history from the first century to the Reformation. It deals particularly with the worship of the early Christians, the development of definite church structure, the changing emphasis on the sacraments, the personalities of the pre-Reformation period and the Reformation, and the arrangement of the chancel, or the absence of the chancel, in the churches which grew out of this movement.

Part II studies the trends in Protestant church architecture which affect the center of worship in order to investigate more particularly the psychological significance of these trends. This section covers the period from the Reformation to the present day, dealing especially with typical forms within the Protestant group itself.

The findings of this study will be summarized and evaluated in the Conclusion.

### D. Sources for the Study

The sources will include the New Testament writings in church history, theology, architecture, worship, and the psychology of religion.

There are two different schools of thought in

regard to the chancel in Protestantism; sources used here will include both.

An effort will be made to investigate the architecture of Reformation churches, churches of early America and Protestant structures in New York City.

# PART I

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND -- THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE TO THE REFORMATION

# CHAPTER I

## THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHANCEL

# CHAPTER I

## THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHANCEL

This chapter covers the period from the Apostolic Church to the thirteenth century, the height of the Medieval Church, when small and scattered evangelical movements began to break away from the Catholic Church.

Herein is contained the history of the Communion table as it developed into an altar and was placed in the chancel. In this chapter the changing emphases in worship will be seen.

### A. Worship in the Apostolic Church

The worship of the Apostolic Church was singularly free from intricacies which developed in the later centuries.

The friends of Jesus, after His crucifixion, met in their homes for fellowship and prayer. During the brief but bewildering interval between the crucifixion and resurrection they must have been sorely in need of the comfort and sympathy of each other. After His resurrection, they still worshipped in their Temple and synagogues, but also continued in their companionship among themselves. But there was a definite cleft between Judaism and the followers of Christ. Peter said[1] the crucifixion had been

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1. Cf. Acts 2:14-36

the work of the Jews and the resurrection was the work of God. Then the Christian worship became more closely confined to their peculiar groups where they had in common the belief in the risen Messiah.

Peter, after reading from Scripture,[1] preached from Solomon's porch a sermon based largely on the Old Testament. Here he quoted from the prophets and the Psalms, authenticating Jesus from the authority of the Jews. Stephen and Philip, as well as Paul and Barnabus, used passages from the Old Testament to convince the people that Jesus was sent from God. Much of the New Testament, as we have it now, uses Old Testament quotations.

When the two disciples were on the way to Emmaus, we find that Jesus, "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."[2] And in another place are recorded these words, "These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the scriptures."[3]

These verses from Luke throw light on the atti-

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1. Cf. Acts 2:14-36
2. Luke 24:27
3. Luke 24:44

tude that the Early Church had toward the Old Testament, and especially toward its place in spiritual edification. Its reading and explanation were central. After Jesus had taught from the Old Testament during His ministry, and then had revealed the Scriptures to the disciples after His resurrection, especially "of those things concerning Himself,"[1] these books were accepted by the Christian Church as valid and inspired.

The New Testament was brought into being by these same men who had been instructed by Christ in the Old Testament and by those to whom Christ had "appeared" such as Paul.[2] In the Apostolic Church period, the very process by which the canon came into existence was the need for instruction and edification by the churches to which the letters were sent.

The gospel which the apostles preached was a gospel of faith and not works. Christ taught that belief in Him was the door to salvation. His disciples entered by that door, and preached this method to others. The Acts and the Epistle to the Romans are especially strong in this doctrine. To the churches in the apostolic period, this was the message that was preached --- the same message which Christ Himself had taught along the shores

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1. Luke 24:27
2. Cf. I Cor. 15:8

of Galilee and in the Temple at Jerusalem.

The urgency for the observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper must have arisen during Christ's resurrection appearances or perhaps after the Ascension. Luke[1] and John[2] give instances of Christ's breaking the bread before the disciples and in the appearance at Emmaus, they recognized Him by this. Whatever the emphasis in the Upper Room may have been, we do not know, but we do know that the apostles earnestly believed that this sacrament was most important to a service where they worshipped Christ.

One author has said, "All else that enters into the Christian liturgy may be said to have a Jewish ancestry, but here we touch something that has no equivalent in the worship of Israel."[3]

After these Christians separated from the Jews and worshipped in their homes, this part of the service was transferred to the evening of their Sabbath (Sunday, the day on which Christ arose) and, shortly after 100 A.D. was shifted to the forenoon service. This was a rite which was designated the pledge of each believer to his Savior, and each member partook of the Supper, which came to be known as a sacrament, from the Latin sacramentum, "oath of allegiance." It was necessary for each Christian

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1. Cf. Luke 24:30,31
2. Cf. John 21:4-13
3. D. H. Hislop: Our Heritage in Public Worship, p.63.

to signify his faithfulness to his Lord by eating of this sacrament, as though he would say, "Forsaking all others, I receive Thee." This was a personal access to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The second sacrament was that of baptism, which was diligently practised. Singing, probably Hebrew Psalms, also formed a rich part of the early Christian worship.[1]

Thus the worship of the early Church was simple, consisting of Scripture, sermon, "the breaking of bread,"[2] prayer and praise. It was characterized by intimacy with God and fellowship with one another.

Hislop says, "The New Testament Church gives the standard for the spirit of worship, but the forms are yet indefinite and undeveloped."[3]

### B. A Period of Transition: The Beginnings of the Chancel

During this period the worship and life of the Church developed from simplicity to complexity. By 325 it had already become conditioned by outward ceremonies, and was beginning to take the form to be found in the later Medieval Church.

#### 1. The Post Apostolic Church (100-170)

This period continued the custom of the preceding

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1. Cf. Col. 3:16
2. Cf. I Cor. 11:23-28
3. Hislop, op.cit., p.64.

years. Most of the Christian services were held in private homes. The table used for the Lord's Supper was probably very simple, like any table used in a home.

Lowrie has given us a description of a Communion table used in regular places of worship:

> "In shape it was copied after patterns which were familiar in secular use; it consisted of a rectangular and only slightly oblong top supported by one, four, or occasionally five legs. The Holy Table of the Church had as little resemblance to a pagan altar as the basilica had to a temple, or the statue of the Good Shepherd to an idol. We can well understand how the Romans could make and the Christians admit the reproach that they had 'no altars, no temples, no images.'" 1

The worship of the early Christians gathered around the Lord's Supper as a nucleus. The Presiding Minister sat on his cathedra behind the table, overlooking it and facing the congregation who stood on the other side of it in front of him. The other ministers, or Deacons, sat or stood in a semicircle immediately beneath or around him. This position is now almost entirely lost. The nearest likeness is to be seen in the Scottish Presbyterian Church, where the minister, from his lofty pulpit behind the table, addresses the congregation with his elders beneath him on the pulpit stairs, or round its base.[2]

There are only a few chapels, hewn in the

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1. Walter Lowrie: Monuments of the Early Church, p.159.
2. Cf. A. R. Stanley: Christian Institutions, pp.58,59.

catacombs, which show any definite arrangement. A description of one of these chapels follows.

In the capella greca, which belongs to the beginning of the second century, there is no distinct place for the altar, presbytery or nave.

> "Besides the rich decoration there is only one thing which distinctly marks it as a place for public worship; that is the tufa bench which runs along one side and is practically continued on another by the surface of the tomb under the central apse. One must imagine a wooden table carried in upon occasion, and one cannot but see in this whole disposition an arrangement for the seating of the communicants at the eucharistic table according to the earliest Christian custom at the breaking of bread." 1

When this custom had to be abandoned because of the multitude of communicants and the congregation could no longer sit at a common table, it is natural to suppose that the priest retained his old position, seated beside the tomb, and not standing, according to the later fashion, with his back to the people. It has been commonly claimed that these tombs were expressly constructed, or at least commonly used, for the celebration of the Eucharist. In olden time they were supposed to be the mark of a martyr's grave. In view of the modern practice which has reduced the altar of the church to a position against the wall, this supposition seems

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1. Lowrie, op. cit., p.44.

natural enough. But in an age when the primitive conception of the altar as the common table was still preserved, when the very position of the altar between the priest and the people still expressed this idea, the eucharistic use of these so-called table tombs, in the manner which is commonly supposed, is very far from obvious.[1]

Another element of worship was the reading of the Scriptures. These were read from the ambones, the magnificent reading desks of the early Roman churches. The only trace of the ambones today is the lectern, which is much smaller in dimension than its original.

The sermon, in this century, was sometimes preached from one of the ambones, but usually from the minister's seat behind the table. It was not a speech or a discourse but a practical address or conversation, meant for instruction after the reading of the Scriptures.

It was during this period that the election of elders, in every Christian church, became universal, and in some places bishops were elected, so that there was a definite cleavage between the clergy and the laity. The clergy was the Church's guard against heresy. The ministry of the Word and Sacraments became official and the services grew more and more formal, with the uniform custom of celebrating the Lord's Supper in the Sunday morn-

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1. Ibid, pp.44,46.

ing service.

Kirk characterizes this period thus:

> "Amid cooling enthusiasms, increasing worldly opposition, and divided counsels, the people began to turn to the idea of a shelter. This impulse to retire from the world gave rise to asceticism and monasticism and was due to a distinct loss of nerve. The movement was a withdrawal from intimate contacts with life toward the protection of an ecclesiastical institution. Priestly ministries and ritual performances were more appealing to this temperment than prophetic leadership and living thought...The great words, 'Go ye into all the world' were changed to, 'Come ye into the Church.' A tired, tempted, disenchanted struggle between the prophetic and the priestly spirit finally led to the triumph of the latter, which reached its climax in the great ecclesiastical establishment of the Middle Ages." 1

2. The Ante-Nicene Church (170-325)

At the opening of the third century, "the common life of the Church had its priests, its altar, its sacraments, its holy book and rule of faith. But it no longer possessed 'the Spirit of power'." 2

> "By the third century it (Christian worship) could already rival the most imposing cults in all paganism, with its solemn and exact ritual, its priests, its sacrifices, and its holy ceremonies." 3

The opposition from the world and the heresies within the Church during the preceding period had organ-

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1. Harris E. Kirk: The Spirit of Protestantism, pp.207,208.
2. Adolph Harnack: Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries, Vol. 1, p. 256.
3. Ibid., p. 293.

ized the simple communities of the Apostolic Age into institutions headed by bishops. The Church was no longer the people who had received salvation through Jesus Christ and who had worshipped Him in spirit and in truth.

The early Christian churches during this period were built in basilica form. The plan of the Roman hall of justice was well adaptable to the requirements of Christian worship.

The place of the altar in the basilicas was in front of the apse, seats for the clergy being arranged in a semicircle against the wall of the apse, with the bishop's chair in the center. A space in front of the altar was enclosed by chancels, and appropriated to the use of the lower clergy, who comprised the choir; hence its name. At either side of the choir there were pulpits, from one of which the Gospel was read, and from the other, the Epistle.[1]

Usually found beneath these altars, for they had become such by the third century, were remains or relics of saints. Special adoration of the saints and martyrs became quite common, but actual worship of relics and prayer to the saints were not practised until the following period.

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1. J. B. deForest: A Short History of Art, pp.114, 115.

> "As the Church became Romanized and partly paganized, Christians tended to emphasize the form of belief, rather than personal virtues and simple faith. In the endeavor to create specific forms for Christian life and worship, Old Testament models were often used. Christian clergy, functioning as a priesthood was largely taken from the Old Testament and the sacrificial theory of the Lord's Supper came from the same source. The Sacrament of the Altar came to be looked upon as the sacrifice of the New Covenant...The priest became mediator between God and the congregation." 1

The bishop functioned as a priest, and unless there was a bishop there could be no church. Hence each local church possessed a bishop as well as elders.

> "The personal communion with God, and the assurance of the presence of Christ, was now definitely conditioned by strict adherence to certain outward forms. This is the essence of Catholicism." 2

Thus, with the influx of pagan ideas, and the gradual rise of the episcopate, the elevation of religious ceremonies to the dignity of sacraments (until the Church recognized seven) and the increase of ritualism, "the Spirit of Power" had gone.

> "But the reasons for the triumph of Christianity in that age are no guarantee for the permanence of that triumph throughout the history of mankind. Such a triumph rather depends upon the simple elements of the religion, on the preaching of the living God as the Father of men, and on the likeness of Jesus Christ. For that very reason it depends also on the capacity of Christianity to strip off once more any collective syncretism and unite itself to fresh coefficients. The Ref-

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1. L. P. Qualben: History of the Christian Church, p. 112.
2. Ibid., p. 95.

-ormation made a beginning in this direction."[1]

The Apostolic Era emphasized the spiritual, universal priesthood of all believers, salvation through faith and the authority of His Word, while the ante-Nicene period lost much of this conception of the Christian faith. The Church was not corrupt during this era but it had lost its vision of Christ.

In spite of such protests as that of the Montanists, the Church failed to stem the full tide sweeping in the direction of a sacramentarian religion. With the establishment of the Church under Constantine the neglect of spiritual religion became all the more pronounced. Several centuries of this type of worship elapsed before scattered churchmen lifted their voices in objection and in appeal for the return to the faith of the apostles.

### C. The Development of the Chancel in the Post-Nicene Period (325 - 590)

After Constantine's approval of Christianity in 312, and the Council of Nicea in 325, the Church was at peace with heathenism.

Notwithstanding, by its growth in wealth and worldly prosperity it lost its New Testament character. There was little in the Church of this age to remind one of the fervor of the apostles and the mission spirit of

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1. Harnack, op. cit., p. 397.

the early churches.

The martyrs became canonized saints, relics were worshipped, prayers were made to Mary for intercession, images were thought to possess miraculous power, ordination was established as a sacrament and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was regarded as a sacrifice.[1] Qualben calls this "an unbloody repetition of the atoning sacrifice of Christ by the priesthood for the salvation of the living and the dead."[2]

While this change was being made in regard to the rites and customs of the Church, there was also a transition in the chancel arrangement. Not only had the movable wooden tables been replaced by stone altars, but the Church was discriminating in favor of altars, so the Communion tables could not be used.

At the beginning of the fifth century at St. Clement's in Rome, the bishop's seat was in the center of the circular wall of the apse, with presbyters on either side. The altar stood in front of the bishop between him and the people, but as time went on, and the episcopacy became priests, the altar was moved to its present position in Roman Catholic churches today, against the end of the apse.[3]

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1. Qualben, op. cit., pp.131-134.
2. Ibid., p.134.
3. Joseph Crouch: Puritanism in Art, p.42.

The elaborate basilicas built by Constantine followed the plan of St. Clement's. At St. Peter's in Rome, this system is still followed. The Pope's throne is against the wall of the apse and he recites the Mass at the High Altar, facing the congregation.

It is in this period that we find one of the greatest personalities of the age, St. Augustine. He stood tenaciously for the nature of the Church, its unity, its episcopacy, its authority, its sacraments and the necessity of connection with it for salvation: typical Old Catholic theology. But his views on sin and grace are distinctly those of the New Testament. In regard to this doctrine he has been called the "first forerunner of the Reformation."[1] Wyclif, Huss and Wessel, as well as the Reformers, resorted most, after the apostle Paul, to Augustine as the representative of the doctrine of free grace.[2]

In regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Augustine's view was that of real spiritual participation of the Lord by faith -- a symbolical theory of the Supper whih is orthodox Reformed doctrine.[3]

Augustine's system of theology, with its sides of limitation and inconsistency, was none the less a vast, epoch making effort, which secured for this Father a well-

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1. Phillip Schaff: History of the Christian Church, Vol.3, p.101.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 102.
3. Ibid., pp.506-508.

deserved supremacy over men's minds in the Middle Ages, and won for his conceptions a revival in yet more vigorous form at the Reformation.[1]

The doctrine in which he believed was that which, in the sixteenth century, turned Luther, Zwingli and Calvin from the elaborate worship system of the Medieval Church to the simplicity of individual faith and expression.

### D. The Further Development and Supremacy of the Chancel in the Medieval Period (590-1294)

During the dark years of the Medieval period, the worship and architecture of the church became fairly stabilized. The basic type of architecture, the basilica style, was developed into the Romanesque basilica, which was characterized by massive proportions, giving much wall space for free painting of Christ and the saints, and the setting up of images. In the twelfth century the Gothic gradually replaced the Romanesque but the position of the altar remained unchanged against the wall of the apse. Its position by this time had become established.

At the same time that the altar was definitely placed against the wall of the apse, the Roman mass became accepted as the main part of the service, replacing the sermon. When the papacy gained power, all masses were then said in Latin, in the entire Roman empire, adding greatly to the feeling of awe and mystery which the common people

1. Cf. James Orr: The Progress of Dogma, p.138.

felt. The Communion table of the Apostolic age had lost all significance of sacrament and fellowship, and had become sacrifice and superstition.

Worship was surrounded by mysticism, ceremonialism and superstition. People were taught to worship bread and wine at the celebration of the Mass, adoration of relics was insisted upon by the clergy, and the priestly office was exalted.

Public singing was restricted to the priests only, the congregations joining in the responses.

Out of the low spiritual and moral conditions of the Church, attempts at reform appeared. But all efforts to rescue the Church from this condition ended in failure until Luther posted his ninety-five theses.

> "This binding system, which knew no law but its own will was resisted at first by the mediaeval emperors in the interest of the independence of the civil realm and, from the year 1200, by widespread popular dissent, showing itself in the rise of Christian sects and in writings conceived in the interest of human liberty and sanctioned by the teachings of the Gospels and Apostles. A third movement of the resistance came from the men of the Renaissance whose furtherance of culture loosened the shackles with which priestly power had bound the mind of Europe. In spite of these opposing elements, the system held on unchanged." 1

The characteristics of this period were an

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1. David S. Schaff: Our Fathers and Ours, p.39.

overemphasis of the contemplative in worship and a neglect of one of the fundamental principles of corporate worship, that it is an act in which the people must actively share.[1]

This system of sacraments built up by the Catholic Church was not sufficient to satisfy the deep longings for spiritual regeneration, and the common man knew no other refuge than the Church. The Word which would have brought him to salvation through faith was not preached. The sacrament which should have given him blessing, assurance and fellowship, had lost its significance. The words of the Man Christ were dimmed by the elaborate requirements of the great political Church, which took its name from Him.

### E. Summary

The worship of the New Testament period was simple and sincere. The Old Testament, combined with the words of their Lord, became the authority of the gospel which the apostles preached. The Lord's Supper and Baptism were the sacraments. The service of this Apostolic Church was characterized by joy in Him, and fellowship with one another. Worship was held in the homes of the Christians.

The Post-Apostolic age brought a definite

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1. Cf. T. L. Harris: Christian Public Worship, p.37.

arrangement in the meeting places for worship, the nucleus of the service being the Lord's Supper. The authority of the church was placed in the hands of elected elders, the presiding minister sitting at one side of the Communion table. This is an age of growing formalism.

During the Ante-Nicene period the Christian Church became wholly ritualized. The Communion table had by this time become an altar, the clergy being both bishops and elders.

The Post-Nicene period welded together more solidly the principles of the era preceding. The table had become established as an altar and bishops took the place of priests. The raised altar was now placed against the wall of the apse, Scriptures and preaching being subordinated.

During the Medieval period the Communion table was made into an altar and used for the Sacrifice. Priesthood was now vested in the ministers and the sermon was replaced by the Mass. The system of sacraments built up by the Catholic Church and the authority vested in the Church could not replace, in the hearts of men, the satisfaction and joy found in the fellowship and communion with Christ, depending utterly upon His Word and Work for salvation.

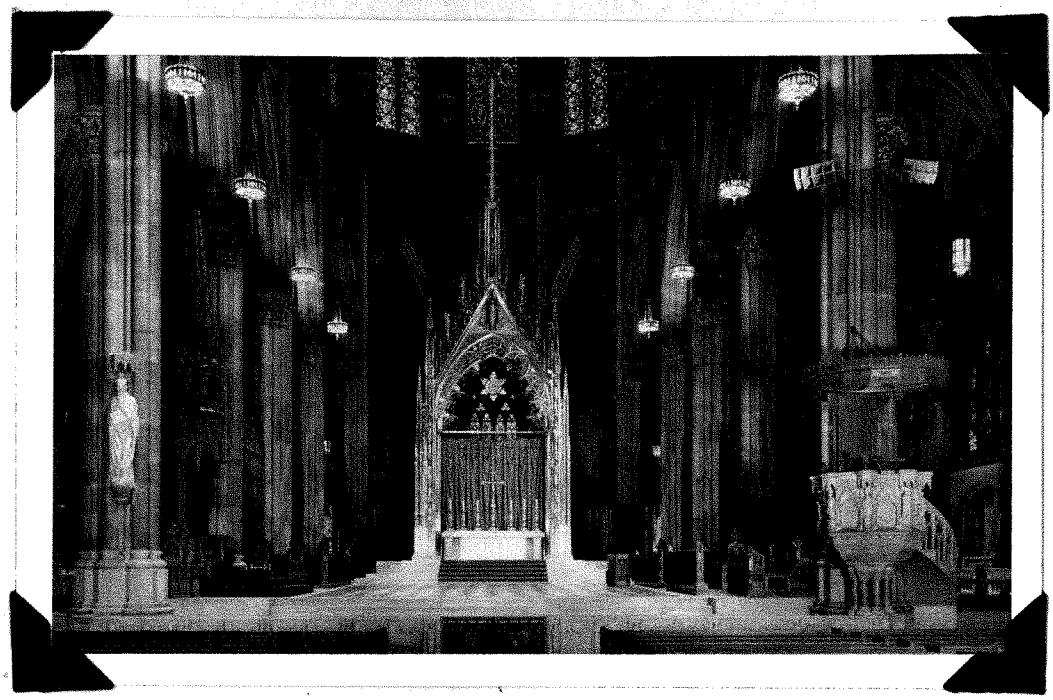

Figure A.

Sanctuary of

St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City

Roman Catholic churches today use the same chancel as the Church of the Middle Ages.

# CHAPTER II

## ANTICIPATIONS OF ARCHITECTURAL CHANGE

## REACTION MOVEMENTS

## CHAPTER II

## ANTICIPATIONS OF ARCHITECTURAL CHANGE

### REACTION MOVEMENTS

During the period of moral and spiritual stagnation, when the original meaning of Christianity was lost to the common folk, there arose, especially during the latter partodf the Medieval period,(1200 - 1500) small groups of evangelical Christians. These different groups, in scattered sections of Europe, kept alive the true spirit of the gospel in a superstitious world.

The men of this period have been called "precursors of the Reformation." They will be studied in the light of their relationship to the Reformation, which followed some of them by several hundred years.

Milton characterized them thus:

"...who kept the truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones."[1]

Dr. Trench believes that ancestors in spirit to the small communities such as are mentioned in this chapter are Claudius of Turin (d.839) and Agobard (d.841), who was Archbishop of Lyons in 816. He says that the Medieval Church System, so far as it was a departure from Apostolical simplicity, fashioned itself under continual protests,

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1. R. C. Trench: Lectures on Medieval Church History, p.248.

some of these protestants having Scripture and the unbroken tradition of the Church from the times of the Apostles as their warrant.[1]

But history gives us no connection between these men and the first of the evangelical communities in this chapter.

A. The Waldenses (1200)

Peter Waldo, (d.1218) a wealthy merchant in Lyons, was a faithful Catholic. "Like everyone else, he went to mass, but his soul was dead."[2] Feeling that his assurance in heaven was insecure, he had the Psalms, Gospels and other parts of the New Testament translated from the Latin. His reading of these Scriptures convinced him that the program of the Catholic church was fallible and that the only way for salvation was the simple life of the early Christians.

He preached and taught to all who would listen and gradually a group of people followed after him.

The program of the Waldenses is: (1) The Church must return to the pure teaching of Scripture; (2) there is no purgatory; (3) the Church is not infallible; (4) Christian laymen are entitled to preach; (5) selling one's goods and giving the proceeds to the poor is an act of

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1. Cf. ibid., pp.249,250.
2. Lilliana Bartelomei: The Contribution of the Waldenses to Protestantism, p.17.

Christian consecration. The Waldenses were not schismatic but intended to carry out their program within the Church.[1]

The picture given by Comba of a Waldensian communion service in the thirteenth century is one of simplicity and beauty. The one who presided gathered all the members of his family around him and set up a bench or box before the group, covered with a clean tablecloth, upon which was placed a large glass of wine and a loaf of unleavened bread. After the prayer, the bread was broken and distributed; then the cup was passed to all. The whole group remained standing during the celebration.[2]

Needless to say, this revival of personal religion in the hearts of a few people incited persecution by the clergy and war was openly declared against them.

But their doctrines never perished for they carried with them the burning desire to please God rather than men. They were forerunners of the Hussites.

B. John Wyclif (1320-1384)

While the Waldenses in Italy and France were attempting to bring about a return in the Church to first century Christianity, John Wyclif in England led one of the most radical programs of the age -- radical in its purpose

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1. L. P. Qualben: A History of the Christian Church, p.182.
2. Cf. Bartelomei, op. cit., p.64.

to depart from Medieval Christianity and return to a Biblical religion.

This man, who is called "the Morning Star of the Reformation" translated the Scriptures into the English tongue and had copies made of the translation. The spiritually hungry folk of England gathered to read and consider the Scriptures for themselves.

The main tenets of Wyclif's preaching were against the spiritual domination of the Priesthood and the authority of the Pope. He opposed the existence of Popes, cardinals, patriarchs, monks; attacked transubstantiation and auricular confession, and advocated the people's right to read the Bible.[1] He denounced the Pope as the "worst of cut-purses" and urged him to return to the simplicity of the Apostles.[2] Wyclif made the Bible the center of life.

The Roman Church regarded him as the worst of heretics and it was only his position in Oxford University and his influence with the English government that saved him from the stake.

The followers of Wyclif were called the Lollards and although his theory of the Church found no acceptance in England, this group kept his principles alive until the Reformation in its great sweep could carry them

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1. Cf. H. H. Halley: Pocket Bible Handbook, p. 448
2. Cf. D. S. Schaff: Our Fathers Faith and Ours, p. 47

on.[1] Wyclif's opposition to the doctrine of transsubstantiation and his idea of the centrality of the Bible in human experience place him in that group of men who make the Bible central in worship.

C. John Huss (1369-1415)

The flame that John Wyclif lighted in England touched a spark in the heart of John Huss in Bohemia. Like Wyclif, Huss was a University man (Prague) and a professor there. When the Pope forbade the reading of Wyclif's writings, Huss defended them and was forced to leave the city, but in this way his preaching was spread over an even greater area.

Although the doctrines he held were similar to those of Wyclif, his two great principles were the use of both elements in the Lord's Supper and the free circulation of the Holy Scriptures. The Church of Rome had withheld the cup from the laity and the Book from both priests and people. For these reasons the Hussites adopted as their emblems of faith the Cup and the Book.[2]

The germ idea of the Reformation was the awakening of mankind to the individual consciousness of the personal relationship to God and John Huss was one of the martyrs of this awakening.

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1. Cf. Arthur C. McGiffert: Protestant Thought Before Kant, p.18.
2. Cf. R. J. Miller: The Fundamentals of Protestantism, pp. 7, 8.

After his death at the stake, his followers, who were a large part of the Bohemian population, were almost wiped out by persecution but the Waldenses came into Bohemia and joined hands with them there.[1]

The privilege of a personal approach to God through the Sacrament and the Word were the principles for which John Huss gave his life. In a country filled with priests and altars he returned to the simple table and the open Book. The Bohemian Bretheren, to this day, place in their churches the Communion table with the chalice and the Bible.

D. John Wessel (1420-1489)

It is significant that in 1419, in Gronigan, Netherlands, the Bretheren of the Common Life had one of their most popular schools. It was in this school that John Wessel's education began. Thus he was early under the influence of the group that prepared the Netherlands for the Protestant Reformation of the following century.

His continued study at Zwolle, in a more famous school of the Bretheren, was concentrated on the Latin language and the principles of the Christian religion, as found in the Scriptures and the Church fathers. Here he was influenced by Thomas à Kempis, who also came close to the ideals of the Reformation. But Wessel, different from

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1. Cf. Trench, op. cit., p.248.

à Kempis, had "from childhood, a deep repugnance to anything approaching superstition." [1]

At Cologne University he studied in Hebrew and Greek the Old and New Testaments. This work gave him a mastery of the Scriptures and an independence of mind, as these languages were studied not for their own sake, but for the light they would throw on theological truth. His close work with the Scriptures, the education in his early life in the schools of the Brethoren of the Common Life and his natural tendency toward mysticism contributed toward his acceptance of the Bible in its full spiritual truth. In this position he was at such variance with the Roman Catholic opinion that it became unsafe for him to remain in certain parts of Europe.

The principles of early Christianity and the Reformation were also his -- justification by faith, supreme authority of the Scriptures and the priesthood of all believers.[2] The ideals of the Apostolic Church were for him the foundation of Church life.

Wessel has been called a "Reformer before the Reformation." Luther said of him, "If I had read Wessel first, my adversaries might have fancied that Luther had taken everything from Wessel, we are so entirely alike in

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1. Ferdinand Piper: Lives of the Leaders of Our Church Universal, p. 234.
2. Cf. E. W. Miller and J. W. Scudder: Wessel Gansfort, p. 140.

spirit."[1]

Although he is a precursor of all the Reformers, the Reformed type of Protestantism, rather than the Lutheran is the one to which his teachings naturally lead.

The doctrines of Wessel were the same doctrines which led the Reformers to remove the altar from its place in worship and restore the Communion table and the Bible to the center.

## E. Summary

During the latter part of the Medieval period, in different sections of Europe, there were outstanding men and groups of Christians who kept alive the true spirit of the Gospel.

Ancestors in spirit to the precursors of the Reformation may have been Claudius of Turin and Agobard.

The precursors of the Reformation were the Waldenses in southern France, John Wyclif in England, John Huss in Bohemia, and John Wessel in the Netherlands.

All of these groups maintained, as did the Reformers, the doctrine of the priesthood of believers, the supreme authority of the Scriptures and justification by faith, but because they desired to reform within the Church, their voices were hushed by persecution and martyrdom.

There is little in architecture to show for the valiant struggles of these groups before Luther, but their

spirit is seen in the challenge of the Reformers, through whom we have our Protestant Church architecture of the centuries since.

# CHAPTER III

# THE CENTER OF WORSHIP
# IN THE
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## THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN THE CHURCHES OF THE REFORMERS

When it seemed as though Christendom of Europe had become completely lost in ecclesiasticism and scholasticism, the deliverance that the Church needed came, not from the Vatican or the Emperor's throne, but through a combination of forces at work in the world under the leadership of a pious monk living in an obscure village in northern Germany.

> "When the Reformation came, the movement was favored by four agencies, the Renaissance, the issue of the Greek testament in print, the invention of the printing press and the impulse given by the new enterprise in commerce and exploration. Everything seemed to have been made ready to advance its spread." 1

### A. Reformers in Church Life

1. Martin Luther

a. His Life

Martin Luther was a "professor of distinction, a moving preacher, a clear and pungent writer, a master of German style." 2 He was also a religious genius.

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1. David S. Schaff: Our Father's Faith and Ours, p. 66.
2. Ibid., p. 70.

Born in Prussian Saxony in 1483, his early years were spent in poverty but he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1502 and Master of Arts degree in 1505 at the University of Erfurt. It was in 1505 that Luther felt compelled to become a monk, so he entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt.

After receiving the Doctor biblicus degree in 1512, he became Professor of Theology in the University of Wittenberg, a position he held until his death in 1546.

His liberating awakening began in 1512, when his position at the University required of him diligent study of the Bible. It was not until October 31, 1517, however, when he poated the Ninety-five Theses on the church door at Wittenberg and produced the widespread and intense sensation all over Western Europe that his break from the Catholic Church took place.

The first four of these Ninety-five Theses emphasized the difference between inward repentance and sacramental penance. Although not recognized then, the first one is an undeveloped principle of Protestantism, justification by faith. These fundamental tendencies are easily detected in the following excerpts from the theses:

> "1. Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ in saying: 'Repent ye' (lit.: Do penance, <u>poenitentiam agite</u>), etc., intended that the whole life of
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believers should be penitence (poenitentiam)." [1]

"5. The Pope has neither the will not the power to remit any penalties, except those which he has imposed by his own authority, or by that of the canons." 2

Another thesis which indicates Luther's belief in authority,

"28. It is certain, that, when the money rattles in the chest, avarice and gain may be increased, but the suffrage of the Church depends on the will of God alone." 3

Schaff has said of these theses, "Without appreciating fully the meaning of his appeal against a well intrenched belief and practice, Luther unsettled by one stroke the medieval theory of papal supremacy." [4]

When "with Scripture in hand Luther had defied the entire Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation"[5] on April 18, 1521 at the Diet of Worms, there was no hope for reconciliation. On May 26, 1521, the emperor and the Diet of Worms declared him an outlaw, a devil in monkish dress and ordered him seized wherever he might be found.

"The Roman Catholic historian, Lord Acton, went far when he said, 'that Luther at Worms is the most pregnant and momentous act in our history.'"[6]

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1. Philip Schaff: History of the Christian Church,Vol.6,p.160.
2. Ibid., p. 161.
3. Ibid., p. 162.
4. Schaff: Our Fathers Faith and Ours, p. 82.
5. L. P. Qualben: A History of the Christian Church, p.237.
6. Schaff, op. cit., p. 86.

Luther's experience of forgiveness of sins while reading Romans in the Augustinian monastary gave him the impetus which carried him through his trials under the Catholic Church and which gave him the moral courage to stand fast in his convictions. Not only did this experience change his life, but it changed the whole course of history.

b. His Convictions

There had come to Luther's attention, while at the University, in his early years at Wittenberg, a little book by an unknown priest in Frankfort, Theologia Germanica. It remains to this day, the simplest and most tender expression of German Mysticism. Its two significant features are its sacramental view of life and its dependence on the authority of the Scripture. Not only did this little book lead Luther to seek peace and communion with God directly, but it pointed him to the experience of justification by faith, and predisposed him to see in the element of the Lord's Supper, not a mere symbol, but a mystic re-incarnation of the presence of Christ. This doctrine of the efficacy of the bread and the wine has held the mind of the Lutheran Church to this day, and has found lodgement in the thought and desire, although not in the Articles, of the Church of England.[1]

Because Luther desired to reform the Church from

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1. Cf. W. M. Clow: The Church and the Sacraments, pp.55,56.

within and because the Lutheran Church was organized only after these efforts had failed, Lutheran worship retains much of the medieval characteristics. Only those elements were stripped off which were unscriptural.

> "The elements inherited from Catholicism which in the 16 and 17 centuries caused no offense in any quarter, became in later Lutheranism more and more an object of suspicion and dislike."[1]

The emphasis Luther placed on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is important because that belief has influenced the development of Lutheran chancels since the Reformation.

Hislop says the two moods in the Lutheran service are at times unrelated, if not antagonistic. These two moods are the effect of Luther's own personality. We find a heart throbbing with evangelical passion, but also instincts and habits which were the inheritance of the pious monk of Erfurt.[2]

Luther devoutly believed in the priesthood of all believers and the supremacy of the Word, which gives light to the mind and spiritual insight and makes God's Presence, Grace and standards real to the soul. But his mystical belief in the real Presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper made a problem which he could not harmonize, and which Lutheran churches of today

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1. Friedrich Heiler: The Spirit of Worship, p.183.
2. Cf. D. H. Hislop: Our Heritage in Public Worship, p.176.

are solving in their own way, according to the emphasis they place upon the sacrament.

The emphasis in Lutheran worship was shifted from pompous ceremonies which appealed to the eye and emotions to evangelical preaching which appealed to the intellect and to personal faith. German was substituted for Latin and the sermon was substituted for the mass. The preaching of the Word of God became the central factor in the worship, while congregational singing led the congregation to a more active participation in the service.1

"When the Word, as the main matter, goes right, there everything else goes right," says Luther. [2] The evangelical service, as Luther understood it, was the proclamation of the Word and its echo in the united prayer of faith.[3]

The study of Lutheran chancels will reveal that, because the founder of that great Church left a vestige of mysticism in the sacrament of the bread and the wine, the churches that since bear his name have been able to emphasize that doctrine to its present degree. Hence there is an altar rather than a Communion table in many Lutheran churches to this day.

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1. Cf. Qualben, op. cit., pp. 241, 242.
2. Heiler, op. cit., p.85.
3. Cf. ibid., pp.84,85.

2. Huldreich Zwingli

a. His Life

Huldreich Zwingli, the great Swiss reformer, holds an important place in Protestant thought. Some believe that he was the originator of what later became Calvinism.

Zwingli was born January 1, 1484, at Wildhaus, Switzerland. Early in his life he came under the influence of humanism, and gave himself with enthusiasm to this study. He was early destined to enter the priesthood, as his uncle and other relatives were clergymen.

Zwingli was educated at the University of Basel, where he became a full fledged humanist. Here he received his B. A. degree in 1504, and his M. A. in 1506.

One year later he entered the parish priesthood at Glarus, and here he carried on with untiring effort his pastoral duties although he did not neglect his classical studies under the influence of Erasmus. He studied Greek in order to read the New Testament in the original. This was destined to influence his whole experience profoundly.

In 1516 he moved to Einsiedeln where he became aroused to the need of a reformation. His devotion to the common people well fitted him to discern such a need. He became critical of the ecclesiastical system and when he became pastor of the Great Minster Church in Zurich, in 1519, he advocated such doctrines, so that soon he found himself in open conflict with the Roman Church.

Before he left Einsiedeln Zwingli had read Huss' views on the Church and had begun to preach on salvation by the grace of God alone. When Luther's writings came to his notice he was speedily convinced of their Biblical character, and adopted Luther's gospel for his own. At the famous Zurich disputation of 1523, the break with the Catholic Church was made open and the growth of the new movement in Switzerland meant the spread of Luther's principles.

b. His Convictions

Zwingli was the father of the Reformed Church -- that section of the early Protestant Church which separated from the Lutherans and adopted the religious doctrines of Calvin. Stanley names as Reformed, the Swiss, South German, French and English Churches. [1]

The contribution of humanism to the life of Zwingli, was in a great measure responsible for his doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The differences between Zwingli and Luther are important here only in the effect those views have upon the ensuing history of centers of worship in these churches.

> "The Zwinglian service of the Lord's Supper seems to find its norm in the 'breaking of bread' as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles. The service is a congregational meal declaring the fellowship and communion and

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1. Cf. Arthur P. Stanley: Christian Institutions, p.107.

> expressing praise and gratitude; but in it there is lacking the note of mystery. It is a memorial of the past rather than an experience of communion with the Present Lord. Indeed the celebration of Holy Communion is an illustration in symbol of the power of the Word. It adds nothing to the proclamation of the Word and is not in itself a means of grace. It is an acted sermon." [1]

But the Zurich rite repeats a true New Testament note in two aspects. It is a service of fellowship -- a corporate act of communion; it is also a service of thanksgiving and gratitude.[2]

> "No service could express more clearly than the Zurich rite this aspect of fellowship. The worshippers are seated, and there is reproduced the aspect and atmosphere of the religious meal which in the New Testament is called the breaking of bread."[3]

Zwingli's form of worship was quite different from Luther's. One characteristic, which has been a trait of the Reformed church ever since, was the abolishment of the Gospel and Epistle lessons, maintaining the freedom of the minister in the selection of the texts.

> "Zwingli, with all the reformers, held that the believer and God established relationship through the Word, and maintained it by the believer's diligent use of the Word. Naturally, therefore, forms of public worship must be framed according to the Scriptures and the preaching of the Word - the natural means of accomplishing all the above - must be central. 'I believe that the work of prophesying and preaching is most sacred, so that it is a work most necessary above all others.'"[4]

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1. Hislop, op. cit., p. 184
2. Cf. ibid., p. 185
3. Ibid., p. 186
4. S. J. Wylie: A Study of the Theory and Practice of Public Worship in the Reformed Church in the 16th Century, Thesis, Biblical Seminary in New York, p. 33

The heritage Zwingli left to the Reformed wing of Protestantism was formulated, enhanced and clarified by John Calvin, and the whole Zwinglian movement, in Switzerland and Southwestern Germany was finally absorbed by Calvinism.

The effect of Zwinglian doctrine on the center of worship is presented in Chapter V - The Center of Worship in Reformed Churches.

### 3. John Calvin

#### a. His Life

Of all the Reformers, John Calvin was the scholar, the thinker and the man with the logical mind. Though Zwingli was the founder of what may be called the reformed type of theology, Calvin was its great formulator.[1]

John Calvin was born July 10, 1509, at Noyon in Picardy, into a devoted Catholic family.

Being sent to college in Paris at the age of fourteen, he acquired a refinement and aristocratic bearing which neither Zwingli or Luther possessed. Calvin, a pious Catholic, was early distinguished as an intellectual boy with strong character. Qualben says he had a genius for organization. [2]

After having studied for the priesthood for

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1. Cf. Arthur C. McGiffert: Protestant Thought Before Kant, p. 81
2. Cf. Qualben, op. cit., p. 262.

several years, in 1528 at the wish of his father, he turned to the study of law at the University of Orleans, and later at the University of Bourges.

In Orleans Calvin was influenced by two Protestants -- his cousin, Pierre Robert Olivétan (who translated the Bible into French in 1532-35) and the German Melchior Volmar, who seems to have explained to Calvin the Lutheran conception of salvation.[1]

Returning to the University of Paris in 1531, he devoted himself to a study of the Humanities, and by 1533 he had undergone a conversion experience in which he was conscious of the all-powerful will of God which practically forced him into absolute obedience to the Divine Will.[2]

It was in this year that he was responsible for an address at the University, given by a friend, in which a plea was made for a reformation on the basis of the New Testament, and the outcome of which was that they both were forced to flee the city.

In Basel, Switzerland, he wrote "Institutes of the Christian Religion." This later became the most famous and influential text-book of systematic theology the Reformation produced.[3]

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 263.
2. Cf. Loc., cit.,
3. Cf. Qualben, op. cit., p. 265.

But being persuaded by William Farel to help organize the church in Geneva, Calvin for the rest of his life exerted his influence over evangelical Christianity from that city and from Strassburg.

b. His convictions

The religious experience of John Calvin centering around the divine Will of God, with his education in law and experience in intellectual movements, made it inevitable that the Protestant wing in adopting his principles would make its foundation stone the supremacy of the Word.

Heiler says, "The ruling principle in the Calvinistic service is the closest adherence to the Bible." [1]

The knowledge of God is written upon the pages of nature and the tables of the heart, but man has been blinded by sin, and so a clearer revelation is given in the Bible, which is God's highest and final communion of His will.[2] This is Calvin's stand.

Although Calvin gave credit to Luther as his spiritual father, he followed more closely, Zwingli. The similarity between Zwingli's and Calvin's theology was not a mere accident, due in part to similarity of circumstances and situation, but in part also to the influence of Zwingli's thinking.[3]

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1. Heiler, op. cit., p.99.
2. Cf. Mc Giffert, op. cit., p.89.
3. Cf. Ibid., p. 81.

> "The place he (Calvin) gave to the teaching of Scripture, his conception of the supremacy of the righteousness of God, his consequent moral passion for the law of God, and the response to it in the soul, and, above, all, his unfaltering loyalty and deep adoration towards Christ, brought him to a standpoint somewhat apart from that of either Luther or Zwingli." 1

Especially in his attitude toward the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Calvin stood alone. While Luther placed emphasis upon the presence, and Zwingli upon the remembrance, Calvin emphasized the feeding upon Christ in spirit and the nourishment of the regenerated life by Christ. In 1549, Zurich accepted this doctrine, and from that time on it was the only recognized doctrine in the Reformed wing of Protestantism.[2]

> "The principal object of the sacrament, therefore, is not to present us the body of Christ, simply, and without any ulterior consideration, but rather to seal and confirm that promise, where he declares that his 'flesh is meat indeed, and his 'blood drink indeed, ' by which we are nourished to eternal life; where he affirms that he is 'the bread of life' and 'he that eateth of this bread shall live forever;' to seal and confirm that promise, I say; and in order to do this, it sends us to the cross of Christ, where the promise has been fully verified, and entirely accomplished." 3

In the sacred supper, Christ offers Himself to us with all His benefits and we receive Him by faith.[4]

The order of service recommended by Calvin for the celebration of the Lord's Supper is as follows:

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1. Clow, op. cit., p. 57.
2. Cf. McGiffert, op. cit., p. 93.
3. John Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. II, p. 644.
4. Cf. Ibid., pp. 644, 645.

> "The Lord's supper might be most properly administered, if it were set before the Church very frequently, and at least once in every week in the following manner: The service should commence with public prayer; in the next place, a sermon should be delivered; then, the bread and wine being placed upon the table, the minister should recite the institution of the supper, should declare the promises which are left to us in it, and, at the same time, should excommunicate all those who are excluded from it by the prohibition of the Lord; after this, prayer should be offered, that with the same benignity with which our Lord has given us this sacred food, he would also teach and enable us to receive it in faith and gratitude of heart, and that, as of ourselves we are not worthy, he would, in his mercy, make us worthy of such a feast. Then either some psalms should be sung, or a portion of Scripture should be read, and believers, in a becoming order, should participate of the sacred banquet, the ministers breaking the bread and distributing it, and presenting the cup, to the people; after the conclusion of the supper, an exhortation should be given to sincere faith, and confession of the same; to charity, and deportment worthy of Christians. Finally, thanksgivings should be rendered, and praises sung, to God; and to close the whole, the Church should be dismissed in peace." 1

In view of Calvin's desire to have Communion every Sunday, so that his people could appropriate their privilege of priesthood, (he was unable to do this) he made his morning service a unity. M. Dourmergue has said that Calvin alone, of all the reformers has not divided the service into two parts -- one liturgical and the other the desire of the officiant.[2] Presenting the Christ in preaching was the sacrament when the Supper, itself could not be celebrated. He placed emphasis

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1. Ibid., pp. 703,704.
2. Hislop, op. cit., p. 188.

equally upon "the service of the Word, and the service of the Supper." [1]

The emphasis of Calvin in elements of worship were influential in the arrangement of church interiors which followed after him. Because he believed in the priesthood of believers, he moved the altar from its raised place at the end of the apse, to a position accessible to the congregation.

4. Comparison of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin

Qualben says, "The Reformation brought its adherents back to the three great and original principles of Christianity: (1) Holy Scriptures as the sole normal authority for faith and life; (2) justification by faith alone without any merits of good work; (3) the priesthood of all believers."[2]

It is to be remembered that, whatever the differences among these leading men in the Reformation, each one of them stood firmly on these principles. Here they were in agreement. And it is on these principles that our churches of Protestantism are founded today.

Martin Luther's conversion emphasized justification by faith.

Huldreich Zwingli was influenced by John Huss'

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1. Dr. N. E. Richardson: Seminar in Psychology of Worship Class, Oct. 31, 1941.
2. Qualben, op. cit., p. 204.

and Martin Luther's writings. But because he was a student of Erasmus, he made emphasis upon the ethics and philosophy of Christ more than upon the spiritual nature of the Gospel.

John Calvin was brought to his position by power of the Divine Will.

The varieties of these experiences make for a variety of emphases in theology, which later influenced a change in interior church arrangement. But at the time of the Reformation, their reasons for breaking away from the Catholic Church were definitely alike.

Each one had been educated as a priest and knew the organization of the Catholic Church thoroughly. Each one, at the risk of his life, protested firmly against the practices of the papacy and its scholasticism and ecclesiasticism. These protests resulted in a separation from the Church whose worship pattern was unsatisfactory, and this separation necessitated a new type of service and plan.

It will be shown in Reforms in Church Architecture how the Reformers, in a similar manner, by rearranging Medieval structures or building new churches, solved the problem of structure and function in regard to worship.

B. Reforms in Church Architecture

As a sequence to the innovations the Reformers made in church life, came the rearrangement of the Medieval structures in which they worshipped, and the decided

difference in architecture when they built churches of their own.

One thing should be noted -- by the time of the Reformation, Gothic was a dead art. A revived Romanesque was coming in fashion among the Catholics, but neither Catholics nor Protestants tried to maintain Gothic. The way in which the Reformers solved their new problems, however, necessarily tended to be more utilitarian than the new fashion in architecture attempted by the Catholics.

1. Castle Chapel, Torgau, Germany

The first evangelical church in Germany was built by Luther in 1544. It is not large, neither is it elaborate, but its beauty lies in its simplicity. The organ and choir are placed in the balcony above the Communion table, which is a plain stone slab, open in the front, supported by four legs which are in the form of angels.

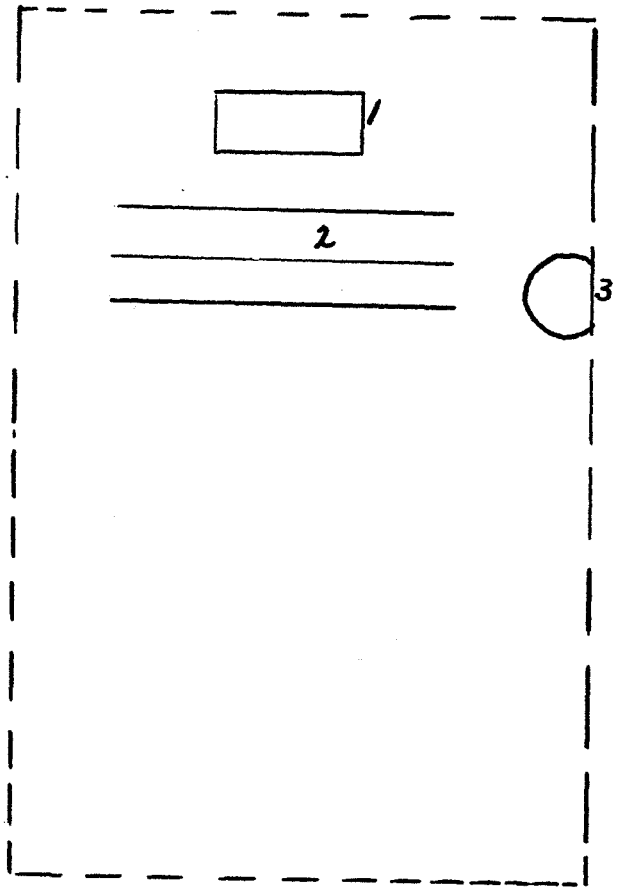
This table stands at one end of the oblong room, raised two steps above the floor of the church, approachable from three sides, as there is no chancel. On the table is a simple cross and two brass candlesticks.

There is no lectern.

The pulpit, richly decorated with color and carving, is on the level of the organ and choir but on one side of the room. It is approached from a concealed stairway, out of view of the congregation. (See Figure 1)

There is little in this early Lutheran church

to remind one of the Medieval Church. Photographs show this chapel to be a most beautiful place of worship, beautiful in form rather than in ornament, but almost Puritanical in furnishings.




1. Communion table raised two steps
2. Benches facing the table
3. Pulpit in first balcony

Figure 1

Castle Chapel, Torgau, Germany

## 2. Swiss Churches

The churches in Switzerland, over which Zwingli had such an influence, and which later were absorbed by Calvinism, show the same characteristics of the Castle Chapel. Altars were removed from the Zurich Church, a

table being placed before the steps of the choir for communions.[1]

Drummond says,

> "The Swiss succeeded in adapting their churches to Reformed Worship without mangling them to the same extent as in Scotland. If the altar disappeared, the traditional 'wine-glass' pulpit, with sounding board, was retained. A simple Communion table was placed either in the nave, in front of the pulpit, or at the front of the chancel." 2

3. St. Peter's Cathedral in Geneva

In 1536 the General Council of Geneva decreed unanimously that they "henceforth would live according to the holy evangelical law . . . giving up mass, idols and other papal delusions."[3]

The church, when Calvin preached in it, was much changed in its interior arrangement from its Medieval style.

What formerly had been a richly decorated altar and bishop's throne, was exchanged for a plain, unadorned apse, with a very large Communion table, decorated in harmony with the carved wood in the nave. The table is approached by several steps which were originally built in the chancel, but it is accessible from all sides.

Photographs indicate the apse lighted by wind-

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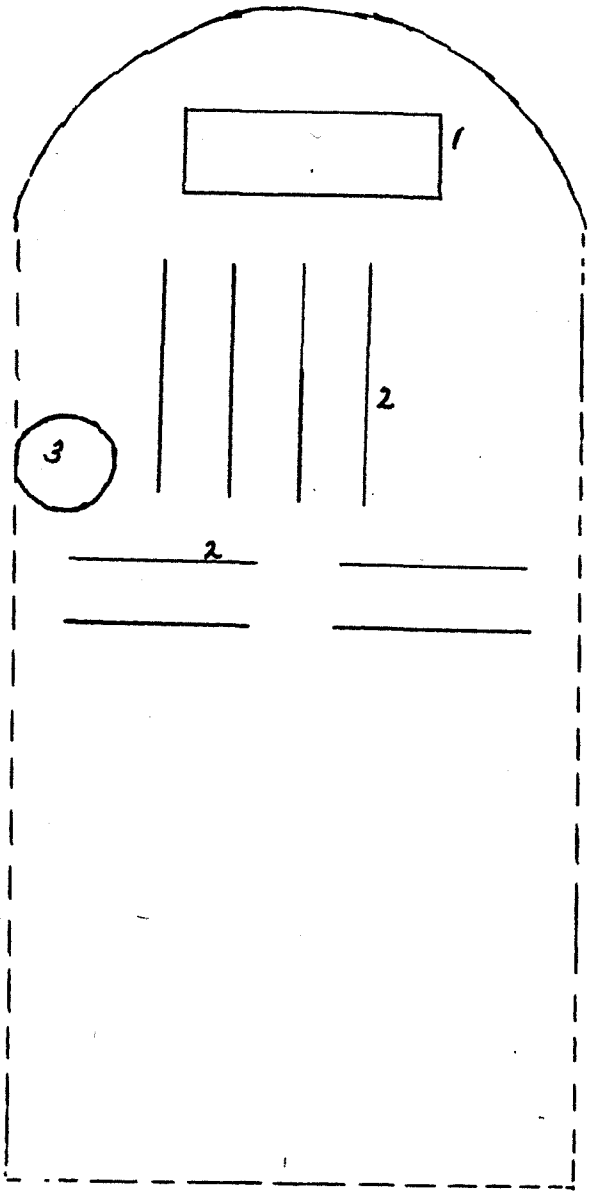
1. Cf. Wylie, op. cit., p. 34.
2. Andrew L. Drummond: The Church Architecture of Protestantism, pp. 21, 22.
3. L. F. Choisy: St. Peter's Cathedral of Geneva, p. 32.

ows, the only decoration being in glass.




1. Communion table raised five steps
2. Benches facing pulpit
3. Pulpit

Figure 2

St. Peter's Cathedral

Geneva, Switzerland

There is no lectern.

The pulpit about halfway down the nave, is ascended by stairs. It has a magnificent sounding board,

richly decorated with carved wood, as is also the stairs.

Calvin conducted his service from the table, except the sermon. For that he ascended the pulpit.

Maxwell says,

> "Devotions should all be conducted from the Holy Table. The true evangelical and Reformed tradition is not to forsake the Holy Table for the pulpit, but to use the Table as a table and not as an altar. Therefore, the minister's proper position, as in the primitive Church, is behind the Table and facing the people. Thus in all we say and do, we are reminded that we are a Christian family, gathered in the Name of our Elder Brother, in remembrance of Him."1

The success with which Calvin adapted this Medieval structure to Reformed worship is remarkable. The windows in the apse, the strong arches of stone, the magnificent pulpit, the spacious table at the edge of the raised chancel, all contribute toward a service of simplicity and beauty.

4. Comparison of Reformation Architecture

The diagrams and descriptions on the preceding pages show, to the extent to which this thesis is concerned, the similarities in these churches.

Three characteristics are noticeable. In every church the chancel has disappeared. The sanctuary, instead of being limited to the chancel, where the priest offic-

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1. W. D. Maxwell: Church Service Society Annual, May, 1930-31, W. D. Blackwood & Sons, Ltd., Edinburgh and London, "The Sunday Morning Service of the 'Book of Common Order'", pp. 31,32.

iates, is expanded to the whole body of the congregation. The priest has been exchanged for the minister. This exemplifies, in a physical expression, the priesthood of believers.

So, also, is this principle emphasized in the fact that the altar has been replaced by a table. The Communion table of the New Testament is returned to its original position -- to a position accessible to the congregation. In the early Reformed liturgies, the name priest has been changed to Diener, indicating that the office of the Protestant minister was that of a servant rather than of a mediator.[1]

But the Communion table does not take a more prominent position than the pulpit. By the authority of the Scriptures comes justification by faith, so that the pulpit is in the position best for hearing.

These practical elements in worship were put in position according to their function. The Communion table near the people for fellowship and service, the pulpit high enough to suggest supremacy of the Word of God.

These structures grew out of the lives and convictions of the Reformers.

### C. Summary

Martin Luther was the leader of a combination

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1. Cf. Ibid., May, 1931-32, "Two Early Parent Liturgies of the Scottish 'Book of Common Order'", p. 54.

of forces at work in the world who brought the deliverance from the ecclesiasticism and scholasticism of the Medieval Church. His experience of justification by faith changed not only his life but the whole course of history. When he had formulated his own doctrines, his position on the Lord's Supper was a mystical belief in the real Presence of Christ in the sacrament. But the emphasis in the Lutheran service was shifted from ceremonies to preaching, which became the central factor in the service. "When the Word, as the main matter, goes right, there everything else goes right."[1]

Huldreich Zwingli was the originator of what is now known as the Reformed wing of Protestantism. He adopted for his own the Lutheran principles but his emphasis on the sacrament was upon fellowship and thanksgiving.

John Calvin's religious experience centered around the Divine Will, but his attitude on the Lord's Supper was one different from both Luther and Zwingli. He emphasized the spiritual Presence of Christ.

Whatever the differences among Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, on the principles of Christianity they were in agreement. Martin Luther emphasized justification by faith, Zwingli emphasized the ethics of Christianity and Calvin emphasized the Divine Will. Despite the variety

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1. Heiler, op. cit., p. 85.

in their religious experiences, their motives for leaving Catholicism were similar.

When they abandoned the Church in which they had been educated for the priesthood, they necessarily had to discover a new type of service and plan. The reforms in church life, brought also a change in church architecture.

The Castle Chapel, Torgau, Germany, which was built by Luther in 1544, the Swiss churches and St. Peter's in Geneva display several common characteristics. The chancel has disappeared and the altar has been replaced by a table which is placed in a slightly raised position, near the congregation. Both of these changes exemplify, in a physical way, the priesthood of believers. The pulpit from which the Bible is preached, is built high, and in the best acoustic position. These are the churches of the Reformers.

# PART II

## MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

## THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN PROTESTANT CHURCHES

# CHAPTER IV

# CHURCH LIFE AND THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN ANGLICAN, PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL AND LUTHERAN CHURCHES

# PART II MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

## THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN PROTESTANT CHURCHES

## CHAPTER IV

## CHURCH LIFE AND THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN ANGLICAN, PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL, AND LUTHERAN CHURCHES

After the Reformation, Protestantism was found to be divided into three general confessions: the Lutheran, the Reformed and the Anglican. For the purposes of this thesis, the Church of England, the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Lutheran Church in Germany and the United States have much in common. This chapter will deal with these Churches, giving a short history of each since the Reformation, emphasizing the important changes which took place in the worship and the architecture of each.

### A. The Anglican Church

It has been said, "The Anglicans have moulded Lutheran, Zwinglian, Calvinistic, and Roman elements into a distinctly new religious organism, the Anglo-Catholic church, whose special contribution has been theological and religious moderation and comprehension, coupled with great institutional strength. In the Anglican church the office and the cult hold the central places, and the relig-

ious life concentrates on practical activities."[1]

The Reformation in England progressed slowly until the year 1527, when Henry VIII was forced to accept Protestantism to further his own desires. The Act of Supremacy, passed by Parliament in November, 1534, gave to King Henry VIII the title, "Supreme Head in Earth of the Church of England." This great movement, however, had not grown spontaneously out of the life of the people; it was as though some manner of life had been imposed upon them, when they did not feel the need of it. England had been since the seventh century Catholic, and the habits and beliefs of the masses could not be changed immediately by an act of Parliament. Thus the Reformation in England was not a people's movement, and it never gained the power that it came to possess in Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The King himself would have preferred the Roman Catholic Church reformed but after his acceptance of the new faith he found it wise to show his interest in it.

A man who played an important part in the development of the English Reformation was Thomas Cranmer, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. Cranmer had been educated in the Lutheran doctrines and brought many of the Lutherans from the continent to help with the English movement. In 1549 he prepared the First Prayer Book which was quite Luth-

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1. L. P. Qualben: A History of the Christian Church, pp.287, 288.

an in its view of the Lord's Supper, but in 1552, under Edward VI, the Second Prayer Book was published, which was more Calvinistic in its emphasis. These two books became the basis for the present Book of Common Prayer.

When the revision of the Prayer Book was carried through in 1552, a similar change was made in the interior of the churches. In that same year, an Order in Council required the altars to be torn down and movable tables substituted, the reasons being "that the form of a table may more move and turn the simple from the old superstition of the Mass and to the right use of the Lord's Supper."[1]

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1558-1603, the prevailing tone of Anglican teaching and literature was distinctly Genevan and Calvinistic. It was during her regime that the Forty-two Articles of 1553 were reduced to Thirty-nine, which are to this day found in the Book of Common Prayer.

Articles VI, XVIII and XXVIII and XXXI include three great principles of the Reformation.

In 1633, during the reign of Charles I, William Laud was Archbishop of Canterbury, a High Churchman before his time. He desired to introduce more ceremony into the church services, referring all disputes to the ante-Nicene practices. Two of his innovations, after one hundred years of Protestantism, were to use a liturgical service and to

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1. Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p. 502.

place the Communion table 'altar-wise' against the east wall of the choir, enclosing it by rails to preserve it from the unholy touch of the laity. This return to characteristics of Roman Catholicism enraged the Puritans.

The greatest question of controversy was over the position of the Communion table. Mr. Crouch says that during the reign of Edward VI, the altars, which had been of stone and placed against the eastern wall of the chancel, were demolished. The term God's table, or God's board, was substituted for that of altar, and it was appointed by the rubric that the table should at the time of Communion be covered with " a fair white linen cloth," and "stand in the body of the church, or in the chancel, the object clearly being to return to what the early reformers believed was the primitive simplicity of a commemorative feast."[1]

These tables were always of wood, and there are hundreds of the Elizabethan and Jacobean tables still in existence in ancient parish churches which carry the designs and enrichments around the four sides of the table, proving that they were designed to be used in the center of the room, at least away from the wall.[2]

> "It is clear, both from rubric and canon, that the law contemplated a table to be moved from one place to another at the time of administration, and this was the almost universal custom

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1. Cf. Joseph Crouch: Puritanism and Art, p. 134.
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 134.

> until about 1633, when Laud introduced the innovation of placing the communion table on raised steps in the position occupied by the ancient altar, and railing it in, usually on three sides. Laud claimed in this, as in all other innovations, that it was done in the interests of decency and order, and in accordance with ancient custom. But, as Gardiner points out, 'The position of the communion table could never be a question of mere decency. The table at the east was the outward expression of one set of religious ideas. The table in the centre was the outward expression of another set of ideas.' The one was a symbol of the sacrifice of the Mass, the other of a memorial feast." [1]

In 1640, however, the Puritans gained power in Parliament and religious as well as civil grievances were discussed and settled.

In 1673 Protestantism was so strong that Parliament passed an act making holy communion and denial of transubstantiation necessary qualifications for public office -- thus excluding non-conformists and Roman Catholics.

The next century found the Church in a decadent state. An English clergyman pictured it thus:

> "Three signal features will give a brief estimate of the shortcomings of eighteenth century religion in England. It was a great period of English colonial expansion; but little religious help was given to the new possessions and little was done for their heathen populations compared with what ought to have been done. At home it was a time of great social and industrial changes; these included great displacements of the population, the formation of vast new industrial areas, and the emergence of fresh and acute social problems. In all of this the Church failed to play its proper part, leaving spiritual deserts to grow up without the means of grace, and

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1. Crouch, op. cit., p. 135.

allowing social injustice and abuse to settle in without any challenge or protest." 1

But this general spiritual and moral decline of the nation was startled by one of the greatest revivals which has ever swept over the Protestant world, headed by John Wesley. John Wesley was the son of a High Churchman and until an experience of conversion on May 24, 1738, he was like any Anglican clergyman. After this experience he, with Charles Wesley and George Whitfield, preached in England and America the gospel of individual salvation.

The four cardinal features of early English Methodism were a dignified ritual, the attainableness of Christian perfection, a marked interest in Mysticism, and present assurances of salvation. 2

The Church of England did not welcome this revival movement. Some of the English ministers closed their doors to the Wesleys but this only spread the Methodist doctrines further. The common folk were glad to hear. Again the presence of Christ was felt in the hearts of humble men.

Almost a century later, 1833, in searching for an intimate relationship to God, the Oxford movement developed under the leadership of John Henry Newman and Edward B. Pusey. This movement, however, instead of leading the Anglican Church into a more free and less compli-

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1. W. H. Frere: A Modern History of the Church of England, pp. 23, 24.
2. Cf. Qualben, op. cit., p. 369.

cated worship, led some of its members into the Roman Catholic Church where the approach to God was made through the medium of the Church and the sacraments. The importance of this movement to the Church of England was that it "called into existence a strong Anglo-Catholic party, and this party has been the true and consistent portion of the Church." [1]

Since that period, Anglo-Catholicism has increased its strength to a great degree. In 1924 it was decided by the Church that there is no difference between Anglican Communion and the Roman Mass. "We hold that by consecration the bread and wine are changed and become the true Body and Blood of Christ" three thousand clergymen declared.[2]

The Anglican Church in the twentieth century has been greatly influenced by this movement and the Church is still in flux about the major doctrines of Christianity, although the Thirty-nine Articles have not changed.

B. The Protestant Episcopal Church

When England recognized the independence of the American colonies after the Revolutionary War, the Church of England ceased to exist in America.

It was then necessary for those churches which had been under the jurisdiction of the Anglican Church to form

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1. A. C. Wyckoff: The Oxford Movement, p. 107.
2. Cf. H. L. Stewart: A Century of Anglo-Catholicism, p. 314.

a government of their own and in 1789 they organized themselves under the name of the Protestant Episcopal Church. In that year they adopted a Constitution and a Prayer Book but held close to the faith, liturgy and tradition of the English Church. Their sentiments toward England are quoted, "This Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline or worship; or further than local circumstances require."[1] The Thirty-nine Articles were accepted with revision, but the greatest difference between the Episcopalians and the Anglicans is found in the matter of Church government. This is important to us only when it affects the position of the clergy and the laity. The changes were more democratic.

The Church grew slowly during the first twenty-five years, but under the leadership of several new bishops in 1811, it began to take on a new spirit and became vigorous and expanding, taking its place in the nation along with the Evangelical Churches. About 1835 there was a great missionary emphasis which was one of the chief causes of growth.

The Oxford Movement in England affected the daughter Church in America to a certain extent. It caused heated controversies among the Episcopalian ministers but when reconciliation was brought about in 1853, more

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1. Qualben, op. cit., p. 505.

freedom in opinion, discipline and worship were accepted.

Since the 19th century the movements in Christendom toward liberalism and modernism have affected all the Protestant churches, including the Protestant Episcopal. The Thirty-Nine Articles, in America, as well as in England, however, remain the same.

### C. The Center of Worship in Anglican and Protestant Episcopal Churches

After the final establishment of Protestantism in England, the altars were removed. The "high altar" which always stood against the eastern wall of the chancel was replaced by a movable table of wood. This was allowed to be placed anywhere in the chancel or nave, as long as it was near to the people. There was a great variety of position; in some churches it stood in the nave, in others at the head of the chancel steps, and in still others, in the center of the chancel, surrounded by an enclosure with seats on four sides. The latter type is called a "table pew."

Laud's innovations in the Church of England about 1630 had a decided effect upon ensuing architecture, especially after the Oxford movement. The Puritans were the group who managed to keep the post-Reformation arrangement of church furniture, but the English Church, as a whole, moved away from it.

A meeting house is described early in the 1700's.

> "On entering such edifices your attention would be attracted by the pulpit, either a good large platform enclosed by wainscot sides, with a curved projection in front supporting a book-board, or a deep narrow box, such as, until of late, was common in country churches, surmounted by a heavy sounding board...On the back-board, above the preacher, there was sometimes a nail or peg, on which to hang a clerical hat, perhaps after a funeral, draped with a long silk band. Occasionally, a desk for the precentor or clerk stood under the pulpit, and in front was almost always placed a table pew, as it was called, a large square or oblong enclosure, containing a seat running all round, with the communion table in the middle." 1

A man who greatly influenced church architecture from 1670-1711, was that creative genius, Sir Christopher Wren. After the Fire of London in 1666 new churches were badly needed and Wren was responsible for much of the rebuilding.

His great aim in designing churches was to insure seeing and hearing. Choir stalls disappeared entirely, and the chancel was reduced either to a mere niche or none at all. The Communion table retained its central position and the pulpit, sometimes heightened to command the galleries, stood either on one side of the table or was a "three decker" in which the clerk's desk, reading-desk and pulpit were combined. If the pulpit was at one side of the altar a conspicuous reading desk on the other side made for better symmetry.

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1. Crouch, op. cit., pp. 222,223.

It was during the early part of the eighteenth century that we have record of the first Episcopalian churches in the new world.

1. Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island

Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island, was built in 1701 and was used until 1726 when a new one was built. The second church stands today, very nearly like it was originally, except that it has been made larger. (See Figure 3, p. 71.)

The interior of the church was probably based on the plan of St. Mildred's, Bread Street, London, which is perhaps one of the simplest of Wren's one room churches, which had its altar at the east end, gallery at the west, and pulpit somewhat east of the middle of the north side. What the minister of the Trinity Church in 1702 called an altar, was an oaken table of William and Mary's time, with curved stretchers and turned and twisted legs. It is still seen in the present church. It is an authentic table of 1698 or perhaps earlier.

In 1726 the second Trinity Church was built. (See Figure 4, p. 72.)

> "The ancient altar from the original church stood against the east wall. If there were any chairs--the rector was generally in either the reading desk or pulpit--they have long since vanished. The altar and footpace must have been 'enclosed", to use the word in the Parentalia list of Wren's churches, by the rail running north and south, as was usual after 1660, and returning eastward along the outer wall. This original rail, however,

long ago disappeared." [1]

It has been suggested that the king's arms were placed over the Ten Commandments, on the center of the east wall, just below the window, and the Lord's Prayer and the 1733 Creed on either side. The king's arms were

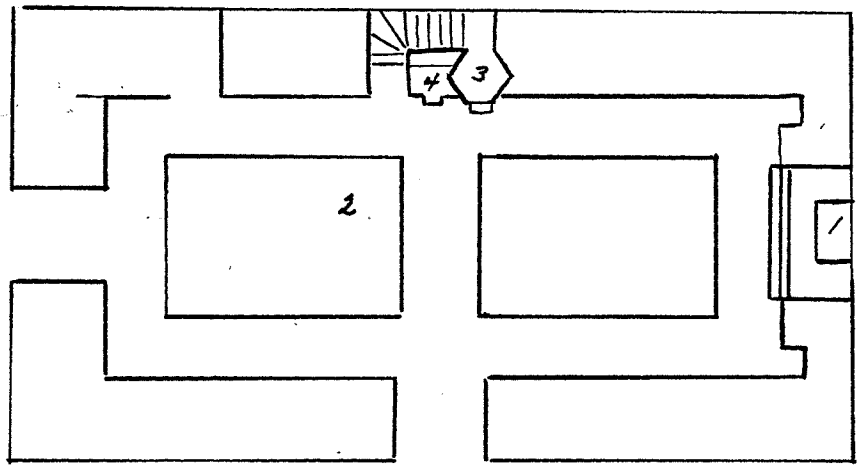


Figure 3*

Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island
1701

1. Communion table
2. Box pews
3. Pulpit
4. Reading desk

torn away in 1779 by American officers.

The pulpit in Trinity is of the "wine-glass"

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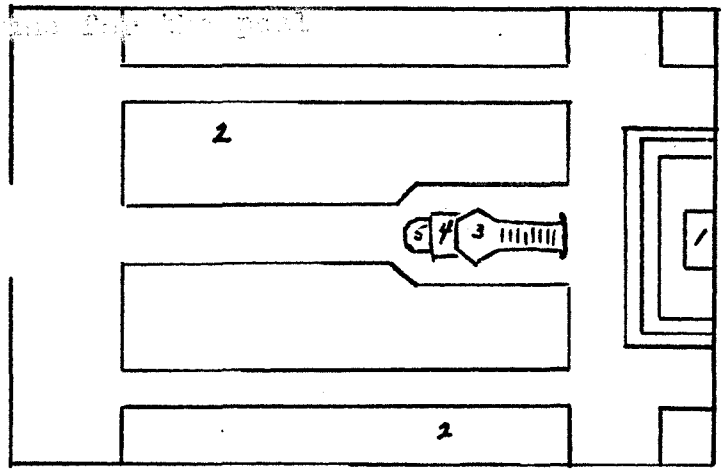
* Norman M. Isham: Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island, p. 9.

1. Isham, op. cit., pp.71,72.

shape, inherited from the Medieval period through the classicized examples of the late sixteenth centuries. A flight of steps gives access to it and over it is a more or less elaborate canopy. The pulpit consists of the pulpit proper, the reading desk below it, and the desk a little lower for the clerk who led the responses and set




1. Communion table
2. Box pews
3. Pulpit
4. Reading desk
5. Clerk's desk

Figure 4*

Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island
1726

the tune for the psalms. It is the only "three decker" now to be found in this country.

In Wren's churches the usual place for the pulpit was on the north side of the nave, but the position

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* Isham, op. cit., p. 37.

which was chosen at Trinity in 1726 is the east end of the middle aisle.

It is difficult to see the Communion table from the west end of the church because the pulpit is ten steps higher than the floor and the table stands in the shallow apse, with a large window above.

The apse was built in 1762 when the church was enlarged to make room for new members. Now the altar stands against the east end of the apse. The Ten Commandments were set in a plain frame in the center and the Lord's Prayer and Creed set in separate frames on one side. (See Figure 5, p. 74.)

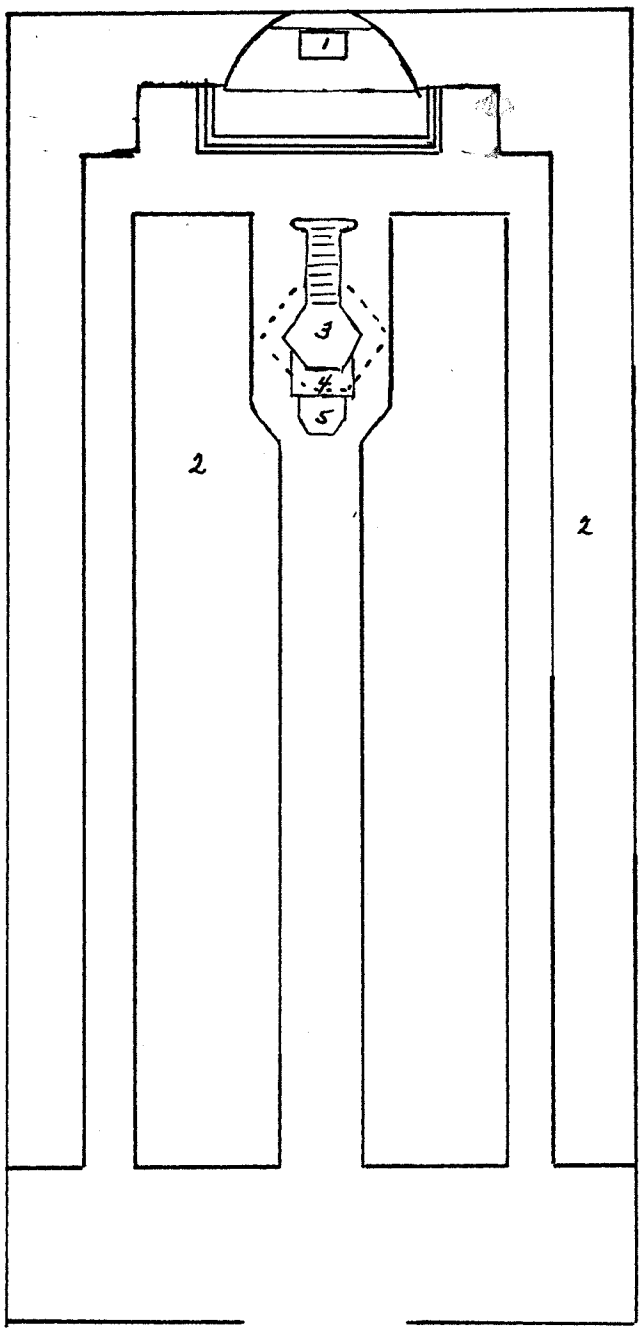
2. Christ Church, Alexandria Virginia

Closely related to this church is Christ Church, Alexandria, Virginia. There is a family tradition in the Munday family of New England, that Richard Munday came from England to build Trinity Church and Christ Church, Alexandria. How true this story is we cannot tell, but there is a similarity in plan and the churches were erected within a few years of each other.

In Christ Church the "wine glass" pulpit is the axis of the church, standing against the east wall with the altar in front of it. There is no chancel.

3. Goose Creek Church, South Carolina

Goose Creek Church, 1711, near Charleston, South




1. Communion table
2. Box pews
3. Pulpit
4. Reading desk
5. Clerk's desk

Figure 5 *

Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island

Present Plan

Carolina, is built on the same plan as Christ Church.

. . . . . .

* Isham, op. cit., p. 83.

There was a shallow apse and the pulpit was placed in the central position. This is the only church in the original Thirteen Colonies to retain the arms of the king of England, and these are above the chancel arch.

4. St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, Pa.

Another church built early in the history of this country is St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, Pa., the cornerstone laid in 1758 and the church completed in 1760. Mr. Jefferys describes the church as follows:

> "Within are the original white square-box pews with doors, and seats facing both ways, those of the gallery being similarly arranged. The galleries, supported by plain columns, are pannelled in front, as well as the pews, reading desk and pulpit. This quaint reading desk and lofty wine-glass pulpit, together with the sounding board overhead and chancel rail were not completed when the church was opened but were finished a few years later (1764). A unique feature is the location of the reading desk and pulpit at the west end and the chancel at the east end, compelling the minister to walk down the center aisle from one to the other preceded by the verger with his mace. The congregation can face either way." 1

The pulpit is almost on the level of the galleries and the reading desk stands under it. The pulpit and the table are at either end of the central aisle. (See Figure 6, p. 76.)

The difference between Episcopalian and non-liturgical church architecture in the Colonial period was

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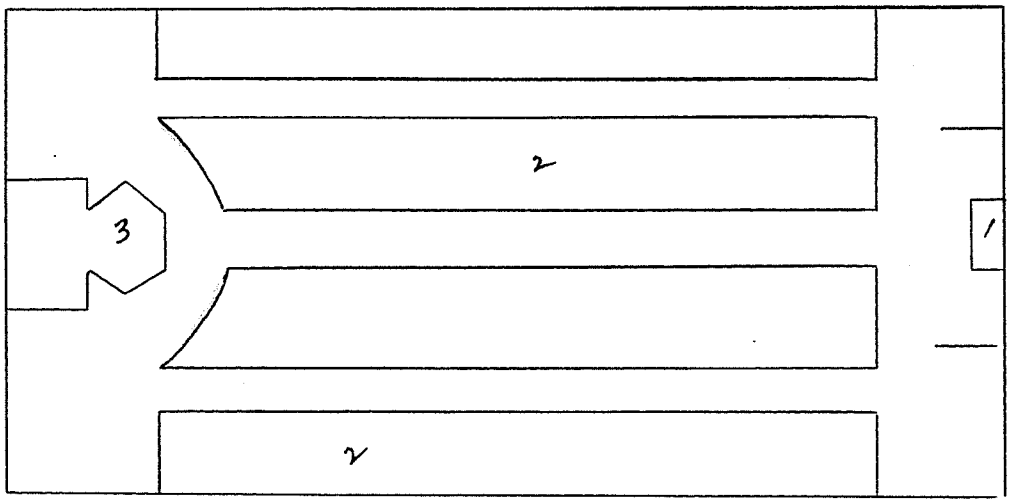
1. C.P.B. Jefferys: The Provincial and Revolutionary History of St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, 1753-1783, p. 25.

slight -- much less than in England where the Anglican Church held on to the impressive inheritance of the Middle Ages.

During the last half of the eighteenth century the influence of Wren was lost. The Communion table no




1. Communion table 2. Box pews

3. Pulpit

(Reading desk is directly

under the pulpit)

Figure 6

St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia

longer received the care and attention that it had been given in the first part of the century, and tended to be a bare table covered with a dingy cloth. It was about this time that the English Church was guilty of being lax about the sacraments, and John Wesley awakened the whole

English-speaking world by his experience. The normal church life of the people was not fully developed. Whereas the priesthood of the people had not been emphasized before the Reformation so it was not being appropriated at this time. Their normal spiritual growth was retarded by the neglect of this great principle.

When the Oxford Movement reached America after 1833, the differences between the Episcopalians and their non-liturgical neighbors in church polity and order were so great that the Episcopalians quickly drew away from the church architecture which they had held in common with the Evangelical churches to the more formal type of arrangement which lent itself more easily to the changed emphasis in worship.

5. Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, Boston, Mass.

Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, Boston, Mass., however, which was built in 1877 to accommodate the crowds which came to hear Phillips Brooks, was built with a shallow apse, to signify the place of the Sacraments, but it held the Communion table, uniting the minister and people in a democratic fellowship.

Dr. Drummond says,

> "Trinity Church is a fine expression of the cooperation of architect and preacher -- a combination somewhat rare. For that eloquent

> and great-hearted 'Preacher of the Word of God-Lover of Mankind,'Phillips Brooks, was essentially both a Broad Churchman and an Evangelical, ever ready to welcome new truth, yet convinced that he had an urgent gospel to preach." 1

6. St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church, New York City

St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church, New York, is a present day example of the early English tradition of retaining the Communion table in the center of the chancel, similar to the "table-pews" of the post-Reformation period. In 1869 the pulpit, an impressive carved wooden structure, but with no sounding board, stood in front of the Communion table. Directly in front of the pulpit was what was probably a reading desk. On the one side of the broad, low platform was the baptismal font and diametrically opposite was the chair for the minister. The Communion table stood within the rails in the apse, on the same level as the pulpit and the desk. The picture from which this description is taken is dim with age, and it is impossible to be accurate about the objects which were within the rails with the table. There were probably chairs for the ministers, or it might have been that the congregation sat within the enclosure to commune.

The balconies extended all around three sides of the church, there being no choir galleries such as are

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1. A. L. Drummond: The Church Architecture of Protestantism, p. 94.

now found in the church.

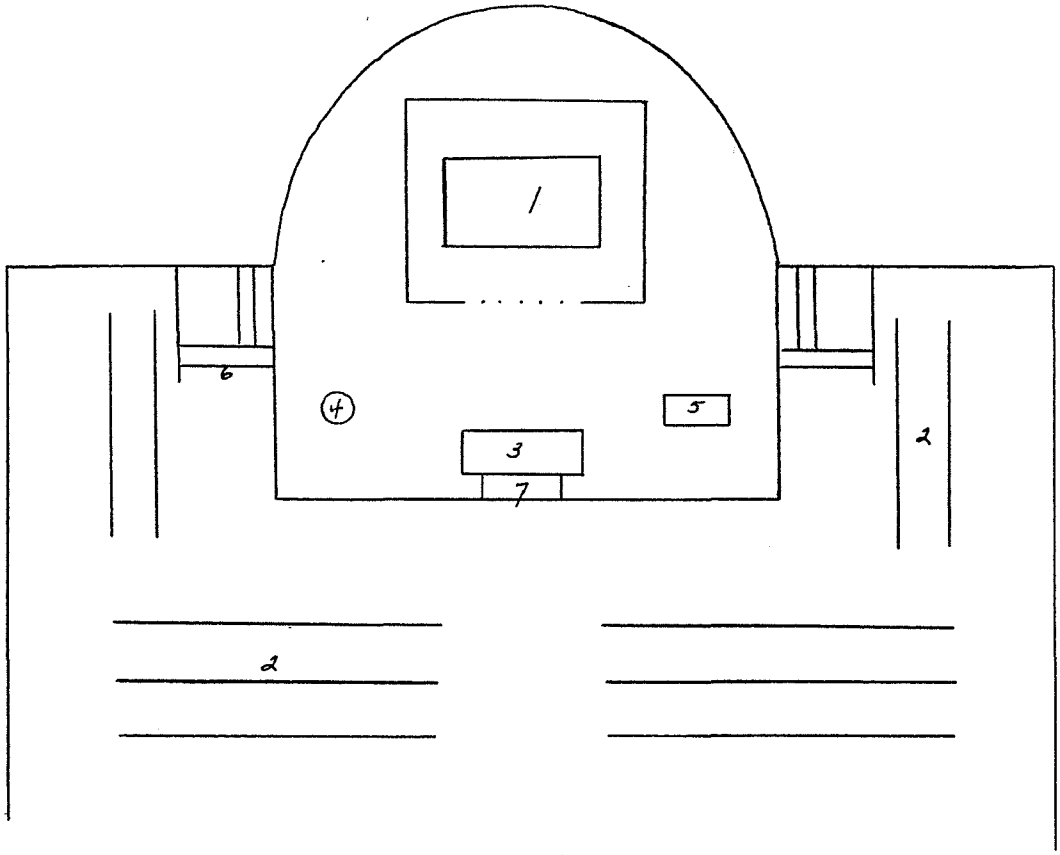



Figure 7

St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church

New York, N. Y.

1. Communion table
2. Pews
3. Pulpit
4. Baptismal font
5. Minister's chair
6. Steps to platform
7. Reading desk

The church, as it stands today, has the large pulpit with a sounding board to the right of the chancel and the lectern to the left, and within the enclosure of

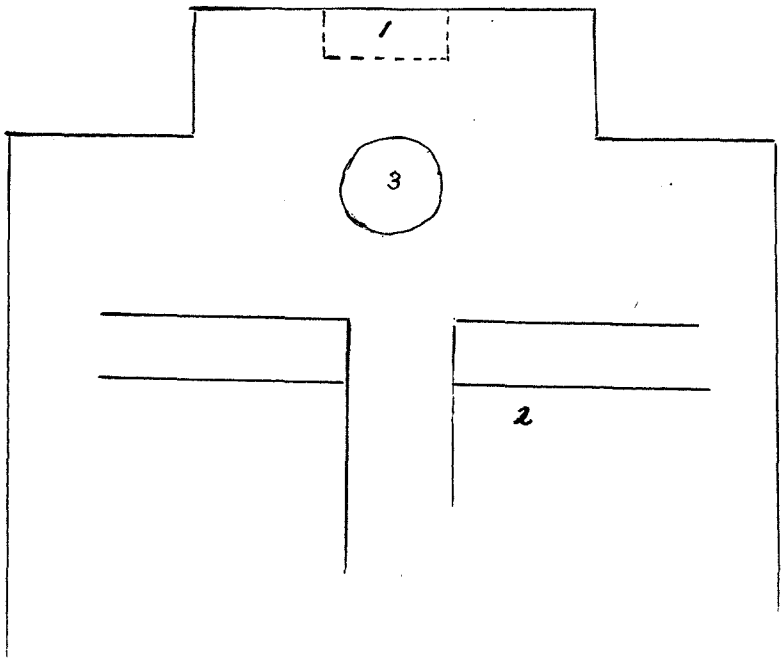
chancel rails stands the Communion table. During the Communion Service the ministers sit around the table, which is spread with a white linen cloth, reading the service, and the communicants enter the apse, kneeling on all four sides of the chancel to partake of the Lord's Supper. On the west wall of the shallow apse is printed the Lord's prayer.

7. St. Paul's Chapel, New York City

St. Paul's Chapel was commenced May 14, 1764, completed in 1766 and opened October 30, 1766. An old etching, which shows the chapel just after it was completed, gives a picture with box pews, a dominant wine-glass pulpit with reading desk below it, with a sounding board, in the axis of the church. The pulpit looks much like the one which is in the church at the present time, which has now been moved to the left of the chancel, to make a place for the altar. This old picture did not show the table but it probably stood against the wall of the apse, behind the pulpit in much the same position as the table in the Trinity Church, Newport, R. I. Today the church chancel is arranged after the same plan of the present day Episcopalian arrangement of the chancel, with the central altar and the pulpit and lectern on either side. (See Figure 8, p. 81)

The general feeling among Anglican and Episcopalian ministers about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper accounts in a real way for the prominent position now

given to the altar. Article XXVIII, "Of the Lord's Supper" remains the same, in the Book of Common Prayer al-



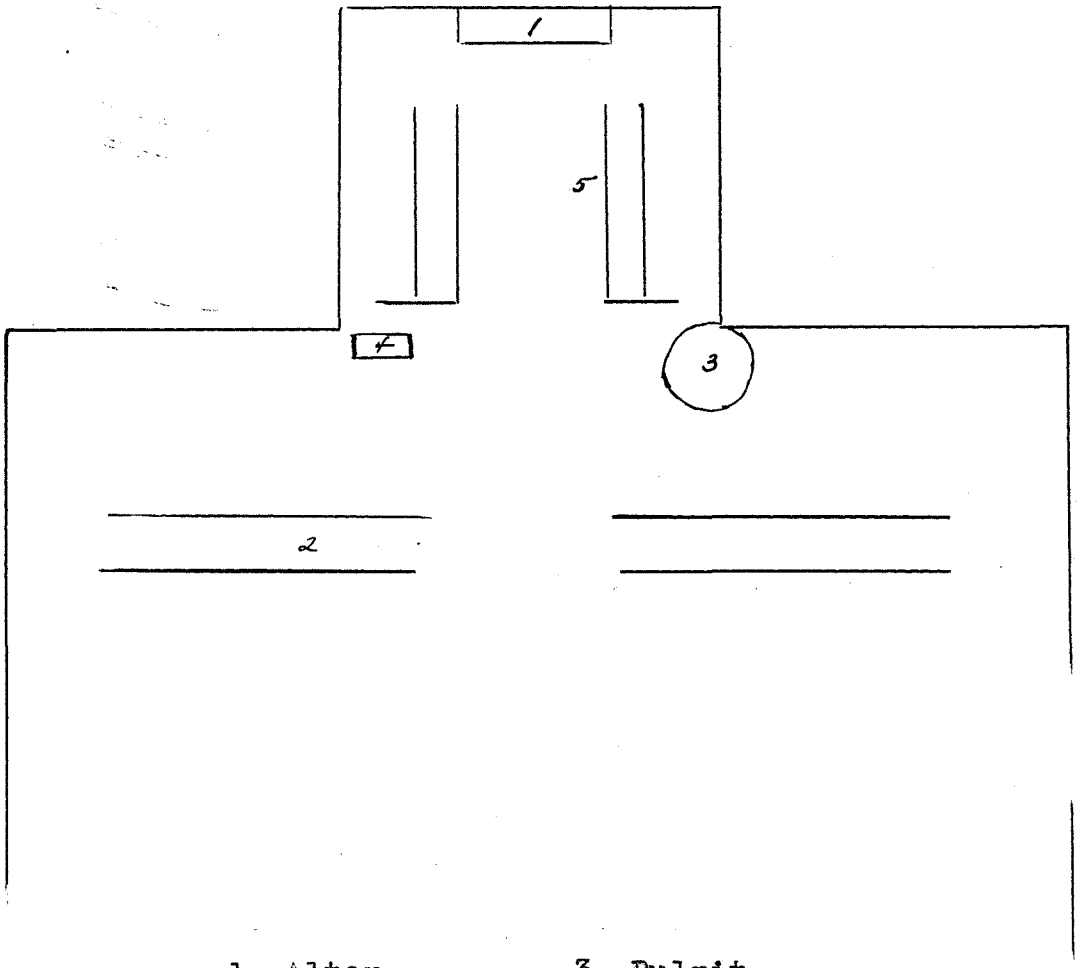

1. Communion table 2. Pews

3. Pulpit

Figure 8

St. Paul's Chapel, New York, N. Y. 1766

though the Episcopalian Church is educating the people toward the very doctrine from which the formulators of the Articles sought to deliver them. (See Figure 9, p. 82).




1. Altar
2. Pews
3. Pulpit
4. Lectern
5. Chancel

Figure 9

Typical Episcopalian Chancel

D. The Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church is the Church which grew out of the teachings of Martin Luther and which adopted his principles. Up to 1530 Luther had no plans for a new church organization but after the Diet of Augsburg in that year, he realized that the groups which had adopted his teachings needed some organization. The dominant influence of this organizing work was Philip Melanchthon. Together with Luther he formulated Lutheran views. Melanchthon's Humanistic interests, however, caused some modification of Lutheranism. In 1543 he gave church office and tradition such an emphasis that he allowed tradition an independent position, in coordination with Scripture. He held a leading position among the Lutherans until 1546.

At the Diet of Augsburg in 1555 the Lutheran Reformation finally received state recognition; the Lutherans were allowed to exist in freedom within the empire. After the Peace of Augsburg the controversies within the Church divided the Lutherans into several groups, although all Lutherans yet have as a common belief, the Apostles's Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed and the Augsburg Confession.

It is very difficult to trace a history of the Lutheran Church after Luther's death, because of the several groups within that denomination. There is really no

uniform Lutheran liturgy, as Luther tried to retain as much as possible the public service of the Medieval Church, yet developing the cardinal principles of Christianity. Luther worked out the doctrines but left it to his followers to apply them.

One Lutheran writer says, "With the Lutheran Church, uniformity of worship and government has always been a secondary consideration, all stress having been placed upon unity in the faith." [1]

Today the Lutheran Church is the largest Christian Church in Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Greenland, and Iceland.

It is with the churches of America, however, that we are most concerned, not because they are most important, but because for this study, the investigation of the American churches is more accessible and accurate.

American Lutheran history began in 1623 when the first permanent group of Lutherans came from Holland and settled in New Netherlands. In 1664 they were given freedom to worship, and since that time the Lutheran Church has become one of the strongest exponents of Protestantism in the New World.

The first German Lutheran synod was organized in 1735 at Raritan, N. J., by the Rev. William Christopher

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1. Henry E. Jacobs: A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States, p. 21.

Berkenmeyer, with two other ministers and eleven laymen. Berkenmeyer had been called from Germany in 1725 and served the parish between New York and Albany.

In 1741, Count Zizendorf, from Halle, came to America to minister to the neglected Lutherans in Pennsylvania. His was a spirit longing to be useful in the new world, and he approached his work with all enthusiasm. But he was not so doctrinal as Lutherans of the mother country desired him to be. The religion he preached was one of simple belief in one doctrine of redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ. His method was so confusing to the newly established churches that in 1742 Henry Melchior Muhlenberg was sent from Halle, to minister to these scattered congregations.

The influence of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg soon extended over all the Lutherans in America. He was a man of dynamic personality, numerous talents and accomplishments, a scholar, preacher, theologian and a firm Lutheran. These characteristics, combined with his ability for organization and administration made him the "Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America." He was influential in organizing congregations, adjusting congregational difficulties, providing places of worship and education and securing pastors for these pioneer churches. These are only a few of his achievements.

The Lutherans to whom Muhlenberg ministered

stood for the standards of the Lutheran Church of the 16th century. They, without reservation, perpetuated a traditional Lutheranism in worship, in observance of the church-year and its festivals, in the use of the Gospel-and-Epistle lessons, the rite of Confirmation, and the preparatory service for the Lord's Supper connected with the confession of sins and absolution. Muhlenberg introduced a warm-hearted, devout, practical Lutheranism with a tendency toward unionism.[1]

By 1830 there were three general groups of Lutherans in America; the group which advocated a rigid confessionalism with a deep spiritual life (Berkenmeyer is said to be the father of this group), the group of conservative Lutherans (such as Muhlenberg), and the General Synod which emphasized the organization for practical purposes (Zinzendorf, not so much doctrinal as devotional).

By 1867 the first General Council of the Lutheran Church convened in order to adopt a new plan of organization for the confessional synods. This was a call to all the synods and congregations in the United States and Canada to unite in the formation of a general body on a historic Lutheran basis.

In 1872 another group was organized, calling itself the Synodical Conference. This Conference believed

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1. Cf. Qualben, op. cit., p. 487.

itself to be even more zealous of Lutheran doctrine than the General Council and the Lutheranism which developed from this group was closely related to the orthodox Lutheranism of the 17th century.

The period since 1872 has been even more characteristic in its synod merging. The Lutheran World Conventions in Eisenach, Germany in 1923, in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1929, and in Paris, France in 1935 have done much to unite the denomination on a confessional basis.

It is not easy, however, to make a general statement as to the worship or church life of the Lutherans at the present day. Their beginnings were the same, but American Lutheranism is now divided into three groups: Synodical Conference, American Lutheran Conference and United Lutheran Church in America.

Dr. Jacobs says of his church,

> "The great need of the hour is for the establishment of strong institutions thoroughly equipped for the cultivation of theological science, so as to communicate to the religious world of America the rich treasures of Lutheran theology, and in the English language and the molds of thought of the nineteenth century to proclaim clearly and fearlessly the very same precious truths of the gospel, which gave her a name and made her a power in the days of the Reformation. As she is faithful to these truths she will become more and more thoroughly united, and will continue with ever-increasing efficiency to develop those fields in her practical life, where, notwithstanding the obstacles she has encountered, her efforts in this country, although made in all humility, and characterized by the frailty that

attaches to everything earthly, have not been without marked evidences of the divine blessing." [1]

## E. Center of Worship in Lutheran Churches

Luther's attitude in regard to church art showed discrimination. The German Lutheran churches, to this day, are rich in carved screens and wood and metal work. Although the altar was changed into a Communion table and placed near to the people, it was much more elaborate in design and ornament, than the table used by any of the other churches which grew out of the Reformation. Luther's belief in the doctrine of justification by faith and the priesthood of believers completely altered the position of sacrament and ministry. The new emphasis was laid upon preaching and teaching.

The diagram and description of the Castle Chapel, Torgau, Germany illustrate the early Lutheran principles.

Dr. Drummond says,

> "To the 17th and 18th century Germany we owe a debt, not so much for architectural style, as for experimentation in the plan and arrangement of Protestant churches...The placing of the pulpit in a central position behind the altar was not a Protestant innovation: for precedent can be found in the Neuwerks-Kirche at Goslar (A. D. 1200)...Reformed influence raised the pulpit of the Schmalkalden Schlosskirche 'axial over the altar' (1590), and this arrangement became common in Hessen and Thuringia, though strict Lutherans considered this position for the pulpit too domineering. Sometimes the pulpit was

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1. Jacobs, op. cit., p. 523.

> found in front of the altar, as in Lauenburg (1615). In the case of certain mediaeval churches converted to Protestant use, the nave was set aside for preaching and the choir for sacraments ...When pews were introduced, they were often ranged across the nave, the Lutheran service not requiring a central aisle for processions." 1

After the Thirty Years War (peace signed in 1648) there was need for a large number of new churches. The typical rural church which was then erected was built with flat roofs without any pillars to obstruct sight and cause echoes and had an altar placed in a niche immediately under the pulpit. The whitewashed walls and wooden galleries were often decorated with pictures of Luther, Melanchthon and the Apostles -- all this conveying the idea of a union of the domestic life of the people with the life of the Church.

The churches which developed in the city after the Thirty Years War, and during the eighteenth century, were more elaborate in structure and form but the same plan with regard to the altar and pulpit was carried out. The table was placed so that the minister could stand behind it. Leonard Christoph Sturm (1669-1729) was the man who was largely responsible for this Zentralbau plan.

During the eighteenth century rationalistic thinking of the German nation was reflected in the Church life. Church music and preaching had reduced the place of

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1. Drummond, op. cit., pp. 29, 30.

sacrament and liturgy in worship. Pauluskirche in Frankfurt-am-Main, a magnificent, yet dignified, oval-shaped house of worship, was built during this century. The pulpit was placed above the Communion table, which was raised three steps from the floor of the congregation and ornamented by a simple crucifix. The beauty of this church is in its spaciousness and simplicity.

From the churches in Germany we now turn to the Lutheran churches in the Thirteen Colonies.

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, who came from Halle in 1742, built what is now known as the most renowned of all the Lutheran churches in the United States, the Agustus Lutheran Church at Trappe, Pa. This old building marks the beginning of the organization of Lutheranism in America. It is of German-rural architecture, probably much the same type as that used in Germany after the Thirty Years War. The church was consecrated on October 6, 1745.

The following pictures will serve to describe this old church. (See Figures 10, p. 91, and 11 and 12, p. 92).

Dr. Fegely says,

> "It happily escaped the modernizing craze, and remains in its rugged simplicity, thereby retaining its superior distinction as the oldest unaltered Lutheran Church building in the United States." 1

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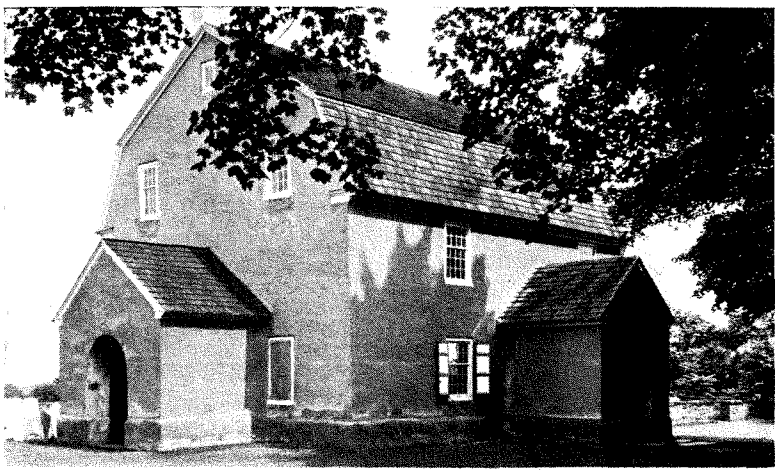
1. William O. Fegely: Augustus Lutheran Church, Trappe, Pa., The Shrine of Lutheranism, p. 8.



1743—THE SHRINE OF LUTHERANISM

Oldest Unaltered Lutheran Church in the United States. Used for Worship 109 Years—Now a Mecca for Visitors and Special Services.

**Figure 10**

Looking from West Entrance, Showing Timbers Under Gallery Floor, Collection Bags on Front Wall, and Imported Pulpit of European Red Walnut.

Figure 11

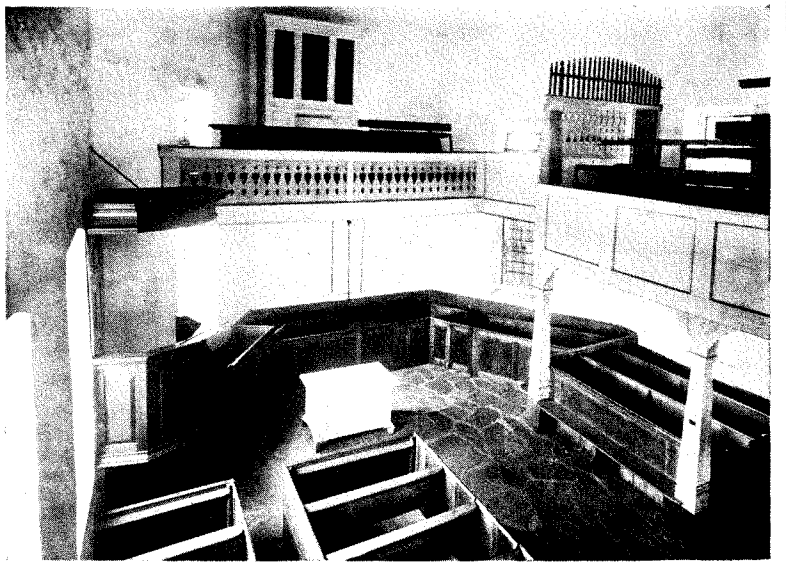


Figure 12. View from Rear Gallery

Many Lutheran Churches today have adopted much the same chancel plan that the Episcopalians use, and this arrangement has become so common and accepted in Lutheranism that few realize that the architecture of the Church has ever been different.

Although Luther stood with the Reformers on the three great principles of Christianity, his belief in the mystic re-incarnation of the presence of Christ in the bread and wine has given the Church the freedom to emphasize the sacrament and place the altar as the most important article in the chancel.

Webber, a Lutheran writer, says, "The main altar of the church must always be devoted to sacrifice on Calvary."[1] Martin Luther, however, to whom the idea of the sacrificial offering in the Mass was abhorrent made the preaching of the Word the central factor in his service. (Cf. Figure 13, p. 94).

## F. Summary

The Anglican Church, which was formed in 1527, adopted doctrinal emphases of the Reformed Churches. The Oxford Movement in 1833, however, called into existence a strong Anglo-Catholic party which has since exerted a great influence upon the worship of the Church. In 1924 a group of Anglican clergymen declared there is no dif-

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1. F. R. Webber: The Small Church, p. 140.

## A Typical Lutheran Church of Today

Interior of Present Church Renovated 1930.

**Figure 13.**

**Augustus Lutheran Church, Trappe, Pa.**

ference between Anglican Communion and the Roman Mass but the original Thirty-Nine Articles have not been changed.

The Protestant Episcopal Church is Anglican in doctrine and discipline but is adapted to exist in a democracy.

The Lutheran Church has divided into several groups since the Reformation with Henry Melchior Muhlenberg from Germany, as the Patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America.

The architecture of the Lutheran Church and the architecture of the Anglican and Episcopalian Churches have followed much the same history. What was a simple Communion table in the Reformation period has now been changed to an altar, which is devoted to sacrifice rather than fellowship.

# CHAPTER V

# THE CENTER OF WORSHIP

# IN THE

# REFORMED CHURCHES

## CHAPTER V

## THE CENTER OF WORSHIP IN THE REFORMED CHURCHES

The Churches of the Reformation which followed Calvin came to be known as the Reformed Churches -- those with the Presbyterian system of faith and order. These Churches today are the Reformed Church in Switzerland, France, Holland, Germany, Hungary and America, and the Presbyterian Church in Great Britain, Canada and the United States.

### A. The Center of Worship from the Reformation to the Present Day

While Calvin was in Strasburg in 1539, he issued a complete service book for the use of the congregation of French Protestant exiles. The first edition has disappeared, but the second edition was printed on February 15, 1542, after Calvin had returned to Geneva and one copy is still extant in the Library there. From this service book John Knox printed an English version in 1556, called "Forme of Prayers," and it was from this 1556 edition that the Book of Common Order, which was used by the Church of Scotland for some eighty years after the Reformation was derived.

From these books and their later editions we have our Books of Common Worship for the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches of today.

Calvin earnestly desired to restore the primitive practice of weekly Communion -- the Lord's own service on

the Lord's own day. The Medieval Roman Church had celebrated Mass daily, but only the clergy communicated. This reform toward a weekly celebration of the sacrament Calvin never achieved, although in other Calvinistic Churches at the time of Calvin, the Lord's Supper was celebrated monthly. Dr. Maxwell says,

> "In every case it was civil (magisterial) interference which prevented Calvin from restoring and maintaining the primitive Christian practice of weekly Communion. He fought to see it restored again and again, but always in vain. The curious thing out of it all, of course, is that these facts should have been ignored by his followers even to this day, many even in his name imagining infrequent Communion to be a cherished principle of the early Reformers. In point of fact, none of them desired it." 1

The laity, however, associated the idea of frequent Communion with the Roman Catholic priest and altar from which they had so recently escaped. They were afraid it would regain its Roman Catholic emphasis; be opened to superstition which would nullify the advance they had made.

After 1560 the Lord's Supper was generally observed quarterly.

The minister usually conducted the service from the table, except when he was forced to go to the pulpit in order to be heard.

> "The Lord's Table is the natural and proper distinctive focal point of all Christian worship, and for the Minister to take his position behind the Table facing the people is alike primitive and good Reformed practice." 2

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1. William D. Maxwell: John Knox's Genevan Service Book 1556, pp. 203, 204.
2. Ibid., pp. 38, 39.

The priest is thus displaced by the minister. In the early German Reformed liturgies the word priest is displaced by the words, Pfarrer or Diener. This indicates in the minds of the Reformers a definite change in the office of the minister.

From "The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America" we have these words,

> "III. That our blessed Savior, for the edification of the visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments; but also to excercise discipline, for the preservation both of truth and duty; and, that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censor or cast out the erroneous and scandalous; observing, in all cases, the rules contained in the Word of God." 1

The "Constitution" says of bishops or pastors,

> "The pastoral office is the first in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness. The person who fills this office hath, in Scripture, obtained different names expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. As he serves Christ in his church, he is termed minister. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed presbyter or elder. As he is the messenger of God, he is termed the angel of the church. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. And, as he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God." 2

The Reformed Churches lay much stress upon a

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1. The Presbyterian Board of Christian Education: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, p. 332.
2. Ibid., p. 336.

pious and educated ministry "because it is highly reproachful to religion and dangerous to the Church to trust the holy ministry to weak and ignorant men." [1] A candidate for this office must be examined in character, conduct, in physical, mental and educational qualifications and of the motives which influenced him to desire to become a minister. If the candidate meets the requirements, the Presbytery or classis ordains him.

> "The presiding minister shall, by prayer, and with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, according to the apostolic example, solemnly ordain him to the holy office of the gospel ministry." 2

Such a prayer follows:

> "Almighty God and everlasting Father, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth by Thy wisdom, and hast from the beginning ordained for Thy Church the Ministry of Reconciliation, giving some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ; Look in mercy, we beseech Thee, on this Thy servant, upon whom we lay our hands in Thy name, and whom we thus ordain and set apart to the holy office of the Ministry. Pour down upon him the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, confirming in heaven what we do in Thy Church on earth, and owning him as a true Minister of the Gospel of Thy Son. Vouchsafe to him that authority and gentleness, that purity and spiritual discernment, that zeal and meekness, which shall make him an example and guide to the flock; that so making full proof of his Ministry, and continuing in the same, he may both save himself and those that hear him. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the love of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen." 3

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1. Ibid, p. 355.
2. Ibid., p. 364.
3. Book of Common Worship, pp. 80, 81.

When new buildings were erected for Reformed worship they were built around the focal symbolism of the Communion table, pulpit, Bible, ordained minister, and as a necessity, especial consideration was paid to their light, acoustics, spaciousness and convenience. Most of the decoration was carved pulpits and woodwork. One of the essentials in Reformed worship is that the congregation should see and hear.

The usual arrangement of the furniture at the center of worship, since the early days of the Reformation, is the central pulpit with the Communion table in front of it, either raised one step or on the level of the congregation, but between the people and the minister.

To guard against the doctrine of "transubstantiation" which the Constitution says

> "is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason; overthrowest the nature of the Sacrament; and hath been, and is the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries," 1

they removed the altar from its prominent eastward position to a place in front of the pulpit.

It is not difficult to see how this arrangement grew out of the Reformers' experience. Medieval churches were built with the pulpit half way down the nave. Although it was necessary that a priest be ordained to serve at the

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1. The Presbyterian Board of Christian Education: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, p. 115.

altar ordination was not required for one who spoke from the pulpit. Therefore it was desirous that the pulpit be apart from the chancel. The Reformers, however, when they unified the ministerial office, were compelled to walk between the table and the pulpit, and sometimes were not able to be heard when they stood at the table. The churches they then erected were so arranged that they could conduct the service from behind the table, at the elevated pulpit. In this way the minister could be both seen and heard for the whole service. The Word on the desk before him held a central and supreme place and he as an educated and ordained man was given unique symbolic recognition. But the table of fellowship among the people signifying their privilege of priesthood did not separate him from them as the priests were separate from the laity because of their priestly function.

During the long and hard struggle for ecclesiastical and political freedom in Scotland and Holland, this structure of Protestantism proved itself more than equal to the demands made upon it to provide the personal character and ecclesiastical leadership necessary to resist the aggression of both political and ecclesiastical autocracy which would rob these people of their newly gained independence and individualism.

In the American Colonies the Scotch and Scotch-Irish based their philosophy of religion on liberty and the example of John Knox had convinced them that revolt against

tyranny was a duty. When the Colonies gained their independence and organized their new secular order of society in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System of Faith and Order found their most congenial environment. For the Republican system of democracy here drawn up corresponded completely to the ecclesiastical structure of their system of Faith and Order, from which it was derived. And it was soon found that this system of Faith and Order has the natural ability to develop the very type of personal character and rugged individualism which The American Way of Life charts. So this branch of the Christian Church has been able to contribute a very important element to the religious, political, social, educational and economic life of this country and has also been a pioneer in the missionary enterprise.

The original arrangement of the Reformed center of worship has remained quite stable until the latter part of the 19th century when some individual churches and educational institutions have adopted a modified form of chancel symbolism similar to that of some Episcopalian and Lutheran churches. Accompanying this trend has been a change in the requirements for ministerial ordination, whereas the Church has been willing to accept ministers without complete training in Greek and Hebrew. This indicates a lessening in the mind of the Church of the importance of reading the Scrip-

tures in the original tongues which is also a definite diminution of the importance of the preaching of the Word of God in public worship.

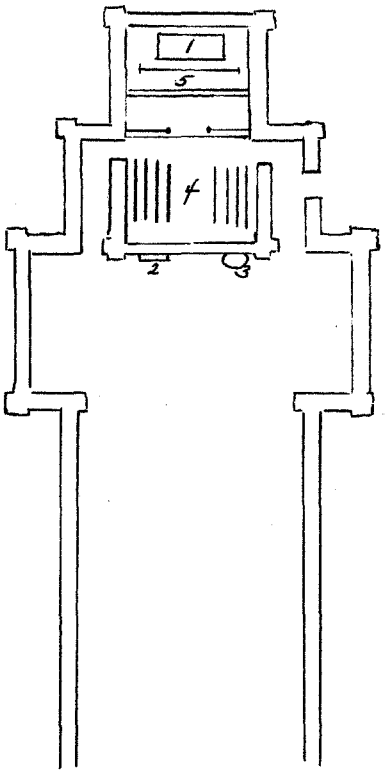
Dr. Stafford gives a plan for an Evangelical Church which demonstrates this trend. (See Figure 14, p. 103)

This trend in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. is shown by the proposition of union between the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.

B. Underlying Principles in the Center of Worship

The Reformed Churches of today, in renovating their churches toward more "worshipful" structures, have failed to take into consideration the principles which underlie the arrangement of the center of worship as the Reformers used them. The Reformers have been condemned as iconoclasts but it seems to have been forgotten that those men who originated the center of worship in these Churches were determined to free Protestantism from the altar-and-priest conception, which was Roman Catholicism. Granted that there was some fanaticism at the time of the Reformation, we must not lose the architectural and liturgical treasures of the Reformation, remembering that they correctly symbolize the doctrines for which the Reformed Church stands, and which have been visibly expressed in the center of worship.

The Reformed Churches acknowledge a ministry of "the Word and the Sacraments." Although there have been times when one has been featured at the expense of the other,




1. Altar 3. Pulpit

2. Lectern 4. Chancel

5. Sanctuary

Figure 14 *

Symbolic Church Plan

* Thomas A Stafford: Christian Symbolism in the Evangelical Churches, p. 107.

the original Reformation doctrines remain the same. When the Reformers removed the altar, they restored the table of fellowship. It was their desire to return to the worship of the New Testament. They restored preaching of the Word which brings salvation through faith, realizing that this great Work is achieved, not by the Mass at the altar but by the proclamation of the Gospel and belief in the head and heart. All of the original Reformers came out of a worship structure which used the altar and neglected the pulpit and if they wanted to retain that type of worship they would have remained in the Roman Catholic Church and been content with reforming its unethical practices.

Because they recognized both the Word and the Sacraments, they kept the table and the pulpit in their proper relation and gave each architectural recognition. But they were careful to keep a balance between these New Testament ideas. Although the whole room of worship is the sanctuary where all are priests, the minister conducts the service and "communicates truth through personality"[1] from the pulpit. Through the laying on of the hands by the ordained ministers of the presbytery a minister's apostolic succession is symbolized and his full ordination completed.

Since the tendency to change the architectural symbolism of the center of worship is growing in Reformed

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1. Phillips Brooks: Lectures on Preaching, p. 8.

Churches it would be well to understand its psychological effect and to determine whether the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian system of faith and order are prepared to surrender what is lost for what is gained.

Some ministers in churches which have already made this change believe that certain forms in the Catholic Church rightfully belong to Protestantism. Devan says of the chancel arrangement,

> "The chancel arrangement, even if not ancient, has much to commend it both on practical and symbolic grounds. Perhaps most important is the fact that in the chancel arrangement, everything seems to h have been cleared away to make room for God. Ministers, singers, preaching station, organ -- all are as it were pushed one side or the other to make a clear path to the cross. The human leaders of worship, and the appurtenances of worship are assigned places of secondary importance. No one can mistake the object of worship. A chancel carries with it an automatic atmosphere of reverence which has an effect both on the congregation and on the leaders of worship themselves..." 1

Of the central altar, Stafford gives this,

> "...There ought to be an unobstructed approach along the central aisle to the altar. This approach is emblematic of the Christian way to God." 2

This is a confusion of symbols in which the Roman Catholic priestly ministry is accepted while the Reformed conception of the purpose of worship is subordinated. Christ is not found at an altar -- He is found in the Word and in fellowship; "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of

. . . . . .

1. Sir Arthur Devan: Ascent to Zion, p. 134.
2. Thomas A Stafford, op. cit., pp. 110,11.

them." [1] Origen says, "The altars are the heart of every Christian." [2]

It should be remembered that the Table in the Apostolic and Early Church and in the Reformed Churches remained a Table while the oblation was thought of as being a self-offering. Only those who offered themselves could come to the Table. When the offering became Christ's offering, the Table became an altar.

Dr. Drummond says of the use of the Communion table,

> "As regards the eucharistic use of the Communion table, it must be admitted that many of those anxious to welcome the ministry of Beauty have allow-'their principles to become blurred.' In seeking to treat the Table with due reverence, they have tried to make 'something more than a table' by such devices as a solid front, embroidered cloths, the use of stone, a position near the wall,(often with reredos behind), no Minister's Chair behind the table." 3

The same Scotchman also says,

> "In the United States I found that there was considerable vagueness as to the distinction (between altar and Communion table) -- due no doubt to the inaccurate interchange of terms and the belief that an 'altar' is simply a more aesthetic form of Communion table." 4

The table becomes an altar when the minister must turn his back on the people in order to serve at the table.

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1. Matthew 18:20
2. Andrew L. Drummond: The Church Architecture of Protestantism, p. 214.
3. Ibid., p. 211.
4. Loc. cit., (the parenthesis is mine)

If Christianity is not a religion of sacraments it is illogical to overemphasize the altar. If it is not a religion of the Word it is illogical to overemphasize the pulpit.[1] The balance the Reformers established has great psychological values and is of the essence of the Reformation. When it is disturbed, the door is opened to Catholicism.

It often has been said that the central altar produces a sense of worship which the central pulpit and table cannot produce -- that there are possibilities in lighting, in drapery and stone which are not possible in a wooden table or pulpit.

Dr. Drummond has given several suggestions about solving this problem, while still keeping the physical expressions of the Reformed doctrines true.

Seek to direct wandering imagination Godwards through a sense of unity and harmony in the proportions and color rather than emphasis of particular symbols.

The first of these aids to worship is symmetry. Make even proportions, regular aisles. A central pulpit has good possibilities from the point of view of symmetry.

The second principle is that of unity. Use harmonious colors, have good structural tone to suggest thoughts of harmony and peace, to prepare the minds of the worshippers who enter for the high privilege of sommon worship.

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Ibid., p. 216.

The third factor is strength. Give a sense of solidity and power in the building itself,[1] to which must be added the ministry of music in typical Protestant form.

The center of worship in a Reformed church must be a part of the whole structure. By color, harmony of line and furniture it can create a spirit of rest, peace and comfort which is focused, not on a particular object, but which leads to the worship of Him who dwells in a temple not made with hands. When too much place is given to architectural values in Christian worship, there must result a corresponding loss in the values which were primary in the Apostolic Church and at the Reformation. There fellowship and the proclamation of the Gospel truth through an ordained Christian personality were supremely important.

The Holy Spirit is enabled to operate with telling power through this channel in preaching, in soul winning, in the extension of the kingdom throughout the world. The apostles, ministering through this combination, "turned the world upside down."

> "Instead of crying out, therefore, 'Back to the ways in which our fathers worshipped God!' let us rather take as our motto, 'Onward to the living Christ!' But we shall find him where the reformers found him, in the open pages of the Bible." 2

C. Summary

The Reformed Churches displaced the priest by

. . . . . .

1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 179-185.
2. Cf. Andrew W. Blackwood: The Fine Art of Public Worship, p. 50.

the Pfarrer or Diener, and demanded an educated and ordained ministry to make the Reformed worship effective. Instead of an altar a Communion table was used which was placed before the pulpit in front of the congretation . The reading of the Word and the preaching of the Word were combined in a physical way at the pulpit. Thus the focal point of the architectural structure was the point where the "Word and the Sacraments " were in close relationship. The table indicated the priesthood of the believers and the Bible on the pulpit the supreme authority and the Way of justification by faith. These doctrines were kept in balance.

Since some Reformed churches are changing the symbolism at the center of worship to the chancel arrangement an effort should be made to determine whether the Reformed Churches are prepared to surrender what is lost for what is gained. The Roman Catholic ministry is accepted while the Reformed conception of worship is subordinated and when too much value is placed upon architectural influences there results a loss in the values which were primary in the Apostolic Church and at the Reformation.

A typical center of worship in a

Reformed church

Figure 15.

West End Collegiate Church, New York City

(This picture was taken when the church was decorated for a Christmas service.)

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In Chapter I we saw how the worship of the early Christians was organized around the fellowship of the Communion table, with praise and prayer, the preaching from the Old Testament Scriptures and reading from the Epistles. The minister was especially qualified by the apostolic laying on of hands. As the organization of the Church developed, however, the worship became sacerdotal; the Table was gradually displaced by an altar upon which was offered the sacrifice of the Mass until the fellowship of the Lord's table was lost and the reading from the Scriptures and preaching were reduced to a minor place. Essential elements of personal relationship of the original Christian religious experience were not able to exist in this type of service.

Strong reaction movements against this sacerdotal system began to take place three hundred years before the Reformation, as shown in Chapter II. Among these were the Waldenses in 1200, Wyclif and Huss in the 1300's and Wessel in 1400. The loss of the Christian fellowship of the believers and the vitality of the religious experience centered in the Word was of such great concern to some of these that they lay down their lives in an effort for reform. In these groups the emphasis centered around

movements to break away from the priest-altar-chancel architectural symbolism to the simplicity of the Lord's table of fellowship one with another and with the Christ, and the reading and preaching from the Bible.

In Chapter III, as we have seen, the Reformers actually accomplished this. The return to the New Testament doctrines which they led could not be organized around the Medieval Church symbolism of the chancel, so they made radical changes in the architectural symbolism of the center of worship. They removed the altar from the rear of the chancel and returned it to its original service as a Communion table, placed it before the pulpit and featured the Bible and an educated and ordained ministry as the remedy for the needs of the people they served.

Chapter IV traced the history of the Episcopalian and Lutheran Churches. Both of these Churches, which were products of the Reformation, after a couple of centuries, made a return to the type of symbolism resembling that of the Medieval Church with the chancel, altar, lectern and pulpit. This type of architecture is now accepted by both Churches as the best arrangement for the doctrines of the denominations and this study is not criticizing their valuable contributions to the American Christian Church and its life.

Some of the Reformed churches holding the Presbyterian System of Faith and Order which have been discussed

in Chapter V are now making a return to the altar-chancel symbolism of the center of worship. The original Reformed symbolism of the Communion table-pulpit-Bible-preacher however, provided the most satisfactory structure for the functioning of the fundamental principles of the Reformation, justification by faith, the Bible as the supreme authority in religion, the preaching of the Word and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as the most perfect expression of Christian fellowship exemplifying the priesthood of believers. This structure of Protestantism has proved itself more than equal to the demands made upon it to provide the personal character and ecclesiastical leadership necessary to keep the people of the Reformed Churches in possession of the freedom which they had once attained.

In the brilliant minds of Zwingli, Calvin and Erasmus of Rotterdam and other leaders there was a clear intellectual recognition of the profound psychological influence of architecture and form of worship upon the nature of public worship and the resulting religious experience in public worship. And there was a very real and subtle element of freedom in worship enjoyed by the Reformed Churches' ministry educated and trained soundly and confidently to interpret the Scriptures, which was intimately bound up with the symbolic support it received from the center of worship as expressed in the architecture of the church sanctuary and the arrangement of the

furniture at the focal point. Because of the rugged individualism and personal character which this type of Faith and Order develops the Reformed Churches have been able to make a unique contribution to the religious, political, social, educational and economic life of this country.

Quite unaware of this psychological fact which the founders of this System of Faith and Order recognized as so essential the twentieth century descendants of these stalwart defenders of religious freedom are beginning to abandon the original Reformation symbolism under the impression that it possesses no elemental religious values. This chancel symbolism which is now being accepted in individual Reformed churches and educational institutions moves the Communion table from the fellowship symbol before the pulpit to the altar position at the rear of the chancel, with the preaching position and Scripture divided and subordinated to the altar.

The questions raised by this study are these: Have the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian system of Faith and Order given serious and intelligent consideration to the psychological consequences of such a change? How is the religious experience which this System is adapted to create and cultivate to be preserved? Are these churches which are firmly united to the three fundamental principles of the Reformation regarding carefully the

psychological consequences which result when the freedom in worship and fellowship is displaced by a pattern which is foreign to its doctrines and public worship needs?

These questions inevitably arise out of this study but the answers do not come within the scope of this thesis.

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