

zation attempting to manipulate the policies of Lutheran Church bodies. Members of the Ministerium and Confraternity are free to determine their own synod of membership, involvement in synodical politics, etc., as long as their confession is clear in their words and practices. They are not, however, to exploit their Confraternity or Ministerium membership for this purpose.

### **What Is the Confraternity's Confession?**

The Augustana Ministerium requires her members to subscribe to the entire *Book of Concord*, not just 'insofar as it agrees with the Bible', but *because it agrees completely with the Bible*. As a part of such subscription, we hold to the inspiration and inerrancy of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. This, in turn requires us to confess that only males may serve as pastors. We also promote the use of the historical liturgical orders of the Church, which were received by the Lutheran confessors, as indicated in the *Book of Concord*. We expect that members of the Confraternity also consider themselves bound to what the *Book of Concord* teaches, and seek to grow in their knowledge of it.

### **What Can I Do to Help Bring Relief to Pastors and Congregations who Share this Confession?**

Our activities, to be effective and comprehensive, require committed resources from both pastors and laity. The Gospel is God's free gift, but bringing it to the faithful (and to the unbelievers!) in this world costs money, talent, and time. As congregations and individuals give generously to our work, we will be able to support the preparation of more pastors, resulting in the planting of more churches and schools. *We assure you:* whatever we receive will go only to support orthodox Lutheran pastors in their ministry needs (funding their work

in mission congregations, schools, etc.), relief to pastors in need, and solid Lutheran publishing and theological conferences. We confine our internal operational budget to the dues paid by member pastors and Confraternity members, so that all other contributions can go directly to such aid.

In his essay to the "Christian Nobility of the German Estates," Luther encouraged redirecting financial and other support *away from* those who promote false doctrine, persecute faithful pastors, and refuse to be reformed by Holy Scripture. Instead, they are to direct their offerings and efforts *toward* churches, schools, and other institutions that are right and just.

The Augustana Ministerium assists in doing what Luther suggests. In the few years of our existence, we have assisted many orthodox Lutheran pastors (and, thus, their congregations) through designated and undesignated gifts totaling in the tens of thousands of dollars. By God's grace, we look for the provision of such aid to continue to increase, as the need is so great.

To make a tax deductible donation, please make a check payable to The Augustana Ministerium and mail it to:

The Augustana Ministerium  
% The Anthony Oncken, Bursar  
712 Brandt St.  
Grandview, TX 76050

If you have further questions, please contact the following:

- Financial matters: the Rev. Anthony Oncken, Bursar (224) 627-0405;
- General practical questions or Confraternity membership: the Rev. Dr. Kent Heimbigner, Legate, (817) 426-0783;
- An orthodox Lutheran pastor in need: the Rev. Andrew Eckert, Dean of Pastoral Care, (405) 414-1335.

# The Augustana Confraternity

An association of Lutheran  
laity formed to preserve and  
promote Lutheran pastors  
and a distinctively Lutheran  
Ministry of Word and  
Sacrament to Lutheran  
congregations through their  
support of  
The Augustana Ministerium

[www.AugustanaMinisterium.org/  
Confraternity.html](http://www.AugustanaMinisterium.org/Confraternity.html)

## First, What Is a Lutheran Ministerium?

A Lutheran ministerium is...*a pastoral association formed to preserve and promote Lutheran pastors and a distinctively Lutheran Ministry of Word and Sacrament to Lutheran congregations.* The commitment of The Augustana Ministerium, in line with this purpose, is:

- To provide emergency relief for pastors in crisis and need;
- To help small congregations keep their faithful pastors, even though they are unable to pay a pastor a full-time livable wage;
- To help plant new mission congregations and preaching stations;
- To put ordained pastors who are without a call back into ministry as pastors and teachers in the Church;
- To establish, publish, and promote such theological conferences, educational resources, and other materials and events as appear helpful for the meeting of our purpose.

## What, Then, Is a Confraternity?

A *confraternity* is a brotherhood—an association of those sharing a common confession and purpose. Members of The Augustana Confraternity share the confession of faith and above-stated purpose of The Augustana Ministerium, and seek to help the Ministerium fulfill the commitment stated above. As Confraternity members rejoice in the forgiveness of sins and the eternal life that is theirs on account of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus their Savior, they:

- devote themselves to the teaching of Holy Scripture and to the elucidation of that teaching in the Confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, particularly the Small Catechism;

- support their pastors in maintaining confessional Lutheran doctrine and practice, and respectfully bring to their pastors' attention any perceived departure therefrom;
- having voiced their agreement with The Augustana Ministerium's Constitution, Bylaws, and *Statement on the Ministry*, undertake to support the work of The Augustana Ministerium with their prayers, and with their 'time, treasure, and talent' to the extent that they are able.

Confraternity members' \$40 annual dues help finance the Ministerium's operational budget. These funds cover expenses for the annual Theological Conference, as well as postage and printing costs for the Confraternity's quarterly newsletter, etc. Individual Confraternity members receive free admittance to the Theological Conference and Plenary. Couples or households holding membership receive one free admittance and a substantial cost reduction for all other members of their household.

Confraternity members, through the quarterly newsletter, as well as through electronic communications, will be kept apprised of the activities and needs of the Ministerium. They shall also have access to resources on the Ministerium website and the opportunity to suggest other resources they would like the Ministerium to provide. They will also be able to consult with pastors of The Augustana Ministerium as may be appropriate in spiritual matters germane to the work of the Ministerium (e.g., recommendation of names to congregations seeking to call a pastor).

## Is a Ministerium or Confraternity a Church?

The Augustana Ministerium is not a fellowship of congregations, but an associa-

tion of pastors committed to certain principles and engaged in certain activities; The Augustana Confraternity is an association of laity committed to the same principles and supporting those activities. Neither is a synod or church body or a 'church within a church', and membership in either is no indication of altar and pulpit fellowship. Each member may leave or join synods or other bodies as his conscience determines, being informed by the Word of God and so long as such membership does not negate his confession and commitment to the principles of the Ministerium.

Our Ministerium and Confraternity *do* strive to provide support where synods fail to uphold a sound confession of faith and good practice. We *do* strive to uphold and defend faithful pastors. Our work together is to support and encourage the pure marks of the Church (the purely preached Gospel and the rightly administered sacraments, Augsburg Confession VII) regardless of synods and 'denominations'. We strive to ensure that faithful pastors and their families will not be abandoned or neglected and that faithful orthodox pastors who are persecuted are defended fairly. Thus, The Augustana Ministerium and The Augustana Confraternity do not seek to duplicate the functions of a synod or other body, but seek to pick up where synods cannot or currently will not help.

## Is this a Political Action Group?

The Ministerium is focused on the marks of the Church and the confession of Jesus Christ, supporting faithful pastors and parishes *across synodical boundaries*. This is not political activity. Confessing the faith and laboring in its behalf is the necessary work of pastors and theologians. The Augustana Ministerium has never been, nor does it intend to be, a political organi-