

Page 1 **Table of Contents - List of Accompanying Documents .**

Sent in a mailing 11/18/1988, to District President Hinz and others, total 45 pages
Print out from computer, 24 pgs.

- Page 2 1. Long Review letter to Hinz, 11/18/88, 18 pgs.
Page 20 2. Accomplishments Faith from Resume, no date approx. Sept. '87, 3 pgs.
Page 23 3. Raise the Roof from Faith File, 8/9/87 1 pg.
Page 24 4. Bd. of G & P from Faith File, 8/9/87, 2 pgs.
Photocopies, 21 pages.
5. Report of Bd. G & P 3/18/79, 3 pgs.
6. Visions of a Servant from 3/20/79 Faith Life, 1 pg.
7. Letter to Hinz no date approx 4/4/79, 1 pg.
8. Letter to Hinz, 4/19/79, 2 pgs.
9. Letter to Kringle by Leo, 5/1/79, 1 pg.
10. Letter to Kringle et. al. 5/8/79, 2 pgs.
11. Letter to Hinz 5/8/79, 2 pgs.
12. Letter to Hinz 5/17/79, 1 pg.
13. Pastor's Annual Report, 5/29/79, 2 pgs.
14. Hinz's Recommendations 6/27/79, 2 pgs.
15. Letter for three month leave 7/18/79, 1 pg.
16. Minutes Congregational Meeting 7/31/79, 1 pg.
17. Letter to Hinz 8/2/79, 1 pg.
18. Letter to Hinz 10/4/79, 1 pg.

Mailed 11/23/88, to the same group, 4 pgs.

- Page 26 1. Cover letter 1 pg.
2. Evaluation by Dr. Noonberg. 2 pgs. (see below).
3. Blank PIF form 1 pg.

Taken to the meeting held on November 29, 1988

1. Proposed Agenda 1 pg. not used
2. PIF Evaluation, Theology of Mission and Self Evaluation by Funck, 6 pgs.
3. PIF Evaluation, presented by President Hinz, 3 pgs.

Sent by Heins directly to Hinz

1. AVA test scores

Added to this computer print out, 11 pgs.

Page 27 1. Letter to Hinz 8/10 87, 1 pg.

Page 28 2. Letter to Hinz 7/7/88, 1 pg.

Page 29 3. Letter to Hinz 7/30/88, 1 pg.

The following items sent to the District Presidents and others invited to the meeting

Page 30 4. Letter to Hinz et al. 9/6/88, 2 pgs.

Page,32 5. Letter to Hinz et al. 9/23/88, 2 pgs.

Page 34 6. PIF Evaluation by Hinz/Funck combined on 3 pgs. (Comparison placing the Evaluation Scores of Hinz and Funck on the same pages.)

Page 37 7. Evaluation by Dr. Noonberg with deletions 1 pg.

There is a considerable number of additional documents concerning the events at Faith during this period of time in Rev. Funck's personal files.

**Rev. Stephen H. Funck
3107 Louise Avenue
Baltimore, Md. 21214**

November 18, 1988

President Richard T. Hinz
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
Southeastern District
Box 10405
Alexandria, Va. 22310

Dear President Hinz:

- 1 This will review much ancient history which needs to be stated plainly. This long letter was begun February, 1988 and was basically finished by March, since then it has waited for the right time to be sent. Originally I expected to share it only with you after meeting about my PIF¹. I had not expected that to be very good but I was horrified when I saw you chose to make it so terrible that no District President would consider me for a call. It is well known that DPs send on to other Districts men they do not want in their own. I personally know of some who were so handled and expected the same treatment.
- 2 Since you chose to involve the others in the justification of that PIF, I have made a few modifications to this and am sharing it with them all. I have also taken the AVA evaluation² which is mentioned in the PIF as an alternate means of evaluation and asked Dr. Noonberg to present an evaluation with reference to the PIF³. Those modifications primarily are in the references, documentation and footnotes. They overlay the more personal style and tone of the original. The others know the broad outline of this. However, since they were involved only at isolated points, they too will benefit from this review. If you

¹Pastor's Information Form. I first requested seeing it December 15, 1987 and finally got to see some of it September 6, 1988. A very long time to wait to see a document "open for my inspection".

²Paul Heins is to send the scores directly to Hinz in time for our meeting since both are authorized to use it.

³I suggested getting his formal evaluation in my September 23, 1988 letter. That evaluation will be included in a second mailing since it is not finished. He has not been told the purpose of my request but I did promise him an explanation and will send him a copy of this document.

have any evidence that I have misrepresented or not been accurate about anything here, I urge you to bring it to my attention.

- 3 My report to you August 10, 1987 stated: *“Over the past many years I have repeatedly sent Brother Pastors and District Officials to you with the same message. They were asked to remind you and to repeat to you the promise I made when we last met with the District VPs at the old office building. Since you refused to meet further with me and resolve our problems, I promised that, my door would be open and you would receive a gracious welcome, but in the mean time I would not pursue the resolution of our separation.”*
- 4 I found it impossible to ignore the Gulf between us. I never have been able to understand how you could either. The passage in Matthew 5:23 most vividly portrays the problem. "So, if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." It has been beyond me how you could lead worship service and carry on your work, knowing I have been waiting for you. I could never had any rest until I had pursued every avenue of reconciliation. Even if I was sure that all the fault lay entirely on the other man, I could not refuse to meet with him if he wanted to work at reconciliation. We are commanded to the "ministry of reconciliation". You are Pastor to pastors. a Bishop, overseer in the Church of Christ. Am I in error to look to you as a leader in the use of Law and Gospel, an example to me in pastoral ministry?
- 5 The normal result of letting time pass, is that reconciliation becomes more difficult, the results less satisfactory. I feel it is necessary to review what took place. However, putting this in writing does change the dynamics⁴. It would have been better if reconciliation would have occurred before now without it.
- 6 We met those many years ago, December 7, 1979 11 am at my demand. Brother Kringle was also present along with 2 of the 3 District VPs. I brought a tape recording of a conversation with

⁴It would have also been much better if the others had not been involved.

Mr. Kettler. You did not let me play it and the only real result of our meeting was the destruction of that tape at your insistence. You also would not permit me to record the meeting, so there is no documentation of what was said. There is enough documentation of the circumstances, so that the general factors are plain.

7 It is obvious that I was very angry with you then, and Mr. Kettler was a key in that anger. His family and others had left Faith. It was the reason they left that provoked my demand, a reason that I was not aware of for some time, that precipitated our meeting. He told me, it was on the tape, that you confirmed his question about my pastoral ministry, that I was leading a dear friend and fellow member of Faith to Hell.

8 In our meeting with the District VPs, you assured me, he had misunderstood you. But you were absolutely unyielding to my request that you communicate that to Mr. Kettler. Really it had been Pastor Rohrs at Lamb of God who had helped him understand that I had done nothing wrong. That had made it possible for him to tell me the reason they had left Faith, but by then it was too late to come back.

9 The misunderstanding was so hard to fathom. You had heard me state in a meeting at Faith⁵, when you brought up the issue of meeting with the group without my presence, that there were questions of "heresy" about my ministry I wanted cleared. I had spent much time and effort by then with Mr. Kettler and others about this. I was encouraged that he would bring the matter to you as District President for resolution. You and I spent an hour going over it at the District Convocation⁶, talking quietly while Lynne waited. He knew you had gone over the whole matter with me and were prepared with an official fully considered response. The charge had been prompted by a fundamentalist minister⁷ of his acquaintance. You described your answer in our meeting with the VPs, as a short, obscure comment.: something like "That certainly is a serious charge, it

⁵June 12, 1979 and I used the word "heresy".

⁶June 15-19, at Boon, NC.

⁷Rev. Chapman of the Christian Missionary Alliance

should be looked into"⁸. Under the circumstances, he had every reason to consider it as agreement that I was a heretic, leading people to Hell.

- 10 For me personally, knowing our previous conversation May 17th, it was inconceivable. I had told Pastor Kringle that I did not want you to be involved in the situation at Faith. Partially because of the time factor - I felt that it would take more time to work the problems out than you had. I also told him that I had personal knowledge of a serious nature that disqualified you. He shared that statement with you and you asked me to meet privately to discuss it in your office.
- 11 I told you about my conversations with another Pastor. How he arranged to meet with me in Towson⁹ because of problems with his congregation. He told me a great deal: his divorce, his affair with his secretary, that he had told a study group in the congregation about the affair, how you had come up to his church and did a good job of smoothing things over for a while. I shared with you my comment to him "But that's adultery. It's against the sixth commandment." and also his response: "That's in the Old Testament, I live by the freedom of the Gospel in the New". You assured me that you were acting correctly and asked me to trust you. I put aside my opinion and agreed to your insistence in your personally dealing with the situation at Faith.
- 12 That pastor never openly showed any signs of repentance or even acknowledged his actions were sinful. There was never any indication that you did not support him¹⁰. With his son at Baltimore Lutheran High School, his wife working for the local AAL, none of this was a secret in Baltimore. I was sure that if you could justify your actions in that, my dealings with a very penitent woman who deeply wanted to amend her sinful ways would have no trouble at all in having your whole hearted support.

⁸Mr. Kettler told me almost the same wording. He knew this was your official fully considered response to the question.

⁹at Howard Johnsons 8:30 am, February 23, 1979.

¹⁰After being forced out of his congregation, he was active as a vacancy and supply preacher at many places about Baltimore. I learned from casual talk with laypeople from several congregations that his situation was known and they were not favorably impressed that he was their preacher. He then went to a large congregation in another District.

- 13 As I shared with you prior to and in that meeting long ago with the VPs, Mr. Kettler was not the only one upset that this woman was living in sin. Your comment to him had been overheard and spread. The result was the loss of Property chairman, SS Superintendent, the best SS teachers and most of my second level of leadership. Those who stayed knew that the District President officially established that I was leading one of the members to Hell. The most spiritually interested, qualified, and equipped people in the congregation left. I told you that in offerings they had contributed over \$7000 or about 1/4th of the total income of the congregation¹¹. When I said that the only place we could cut back was not to pay our mortgage to CEF, you became upset and said we had a "moral obligation" to pay. I remember that clearly. I remember my response clearly too: I said you had had a "moral obligation" to me and to Faith.
- 14 That alone is more than adequate reason for the gulf between us. Unfortunately there is much more. Your whole conduct in the affair at Faith and your actions since raise equally serious problems.
- 15 Over the years I have asked men to remind you of my offer to meet with you. "That my door was open and that you would receive a gracious welcome" The promise I extended to you in that meeting long ago with the VPs. I have shared with them some of the events that led to our broken relationship, but I have always stressed that it was not the events of long ago that were the deepest problem. I remember vividly sharing this on several occasions with Pastor Bendewald, when he spoke of his close friendship with you. I told him my feelings that your words and actions long ago were perhaps without thought, the evidence of inattention or incompetence. That they may be inaccurate evidence of your thought or character. But that the hardest problem for me was that you decided and repeatedly confirmed your decision to close your door to me and reconciliation.

¹¹This does not even consider the loss of income that occurred when the others left over the dispute with the Board of Guidance and Planning. In all over \$14,000 was lost. Half the income of a very poor church with a poor stewardship history. The people who left were the most active and highest givers.

- 16 I was dumbfounded when you refused to meet further with me at that meeting with the VPs. At that time you rejected my offers to meet with you privately or to meet with me and a counselor or to call you. You made it plain you wanted no further contact with me of any kind. It was at that point I made my final offer: "that my door would always be open to you and that you would receive a gracious welcome". But I did also say that since you wanted no further contact with me that I would stay away from you. That is why I have not attended any event where I knew you would be present, including district functions¹². I have sorely missed being with my brothers. I have sent almost every District Exec, District VP, and most of the Baltimore Circuit counselors to remind you of my offer.¹³ None have ever spoken a word to me that I was remiss or suggested a different action on my part.
- 17 I know in your letter a year ago you said no one had ever carried this message to you. They did not tell me that would not speak to you. I did understand from Pastor Bendewald that you were not open to seeing me. Nevertheless perhaps, the others decided speaking to you would not be worthwhile. After you received my letter quoted above, you still made no effort to take advantage of my offer. That was again a deliberate choice. What does that say about you? What should I think? How should have I acted? Don't I have powerful reasons for my words and feelings?
- 18 I remember the point at which I called you a "jerk" in that meeting with the VPs. I am sure it stuck in your mind also. You had mentioned that you had gotten phone calls complaining about my ministry at Faith. You would not share what those were about with me. You said it would be "unethical"¹⁴. The

12As by far the poorest paid minister in the SED, the entire cost of attending conferences would have come out of the income I had to live on. Conference expenses would have further reduced my meager grocery money.

13I have not made it a practice to speak about our problems to brother Pastors or laypeople. I felt it would drag both of us down and if it got back to you it might have made you less willing to be reconciled. Each one I spoke to heard me say "Tell him my door is still open."

14I learned a different ethic in my training. That when I heard slander and serious persistent complaint, I was to take it seriously. First by showing the proper scriptural way for them to take the problem to the proper individual. Second if they would or could not, by going with them. And finally if they refused to deal with it properly then to deal with their refusal to be obedient to the Scriptures

Scriptures and Catechism have clear statements on what to do¹⁵, which you did not follow.

19 All you said you could do was to encourage them to be taken up within the structure at Faith. You could not make any evaluation or take any action. Your policy was not to bring complaints to the attention of any Pastor, not to be concerned if they were based on valid problems or simply unjustified slander. I remember vividly my comment that that made it possible for troublemakers to go around saying: "You know I talked to the District President again about our problems with Pastor and he can't do anything to help us". What poison that spreads! No slanderer, no one with groundless complaint wants his "problem" brought into the open. The weak and sensitive, however, will never have their real problems reconciled. I am also aware that the angriest, most persistent complaints, I ever received at Faith were for saying and doing what is normal, standard Pastoral practice, indeed, commanded by Scripture and Lutheran Doctrine.¹⁶

20 Then there is the whole matter of your dealing with me and Faith that had brought you there for Mr. Kettler to talk with on the side. We were having a problem of very major proportion. It was like working with a marriage in "crises". Time and excellent counseling ability were mandatory for any hope for a good resolution. Yet the basis was there for reconciliation with most of the participants¹⁷. In that situation, a number of sessions are needed just to begin, then more to work out the problems and finally to bring things together. I said it normally would take at least 12 sessions. I did not think you had that

¹⁵Matthew 18:15 "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him, his fault between thee and him alone." I Timothy 5:19 "Never admit any charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses." Luther's explanation to the 8th Commandment: "We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything."

¹⁶Having Pastor Rohrs bury a peripheral member when I had to be out of town for long scheduled commitment, Not baptizing a baby when the nonmember parents refused to meet with me or attend Prebaptismal sessions.

¹⁷I felt at the time that only Mr. Eidman was likely beyond reach and that he too might stay if the others did.

much time¹⁸. You assured me that you would carry through to the end. It was at the 3rd session, the meeting you asked to have without me present, at the end of the introductory time, that you presented your recommendations and had no further contact. Real counseling had not even begun.

- 21 The whole relationship between you and I at that time had begun badly. Our first contact April 3, 1979 at the Baltimore Pastoral Conference in Odenton, involved you in sharply "chewing me out" for my handling of a situation months earlier concerning our PreK teacher¹⁹. You would not hear anything I had to say. It deeply troubled me because in all that took place, I did what your "Presidential Assistant for Education", Mr. Zielske, recommended. He was fully supportive of me. The letter I wrote you shortly after our meeting in Odenton is attached.²⁰
- 22 With one minor exception, that perhaps, I should have presented the January 22, 1978 sermon from the lectern and not the pulpit, you never suggested I should have done anything at any time differently. And in that one exception you said it was proper to do what I had done.²¹

18I knew you were heavily involved in the LCMS Convention at that time, when I asked you about the conflict of time, you assured me it would not interfere. Your third session with the group was before the convention, and the vote on my leave was after it.

19Miss Peggy Pafk had been called by Faith. Just before her installation, on October 8, 1978 (unusually late but she could not make herself available sooner), she told me privately that she would have nothing to do with Faith because it was so unfriendly to her. She had been in Middle River for nearly two months had only attended worship at Faith once and had turned down invitations to the church picnic, fellowship events and every offer of assistance. I told her under those circumstances, I couldn't go through with the installation, until after we met with Mr. Zielske. I offered to do that before the coming Sunday, she said she would not have the time, so we could not have the Installation on the scheduled day. I called Mr Zielske immediately. He was in total agreement with what I had said. Mr. Zielske met ,October 11th, with the Bd. of G&P, The Prekindergarden Board and Miss Pafk to resolve her position. After he left that meeting, Miss Pafk brought up and argued adamantly for a new demand: that she be installed as Director of Faith Prekindergarden and NOT as Prekindergarden Director of Faith Lutheran Church..She would make no pledge to the Church, but only responsible only to the PreK. The good counsel of Mr. Zielske, was nearly nullified by this.

20No date.

21I had finally brought my concerns to the congregation in a long article in the Congregational newsletter on January 11, 1978 and sermons on January 15 and 22 after trying for a very long time to have the council face the reality of their inaction. I had given them clear warning that I would not passively permit Faith's downward slide to continue. The Council of 18 consisted of over 1/3rd delinquent members, seldom met on their committee assignments or reported to or consulted with the congregation. The Congregation had one meeting a year, poorly attended, to rubber stamp a budget and find 6 more to elect.

- 23 The, executive, Board of Guidance and Planning²² you wanted to be in charge of Faith while I took a three month leave, had done several things that were blatantly unethical and deliberately violated normal constitutional requirements. Remember how the problem surfaced at Faith? One week after a well attended regular Congregational meeting on March 18, 1979 , without warning, after the benediction, they read the attached statement²³. They asked the people to stand as a sign of support without any explanation. Then they announced that on the basis of this so called, "Official Congregational Meeting and Vote", they were changing the constitutional structure, and dismissing all the working committees²⁴. You had this well documented²⁵.
- 24 The Sunday the Board of Guidance and Planning sprang their surprise had 130 people in attendance, the highest in many years for a regular Sunday. The months before had seen a steady increase in attendance. For most of its history attendance at Faith had hovered in the 100-110 range with people leaving as fast as they came in. After all the trauma these pages detail, Sunday attendance settled around 70. They were dispirited and battered, far different in attitude and spirit
- 25 The Board received and reviewed detailed monthly agendas and reports from the committees. Those committee chairmen and members were outraged to be dismissed for doing so poorly.

22It was those people who would have been in charge even though the constitutional structure had reverted to the prior form and they no longer had that title or structure.

23Attachment. This was mailed out in the same March 20th Faith-Life Newsletter with my Visions of a Servant article also attached concerning the March 11th Congregational meeting. The differences in tone are striking. The month is misstated in Faith-Life.

24They had the power to do this without need of any "Congregational vote" from the resolution that authorized the FAITH FORWARD restructuring, on May 21, 1978. That trial was to automatically end with the Annual Meeting May or June 1979 unless there was a positive vote by the congregation to continue it.

25The entire FAITH FORWARD restructuring booklet totals 11 pages. The empowering resolution is a direct word for word copy, with only necessary modifications, of the resolution passed in 1976 and continued in 1978, by the SED when it adopted its INVERTED PYRAMID structure. FAITH FORWARD was a deliberate imitation of that for the same purpose, to give the people a greater voice and power.

Each chairmen had met just the month before with the Board for a 6 month review and heard only praise. You knew all this.

26 It was obvious that the root of the problem was a struggle over the nature and use of power in the church. I told you the actions at the regular congregational meeting March 11th, just before the surprise event gave a good illustration of the situation. I reminded the Worship Committee that we should not have a Maundy Thursday Seder Service that year, because we promised the year before, when we received permission for the first Seder, that it was a trial and we would have a traditional Communion the next time.. The Worship Committee chose to have another Seder anyway because the one the year before had been so popular. The Board of Guidance countermanded that decision on March 6, 1979. I objected to their continual use of power instead of guidance suggesting they return the Seder to the Worship Committee stating the prior promise, or take it to the congregational meeting, scheduled for the next Sunday, March 11 for all to decide. The Worship committee became angry at having yet another one of their actions countermanded²⁶ and took the Seder and their anger to the Voters. The Voters agreed, overturning the Board without dissent. They also brought up from the floor and adopted a resolution that no further congregational meetings be conducted in the Nave, in reaction to the Board's conduct at the prior Congregational meeting, December 10, 1978²⁷. It was the very next Sunday, March 18, 1979, that the Board held their

26Where to seat the acolytes, the new Hymnal, the Freestanding altar and other items they had labored over had been turned around by the Board without consultation.

27As I remember that was held in the Nave to my surprise. I remember going to the Social Hall from my office after taking of my robes and being puzzled what to do. The Board had begun the congregational meeting without me, I didn't feel like coming in late. The main items on the agenda were the LBW Hymnal and the freestanding altar arrangement we had been trying. I did not want to get drawn into either. Mr. Eidman on the Board was adamant about the freestanding altar, he was serving as Deacon-Assisting Minister, and would have wanted me to actively support him. Afterward the people felt the temper and words were not suitable in the House of God. I was told they did approve the LBW when Mr. Schroeder offered to fund it. They rejected the freestanding altar; I heard Mr. Eidman's displeasure over my lack of support for a long time. I had suggested to the Board that these or other items might be handled by a ballot in church with three choices: yes, no, and I would like further information or discussion. This way more items could be decided by the whole church without calling many special meetings. Of course full information and opportunity for discussion beforehand would be an integral part before any ballot.

"congregational meeting" in the Nave, deliberately rejecting the congregation's authority.

- 27 I knew I could permit and encourage a fight, overthrow the Board and reverse their actions. Instead I did everything I could to spread oil on troubled waters, encouraging individuals and the congregation to leave open the door of reconciliation²⁸. The cost of such a fight would have been heavy. It would have driven the Board members out of the congregation and left deep scars of pain. I prayed much over what and how to respond. It is not the Church's place to seek to throw sinful or foolish people out. Our primary task is reconciliation. I sought and encouraged the congregation to seek to will of Christ, the restoration of peace among all the members. I did not know at the time that the Board had been planning their action and statement for months in secret²⁹. I thought at the time it was a direct reaction to the Congregational meeting March 11th. They had been overridden repeatedly by the congregation. The old structure, with a weak council and an uninformed congregation briefly consulted once a year was easy to dominate. Had I known that it was not a spur of the moment act by the Board, lashing back at being overruled, I may have reacted differently.
- 28 Reconciliation, the will of Christ and peace have always been the basis of my attitude and treatment of people. Almost from the very beginning at Faith I had been under pressure to remove Leo Schroeder as president of the congregation. He was seen by a fair number of people as the "chief problem". I noted however as the Council was electing the president, that although a majority of the group had privately complained to me about Leo, they reelected him unanimously³⁰. Later one of the

28The letter I wrote to you April 19, 1979 and my Annual Report May 29, 1979 both attached are characteristic of my principles, actions and words.

29Thinking back I wonder if, it was prompted by the only time I stopped the Board from doing what they wanted. Mr. Eidman wanted to dismiss the Youth counselors. He and the board, refused, my suggestion to talk with them about the minor incident. The counselors were very popular and I was sure that such an autocratic action would create a major upheaval. This was followed by the meeting where I did not support their desire to ram through the free standing altar. We had disagreed repeatedly over the use of power and Christian authority. They wanted to rule. I had deliberately chosen the title "Board of Guidance and Planning" For me, the Congregation is the final authority and ruler under God.

30The old structure at Faith had the congregation meet only once a year to elect 6 to a 3 year term on council. The council each year elected the officers and divided itself into 6 committees of three without chairmen. The 18 person council had no executive board. Officers and pastor only saw each other at council. A most unusual format.

members of the Board of Guidance, John Eidman, spent most of 1978, doing everything he could to stir me up to get rid of Leo³¹ and get others to be against him. The fact that Faith did not change for the worse after Leo joined³² or improve after he left is the best counter point. Leo was a problem as well as a blessing.

29 The old council structure had been reestablished at Faith. It was that group that requested, April 24, 1979 your Mission Exec. Max Schaefer, to serve as a counselor and established an Ad Hoc group: the Board, myself and certain others to work together on reconciliation. Schaefer had been recommended at a Pastoral Circuit, April 23rd by Pastor Bendewald when I discussed the situation and sought advice³³. Pastor Schaefer requested a letter from the Council listing the items of concern.

31He often told me that Leo would get rid of me and destroy all the good I was doing, if I did not strike first. I agreed with some of John's comments about Leo, brought up Leo's good points and assured John that it was unlike Leo to take action against anyone for any reason. In retrospect, I am sure John used some of my comments about Leo to encourage him to act against me. Actually I nearly broke my policy the year before and spoke against authorizing Eidman to become Deacon because of his repeated pressure to remove Leo, before he became part of the Board of G & P.

32Very soon after joining, he became SS superintendent and treasurer, within two years he added President. He wanted to keep all three offices. He mentioned to me once that his call from God as Church President was for life, like his father's call, while my call as pastor was only till retirement age. I did get him to agree to let me try to find someone else serve as SS Super and finally prevailed on a new member to try it. Later another person agreed to be SS treasurer, but Leo refused to turn over the check book. The following year another treasurer was elected and after another 6 months finally got the check book. Leo never had given a SS financial report and could not have since he never had balanced the book. Leo had a lead role in authoring the prior constitution. He repeatedly said good Missouri Synod Theology meant we were to have NO chairmen, No Executive Committee or Humanly planned program in order to permit the Holy Spirit to lead. He complained to me that I was trying to be a leader, like other LCMS pastors were, but that it was not truly proper LCMS theology, for the Pastor was servant. After this time, he remained in the congregation for another year and a half until I was married on January 1, 1981. He and his wife encouraged some other members to leave Faith at that time because, it was not right to remain in a congregation when the Pastor was living in open unrepentant sin. The question was not my divorce. There was nothing at that point to question my fitness for the ministry. The LCMS doctrine, they said, I violated was in the remarriage itself. The other members were horrified and embarrassed. They were very pleased that we had married. It was some time before the identical story came from different sources.

33I was seeking a counselor with the following credentials: well experienced and savvy, over 40 with an imposing appearance, without ties to me, and with the time to make a long term commitment.

A special council session was held May 1st to which Mr. Schroeder brought the attached letter. The formal request from Faith was addressed to Kringle at Leo Schroeder's adamant insistence that that was the only proper way to address it. I had explained to both Kringle and Schaefer, by phone, that the council had complied only because they wanted to avoid another ugly fight. You pulled him out and had the Circuit counselor Kringle step in, who had been deliberately passed over as a mediator in this situation³⁴. Kringle told me it was at your order and not his desire. At 11 PM on a Saturday Evening, Kringle called informing me that he would be at the initial meeting of the group the next Monday instead of Schaefer³⁵. There was no consultation with the council of Faith.

30 Then you put yourself in. After two somewhat bland introductory sessions, you met with the group once without my presence³⁶. At that time you made your recommendations³⁷. I was told by Mr. Geraci and Mr. Kettler that it came "Out of a blue sky"; that you never said anything about the very real problems at Faith and made no attempt to try to work toward reconciliation, no word about anything to be repented or anything to be forgiven³⁸. You officially recommended that

34There were several reasons I felt he would not be effective in this situation.

35Attached are copies of letters written at that time. May 1, 1979 written by Leo Schroeder, and two letters by me on May 8, 1979

36You did ask my permission, which I freely gave. "After all I had met with you several times without their presence.

37Attached. It is important to note that you made a change in this at my recommendation. You added the last sentence in # 2 as your response to my concerns. I told you that I did not think it would be acceptable in the congregation because it was so one sided. I was the only one singled out for correction and counseling. There were many serious errors made by the leaders that had caused great anger in the congregation. The recommendations needed to be more evenhanded. The leaders needed counseling and advice in how to act and the proper understanding of their responsibilities. When I saw the line you added, I felt like I had been talking to a stone. "It would be wise to engage a third party consultant in this process." What's the use of speaking to you. It was just after this meeting at which you presented your recommendations, that you spoke briefly with Mr. Kettler leaving him the clear impression that I was leading one of the members to Hell.

38 1 Board rejected congregational authority by holding a meeting in the nave one week after the congregation passed a resolution against doing so. 2 The Constitution was rejected. None of the requirements for a Congregational meeting were met. 3 They held a meeting and vote with out calling for discussion or even explaining that this was a meeting and did not reveal the meaning of standing in support. 4 They held a whole series of secret meetings and never shared their concerns with their Pastor. 5 They did not bringing any concern to the Committee Chairmen responsible when they met with them. 6. Many of the items they cited in their statement bordered on fabrication and further the responsibility for a number of items they cited was their own. My hope had been in the reconciliation process with Max Schaefer to have gone over that statement in detail, it deserved serious treatment. 7 There were major issues concerning, Law and Gospel, Legalism, the proper use and role of authority and power in the Christian Church, personal.ethics. I had shared a number of "horror" stories with Hinz at the time, that time and space does not permit me to include. There were many more unsavory details concerning the problems at Faith than this document includes.

that the Board be in charge at Faith while I took a three month leave and had a psychiatric evaluation.

31 I was astonished when you told me you had done that. Appalled too that you had told the group before you had said anything like that to me. Mr. Geraci and Mr. Kettler said that the group was equally amazed. They had not said to you they wanted to, or even thought of, getting rid of me. Your suggestion transformed the situation, from how to reconcile the leadership to a vote on my leaving. There is no way anyone could come back under those conditions.

32 When the congregation, July 31, 1979³⁹, overwhelmingly, rejected your recommendation, they in effect rejected their own leadership. I was again astonished for I was sure it would pass.⁴⁰ I had a job beginning the next morning⁴¹, a direct answer to prayer. I asked that I at least be allowed to keep my promise to my new employer for a while by working part time, which they overwhelmingly rejected.

33 The end result was that I lost all the leaders I and they had. Some may not have been very good, in my opinion, but I did not want to lose them. What I had as replacements were people

³⁹Faith-Life Report by secretary attached, as well as my personal report to Hinz dated August 2, 1979. There was also a meeting with Hinz and Kringle on August 16th. In my notes for that is the following: "NB if I am deficient and H & K are not, then why can't they act Evangelically w. me and fix things?"

⁴⁰You have repeated the accusation on the few times we met that I encouraged the congregation to reject your recommendations. That has been puzzling to me because it is so completely false. Now I wonder if you were told that by your "complaining informant" to explain its rejection, and the "unexpected" results.

⁴¹Mr. David Douglas had a small mid level executive recruitment agency. I was worn by the frustrations of looking for a three month position. I could not afford to be without income. As I was driving to meet Mr. Douglas I was praying, saying, I could not continue to only receive flat rejections. Mr. Douglas did not just have a company to send me to for a job prospect. He hired me to work for himself, beginning August 1st. He could use me either full time or part time.

even less suitable. Moreover they knew I had been judged by the District President as: the source of problems. I was the only one asked to leave, one who was leading a member to Hell and Psychologically unfit. Those who took over positions as leaders and the people remaining made plain that I was no longer a shepherd to follow. For example even though they had experienced the old and new structures they were unwilling to quickly return to the benefits of the Faith Forward format. When they did, the spirit was not the same and key people were gone.

- 34 How many people want to belong to a church where the Official Word of the Bishop is that the Pastor is leading a member to hell and is Psychologically unfit to lead? All in all, there was a major drop in the average attendance and in income. Nearly all of the first and second level leadership people, many of the hardest workers and other people who just didn't want to be in a place like Faith any longer were lost. If Faith had been strong and vibrant, it would have been a great tragedy. But Faith had always been weak and troubled. It was fair more serious than a great tragedy.
- 35 In our meeting with the VPs, December 7, 1979, I mentioned my distress over your recommendation to the congregation. You expressed amazement that your recommendation would be seen as a judgment that I was unfit. It was, you assured me, a neutral thing. You assured me then that you did not regard me as psychologically unfit. You could not imagine how the people could have gotten that impression. I felt they made a reasonable interpretation. You did refuse my request that you communicate your true meaning to the congregation. Privately you assured me of your support, publicly you would do nothing to demonstrate that. The Psychiatric evaluation did say I was angry⁴². But then there was nothing to say that I was angry without just cause, or that I acted inappropriately, or that I should have felt or done any thing differently. Under trying circumstances, it was a real affirmation of good character, judgment, spiritual and mental health. Indeed, if I had not

⁴²I shared Wohlfort's report with the congregation. All of these events were reported and the documentation was mailed to all the people on the Faith-Life mailing list: the large number of peripheral members, all the churches in the circuit, relatives and friends. It certainly could not have encouraged them to want to draw near. I no longer felt the same myself.

been angry, it would be a sign that I was out of touch with reality.

36 Do I have just reason for wondering if you were distracted, or too busy or incompetent? Why did it happen? Is it a matter that you were out to "get me", if so what had I done to make you feel that way? Had someone poisoned your mind about me? You did say you had received phone calls complaining about me. I can guess at some you may have gotten and I know how groundless their accusations were⁴³.

37 I talked within the last year with Bendewald and told him that I felt it had been a miracle, that Faith had survived at all. My wife also deserves a great deal of thanks⁴⁴. She was willing, without complaint to live on half or less than half of the average pay of a minister. You comment occasionally on how underpaid clergy are in general. Note, I was getting \$14,000 total including housing and allowances my last year at Faith, far less than the more common \$30,000+⁴⁵. Mr. Helsely years ago was amazed at how little I was paid, and it got worse from that point.⁴⁶

43Perhaps the most flagrant example was referred to in the Board's long statement concerned the time the former treasurer left, saying "That kind of autocratic dictatorship is driving us out of this church." I had proposed an amendment to the budget being adopted, that part of my salary increase be given instead to the janitor and the secretary.

44Lynne so impressed me by her acceptance and strength in all these events. She bore great pain as well as I did. I am sure one of the results of all this was our marriage. I am also sure that if I had been married at the time, I would have left Faith. I could not have dragged my wife through such shame. The events that later led to my leaving Faith and the subsequent struggles, while very heavy financially, did not carry anything like the same anguish.

45Actually SED scale for entry level Sem graduate is nearly \$30,000 when housing allowance, car and other benefits are included.

46When the Board of Guidance and Planning cut my pay by \$ 2200 a year to help pay for the new roof at Faith. That was equivalent to cutting a fellow making less than \$7.50 an hour to less than \$ 6.25. But then since I always worked more than 50 hours a week, it was closer to \$5. an hour. Attached are documents concerning that. The one titled Raise the Roof of Faith concerns the congregations response to the \$20,000 fund drive. The second, I originally shared privately with the Board at Faith. It was presented to the whole congregation ,after the board publicly boasted about how well they did in financial support. I know it was not friendly but it was appropriate. These people all have above average incomes and below average "special circumstances. They were the ones who initiated the roof repair work, authorized the \$20,000 goal and boasted that the congregation and they themselves had paid for the new roof. They overlooked a few minor items: paying fuel oil, mortgage and me. Those actually covered about 75% of the total.

- 38 This has been a long and not very friendly letter. It has a serious and friendly purpose. I am still interested in reconciliation. The passage of time has reasonably altered memories of these events. That is why I reviewed so much of the past history, it can be checked out. I have documentation for much of what I have written. As I shared last Spring with yet again another Baltimore area Circuit counselor⁴⁷, this will never blow over, nor should it. Our problem, I, will always be waiting for you, until death or beyond to the day of judgment. There are so many Bible passages that could be quoted.
- 39 That Circuit counselor was saddened to learn of our broken relationship and felt something should be done. All I could do was agree with him and remind him my promise my door was open. If it is bolted, it is on the other side, your side. I asked him to speak to you and hoped he did. You have never implied that I have caused you injury, do you feel you have some ground for ill feeling for me? If you feel you have, you have never tried to take care of it properly by bringing it to me.
- 40 I still want you to communicate to Mr. Kettler that he misunderstood you those many years ago. He has not forgotten. Nor has the woman, branded a lost sinner. She, too, should hear from you. I still want you to communicate to the congregation at Faith that the recommendation you made was not meant to be a judgment that I was unfit for the ministry. You said those things privately with the VPs, but the public record still remains with power today. I know it is impossible to track down where those words have gone and undo the trail of damage. Still it is proper to do what can be done.
- 41 Finally, there is the matter of closing your door to me. As long as you continue to deliberately reject even the attempt of reconciliation, there is no way I can, scripturally, regard you as a Christian, or even respect you as a man. I do honor the office you hold and respect the power you wield.⁴⁸

47 Since then a District VP.

48 A few parting comments:

What about the District programs to assist and counsel Pastors. Why was nothing suggested, no help given if it was so badly needed? You did not just turn your back on me but on a congregation.

Many say there are two sides to everything. I have tried to discover what the other side is and cannot. The fuller picture of these events is even more black and white. Those who supported Caiaphas and Ananias looked at the surface. They "knew" that those great men of God must have very good reason to be opposed to that country nothing Jesus. "Where there is smoke there is fire" so obviously Jesus must die for good cause. I am not perfect and did not act perfectly in every regard. Compared to the blackness these pages review, even an average Pastor doing an average job is white. I wonder how many who would have been in my shoes would have done better? Do I really deserve a PIF rating as almost uniquely bad as a minister?

42 Perhaps if you could show me where you have been as deeply injured by a public comment and have accepted a private assurance, I would be willing to follow your example. I wonder what your reaction would have been, if the Synodical President would have publicly recommended your leaving your position, and seeking psychiatric counseling? If he had implied to the leadership of the District, the core of your opposition, that you were a heretic, leading people to Hell? If you would have lost the best third of the District and were impoverished as President? Suppose then, he privately assured you, it was a misunderstanding. What would you then do, if the shoe was on the other foot?

Sincerely, one, who would be your brother in Christ,

Stephen H Funck

CC: Bendewald, Giller, Kuhn, Maack, Schroeder, Scheer and Kringle.

Rev. Stephen H. Funck

**3107 Louise Avenue
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Faith Lutheran Church in Middle River was in very serious condition long before I arrived there. It had been so really almost from its beginning.

Illustrative of this was the fundamental division in the congregation between the Sunday School and the Sunday morning worship. There was almost no contact between these groups and almost no regret over it. The Sunday School had a large number of pupils and staff but almost all of them left by Sunday School bus. They did not remain for worship, considering it an unnecessary addition to Christianity. At the same time, the Worshippers were happy that the children were not there to disturb the quality of their devotion. Both groups missed the true nature of Christianity.

Many other items could be listed to demonstrate the unusual nature of the congregation. There was a Church council of 18 for a worshipping congregation of 100. Of the 18 at least 1/3 were "delinquents" at best. Indeed, the Vice President, who was also Head Elder, was elected to that position as a hard drinking, skirt chaser. It was no wonder that the building and grounds were obviously abandoned and not cared for.

The previous pastor had developed a large, and excellent youth program. The remnants of that remained, but the young people did not attend worship nor were they missed. When they held a fund raiser to benefit the congregation, the congregation would not support it. There was a local church sports league that ended, chiefly because the teams from Faith were recruited from the local taverns. There was no attempt to recruit members of church, no schedule of games and no announcement of results.

Some people identified certain individuals as the "problem" and encouraged me to "get rid of them" for the good of the parish. While I am not opposed to taking strong direct action when necessary, I was not able to agree with them. The problem went beyond individuals, indeed, the "problem people" joined the congregation after the problems were in full flower. I tried all the "recommended" solutions. A PreKindergarden was added, chiefly to get another trained individual, with a good understanding of a "normal" congregation. Kennedy Evangelism Explosion was begun in co operation with neighboring congregations.

In time I became convinced that the key to change had to be developed out of a change in structure. Through study, I learned that there were three keys to change: change in people, change in program and change in structure.

I could see that the structure of the congregation was frustrating and preventing the changed people in carrying out any changes in program. With 1/3 of the council delinquents, most of them on committees they did not care about, no history or expectation of accomplishment and no unified leadership, the congregation was running on "automatic" down. I encouraged and finally "forced" a one year trial of a different constitutional structure.

I developed it out of sample constitutions, books on church structures and the sociology of group dynamics.

I was not convinced that it would make the "great change" needed. But it would at least free up people to put into action their ideas and make it possible to make changes in program. There was considerable opposition to these changes. The old ways made it possible to be self satisfied without responsibility or need to accomplish anything. There was by this time many years' history of apathy in the congregation and many were satisfied with it.

The biggest improvement that resulted was an end in the practice of busing the Sunday School children home, keeping them from worship. The time was reduced between SS and Worship to encourage them to stay. A Children's Church was begun to provide a message and activities for the smaller children during the Sermon and Communion distribution and Children's sermons were added to the worship. All this was an effort to make the Congregation attractive to families, as a place where they all could grow in the Lord. In addition a fellowship time was added after the Worship service so the people could get acquainted with one another. The congregation was small but few people who attended there for years knew who the other people were.

In addition to the "normal" pastoral activities to mediate change in the congregation and also to build up the power of the Spirit in my own life, I worked in the following areas.

First, I participated in the River of Life Lutheran Fellowship which provided many conferences and workshops for Spiritual growth over the years. Mr. William Collinge in the personal references is a leader there. The members from Faith that took part were not seen by the congregation as people to follow, unfortunately.

I also, became involved in the Order of St. Stephen, Deacon, as teacher in Scripture, in Church History and as a member of their Board. It is an organization of Lutheran Laypeople offering 2 years plus in training, to serve as a Deacon in Lutheran Congregations. Mr. Max Hoffman in the personal references is a Past Head Deacon. He is also deeply personally involved in Food Ministry and other Social Ministries. He has assisted me at Faith in providing food and clothing for distribution. We also became involved in setting up a Lutheran Lay School to broaden the appeal of the training so a person could take the courses without committing themselves to membership in the Order. Two members of Faith did take this training.

The deepest source of satisfaction in serving at Faith was it is a place where the "unacceptable" could come to Christ. Some churches would not have been comfortable for them. The congregation was open to all. Part of that was an accepting attitude; part a lack of Christian standards. So that is both good and bad.

The most visible result of my work at Faith has been a radical improvement in the appearance of the property. It was obviously abandoned and forlorn when I came. It was unbelievable that anyone could worship God in such a place. The other accomplishment was somewhat forced by a continuing failure in increasing their stewardship. Faith was the most inexpensively operated congregation possible as far as I could influence with personal sacrifice on my part. My resignation was the result of their satisfaction, indeed, proud refusal to do more than a minimal effort in serving the Lord.

There have been a number of people that have experienced the radical transforming power of Christ through my years at Faith. That has been my greatest joy and delight. Rather than a time of frustration, it has been a place of privileged ministry. I have seen the clear dark power of Satan broken by the clear light of Christ's Spirit. The Lord, however, led most of these people away to other places and churches.