

FORMS OF THE (PUBLIC) MINISTRY

Materials presented to the brethren

by

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1. Quotes for critical evaluation
 2. An outline of the hermeneutic for the ministry
 3. An adaptation of the Mueller Tree
 4. A semantic diagram of DIAKONIA
 5. Ministry perspective from Joh. Schaller

The variety of ministry forms and methods in the early church is in itself instructive. It demonstrates the early church's understanding of the freedom which Christ gives for ministry and its dedication to carrying out his mission in every way possible.

Behind the (appearance) of multiformity, there is one basic ministry, for the church has not several life-principles but only one: Christ's alone-saving Gospel (which always includes the sacraments). From this one and only divine fount and source flows all life and salvation upon the church and, through her, upon mankind.

First, there simply is no call from God through the Church, but the call to the preaching of the Word (and administration of the Sacraments) ... no call in our day to fund raising, accounting, public relations, Sunday school or parochial school teaching ...

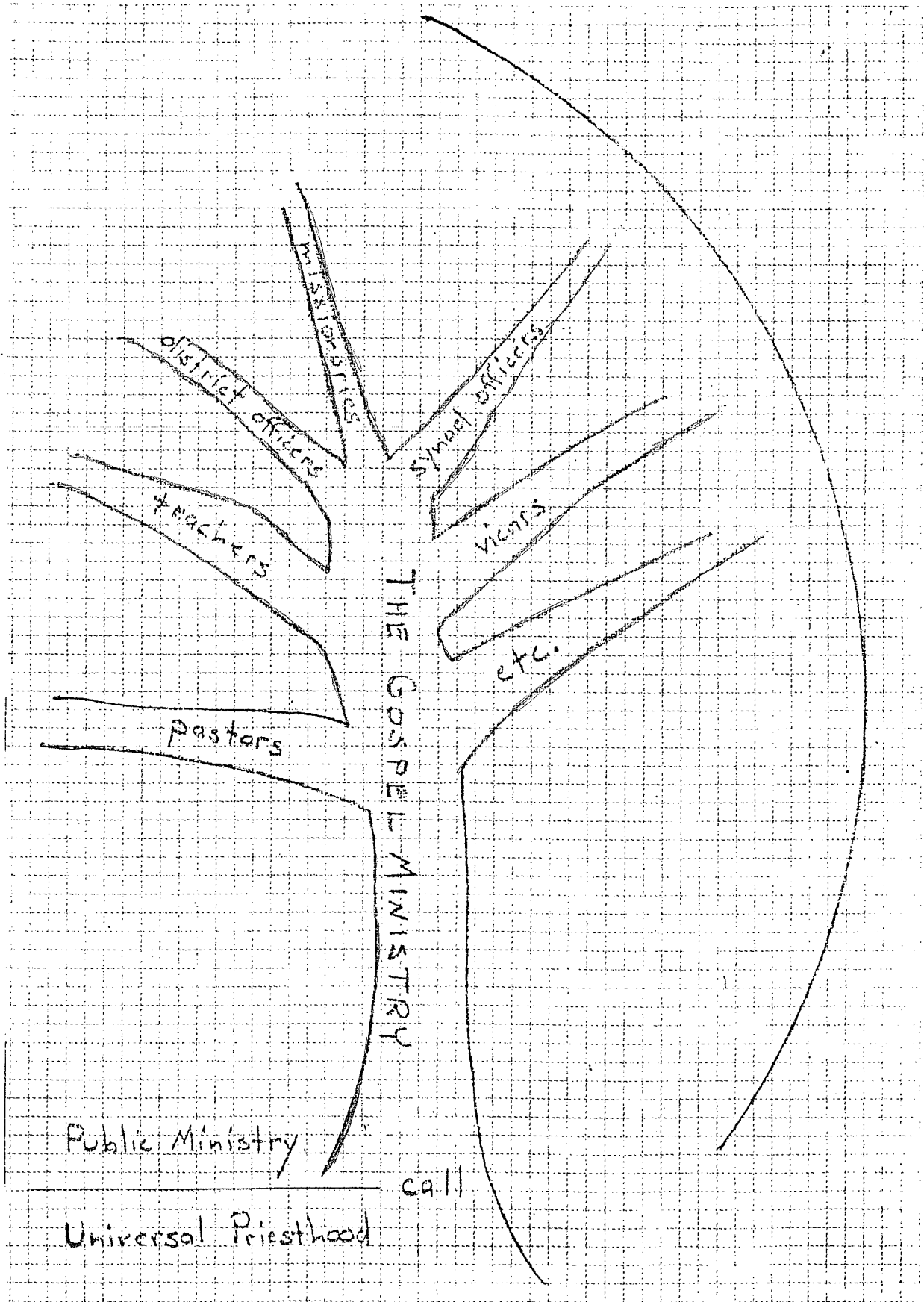
We can also consider it as settled that nowhere in the New Testament can a definite command be cited that Christians should establish a particular form of the public ministry in their midst. ... At the same time it should be noted that Scripture clearly teaches that it is God's will that there be a public ministry and that Christian congregations have shepherds and teachers who in the name and on behalf of the congregation carry out the duties of the ministry of the word in their midst.

"The Scripture uses a variety of terms to describe the pastor in his office of ministering God's Word to the congregation under his care. ... the believers ... have the right to establish other offices of the public ministry which they deem expedient and make them auxiliary to the pastoral office."

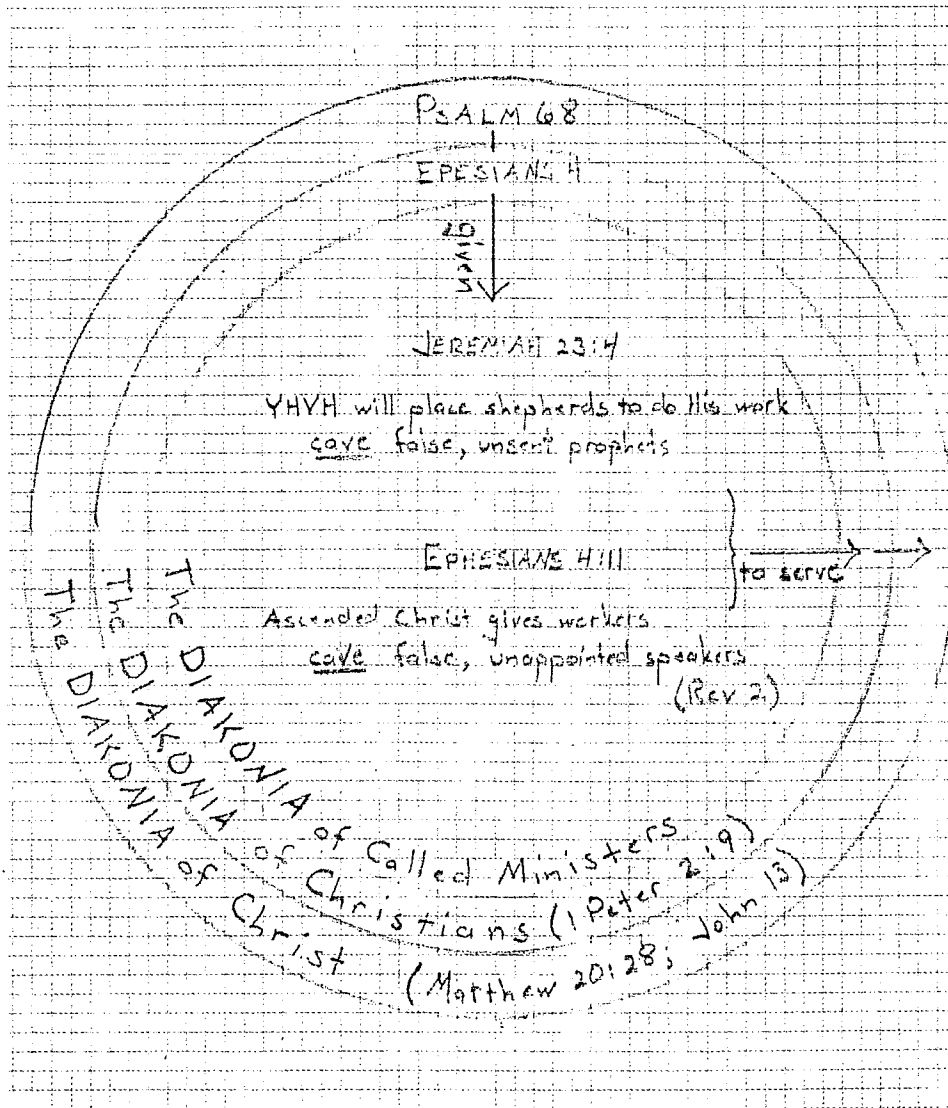
THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

- I. Article I. Of God
- II. Article II. Of Original Sin
- III. Article III. Of the Son of God
- IV. Article IV. Of Justification
- V. Article V. Of the Ministry of the Church,
or the Origin and Causes of Justifying
Faith
- VI. Article VI. Of New Obedience
- VII. Article VII. Of the Church - The Church in
its True Nature
- VIII. Article VIII. What the Church is - The
Church in its Present Appearance
- IX. Article IX. Of Baptism
- X. Article X. Of the Lord's Supper
- XI. Article XI. Of Confession
- XII. Article XII. Of Repentance
- XIII. Article XIII. Of the Use of the Sacraments
- XIV. Article XIV. Of Ecclesiastical Orders
- XV. Article XV. Of Ecclesiastical Rites
- XVI. Article XVI. Of Civil Affairs
- XVII. Article XVII. Of Christ's Return to
Judgement
- XVIII. Article XVIII. Of Free Will
- XIX. Article XIX. Of the Cause of Sin
- XXI. Article XXI. Of Worship of Saints

A GRAPHIC PARADIGM OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY
adapted from A. C. Mueller



A SEMANTIC SYNTHESIS OF
 EPHESIANS 4, PSALM 68 AND JEREMIAH 23
 WITHIN THE DOMAIN OF DIAKONIA



Let us summarize what we have up to this point seen to be the scriptural doctrine concerning the origin and development of the New Testament ministry. The New Testament ministry [Predigtamt, literally, office of preaching], better termed service [Predigtdienst, literally, service of preaching], began with and through the first preaching of the gospel in Paradise and appears wherever the gospel is in any way communicated. For the gospel is a word which is to be preached, and it immediately through the very process of conversion turns those whom it brings to faith into preachers of it. Thus every believer since the beginning of the world is according to his spiritual nature a preacher of the gospel not only de iure [by right] but also de facto [in fact]. There is no one who has this commission de iure who does not also carry it out de facto. God did not institute a ministry in abstracto [in the abstract], but he continually creates the ministry of preaching [Predigtdienst] through his gospel.

Because of the needs of the church God in the time before Christ raised up the prophets, and later the apostles, by a direct, immediate call and by a special endowment with the Holy Spirit in order that they might perform the service of preaching in a special form. Their activity did not differ essentially from the preaching activity of all Christians. They wanted and were to proclaim nothing but the word of redemption. Their ministry differs from that of other believers only in this that they became such bearers of this word that God gave an ever clearer revelation through them and made their writings for all time the source of the truth to which all other believers are bound in carrying out their ministry of preaching. Neither the prophets nor the apostles constitute a special order of the beginning or a special order in the church to which the ministry would be given exclusively. This work always remains the duty of all Christians and of every individual Christian until the end of days. Where there is no believing Christian, there is also no commission to preach. But wherever there is a single true Christian, then there is not only a person who is invested with the ministry, that is, one who has the commission to preach, but also one who actually proclaims the praises of Him who has called if he finds ears to hear.

--Joh. Schaller "The Origin and Development
of the New Testament Ministry"
from Our Great Heritage, pp 472