



VESTMENTS IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Prepared by

The Reverend David L. Adler, Pastor
Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church
Palestine, Texas

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In our adult Bible Class study of Leviticus on Sunday mornings, we have learned about the elaborate garments worn by Aaron (the High Priest) and his sons (the Priests). One might think that our use of vestments in the church today is derived from these customs. Those who have studied the Greek mystery religions might also want to draw a similar comparison. However, neither is true.

... liturgical vestments developed out of ordinary civilian dress of the late Roman empire. Between the fourth and ninth centuries these items of clothing became ecclesiastical garments invested with specific liturgical meaning. Liturgical attire developed from two basic types of Roman clothing: an indoor tunic and an outdoor cloak. The indoor tunic survived as the alb, while the outdoor cloak became the chasuble, and, eventually, the cope. In addition to these two basic forms, other accessories such as the amice, cincture, maniple, and stole were maintained in churchly usage long after they had become archaic as items of dress. Only after the clothing of Roman antiquity was in regular use in the church's liturgy was theological meaning assigned to the various garments. More often than not, this meaning was derived allegorically, a trend that can be seen in the many prayers that were prescribed to be prayed while the priest was vesting. (Pless 219-220)

The Reverends Paul H. D. Lang and John T. Pless give apt descriptions and explanations of our basic vestments. Vestments currently in use at Bethlehem are marked with an *.

*The Alb**

“Originally the alb (*tunica alba*) existed in both short and long forms. The short form was something like a knee-length shirt (*chitron*) [sic], while the long form (*chitron* [sic] *poderes*, see Rev. 1:13) was a garment of ankle length. This long white tunic was typically worn as standard dress of professional people in the Roman empire. Around the beginning of the fifth century it became a specifically Christian vestment. Like its secular antecedents, the alb used by the clergy was sometimes decorated with strips of colored material placed over the seams.



“The *tunica alba* of classical times was held in place by a girdle made of cloth or by a cincture. This girdle or cincture was a utilitarian device which, with the alb, was eventually adopted for ecclesiastical use. In medieval times the girdle was said to symbolize clerical chastity as well as spiritual vigilance (Luke 12:3-38). (Pless 220)

“The alb is the earlier white linen vestment from which the surplice and rochet later developed. It covers the cassock completely. ... At the front and back of the skirt near the edge, silk damask or brocade apparels about 7” by 14” may be attached; just above the wrists on the sleeves, apparels about 3” by 8”. The alb symbolizes innocence and the robe of righteousness which is ours as Christians. (Lang 89-90)

Norris informs that the development of the tunic goes back to a classical Greek (6TH century B.C.) garment called the *chiton*. “During the period of the republican Rome the Greek chiton was adopted by the Romans and given the Latin name TUNICA.” This became the preferred garment of the elite of Roman society. During the time of its use, cultures (e.g., the Mongols) that wore trousers were considered barbaric.¹ Therefore, Rome had a strong aversion to these type of garments. By the second and third centuries *tunica alba* were worn by men of the upper class. It makes sense, then, that this was the garment that preceded the alb and made it, rather than trousers or even a suit, a more appropriate vestment for divine worship. “The tunic when it reached the feet was known as the TUNICA TALARIS” (Location 774).

“The Edict of Toleration published by the Emperor Galerius (305-6), and the Edict of Milan issued by Constantine the Great (306-37) in 313, were followed by a decree of Sylvester, Bishop of Rome (314-36) ordaining that the tunica talaris should be worn by deacons when assisting at the altar. The intention clearly is that he is to wear his ordinary everyday garments, but is to change into a clean tunica for the purpose, and change it again after use. In the middle of this century the overseers of the church, or “bishops,” wore three garments—the tunica talaris being one of them—simply as adequate clothing, which was the everyday dress of the common people: as yet it had no significance whatever in Church ritual.

¹ Also, of interest to this writer, the tunic was the preferred garment for Roman elite, because it limited physical exertion and labor “and being the characteristic garment of learned men found great favor.” (Location 802)

“In a canon of the Council of Carthage (c. 400) we meet with the first use of the word ALB in an ecclesiastical connection. It may well be one of the earliest regulations ever made to govern the ritual usage of a vestment: the Latin word, *vestimenta*, meaning the articles of ordinary clothing. Not only does this canon ordain that an alb is to be used by a deacon at the time of mass as well as of the lesson, but it further prohibits him from wearing the alb except when officiating. This implies that bishops and priests could wear a long white tunica, the prototype of the alb, for everyday dress: but that this was forbidden to deacons. The canon was necessitated on account of the prevailing tendency of the minor clergy to wear their official dress in the streets: the dress was the same, whether for every day or for service, but the deacon is to wear a *clean* garment in Church, and change it afterwards.

“St. Jerome (Hieronymus), doctor of the Church (341 or 342-420), translator of the Vulgate, writer of the history of the early Latin Church, confidential adviser of St. Damasus, Bishop of Rome (336-84), enlightens us as to the difference between the garments worn by the clergy when officiating in church, and those used by them for everyday wear. His translated words are: ‘The Holy Religion has one dress for Divine Service and another for everyday use’: also ‘we ought not to enter the Holy of Holies in soiled everyday clothes, but with a clean conscience and with clean clothes to administer the mysteries of the Lord’ (see Ezek. xlii. 14, xliv. 19).

“The earliest illustration of a bishop is to be found in the partly destroyed mosaic of St. Ambrose (340-97) in the Church of St. Ambrogio, Milan, put up soon after his death. In this he is shown wearing the tunica alba, dalmatic, paenula², and shoes. It is interesting to note that St. Ambrose was elected by the people Bishop of Milan in 374. He is also renowned for his influence in the development of Church music, which he introduced into his diocese about the year 386.

“Recognition of a distinctive dress or uniform for the minor clergy was not an accepted practice until the later part of the sixth century.

“The First Council of Narbonne, which took place in 589, definitely confirms that the tunica talaris or colobium, i.e. the alb, was by this date an official dress. It enacted that ‘neither deacon nor subdeacon, nor yet the lector, shall presume to put off his *alba* till

²² The precursor to the Chasuble.

after mass is over.’ This firmly establishes the fact that the alb was by this time regarded as a vestment. (Location 832-848)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Maniple

“The maniple was originally a handkerchief that served as an emblem of office for the Roman consul. Since clothing from this period lacked pockets, the maniple was carried in the hand. By the sixth century, the maniple was in use as a liturgical vestment attached to the priest’s left forearm. It was used as a towel to clean the priest’s hands as well as the communion vessels. (Pless 221)



“The maniple is purely a ceremonial vestment worn over the left arm near the wrist. It is made of silk damask, usually follows the colors of the church year, and has a 1” fringe at each end. The maniple should be about 2 1/2 wide and 44” long. Whenever the celebrant is also the preacher, the maniple and chasuble may be removed before the sermon and put on again before the Offertory. (Lang 90)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Amice

“A piece of cloth, known as an amice (Latin *amicus* from *amicio*, meaning “to wrap around”) was placed around the neck as a collar to protect the alb from sweat. The amice became a regular part of eucharistic vesture by the eighth century. Allegorically, it was interpreted as the “helmet of salvation” (Eph 6:17). (Pless 220)



“The amice is the neckcloth anciently used with the alb and other garments. It is a rectangular piece of linen ... In the center of the upper portion about 2” below the hem a simple cross is embroidered. ... The amice is put on by folding back the appareled edge, laying it on the head ... and tying it in place with the tapes across the breast and around the waist. After all the vestments have been put on, the amice is pushed back so that the apparel will form a collar about the neck and resting on the shoulder. The traditional prayer which is said

when the amice is put on refers to it as the “helmet of salvation” (Eph. 6:17). It probably acquired this symbolical meaning because it was first placed on the head before being laid back as a collar. (Lang 89)

In modern vestments the amice is now often incorporated into the alb as either a high collar or a hood.

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Stole*

“Like the maniple, the stole was most likely a type of handkerchief used as an ensign of rank among Roman officials. Under Roman law (Codex Theodosian in the late fourth century), senators and consuls were directed to wear a colored scarf over the alb as a badge of office. Gilbert Cope suggests that the stole was adopted as an insignia of office for the clergy. (Pless 221)

“The stole represents the yoke of Christ. A clergyman wears a stole around his neck for sacramental and some other services. No unordained person should wear a stole. One stole should be provided for each liturgical color.

“The stole symbolizes our Lord’s perfect obedience by which He obtained for us the stole or robe of eternal life. This is indicated in the prayer which the minister may say as he puts it on: “Give me again, O Lord, the stole of immortality which I lost in the transgression of my first parents, and though I am unworthy to come to Thy sacred mystery, grant that I may rejoice in the same everlastingly.” (Lang 90)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Chasuble*

“As the alb was the indoor tunic in the Roman empire, so the chasuble was the outdoor cloak. The chasuble (from the Latin *casula*, “little house”) was a poncho-shaped garment with a slit for the head. The garment was used in the Graeco-Roman world by all social classes and both sexes. This is the garment mentioned by the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:13, where he requests that Timothy bring along his cloak (*phailones*). This outer garment became the primary eucharistic vestment in both the East and the West. Other Roman garments adapted for churchly usage would include the cope

(an outdoor cloak) and the dalmatic and tunicle (variants of the *tunica alba*). (Pless 221)

“When the celebrant puts on the chasuble, he may pray: “O Lord, who hast said, My yoke is easy and My burden is light, grant that I may so be able to bear it as to attain Thy grace.” This prayer indicates the symbolism of the chasuble and signifies that the wearer is in the service of Jesus Christ, doing His will and working according to His directions. (Lang 91)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Surplice*

The surplice is actually a variant form of the alb. Piepkorn writes that the surplice differed from the alb “in design because it was made to go over (*super*) fur-clothing (*pelliceae*, from *pellis*)—hence the Latin name *superpelliceum*” Unlike the alb, the surplice had a wider opening for the head and fuller sleeves. By the 11th century the surplice was used for non-eucharistic offices while the alb was reserved for use at the Mass. (Pless 221)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

Cassock*

“The cassock was once, and in principle still is, the everyday dress of a Christian clergyman. Therefore it is really not a vestment if we define vestments as garments worn only for divine worship. It is more precisely a garment over which a clergyman wears his vestments. It is black in color and should be made of wool serge or of cooler materials for warmer climates. It is fitted to the upper part of the body and extends into a full and flowing skirt from waist to ankles. At the neck it has a narrow band which fits around a white clerical collar. The neckband has a small step, or opening, in front. One style is single-breasted and buttons all the way down the front. Another style is double-breasted with fastenings, perhaps snaps, from collar to waist. (Lang 85)

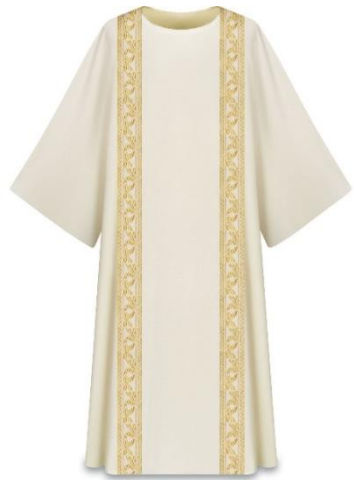


“While the alb, stole, and chasuble are the primary eucharistic vestments of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, the cassock and surplice are the standard vestments for non-eucharistic services. The cassock was originally used as an ankle-length coat for daily use by the clergy. It appears to have come into common usage among priests in the West in the sixth century. The surplice or alb would be worn over the cassock. In this sense, the cassock is the forerunner of the contemporary clerical shirt. Since the 11TH century the surplice has been associated with non-eucharistic services, while the alb has been associated with the Eucharist. Like the alb, the surplice should extend to the ankles. (Pless 223-4)

(see also Figure 1, page 15)

The Dalmatic and Tunicle

When the celebrant is assisted by an ordained deacon and subdeacon, the deacon may wear a dalmatic and the subdeacon a tunicle. Other assisting clergymen may also wear a tunicle. The dalmatic and the tunicle are very much alike; both are often called either dalmatic or tunicle. The dalmatic, however, is ornamented more elaborately than the tunicle. These garments are made of the same material as the chasuble. They are long robes with sleeves, similar to the alb, but without any fullness.



At the bottom they are about 40” from side to side, and the length is about 45”.

They are decorated with orphreys from the neck to the bottom. The sides are open 20” or more from the bottom. These vestments symbolize joy and gladness. The ancient prayer for putting on the dalmatic is “Clothe me, O Lord, with the robe of salvation, and the garment of gladness, and ever set about me the dalmatic of justice.” (Lang, 91-2)

(see also Figure 3)

The Cope

The cope is a cloak or cape open in front, fastened there with a clasp or piece of material called a morse, and furnished in back with a cowl, or hood. It is used for ceremonial occasions other than the Holy Eucharist, such as processions (also at the Holy Communion service), ordination and installation rites, confirmation, the morning service without Holy Communion, matins and vespers on feast days, and the like. It is not exclusively a clerical vestment and may be worn by laymen as well as by clergy as a vestment of dignity.

The effectiveness of a cope depends on the gracefulness of its folds and the beauty of its material rather than on elaborate embroidery and other rich ornamentation. It is made of silk damask in the colors of the church year. The shape is an almost perfect semicircle. An orphrey as wide as 6" may cover the length of the straight edge. The orphrey may be cloth of gold or some other contrasting color. The cope should be made long enough to hang to the feet.

Many copes today have only an imitation hood in the form of a shield, which is nothing more than an excuse for embroidery and other ornamentation. Instead of such a shield, why not a real hood made of the same material as the cope? When the hood is properly attached to the back, it will hang gracefully and may itself have a tassel or other ornamentation. (Lang 92)

(see also Figure 2, page 15)

Other Items

Beffchen

In some European countries ... a combination cassock and gown developed and was worn with a ruffled collar. It became popular in Norway and Denmark ... Instead of the ruffled collar bands (*Beffchen*) came to be worn with the black gown. These have no symbolic or ecclesiastical significance for Lutherans. They were simply part of a gown worn by secular officials as well as clergymen in various countries including our own. (Lang 87)

Tippet

“Also rare, but not unknown among Lutherans, is the tippet. This is a “scarf” that looks like a black stole, worn by an ordained pastor while preaching a prayer office such Matins or Vespers. (“Introduction to The Liturgy”)

“A *tippet*, or scarf, was added to the black gown in England and elsewhere. In Norway the scarf took the shape of a narrow tasseled, black silk stole over a black gown in the manner of some American clergymen. The *chaplain’s scarf* of the American and the British armed forces is a kind of Norwegian black stole, but again it is not an ecclesiastical vestment. It is a chaplain’s scarf, an item of uniform. (Lang 87)

Historical Development and Use of Vestments

Dr. Pless gives us the following history:

“As the Middle Ages progressed, ecclesiastical vestments became more elaborate in design and reflective of the wealth and prestige of the clergy. The question of vestments had to be faced by the Reformers. The Anabaptists and the Reformed rejected vestments as detestable reminders of the papal church. For Luther, vestments belonged within the realm of Christian liberty. In his *Formula Missae* of 1523 he commented, “We permit them [vestments] to be used in freedom, as long as people refrain from ostentation and pomp. For you are not more acceptable for consecrating in vestments. Nor are you less for consecrating without them.” Luther’s colleague and pastor, Johannes Bugenhagen, expressed a similar view in a letter written to a certain M. Goerlitz on September 30, 1530: “There is a twofold doctrine on chasubles ... one is the truth, namely that chasubles can be used; this does not give scandal to those who are accustomed to hearing the Gospel. The other is a Satanic lie out of the doctrines of the devils, namely, that it is never lawful to use chasubles; this gives scandal to the people where they hear and believe such lies from the ministers.” Article XXIV of the Apology states that the Church of the Augsburg Confession has not abolished the Mass but celebrates it every Sunday and on other festivals and maintains “traditional liturgical forms, such as the order of lessons, prayers, vestments, etc.” The research of Gunther Stiller and Arthur Carl Piepkorn demonstrates that the historic vestments

(alb, chasuble, and stole) continued to be used in many places within the Lutheran Church well into the 18th century. For the most part these vestments were rejected by the proponents of Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism.³ It was under these alien influences that the black gown of the academy entered into liturgical usage in the Lutheran Church.

“The use of vestments in American Lutheranism varied widely. Some Scandinavian immigrant churches used full eucharistic vestments for many years. Other immigrant groups used the black gown or no vestments at all. Piepkorn notes, “In 1839, while waiting to move to Perry County, the clergymen of the Saxon Lutheran immigrant party ministered at the Lutheran Services held in Christ Church Cathedral (Protestant Episcopal), St. Louis, in albs. ... Prior to their departure from Germany, the Saxon immigrants supplied themselves with sketches from Roman Catholic vestments used in Dresden.” The combination of cassock, surplice, and, stole as standard clerical vestments for American Lutheran clergymen is a 20th-century development which was encouraged by Luther Reed and others with a taste for things Anglican.

“The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has wisely sought to follow the directive of Article XXIV of the Apology that vestments are retained in the church’s liturgy. The continued use of vestments in the Church of the Augsburg Confession is important for at least two reasons: **First, vestments are used as ensigns of the office of the holy ministry.** These liturgical garments cover the man, reminding the congregation that their pastor speaks to them not simply as a fellow Christian, but as “a called and ordained servant of the Word.” The vestments are clothes of a servant. In this sense we may agree with Frank Senn that “vestments are a liturgical language.” **Secondly, vestments are a visual reminder of the continuity of the church’s worship throughout history.** Grisbrooke writes, “An essential element in the nature of Christian worship is its witness to the unchanging and abiding value and power of God’s mighty works in Christ, and it follows that the vestments should reflect the continuity of Christian worship, rather than the discontinuities which at times have afflicted it.” The use of the historic vestments signals our linkage with the church catholic in confession and life. Thus in the Evangelical Lutheran Church vestments are not merely aesthetic decorations, but are symbols of the historic continuity of our church

³ The latter two were explained in the previous presentation on chanting.

with prophets, apostles, martyrs, and confessors of all times and places.

“The Notes on the Liturgy in *Lutheran Worship: Altar’ Book* do not legislate liturgical vesture. Suggestions are made, however, for the use of vestments appropriate to the particular service. Historically, there are two forms of vestments: eucharistic vestments and non-eucharistic vestments. For the Divine Service it is appropriate that the pastor be vested in an alb and a stole in the liturgical color of the season. The Notes on the Liturgy state that the presiding minister “may wear a chasuble over the alb and stole at the Holy Communion.” Like the stole, the color of the chasuble is dictated by the liturgical color of the day or season. Like the stole, the chasuble is an emblem of the office of the holy ministry. Under no circumstances is either the stole or the chasuble to be worn by nonordained assisting ministers. The chasuble is never worn at non-eucharistic services. (Pless 222-3)

“For the daily prayer services (without sermon) the cassock and surplice are used without the stole. When the service includes a sermon or other specific pastoral acts (Baptism), the stole is worn. Cassock, surplice, and stole are appropriate for services of marriage, burial, installation, and ordination, as well as for individual confession and absolution. The Notes on the Liturgy make provision for the use of a “cope, the historic vestment for daily prayer services.”

“While the use of a stole and chasuble is reserved for ordained clergymen, lay people who assist in the service may properly be vested in alb or surplice. If the pastor wears an alb, lay assistants would properly be vested in albs. If the pastor wears a surplice, lay assistants would wear surplices. The cope may be worn by lay people as well as clergymen. (224)

Liturgical vestments serve in a variety of ways. They contribute to an appropriate decorum of reverence. Rather than drawing attention to the man who wears them, they also serve to cover and hide the person while focusing on the Office of the Ministry in which he serves.

The pastor speaks and acts as Christ’s ambassador; that is His Office. Vestments help us realize this and confess and give thanks that through the gifts given Jesus is here serving us with His own Word and Sacraments. The white alb or surplice covers the man, and reminds us of Christ’s clothing us with Himself at baptism.” (“Introduction to the Liturgy”)

A Word About Colors

“During the first eight centuries of Christianity there was no special assignment of colours to the various seasons of the ecclesiastical year. By the time of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), however, the Roman use in this matter had become fairly well defined: it was adopted in this country in the large cathedrals, but has only become standardized during the nineteenth century through the decay of other usages. (Hope)

“The liturgical colors are both a teaching device and a way of marking days and seasons. They evolved among Christians without conscious planning and have existed since the Middle Ages. Some colors were adjusted in the revised church year. Most notably, there is a new option for Advent: blue—to distinguish Advent from Lent. Here are the colors used for altar and lectern paraments, pastor’s stole and chasuble, and banners or hangings ... (Brauer 164)

The color of the day is NOT changed for weddings and funerals.

White

Color of the Godhead, eternity, robe of the glorified Christ and the Angels ... Symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity, innocence. perfection, joy, purity. White is the preferred color of worship leaders’ garments color—like the alb (from *alba*, the Latin word for white)—because this was the color of the ancient baptismal garment. Used for Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter and their seasons. Associated with festivals of Christ and of saints who presumably died a natural death. It is used on the Feast of the Holy Trinity and during its octave. It is also used on the festivals of the Presentation, Annunciation, Visitation, and Transfiguration; the Day of St. Michael and All Angels; the Conversion of St. Paul; the Nativity of St. John the Baptist; All Saints’ Day; the dedication of a church and its anniversary; days of general or special thanksgiving; and on the festivals of saints not martyrs. (Brauer 164, Lang 106)

Green

Color of abiding life, nourishment, rest; dominant color in nature. ... The color of growth, leaves, foliage, fruit, and life, suggesting a time of spiritual growth. It is used for the season after Pentecost and for the Sundays during the Epiphany season. (Brauer 164, Lang 106)

Red

Color of fire, fervor, blood, martyrdom, love, victorious truth of Christian teaching based on the blood and righteousness of Christ. For Pentecost and for days commemorating martyrs. Also appropriate for festivals of renewal in the Spirit like Reformation, church dedications, anniversary of a congregation, and ordinations. (Brauer 164, Lang 106)

Violet

Color of royal mourning and repentance, The royal color, the most costly with primitive dyes. For Lent—and as an alternate color for Advent. It symbolizes penitence and self-discipline and therefore also fits a Day of Supplication and Prayer. (Brauer 164, Lang 106)

Blue

Represents hope, anticipation. Often associated with festivals of Mary, Mother of Our Lord. From a Swedish Lutheran tradition and from the ancient Mozarabic (Spanish) liturgy. Helps distinguish Lent and Advent. (Brauer 164)

Black

Absence of color, symbolical of death, mourning, ashes. Now reserved for Good Friday; an alternate for Ash Wednesday. (Brauer 164, Lang 106)

Scarlet

A favored color for royalty (deep scarlet or maroon) and a variant of red and purple. For the Passion of Our Lord, preferred for Holy Week (Sunday through Thursday) suggesting deeper intensity, triumph, and victory. (Brauer 164-5)

Gold

Associated with riches and kingly attire. Reserved for Easter Day and Evening, the greatest of festivals. (Brauer 165)

Final Thoughts

I am both disturbed and disappointed.

Having been exposed to the history and purpose of Vestments in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, I find it disturbing to see the discarding of these historic vestments in congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. I find it disturbing to see pastors preaching and administering the Holy Sacraments in a suit and tie ... or even worse in shorts and a golf shirt. I am disturbed to see pastors jig down the aisle while the praise band consists of musicians wearing ball caps as they perform. When pastors dress in these ways, or allow such irreverent dress by others, they are saying something about the service.

Prosper of Aquitaine (d. 455, disciple of Saint Augustine) is credited with the maxim "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*" ("the law of praying (worship) [is] the law of believing (doctrine)"). Or to put it simply "what we do in worship serves to teach what we believe." In other words, you cannot separate form from substance.

When churches use contemporary songs which speak of decision theology, or which focus more on us than on Christ ... when the Chancel is converted into a puppet theatre and the Holy place is now for entertainment ... when the sermon contains practical life lessons and psycho-babble instead of a Christ-centered Law and Gospel message ... the Lex Orandi is influencing the Lex Credendi ... and people are being taught theology ... BAD theology to be sure, but theology all the same.

Therefore, it is my belief ... *not* just a supposed idea, but a "I-have-seen-this-with-my-own-eyes" testimony that many LC-MS congregations have not only discarded the historic liturgy, mistaken that it is a barrier to evangelism, they have also lost pure doctrine in the process. Sunday after Sunday, they teach false doctrine by what they do in worship. When pastors attempt to justify these measures by the corresponding numerical growth of their congregation, I cry *Kyrie eleison*. And then I wonder if and when these "converts" really understand the essence of Lutheran theology, how they will deal with the realization that they have been snookered into something completely foreign to their experience. It seems as though anything and everything is kosher as long as we "talk about Jesus."

I have served seven different congregations in the course of my vocation. I find it somewhat disappointing that in all but one, laymen did not vest when serving at the Altar. Why not? Acolytes have appropriate attire. In the history of divine worship all of the offices in the worship of the church (e.g., deacon, subdeacon, lector, porter, acolyte, etc.) have had liturgical vestments. As we have learned, with the exception of the stole

and chasuble, many different vestments may be worn by non-ordained laymen.

Yet, since it is a matter of adiaphoron, I am not suggesting that a new law be imposed on the congregation I presently serve. I'm simply expressing disappointment that the Altar, at which we both distribute and receive such miraculous gifts of grace, doesn't deserve something more significant than a bow of the head when we come into its holy space. It is sad enough that our beloved LC-MS has seen the wholesale discarding of the historic vestments by pastors—but why also for the laymen who also serve at the Altar with their shepherds in the distribution of holy things to God's people?

Perhaps, if we treated the Chancel area—indeed, the entire Nave—as “sacred,” we wouldn't need an inane contemporary ditty to try to contrive some artificial “feeling” among our parishioners that “we are standing on holy ground.”

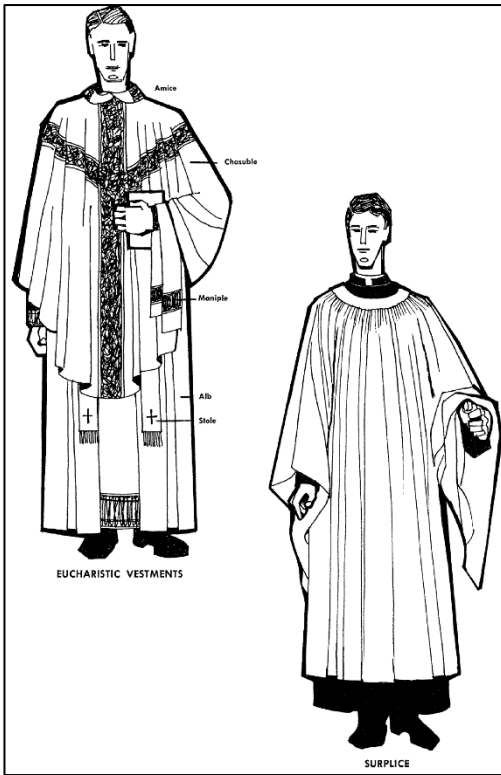
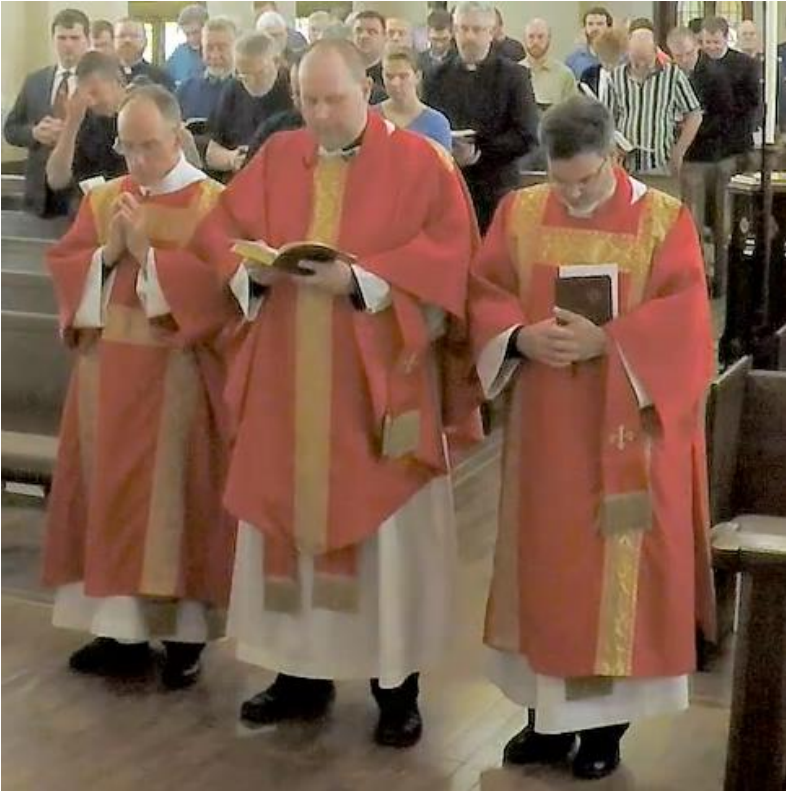


Figure 1



Figure 2



Deacon (Dalmatic) – Celebrant (Chasuble) – Subdeacon (Tunic)
Figure 3

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