

DOCTRINAL STATEMENTS AND THEOLOGICAL OPINIONS (DSTO)

VOLUME 1

A. THESES OF AGREEMENT

The status of the Theses of Agreement and other doctrinal statements

Prepared by the Commission on Theology and Inter-Church Relations. Recommended for adoption by the General Pastors Conference. Adopted by the General Synod, 1975 Convention.

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1. In the exercise of their teaching function, whether dealing with a group or a congregation or with individuals, pastors of the LCA should not run counter to the letter and the spirit of the Theses of Agreement.
2. The Theses of Agreement, the fruit of prayerful labours extending over many years, have been adopted in all seriousness and in good faith by both the former UELCA and ELCA as a unifying document. They should be respected and treated accordingly. Should amendments become desirable in the course of time, such amendments would have to be submitted to the entire Church after thorough theological examination and discussion. Meanwhile, a deliberate disregard of the Theses in teaching and preaching would appear as evidence of bad faith, and would constitute a serious threat to the unity of the Church. There may, of course, be inadvertent disregard of the Theses due to ignorance of their content.
3. It is clearly the right and the duty of the Church, in the face of current challenges, to define how it understands the Scriptures and the Confessions. Therefore, explanations and amendments of the Theses, as well as any other statements of a doctrinal nature, submitted to the entire Church after thorough theological examination and discussion and adopted by it, must be accorded the same authority in the Church as the Theses themselves (see 1 and 2 above).