

Defining Lutheranism from the Margins: Paul Peter Waldenström on Being a “Good Lutheran” in America

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The histories of church institutions may often be written by the orthodox “winners,” but dissenters, protestors, and even heretics undoubtedly play important roles in giving direction to the parent institution’s evolving identity. Such voices from the margins often set the agenda at crucial moments, prompting both the dissenters and establishment to engage in a debate to define proper theology and practice. Once a dissenting group has formally separated from a parent body, there is a risk that teleological hindsight will obscure the nature of these conversations, including the reasons for the ultimate separation and the intentions of both the dissenters and the establishment. The history of American Lutheranism since the colonial era has been a kaleidoscopic rotation of separations and mergers, in which dozens of Lutheran churches and sects have pushed and pulled on one another, all with varying shades of ethnic and linguistic identities, pietistic and confessional orientations, “high” and “low” worship, and conventional and radical practice. This is evident in the history of two institutions in particular, the Evangelical Covenant Church (the Covenant) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) through its heritage in the Augustana Lutheran Synod (1860-1962).

One of the more complex, and perhaps misunderstood, characters in the overlapping history of Augustana and the Covenant is Paul Peter Waldenström (1838-1917). This Lutheran-minister-turned-Pietist-evangelist was a figure of controversy in his day, prompting a variety of conflicting interpretations among his friends and foes alike. As a result, he has also been problematic for historians to sort out. This essay will shed light on the conflicts and confluence of Augustana and the Covenant by drawing on recent research in the Waldenström

collection at Riksarkivet, the Swedish National Archives, in Stockholm, which preserves the majority of Waldenström's personal papers. Among these papers is a collection of carbon copy books in which Waldenström drafted hundreds of letters between 1906 and 1915, some of which have not been analyzed before. Other observations are drawn from his various writings, including travel accounts written and published after his four speaking tours to North America.

While immensely popular in his lifetime, both in terms of book sales and itinerant preaching—he preached on average once every other day—interest in Waldenström cooled in the latter half of the twentieth century. This is reflected in Covenant historian Karl A. Olsson's reevaluation that “he was not the most interesting of the Mission Friends,” and that he was “no longer the church father that he was in 1910.” That was the year of Waldenström's fourth and final grand speaking tour of North America, when thousands of Chicago Swedes gathered on the lawn in front of North Park College's Old Main to catch a glimpse of him, even if they could not hear his speech over the crowd. Certainly by 1963, when Olsson wrote his article explaining Waldenström's relationship to the Augustana Lutheran Church, the spirit of the age had begun to abandon theories of “great men” in favor of “histories from below”; the 1960s were



Waldenström preaches on the steps of North Park's Old Main, 1910; F. M. Johnson Archives, North Park University.

after all the decade of taking patriarchs off of their pedestals.¹

If Covenanters like Olsson have distanced themselves from Waldenström, he has fared less well in the history of Lutheranism. Eric W. Gritsch, in his otherwise impressive accounting of trends in nineteenth-century American Lutheranism, has offered just one sentence: “Swedish [American] Lutherans battled over decentralization, favored by a revival movement inspired by [Carl Olof] Rosenius and his disciple Paul P. Waldenström; the dissidents became non-confessional fundamentalists.”² Whether the dreaded F-word, “fundamentalist,” is the appropriate term or not to describe Waldenström and his followers, it certainly underscores a prevailing Lutheran perspective that Waldenström marked a departure from Lutheranism, after which he falls outside of the Lutheran story and into some insignificant sect. After his 1889 tour, Waldenström’s visit was covered by the newspaper *Gamla och Nya Hemlandet*, which reminded its readers that “the renown Scandinavian Prof. Waldenström D.D. Ph.D. was once called to Augustana College. In all probability, he would yet have been a good Lutheran, had that call been accepted.”³ This perspective that he was *not* “a good Lutheran” can be traced to several Augustana figures, particularly T. N. Hasselquist, the president of Augustana College in Illinois, and C. A. Swenson, president of Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas.⁴ Since Karl A. Olsson has already highlighted several of the key parts of this exchange in his article, there is no need to repeat them here. The task at hand is to fill out an aspect of the discussion of Waldenström that has to date remained absent from the historical record, which is to explain his continued attempts to define “good Lutheranism,” long after he helped lead his band of “Waldenströmiens” out of the formal Lutheran fold.

Asking the question “How Lutheran was Waldenström?” is rather similar to asking the question “How Catholic was Martin Luther?” and perhaps equally difficult to determine. Each represents a point of schism as well as continuity; each critiqued existing churches with an expressed intent to reform, rather than to revolt. When their critiques eventually did cause schism and produced new theologies and institutions, they expressed remorse. In the case of Waldenström, the reasons for exploring the points of continuity are prompted by several considerations. Foremost is the fierce criticism that Waldenström

generated within the Lutheran world, in which he was deemed not simply as a reformer within Lutheranism, but as a traitor. In the North American context, for example, the Waldenströmiens were compared to ravenous grasshoppers, portrayed as eating up Augustana congregations and leaving a wake of ruin behind them.⁵ Granted, this is a critique of what Waldenströmiens were doing (not Waldenström), but the blame of the man is implied. In the sharply confessional spirit of Swedish and American Lutheranism of the 1870s, it is easy to see why he was portrayed as anything but Lutheran.

Exploration of Waldenström's writings between 1889 and 1917, however, reveals a persistent interest in the fate of Swedish Lutheranism on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as a formal participation in Lutheran church activities long after the period of schism. It is thus Waldenström's lifelong discussion of Lutheranism that is the prime interest of this study. Waldenström retained core markers of Lutheran theology and tradition his whole life, including references to Luther and Melancthon in his sermons, and a preference for preaching from the lectionary (*Svenska kyrkans högmässotexter*), although he did so in the manner of a folksy Bible study leader rather than the erudite Lutheran priests of the Church of Sweden. While a great deal has been said regarding his theology in light of Lutheran doctrine, far less has been said about his continued involvement in the Church of Sweden, as well as his ongoing relationship with Augustana after the major points of schism in 1872 (the year when many Mission Friends left Augustana) and 1878 (the year that the Mission Friends in Sweden left the Church of Sweden to form their "Mission Covenant"—*Svenska Missionsförbundet*).

As the name Waldenström is likely unfamiliar to many North American Covenanters and Lutherans today, a brief description of his career can help place him in the context of Lutheran history. In the whirlwind of religious revival movements that was produced by Swedish Pietism in the nineteenth century, a few central figures emerged who became emblematic of various viewpoints on the relationship between revival Christianity and the established state church. Carl Olof Rosenius, regarded as the foremost leader of the Swedish Awakening,⁶ was a figure who represented a time-honored standpoint that had been endorsed by German and Scandinavian "churchly" Pietists

since the 1600s. These churchly Pietists saw an essential role for Pietism to play as a “leaven in the lump,” since the revivals could do far more good by remaining within the national church than by leaving it. By remaining in the state church, the Pietists could retain their voice of protest; by exiting they would lose much or all of this potential for voice. Therefore, they remained loyal to institutional Lutheranism in order to reform it.⁷ This decision was also aided at first by the fact that it was illegal in Sweden to do anything but remain in the state church.

After the enactment of a new dissenters law in 1860, however, it became possible to leave the Church of Sweden, so long as one left in order to join another approved denomination.⁸ The first of these so-called “foreign confessions” were the Swedish Baptists, who had begun formal activities already in the 1840s. The churchly Pietists, in contrast to these separatists, had in 1856 chosen to start an internal organization approved by the Church of Sweden, called the Evangelical Homeland Foundation (Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsen—EFS), from which they would launch their mission work. Rosenius, as editor of the popular devotional journal *Pietisten* (The Pietist), had become the indisputable leader of this old-line strategy of loyalty to Lutheranism through the activities of the EFS.⁹ Several other denominations followed the example of the Baptists, but the circle around Rosenius stayed the course by remaining loyal to the Church of Sweden.

However careful Rosenius had been about toeing this line of loyalty, his successor as editor of *Pietisten* was less careful, or less concerned, with this strategy—at least at first. Waldenström took over *Pietisten* after Rosenius’s death in 1868, but four years later, his independence was evident as he published a provocative sermon on the nature of the atonement. This sermon challenged the prevailing Lutheran understanding of what was accomplished by Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. The Swedish Lutherans held to the Augsburg Confession, which presented Christ’s sacrifice as serving to reconcile God to humankind.¹⁰ Waldenström, in failing to find this doctrine defended in scripture, held that no change could have occurred in the heart of God, but instead that human beings had been reconciled to God, not the other way around. Furthermore, he presented the

loving nature of Christ as being one and the same with the nature of God, eliminating this tension between the two figures of the Trinity. Aside from the theological significance, there were practical ramifications. Waldenström had ignored the sage advice of key members of the EFS, including Rosenius's right-hand woman, Amy Moberg, who had urged Waldenström to back away from an open challenge to Lutheran doctrine, seemingly predicting the divisiveness that would follow.¹¹ But Waldenström went ahead, alienating much of the Rosenian camp within both the Church of Sweden and Augustana, who felt that he had betrayed the spirit of Rosenius and *Pietisten*.¹² Between his sermon in 1872 and 1878, a gradual exodus occurred, in which the Pietist Mission Friends left to start the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. On the other side of the Atlantic, the American Waldenströmiens had followed suit in 1885, and left the Augustana Synod to start a parallel Mission Covenant. And here is where the narrative typically ends, with Waldenström and the thousands of Mission Friends abandoning Lutheranism in favor of a creedless Christianity and a so-called believers' church.

This version of the story has focused on the role that Waldenström played in exiting Lutheranism to start something new. The histories of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden and the Evangelical Covenant Church in North America have cast Waldenström as an instigator in their early beginnings, with some credit to the influence of his theology and the character of his piety on the early generations of Covenanters. For the leaders of Augustana and their children in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this has been presented as the story of the Prodigal; the Covenant has been seen as "the one that got away," the vine that climbed up and over the wall was "lost." One difficulty this perspective presents is that it misses ways in which Waldenström interacted within a much broader sphere and continued to voice his protests from the margins. Furthermore, one central theme of his writings was an ecumenical philosophy, which can only be appreciated by looking at him from an ecumenical perspective.

Revisiting his continued participation as a Lutheran can do much to improve the understanding of his Lutheranism, of his Pietism, and how this dynamic identity related to his ecumenical vision. As Augustana no longer exists as an independent organization, and as

the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden has now merged with two other churches (as of January 2012, with the Baptists and Methodists), teleological understandings of Waldenström as a denomination builder will become less relevant. Even in the Evangelical Covenant Church, which continues to grow, there has been enough of a departure from the identity of its formative period that a reinterpretation of Waldenström's Lutheranism and his ecumenical vision will perhaps be more significant to future historians than his role as a founding father of an ethnic sect.

There are several key aspects of Waldenström's later career (that is, after 1878) that can best be explained as examples of continuity with his earlier (Rosenian) loyalty to Lutheranism, rather than a break with that tradition. Although the main modification he made was that whereas the Pietists had been loyal to the broader Lutheran communion, once a formal break had been made with the state church, Waldenström's posture of loyalty was remade into a broader loyalty to the universal church and the international ecumenical movement, which was gathering steam in the late 1800s.¹³ Like the Pietists of old, he thought the Mission Covenant congregations should continue functioning as the "leaven in the lump" within the broader worldwide church, as opposed to merely being a leaven within the Church of Sweden or Augustana. There are several examples of his continued attempts to define Lutheran theology and practice, the first of which being his reluctant leadership of the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden. In 1878, when the Covenant was forming, Waldenström was out of the picture.¹⁴ While it is rather safe to assert that there was no revival preacher in greater demand than Waldenström, it is remarkable that he avoided formal leadership of the church that he had inspired and only assumed the chairmanship in 1904. He also retained his ordination in the church of Sweden until 1882—four years after the break. As most Covenanters retained dual membership in both the Covenant and the Church of Sweden, so did Waldenström, which entitled him to the right to participate in the Church of Sweden's representative body, the Church Assembly (*Svenska kyrkans kyrkomöte*), beginning in 1868. The Church Assembly had come into existence that same year as a compensation for the fact that the clergy had lost their house in parlia-

ment (Riksdag) two years earlier; thus this body was somewhat of an appendage to the Riksdag, in that legislation with relevance to the Church of Sweden was deferred to the Church Assembly. Waldenström also served as a lay delegate to the Church Assembly in 1908, 1909, and 1910, in which he was most outspoken as an advocate for the separation of the church from the state, and advised that the Church of Sweden take the initiative to this split, rather than wait for the state to do it, in which it would fare worse.¹⁵

Waldenström also traveled throughout Germany and Switzerland, visiting the historical centers of Lutheran Pietism in Herrnhut and Halle, as well as Berlin, Wittenberg, and Basel, on the occasion of mission conferences. His travel letters to Swedish newspapers from these places reported extensively on what one could call “best practices,” which could be replicated at home in Sweden.¹⁶ These fact-finding missions also included commentary on schools that he visited in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada (including North Park College and Augustana College). Such comparative analyses of mission work and educational ministries was particularly frequent as he prepared for the opening of the seminary on the island of Lidingö outside of Stockholm, a program for which he was the principal fundraiser and visionary.¹⁷

After Waldenström’s journeys to the United States in 1889 and 1901, and after his trip to Canada in 1904, he published travel accounts that were successful in both the Swedish and Swedish-American markets.¹⁸ Here he offers his readers a surprisingly candid account of not only the places he visited, but also the people he interacted with, and general musings about the state of society, politics, and church life. Of chief interest to him were the various denominations started by Swedes, which he often complained were divided by confessional and sectarian controversies. One can only speculate about the degree to which he saw himself as having been responsible for past schisms related to his atonement theory. It seems likely, however, that his efforts to communicate an ecumenical message to both his followers and his critics were part of an effort to do damage control. Instead of attempting to reclaim Rosenian loyalty to a parent church, he instead proposed a unique transfer of this loyalty to a quite broad concept of the worldwide, ecumenical church.¹⁹ This was how Pietism could avoid sectarianism and continue to serve as leaven in a different, larger lump.

In his first travel account, Waldenström was surprised and troubled by the confessional divisions that he found in North America.

The Scandinavians in Brooklyn also have several meeting places. I do not know how many denominations the Swedish churchgoers are divided into, but there are Lutherans, Methodists, First and Second Baptists, Congregationalists, Adventists, "Helgianists," Plymouth Brethren, Christian Brethren and who knows how many other "-ists" and "brethren." It always grieves me greatly to think about all of this divisiveness. When I compare it to Christ's prayer for the unity of his disciples . . . then all this spiritual confusion becomes altogether dreadful. Without a doubt the Catholics have good reason for what they say about Protestantism: "If you want to see how possible it is for the individual person to grasp the truth directly from the scriptures, just look at the Protestant churches. All of them claim to have retrieved their truth from the Bible, but soon there are as many opinions as there are heads. Which of them is right?"²⁰

This fractured spiritual landscape prompted an encouragement to the readers to act to lower the walls between the various denominations. He claimed that while many within the church were currently working to lower the walls between the world and the church, they simultaneously defended tooth and nail the divides that separated Christians from one another. Reflecting on the idle wishes of Christians for God to eliminate these divides, he wrote:

One wishes and prays that God would do it, but one does not think about the fact that it is through us that he will bring this to be. The only way to do this is to fashion the local congregation after the pattern of the great general congregation, namely, so that there is room in every local congregation for every believing Christian. . . . Furthermore, it ought to be repeated again and again, that a local congregation that is not organized in this way, does not have the right to be called a Christian congregation in the biblical sense, but instead is *a sect* [italics original].²¹

This plea was not only born out of an idealistic desire for unity, but had practical origins. From Waldenström's observations, he concluded that institutionalization is the beginning of the decline of social movements, and he predicted that this would spell the end of the Lutheran Pietist revivals that had started the two Covenant churches.²² Denominations (*samfund*) were not inherently a negative phenomenon, but had a tendency to constrict the type of spontaneous spiritual life that was the lifeblood of the revival. The solution to this was to attempt to remain free from the constricting forces of denominations, as well as any bonds with the state.²³

Reconciliation with both the Church of Sweden and Augustana were the most logical places to begin this ecumenical vision. Nevertheless, it is perhaps surprising that praise of Augustana's ecumenism would appear in his travel accounts. Waldenström chose to highlight instances when the Swedes in North America had achieved ecumenical cooperation and service to a number of ethnic communities



Augustana Hospital, Chicago; from Waldenström's "Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater," p. 160.

outside the Swedish Lutheran enclaves, and Augustana's institutions were among these examples. In this spirit, Waldenström gave a glowing report of Augustana's hospital near Lincoln Park in Chicago for its apparent blindness to ethnicity and creed. Statistics since its opening in 1884 indicated that the patients represented nineteen nationalities and twenty-four Christian confessions.



Augustana Orphanage, Jamestown, N.Y.; from Waldenström's "Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater," p. 137.

On the sickbed and in death, the human being becomes simply a human being—"not Jew or Greek, not slave or free"—and the Christians become only Christians, not Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, but quite simply Christians, which the Lord intended that they should be even in the days of their health in the Christian congregation.²⁴

All three of his North American travel accounts are full of visits to deaconess hospitals, sailors' homes, and orphanages, in which similar sentiments are expressed.

So what prompted this ecumenical vision from this bane of Lutheranism and the leader of the Waldenströmian grasshoppers? This is first and foremost a continuation of the traditional philosophies of the Lutheran Pietists from Spener to Rosenius. But this also should be seen as a direct response to the fact that Hasselquist, Swensson, and the newspapers of Augustana had painted Waldenström as a separatist, a denomination wrecker.²⁵ While Waldenström was not able to hide his negative feelings for Swensson and Hasselquist, the pictures he painted of Augustana in general were, by contrast, often rather warm, particularly after the turn of the century. His 1901 visit to Augustana College was described as having been pleasant, so much so that he could hardly believe that this was the same Augustana, contrasting his positive interaction by Andreen with that of the Lutheran fanatic Hasselquist twelve years earlier.²⁶ He had positive things to say about his tour of the campus, the chapel service where he preached to Augustana students, and the warm reception he received from Andreen.²⁷ His main complaint against Augustana was a response to the fact that he had been portrayed as having been a bad Lutheran, which gave him opportunity to reflect on that identity.

Since I have just now left the seat of Lutheranism in America [Moline], this is a good occasion to say a thing or two about Lutheranism. Just how familiar are these Lutherans with Luther? How much have they read from what *Luther himself* has written? In general, nothing. They count as Lutheranism that which has been written by a host of so called Lutheran theologians, who have precious little in common with Luther himself. I believe I am more at home in Luther's writings than a great many Lutheran professors, who often have all but a scant familiarity with these writings. . . . The first person who turned my attention to the fact that Luther "did not truly teach correctly about sanctification according to the Lutheran confession" (!) was C. O. Rosenius, who said this in all secretiveness and with great uneasiness. By "confession," though, he naturally meant the prevailing theological interpretations of that time.²⁸

Waldenström's criticism of the Church of Sweden had been based in a perspective that differentiated Luther from Lutheranism. Waldenström pointed out that the Pietists had often used Luther's words to defend their actions to the Church of Sweden, and had received the response from the authorities that these were "Luther's private opinions" in contradistinction to official Lutheran theology.²⁹ The difference between prevailing attitude and the already articulated creeds and theology opened the doors for hypocrisy and dilemmas of conscience.

They call themselves Lutherans and claim to honor the Augsburg Confession, but all the while they reserve the right for themselves to think whatever they want about these individual points of doctrine. The same applies to the Augustana Synod's adherents in America, in fact, every church denomination with a humanly formulated confession. In this context, one can justifiably ask exactly what purpose the confessions are supposed to serve, other than to cause people to take dishonorable positions, which will either haunt their consciences or cause them to defend an idea that they otherwise would never defend if they did not have a personal stake in it.³⁰

Institutionalization could also prevent necessary innovations in practice. An example of this is visible in his proposal to reform confirmation materials, since Luther's catechism was not a pedagogically sound means of instruction, with its stale question-and-answer format. This was not a critique of Luther's work, but was aimed at Lutherans who held to an outdated educational program in the name of Luther.³¹ From Waldenström's vantage point, it seemed that Lutherans were picking and choosing when to identify with Luther, when to identify with Lutheran theologians, and when to ignore both.

At the turn of the century, Waldenström also found himself in the curious position of being caught between two Lutheranisms, Lutheranism in Sweden and Swedish Lutheranism in North America, which were two different animals. He found the Swedish-American variety to be more confessional in its tone and more defensive of the binding nature of its confessional identity. The opposite was increas-

ingly true in the Church of Sweden, as so-called liberal theology had begun to take a foothold by 1906.³² He claimed that even in his student days (i.e., the 1850s) there was the general understanding that the Augsburg Confession was *not* binding, which had helped many candidates for the priesthood overcome their conscientious objections so that they could swear their “priest oaths” (*prästen*).³³ When members of the Church of Sweden appealed to “Lutherdom,” he claimed they were only appealing to a hollow cultural shell, as the substantive confessions of Lutheranism were devalued, as well as the miraculous items in the ecumenical creeds, such as the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ, which were beginning to be dismissed as fables. The Church of Sweden, he felt, was more welcoming to people who openly denied these truths than it was for him, who had relatively few theological complaints with Luther.³⁴ Here he reveals his own continued deference to Lutheran ideas, although it is also clear that he does not feel bound to them. Thus, while Waldenström was liberal and radical in the eyes of the Augustana Lutherans, he was seen as a conservative reactionary at home in Sweden.

Waldenström frequently appealed to Luther in his travel writing, in response to Augustana claims that he sought to paint Lutheranism in a bad light, chief among these people C. A. Swensson. He dismissed this as being the result of the fact that Augustana members had romanticized the past and forgotten what had taken place in the dark days when the Conventicle Edict (1726) was in force and the Church of Sweden had actively punished Pietists for having followed Luther’s own example in organizing conventicles. He reminded his readers that it was the “free church movement” that broke these chains and introduced freedoms and innovations that all Swedish Christians now enjoyed, even Augustana members.³⁵

Both during my journeys in America and after my return home to Sweden, I have with great joy noted a change for the better, toward more peace, that has occurred in the relationship between the Augustana folk and the Mission Friends. But there appears to be people in America, who intend to hinder every such step. . . . It is as though they have dedicated part of their church services to tearing open every

wound that was in the process of healing. From this perspective, I most regret Dr. Swensson's work. Dr. Swensson can be certain that if anyone is going to benefit from such a performance—it will not be Augustana.³⁶

In Waldenström's presentation there is a two-pronged reaction to the critique of Augustana leaders, the first being a direct response to his critics, in which he makes the case that he is after all a good Lutheran and perhaps even a better Lutheran than they are, the second being a plea to the two churches to move toward ecumenical cooperation. This was perhaps strongest in 1910, the year of jubilees for both Augustana and the Covenant,

in which Waldenström remarked, "It can certainly not be denied that God, through both [denominations], has carried home many people to heaven." He thus suggested that the Covenant leadership invite the visiting Swedish bishop, K. H. G. von Schéele, to its twenty-fifth anniversary celebration as a dignitary along with Augustana's president. Von Schéele was then expected to travel to America in order to take part in Augustana's fiftieth anniversary.³⁷

From the perspective of Augustana, it was the "hyper-evangelicalism" and the emphasis on the creation of a "pure," "regenerative" church on the part of the Covenant leadership that precluded dialogue.³⁸ While it is difficult to explain what the rank-and-file Covenanter meant when he/she used words like *pure* and *regenerative*, Waldenström's writings are rather clear on how he viewed the



Bishop von Schéele, from Waldenström's *Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater*, p. 65.

congregation. He took the opportunity in his travel literature to set the record straight that he was not the leader of a sect, but actually radically ecumenical, perhaps more so than Augustana was.

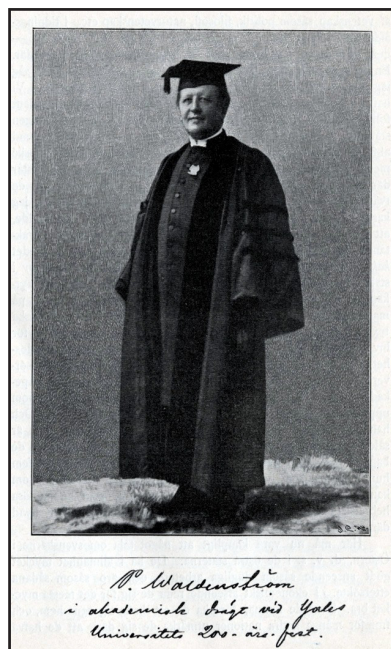
Every sound, Christian reflection [on these matters] must arrive at the conclusion that a congregation can never be a truly Christian congregation if it unites together both Christians and openly ungodly people or excludes from itself living Christians. The former becomes a worldly church, the latter a sect. A *Christian* congregation is the one that excludes openly ungodly people, but has open doors for each and every person who, as far as humans can tell, are living in God.³⁹

On this point, his definitions refer to the Augsburg Confession, article VIII. Elsewhere, Waldenström is equally careful to qualify what he means by the congregation's purity (*renhet*). Only those people who are openly antagonistic to the essential biblical truths presented in the ecumenical creeds are to be excluded; on the other hand, human beings cannot "try the heart," and if a person expresses that he or she is a believer and does not openly contradict this in his or her life, then room must be made for this person in the congregation.⁴⁰ This corresponds furthermore to his explanation of the elasticity of grace in his religious allegory *Squire Adamsson*, in which Mother Simple warns against excluding marginal members of the community.⁴¹ Waldenström's criticism of Augustana, therefore, is not primarily that there were presumably ungodly people mixed in with the believers, but rather that he feared that Augustana was trying to replicate the folk church model of the Church of Sweden, which was a "worldly church." Waldenström thought that there was no excuse for trying to imitate the state church in North America, where one was free of the state church bands and ought to focus on gathering all believers, not all people of a certain ethnic profile.⁴²

Augustana leaders had long debated over how to define their relationship to the Church of Sweden. To begin with, the Church of Sweden had shown such a surprising lack of interest in the North American Swedes in the early days that many Augustana folks felt abandoned; the only significant connection was because the EFS

(already a marginal group of churchly Pietists within the state church) had been the primary engine of evangelization and support for Augustana. This imparted a *de facto* Rosenian character to Augustana, which distinguished it from the Church of Sweden.⁴³ Yet, even if Augustana was disconnected from the mother church, the Church of Sweden was still the most logical model for how to fashion a confessional Lutheran church that served an ethnic Swedish diaspora population. This ethnic focus *inherently* mirrors the folk church concept (a church for the whole Swedish nation), which the Church of Sweden would increasingly articulate in the early twentieth century. That Augustana was the largest Swedish church in North America (as well as larger than any Swedish secular organization)⁴⁴ put it in a prime position to live into a mission to serve all Swedish Americans. Even if Augustana leaders periodically denied the accusations that they had aspirations to imitate the folk church model, in practice it had often functioned this way.⁴⁵ With an ethnic mission like this, one would expect that at the congregational level there would be an inherent tension between the desire to include all Swedes, regardless of the sincerity of their faith, and the desire to establish congregations where sincerity of faith was paramount. This tension was precisely the origin of the division between the Mission Friends and Augustana. Illustrative of this tension is the curious case of Olof Olsson, who was one of Augustana's more outspoken opponents to the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement in the 1870s, but had earlier been a student of Waldenström's in Uppsala.⁴⁶ Olsson had begun his pastorate in Kansas with the hope of founding a pure congregation, but later abandoned this in favor of a more pragmatic, confessionally Lutheran model that was deemed necessary to reach all of the Swedish settlers in the area.⁴⁷ The likely earlier influence of Waldenström gave way to an active opposition in favor of an ethnic Lutheran congregational model.

When the Church of Sweden eventually became more interested in Augustana around the turn of the century, several visits by Swedish clergymen raised speculation about establishing an apostolic connection between the mother and daughter churches. While this possibility too has often been downplayed, it was a current enough item of conversation during Waldenström's 1901 and 1910 America tours that he felt prompted to respond to it. For instance, Waldenström



Waldenström at Yale, 1901; from Waldenström's *Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater*, p. 48.

became convinced that Bishop von Schéele was being actively courted by Augustana to come to America to be their bishop, based on an Augustana clergyman's introduction for the bishop when both Waldenström and he were guests of honor at a reception at Yale University. Von Schéele apparently did not address the topic in his own speech at the same reception. Waldenström's concerns that an episcopal connection would be a terrible idea for Augustana were mocked by *Svenska Kuriren*, and the newspaper suggested that he was just jealous that Augustana had not asked him instead.⁴⁸ Waldenström was indeed opposed to the idea of an episcopal connection between Augustana and the Church of

Sweden, and the mere rumor troubled him. If true, then Augustana was imitating the structure of a folk church. Though he admitted that apostolic succession could have a positive function in potentially uniting all Christians, Waldenström saw the institution of bishops as superfluous, and asserted that Luther had thought this as well.⁴⁹

When a fiftieth anniversary history for Augustana was published in 1910 (largely synthesized from a previous history by Eric Norelius), there were several indications that Waldenström's critique of Augustana's identity was still enough of an annoyance to warrant comment. The author explained that Augustana was indeed distinct from the state church, which, despite contributions to "the development of God's kingdom on earth," had "outlived itself" and had "become a hindrance to the kingdom of God." At the same time, Augustana was defined as a "free church," but in such a way as to carefully distinguish itself from the free churches of the Waldenströmian

model. Augustana's history was interpreted as follows:

When the emigration from Sweden began in the 1840s, the Church of Sweden lay in a general spiritual slumber. The general populace lived in their—what we now like to call—dead faith. They believed that the priest and church were necessary, that the Bible, baptism and confirmation and the Lord's communion were holy things. . . . In many cases this faith and religion was superficial, but it was not an antagonistic unbelief. . . .

But in the 1850s more and more began to come to America, and these people . . . had to greater and lesser degrees come in contact with the spiritual revivals and taken inspiration from them . . . such people as those who had been inspired by teachers formed by Scharltanumism . . . or by Sellergren . . . and later by Rosenius and the more evangelical [i.e., Lutheran] line, and who were able without great difficulty to unite with one another around the Augustana Synod's articles of faith. . . .

Those immigrants who came here in the end of the 1860s and in the beginning of the '70s, and who had in Sweden been inspired by the extreme "new evangelicalism" [*nya evangelismen*], and modern revivalism with its perverted concept of the congregation, order and sacrament, joined themselves to the Augustana Synod congregations, but soon found that they were not at home there. They believed that the synod represented the state church in Sweden and would allow them the same freedoms as they had held there, such as provided for all manner of independent conventicles and unsupervised lay ministries, and that no discipline of doctrine should be practiced. When they began to find out that their practices could have no place in a free church then they separated themselves from the Augustana Synod with the impression that it was worse than the state church of Sweden itself. These hyper-evangelical people, who even spoke about how a person can sit in hell with forgiven sins, threw themselves with burning zeal into the net that Waldenström's actions

had set out. When Waldenström visited America for the first time, there were a number of pastors and congregations, who out of politeness or perhaps of curiosity opened their church doors for him; but few if any renewed that courtesy upon his next visit; people knew what he had up his sleeve.⁵⁰

The author then explains that von Schéele was opposed to episcopacy, and that Augustana should be on guard against attempts to establish an apostolic connection with the American Episcopal Church, which had actively been pursuing Augustana.⁵¹

There are several noteworthy aspects of this definition of Augustana's identity as outlined above: the rejection of the dead formalism of the state church, but with the qualification that this was not necessarily the same as "unbelief" (which aligns with Waldenström's evaluation); the positive contribution of Rosenian piety to Augustana, and the explanation of how various strains of churchly Pietism were able to find common ground (which mirrors Waldenström's ecumenical vision, though in a more narrow, confessional Lutheran version); the differentiation between Rosenian pietism and the Waldenström variety (which, though indeed distinct, is exaggerated here as a "perversion"); the surprising identification that not only was Augustana not a "state church," but it could even claim that it had become a "free church"; and the assumption that a free church ought to be centralized, should regulate lay activity, and discipline divergent doctrinal interpretation (which was not the path taken by all free churches, such as the Covenant). Essentially, this definition assimilated every positive contribution to Augustana that was made by the Pietists and attributed those things to Rosenius, but took all of the negative aspects and attributed them to Waldenström. Waldenström here became a scapegoat, which obscures ways in which he too might be seen as influencing Augustana's development.

What is also remarkable is that, despite the fact that the author wished to differentiate Augustana's concept of the congregation from the one articulated by the Waldenströmiens, the description ended up in a similar middle-of-the-road formulation and with ecumenical overtones. "The Augustana Synod's structure or constitution has neither an order of bishops, an order of the priesthood, is neither con-

gregationalist nor independent; but it has some elements of each of these systems.”⁵² The definition wavers between extremes, positing that Augustana respects the independence of member congregations from one another, but dismisses the majority of congregationalist models in America; Augustana does not see its denominational structure as “holy” but does see it as most in line with Lutheran teaching; Augustana sees its governance as having much in common with the prevailing republican system of government popular in the United States, but refrains from endorsing a majority-rule style of democratic governance.⁵³ In summary, Augustana was at pains to define itself in contrast to two extremes (state-church and free-church models), and in order to do so, it necessarily had to internalize the critiques and weaknesses of both. While it seems to have drawn a line that excluded Waldenström and his folk, it did so as a result of internalizing Waldenström’s critiques in such a way that they arrived at similar understandings of ecumenism, practicality, and piety. At the very least, this “hyper-evangelical” nuisance was one of several significant factors that shaped how Augustana had to define itself.

In contrast to the presumed aspirations of Augustana to replicate the folk church model, Waldenström applauded Covenant leader David Nyvall’s understanding of the nature of the congregation, and avoiding the perils of denominational institutionalization.

David Nyvall said it completely right in his last article in *Veckobladet* that the Covenant had to choose between two paths, the one to continue developing along the lines that it had followed thus far, or to adopt a definitive church confession and be transformed into a synod. I can well enough believe that the temptation to such a transformation can sometimes be great. It has been the case among many people even in Sweden. But may God preserve the Covenant as nothing more than a covenant [or association] of congregations joined in common mission activity. May they consider the example of the Ansgar Synod’s sorry end. Church denominations are nothing other than sects and can never be anything else. It is denominations that have throughout the ages kept Christianity torn to pieces. And furthermore, what

help are those so highly praised confessions anyway? Is it not the case that both within the Lutheran church and other Protestant church denominations, there is spreading increasingly open and public expressions of doubt about—even denial of—the basic principles of the Protestant reformation, the divine authority of Holy Scripture? And what then is all this boastfulness about confession and faithfulness to confession? By the way, are not the congregations of the Covenant also “confession-free”? I think that they rather seriously hold to the apostolic creed. But where do the church denominations stand on that count? In the Lutheran church for example, both in Sweden and other countries, Darwinism is confessed openly by priests and theology professors alike instead of the first article of faith, and among the various points of the second article, historical validity is only granted to the point that Christ was crucified under Pilate, dead and buried. All the rest of the points are explained as fables. And that is just fine. “The church” can do nothing about it. She stands powerless and boasts about her Lutheran confession!! It is fortunate for Luther, that he lies in the grave and is oblivious to all this.⁵⁴

In conclusion, past interpretations of the interaction between Waldenström and Augustana leaders have focused almost exclusively on his interpersonal conflicts with Hasselquist and Swensson, and overlooked the substantive criticisms that Waldenström made to the Lutheran project in America. The much-discussed atonement theory is also of relatively little importance compared with the crux of Waldenström’s argument. As he defined the nature of the congregation and the perils of denominations and episcopacies, this was done in an effort to advance a grand ecumenical project that was far bigger than either the Covenant or Augustana. In making his case, Waldenström used his Lutheran credentials as well as some of Luther’s own ideas to deny the claims of Augustana critics that the Covenant’s project to affirm a believers’ church amounted to sectarianism. The believers’ church was no sect, as Waldenström explained it, but was actually poised to make good on a centuries’ old dream of ecumenism

that he found buried deep in the Lutheran tradition. While Waldenström's attempts at reconciliation with Augustana may have originated in a desire to rebuild his battered reputation, the result was thought-provoking discussion of the nature of confessional divisions in North American Christianity.

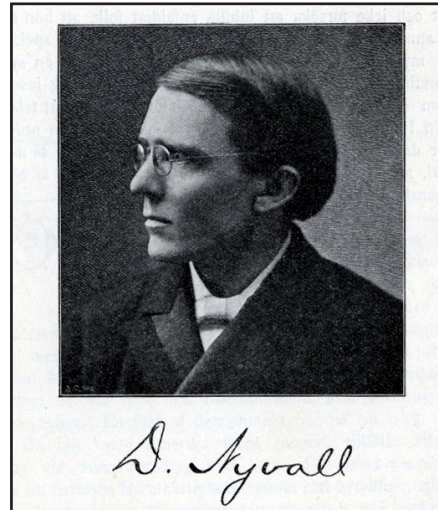
Would not it be possible to remove the tension between the Covenant and the Free? I

have a memory from 1904 that still pains me. I was in Denver. Princell

was also there. Both the Mission Covenant and the Free had mission meetings. I proposed that both meetings could be combined into one. The Mission congregation joyfully adopted the measure. Princell was also in on this. But the Free said no.

But I want to go even further. Would not it be possible to remove the tension between the Covenant and Augustana, or at least reduce it? Now when Augustana soon will be celebrating a 50th anniversary and the Covenant a twenty-fifth anniversary—could not something be done in this regard? And then the tension between the two “Swedish” cities in America with their newspapers—could not that be transformed into a brotherly mutual understanding? And then East and West. The storms of biblical criticism and unbelief are gathering with a forcefulness that calls the believers to take their positions at the fore as one single army. Time is hastening by. The Lord is coming.⁵⁵

It is well known that the Covenant was seriously courted by the American Congregationalists in hopes that the Covenanters could



David Nyvall; from Waldenström's *Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater*, p. 153.

be annexed as a Swedish wing of the Congregationalist church, and it is clear from his own statements that Waldenström endorsed this merger.⁵⁶ What has not been pointed out is that Waldenström's ecumenical attitude regarding the Congregationalists also applied to Augustana, even if this was less likely to bear fruit based on the negative personal interactions with key Augustana figures in the past. Waldenström, it seems, never gave up on the idea that the Covenant and Augustana had potential for rapprochement, and he certainly never categorically rejected Lutheranism.⁵⁷

A reunion through merger between the Covenant and Augustana never took place, nor does it appear likely that the ELCA and the Covenant have a common enough trajectory for this to take place any time in the near future. But the fact that the, albeit weak, ties of communication between these bodies were never fully severed is indicative of a persistent awareness of common identity. Throughout the century since Waldenström's death, impulses for continued re-evaluation of the Lutheran Pietist heritage within the Covenant have indicated that this foundational identity bears relevance for the Covenant's present and future.⁵⁸ Though Augustana publically remained far more interested in cultivating a relationship with the Church of Sweden than it did with the Covenant, it is important to point out that Augustana was perhaps equally informed by Rosenian piety, practice, and hymnody as it was by the visits of distant clergymen from Uppsala and the theology of a declining state church.⁵⁹ One can argue that by transplanting an Old World folk church to a New World context in which the immigrants had to "opt in" rather than "opt out" of membership, all the dead weight of the more apathetic members was cut away, leaving a population that was *de facto* more pietistic than it acknowledged. When tracing the strands of Pietism in the ELCA's history, perhaps Rosenius will continue to be a more familiar name than Waldenström to Lutherans, but it is also fair to conclude that Waldenström was more a continuation of the Rosenian school than he was a departure from it. Also, the controversies surrounding Waldenström may have kept Rosenian ideas alive longer than if he and his Augustana opponents had not fought over who was Rosenius's rightful heir.

It is perfectly reasonable to conclude, as Augustana historians

sometimes have, that overall, Augustana was ecumenically minded and that it was “a church that always thought big, thought national, thought of itself not only as local congregations, but as part of the wider church.”⁶⁰ One complement to this portrait is to compare and contrast this heritage of ecumenism with that of the Covenant Church. The profile of Waldenström given in this article demonstrates that one clear point of similarity is in the shared Rosenian heritage. However, Waldenström’s experience reveals that even though both churches valued ecumenical relationships, Augustana and the Covenant came to this realization by means of vastly different trajectories. Augustana grew into its ecumenical identity by first carving out a clear Lutheran confessional identity in its first two decades of life, which involved confronting and aggressively excluding the Waldenströmian dissenters. It was only after Augustana had formulated this solidly Lutheran identity that it engaged in ecumenical dialogue with other Lutheran bodies. Also, it is important to note that Augustana’s ecumenical spirit and “sense of the wider church,”⁶¹ which has been celebrated as one of its defining contributions to the ELCA, is perhaps a more recent twentieth-century phenomenon. In the nineteenth century and up through the First World War,⁶² this ecumenism is less easy to see. Its confrontation with the Mission Friends was a rocky start. But then again, this trauma of conflict and separation perhaps acted as a catalyst for reflection on ancient Christian aspirations for ecumenical unity, for both the Mission Friends and Augustana.

In contrast to the case of Augustana, the Covenant began by first liberating itself from a binding Lutheran confessional identity, and though Lutheran tendencies persisted, it found communion with Augustana to be painfully difficult. Thus unable to relate to Augustana, the Rosenian impulse for ecumenical activity was funneled into conversations with Congregationalists, Evangelical Free, and other churches with whom the Covenant now had more in common in terms of congregational polity and practice. Both churches may have developed high ideals of ecumenism, but in putting these into practice in the early years, they found themselves limited to working with the churches that were most similar in structure, and only gradually were able to expand the number and quality of their partnerships. It is also fair to claim that each church imparted a legacy to the other,

in which each had to come to terms with the limits of its ecumenical scope, bringing both towards the center in the dichotomy between confessionalism and Pietism.

ENDNOTES

1. Karl A. Olsson, "Paul Peter Waldenström and Augustana," in *The Swedish Immigrant Community in Transition; Essays in Honor of Dr. Conrad Bergendoff*, ed. J. Iverne Dowie and Ernest M. Espelie (Rock Island, IL: Augustana Historical Society 1963).
2. Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2002), 193.
3. No author, no article title. *Gamla och Nya Hemlandet*, 5 Sep 1889 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del I, vol. 21, Riksarkivet, Stockholm); Paul Peter Waldenström, *Nya Färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater; Reseskildringar* (Stockholm, Sweden: Normans Förlag 1902), 268. Waldenström recalls that he was also close to accepting the call, being enthusiastically courted by Lars Esbjörn, as well as being encouraged by none other than Rosenius.
4. Waldenström, *Nya färder*, 267; Olsson, 117.
5. Dag Blanck, *The Creation of an Ethnic Identity: Being Swedish American in the Augustana Synod 1860-1917* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press 2006), 37.
6. Oloph Bexell, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria. Folkväckelsens och kyrkoförnyelsens tid* (Trelleborg, Sweden: Verbum 2003), 51.
7. Assumptions about exit, voice, and loyalty are drawn from sociology, namely Albert Hirschman. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1970).
8. Bexell, 45.
9. *Ibid.*, 51.
10. Augsburg Confession, Article III:3.
11. William Bredberg, *P. P. Waldenströms verksamhet till 1878* (Stockholm, Sweden: Missionsförbundets förlag 1948), 145; Bexell, 110.
12. Bexell, 111.
13. William Pike, on behalf of John Henry Barrows. Letters to P. P. Waldenström, 31 Oct 1892, 23 Dec 1892, 20 Jan 1893 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del II, vol. B-4). Already in the 1890s, Waldenström was in contact with colleagues planning the parliament of religions in Chicago in 1893, not to mention his participation and various Lutheran and Reformed conferences on the continent (see note 16 below); Waldenström, *Nya Färder*, 198. Waldenström also presents the Federation of Churches in a very positive light.

14. Hans Andreasson. *Liv och rörelse. Svenska missionskyrkans historia och identitet* (Stockholm: Verbum 2007), 44f.

15. O. Johansson, P. P. Waldenström i Kyrkomötet, *Hans motioner och anföranden i kyrkliga och teologiska frågor vid fyra kyrkomöten* (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag 1931), 210.

16. Waldenström, letters to the editors of *Svenska Morgonbladet* and *Jönköpings Posten*, 8 May 1912, 10 May 1912, 21 Apr 1913, 23 Apr 1913, 2 May 1913 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 3). Waldenström visited ecumenical missions conferences in Herrnhut in 1912 and 1913, as well as Halle and sites connected to the life of Martin Luther.

17. Andreasson. *Liv och rörelse*, 97f.; Waldenström. Letter to Otto Högfeldt. 19 Mar. 1915. (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 3).

18. H. Arnold Barton, *A Folk Divided: Homeland Swedes and Swedish Americans, 1840-1940* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press 1994), 90. In particular, Barton concluded that Waldenström's first travel account in 1890 was one of the most widely read Swedish travel accounts to date.

19. Waldenström has a clear link to Moravian notions of ecumenicity. Zinzendorf's concept was that each individual church is a "trope" that completes the diverse whole that is the greater church. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2002), 155.

20. Waldenström, *Genom Norra Amerikas Förenta Stater; Reseskildringar* (Stockholm: Pietistens Expedition 1890), 95:

Äfven skandinaverna hafva i Brooklyn flere samlingslokaler. Jag vet icke, i huru många samfund de svenska kyrkobesökarna äro delade, men der finnas lutheraner, metodister, första och andra baptister, kongregationalister, adventister, helgianister, plymouthbröder, Kristi bröder, och hvem vet, huru många andra "iste" och "bröder". Det är för mig alltid en stor bedröfvelse att tänka på all denna splittring. När jag sammanställer den samma med Kristi bön om hans lärjungars enhet . . . då blir denna andliga förvirring alldeles förskräcklig. Utan tvifvel kunna ock katolikerna från den samma hemta god grund för, hvad de pläga säga om protestantimen: "Vill ni se, huru pass möjligt det är för den enskilda menniskan att direkt ur den heliga skrift fatta sanningen, så se på de protestantiska kyrkorna. De påstå sig allesammans hafva hemtat sin sanning ur biblen, och snart äro der lika många olika meningar, som der finnas hufvuden. Hvem af dem har rätt?

21. Waldenström, *Nya Färder*, 53. "Man önskar och beder, att Gud må göra det, men man tänker icke på, att det är genom oss, han vill utföra det, och att enda vägen därtill är att inrätta lokalförsamlingarna efter mönstret af den stora

allmänna församlingen, nämligen så, att i hvarje lokalförsamling finnes rum för hvarje troende kristen. . . . Därjämte bör det åter och åter upprepas, att en lokalförsamling, som icke är inrättad så, icke heller har rätt att kallas en kristen församling i biblisk mening utan endast *en sekt*.”

22. Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed), 31 Mar 1908 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 1).

23. Waldenström, letter to the editor of *MissionsVännen* and *Veckobladet*, 12 Jul 1909 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 2).

24. Waldenström, *Nya Färder*, 156. “På sjukbädden och i döden blifva människorna endast människor—“icke jude och grek, icke träl och fri”—och de kristna bli endast kristna, icke lutheraner, baptister, metodister, utan rätt och slätt kristna, hvilket Herren hade ämnat, att de skulle vara äfven under hälsans dagar i den kristna församlingen.”

25. Ibid., 203.

26. Ibid., 273f.

27. Ibid., 267ff.

28. Ibid., 276f.:

Under vägen må det tillåtas mig, att, när jag just kommer från lutherdomens hufvudsäte i Amerika [Moline], resonera en smula om lutherdom. Huru mycket känna de lutherska till Luther? Huru mycket hafva de läst af, hvad *Luther själf* har skrivit? I allmänhet ingenting. De räkna för lutherdom det, som skrivits af en mängd s. k. lutherska teologer, som hafva föga gemensamt med Luther själf. Jag tror mig vara mer hemmastadd i Luthers skrifter än flertalet lutherska professorer, som ofta sakna nästan all kännedom om dem. . . . Den förste som fäste min uppmärksamhet på, att Luther ”icke lärde riktigt rätt om rättfärdiggörelsen enligt den lutherska bekännelsen” (!) var C. O. Rosenius, som sade det i all hemlighet och med stort bekymmer. Med bekännelsen menade han då naturligtvis den vanliga, rådande teologien.

29. Ibid., 161f.

30. Waldenström, *Genom Norra Amerika*, 133:

De kalla sig lutheraner och bekänna sig hylla den augsbergiska bekännelsen, men under tiden förbehålla de sig rättighet att om dess särskilda läropunkter tänka, just hvad de tycka. Det samma gäller lika mycket Augustanasynodens anhängare i Amerika, ja alla kyrkosamfund med en menskligt formulerad bekännelse. Under sådana förhållanden kan man visserligen hafva rätt att fråga, hvad bekännelsen egentligen skall tjena till, om icke till att försätta menniskor i en öärlig ställning,

som antingen måste sarga deras samveten eller också uppfordra dem till att försvara en sak, som de aldrig skulle försvara, om de icke hade ett personligt intresse deraf.

31. Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed), 23 Apr 1917 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del I, vol. 7).

32. K. G. Hammar, *Liberalteologi och kyrkopolitik. Kretsen kring kristendomen och vår tid 1906-omkr. 1920* (Lund, Sweden: Gleerup bokförlag 1972).

33. Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed), 23 Apr 1917 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del I, vol. 7).

34. Ibid; Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed), 1 Oct 1907 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 1). In the journal "Kristendomen och vår tid," it was apparently claimed by the Lund theologians that the fables about Christ's miracles are hindrances to faith, a point that angered Waldenström. He explained that the net result of this would be to place all of the various Bible passages "under glass" as though they were no more significant than items on display in a museum, like evidence of scientific inquiry. Waldenström, letter to the editors of *Missions Vännen* and *Veckobladet*, 28 Sep 1908 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 2). In response to Adolf Hamack's Bible criticism, Waldenström warned that "soon we will only have the front and back cover left" (*pärmarne*).

35. Waldenström, *Nya Färder*, 161f.

36. Ibid., p. 165:

Både under min färd i Amerika och efter min hemkomst till Sverige har jag med stor glädje omtalat den ändring till ett bättre, till mer frid, som inträdt i förhållandet mellan augustanarne och missionsvännerna. Men det synes finnas personer i Amerika, som satt sig i sinnet att hindra hvarje sådant steg. . . . Det är, som hörde det till deras gudtjänst att rifva upp hvarje sår, som håller på att läkas. Från denna synpunkt är det jag allra mest beklagar d:r Svenssons uppsats. Det kan emellertid d:r Svensson vara viss på, att om någon får nytta af ett sådant uppträdande—icke blir det Augustana.

37. Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed, clearly for an American audience), 24 Mar 1909 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 2).

38. G. Everett Arden, *Augustana Heritage: A History of the Augustana Lutheran Church* (Rock Island, IL: Augustana Press 1963), 160; Olsson, "Paul Peter Waldenström and Augustana," 119.

39. Waldenström. *Nya Färder*, 202f.:

Hvarje sund, kristlig eftertanke säger, att det aldrig kan vara en kristen församling, som förenar till ett både kristna och uppenbart ogudaktiga, eller som från sig utelsuter lefvande kristna. Det förra blir en världskyrka, det senare en sekt. En *kristen* församling är en sådan, som från sig utestänger uppenbart ogudaktiga men har öppna dörrar för var och en, som, såvidt människor kunna döma, lefver i Gud.

40. Waldenström. "Staten och Religionen," in *Arvet från Waldenström*, ed. Erland Sundström (Falköping, Sweden: Gummessons 1953), 105.

41. Waldenström, *Brukspatron Adamsson: Eller hvar bor du?* 8th ed. (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag 1937), 167.

42. Waldenström, *Nya färder*, 202ff.

43. Norman Hjelm. "Augustana and the Church of Sweden: Ties of History and Faith," in *The Heritage of Augustana*, ed. Hartland Gifford and Arland Hultgren (Minneapolis, MN: Kirk House Publishers 2004).

44. Blanck, 25f. Dag Blanck has concluded that though Augustana was the largest Swedish-American organization and at times saw itself as synonymous with Swedish America, its membership never included more than a quarter of the entire Swedish-American population, meaning that most immigrants never affiliated with any church.

45. Olsson, "Paul Peter Waldenström and Augustana," 114; Olsson, *By One Spirit* (Chicago, IL: Covenant Press 1962), 187. Karl A. Olsson describes Augustana as not having a "national church sense," but yet perpetuating an appearance of a folk church for all Lutheran Swedes as a compromise between conservative symbolists and evangelical Pietists.

46. Waldenström, *Nya färder*, 268.

47. Maria Erling and Mark Granquist, *The Augustana Story: Shaping Lutheran Identity in North America* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress 2008), 43f.

48. N.a., "Di ä sura, broder Waldenström!" *Svenska Kuriren* 1901 (day and month missing), (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del I, vol. 21).

49. Waldenström, *Nya färder*, 207-10. Waldenström also suggests that the desire for a bishop was in part inspired by the idea among Augustana leaders that it would unite all Swedish Christians in the apostolic church, which was being divided by sectarianism. Hjelm, "Augustana and the Church of Sweden," 27-30. Though an invitation to become bishop of Augustana may have been unlikely, establishing an episcopal relationship with the Church of Sweden was a topic that gained currency every time von Schéele visited the USA (1893, 1901, and 1910) and continued with the overtures of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom and his well-received visit in 1923.

50. *Minneskrift med anledning af Augustana-Synodens femtioåriga tillvaro*, ed. L. A. Johnston (Rock Island, IL: Augustana Book Concern 1910), 43f.:

Då emigrationen från Sverige började på 40-talet af sista århundradet, låg den svenska kyrkan i allmänhet i en andlig dvala. Det allmänna folket lefde i sin, hvad vi nu behaga kalla, döda tro. De trodde, att präst och kyrka voro nödvändiga, att bibeln, dop och konfirmation och Herrens nattvard voro heliga ting; . . . I många fall var denna tro och religion ytlig, men det var icke en förneckande otro . . . Men på 50-talet började allt fler komma till Amerika, som . . . kommit i mer och mindre beröring med de andliga rörelserna och tagit intryck af dem. . . . sådana, som tagit intryck af schartauanskt anlagda lärare . . . eller af Sellergren . . . och senare af Rosenius och den mera evangeliska riktningen, hafva utan större svårighet kunnat ena sig om Augustana-synodens läroartikel. . . . De immigranter, som kommo hit i slutet af 60- och i början af 70-talet och voro i Sverige införlifvade med den ultra nya evangelismen, den moderna revivalismen med dess förvända begrepp om församlingen, ämbete och nådemedel, förenade sig med Augustana-synodens församlingar, men funno snart att de icke voro hemma där. De trodde, att synoden representerade statskyrkan i Sverige och skulle lämna samma frihet som den för allehanda fria konventiklar och en okontrollerad lekmannaverksamhet, och att ingen lärotukt skulle öfvas. När de började komma underfund med att en sådan praxis ej kan äga rum i en frikyrka, så separerade de sig efterhand från Augustana-synoden med det intrycket, att den var sämre än själva statskyrkan i Sverige. Dess hyper-evangeliska människor, som till och med talade om att man kan ligga i helvetet med förlåtna synder, kastade sig med brinnande hast uti Waldenströms utlagda gärnings-not. Då Waldenström första gången besökte Amerika, var det icke så få pastorer och församlingar, som af artighet eller kanske af nyfikenhet öppnade sina kyrkodörrar för honom; men få om någon förnyade den artigheten vid hans nästa besök; man visste hvad han bar i skölden.

51. Ibid., 45f.

52. Ibid., 46. "Augustana-synodens författningar eller konstitution är hvarken biskoplig, prästerlig, kongregationalistisk eller independent; men den har några elementer af hvart och ett af dessa systemer."

53. Ibid., 46ff.

54. Waldenström, letter to the editors of MW and *Veckobladet*, 11 Jul 1910 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 2):

David Nyvall sade alldeles riktigt i sin sista artikel i *Veckobladet*, att förbundet hade att välja mellan två vägar, den ena att utveckla sig

såsom ett förbund enligt de linier, som det hittills följt, eller att antaga en bestämd kyrkosamfundsbekännelse och omvandlas till en synod. Jag tror nog att frestelsen till en sådan omvandling stundom kan vara stor. Den har så varit hos många äfven i Sverige. Men må Gud bevara Förbundet såsom rätt och slätt ett förbund af församlingar till gemensam missionsverksamhet. Må det taga lärdom af Ansgariisynodens sorgliga ändalykt. Kyrkosamfunden äro ingenting annat än sekter och kunna aldrig bli annat. Det är de, som i alla tider hållit kristenheten söndersliten i trasor. Och hvad utsätta för resten de så högt beprisade bekännelserna? Utbreder sig icke både inom luterska kyrkan och andra protestantiska kyrkosamfund alltmer och mer och uttalas icke öppet och offentligt tvifvel på, ju förnekelse af den protestantiska reformationens främsta grundval, den heliga skrifts gudomliga auktoritet? Och hvad betyder då det stora skrytet om bekännelse och bekännelsetrohet? För resten äro väl Förbundets församlingar icke bekännelselösa heller? Jag tänker, att de ganska allvarligt håller på den apostoliska trosbekännelsen. Men hvar är det med kyrkosamfunden i den delen? Inom t.ex. den luterska kyrkan både i Sverige och andra länder förkunnas öppet både af präster och teologie professorer darvinism i s.f. första trosartikeln, och bland den andra artikelns särskilda punkter tillerkännes historisk sanning endast åt den punkten, att Kristus är korsfäst under Pilatus, död och begravnen. Alla öfvriga punkter förklaras vara fabler. Och det får passera. "Kyrkan" kan ingenting göra däråt. Hon står (?) vanmäktig och skryter öfver sin luterska bekännelse!! Det är lyckligt för Luther, att han ligger i grafven och vet ingenting därom.

55. Waldenström, letter to the editor (unnamed, probably to American readers), 30 Oct 1908 (Waldenströmska släktarkivet, del III, vol. 2):

Skulle inte spänningen mellan förbundet och de fria kunna utjämnas? Det är ett minne jag har från 1904, som ännu kännes pinsamt. Jag var i Denver. Princell var äfven där. Både missionsförsamlingen och de fria hade missionsmöte. Jag föreslog, att de bägge mötena skulle slås ihop till ett. Missionsförsamlingen omfattade föreslaget med glädje. Princell var ock med därom. Men de fria sade nej. Men jag vill gå ännu längre. Skulle inte spänningen mellan förbundet och Augustana kunna utjämnas eller åtminstone mildras? Nu när Augustana snart firar ett 50-års-jubileum och förbundet ett 25-års-jubileum—skulle icke då något kunna göras i den vägen? Och så spänningen mellan de två stora "svenska" städer i Amerika med deras tidningar—skulle den icke kunna förändras i ett broderligt samförstånd? Och så östern och västern. Bibelkritikens och

otrons stormar draga nu fram med en våldsamhet, som manar de troende till att ställa sig i ledet såsom en enda här. Tiden hastar. Herren kommer.

56. Waldenström, *Genom Norra Amerika*, 308:

Jag försökte, så godt jag kunde, sätta mig in i denna fråga. Och för mig syntes det så, som skulle en förening mellan missionsvännerna och kongregationalistsamfundet icke vara olämplig. Jag tänkte mig saken så här: de svenska missionsförsamlingarna skulle allesammans tillhöra det Svenska evangeliska missionsförbundet, och detta förbund skulle sedan såsom ett helt utgöra en gren af kongregationalistsamfundet med bibehållande af samma frihet, som det för närvarande har . . . [det kan] icke nekas att, missionsvännernas och kongregationalisternas grundsatser både med afseende på den kyrkliga organisationen äro de samma.

I tried, as well as I could, to weigh in on this question. And for me it seemed that a union between the Mission Friends and the Congregationalist denomination would not be inappropriate. My rationale went like this: those Swedish mission congregations could collectively belong to the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant, and this Covenant could, as a whole, make up a branch of the Congregationalist denomination, while retaining the same freedom that they currently have...[it can] not be denied that the Mission Friends' and the Congregationalists' principles are the same in regards to the organization of the church.

57. Olsson, "Paul Peter Waldenström and Augustana," 107. Olsson also seems to hint that a reunion between Augustana and the Covenant was not entirely out of the realm of possibility.

58. *The Covenant Quarterly* and North Park Theological Seminary have an established reputation as forming a center for Pietism studies in North America, evident in the series of journal articles related to Pietism and the curriculum offered to the seminary students. Informally, the resurrected journal *Pietisten* has since 1986 demonstrated a lay interest in this identity, as well (www.pietisten.org).

59. Mark Granquist, "The Augustana Synod and the Evangelical Covenant Church," in *The Heritage of Augustana*, ed. Hartland Gifford and Arland Hultgren (Minneapolis, MN: Kirk House Publishers 2004), 164. The predominance of EFS-trained leaders and Rosenian piety in the early years of Augustana's history has been acknowledged as a point of commonality with Pietist groups.

60. Erling and Granquist, *The Augustana Story*, 344.

61. *Ibid.*, 338.

62. Ibid., 316ff. Despite the fact that Augustana had been a member of the Lutheran General Council since 1870, its participation had been unclear and it was not until 1918 that Augustana leaders like President Brandelle emerged as more favorable toward ecumenical cooperation and merger. Even then, the majority within Augustana remained timid, taking a significant step toward participating in dialogue with the other American Lutheran churches in 1917 at the 400th anniversary celebrations of the Reformation, but declining to officially participate in the Joint Committee. It was primarily the catastrophe of war that prompted cooperation in fundraising for relief efforts that brought Lutherans together in the National Lutheran Council in 1918.