

# The Correspondence of WOLFGANG CAPITO

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VOLUME 3: 1532–1536

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Translated by Erika Rummel  
Annotated by Milton Kooistra

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# Preface

The first two volumes of the *Correspondence of Wolfgang Capito* covered the period 1507 to 1531 and dealt with Capito's formative years in Freiburg and Basel, his short-lived career at the court of the archbishop of Mainz, and his drive to bring the Reformation to Strasbourg. In the 1520s, Capito and his colleague, Martin Bucer, focused their attention on battling the Catholic authorities. They enlisted the aid of the Strasbourg city council to safeguard the new order against Catholic opponents and radical dissenters. Those years were marked by two events defining the theological direction of the Strasbourgers: the Marburg Colloquy of 1529 and the presentation of the Tetrapolitan Confession at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530.

In the years 1532 to 1536, which are covered in the present volume, we see the Reformation firmly entrenched in Strasbourg, with Bucer taking the lead and becoming the principal theologian of the city. Capito, by contrast, appears weakened and indeed worn out by personal troubles – the death of his wife, financial difficulties, and poor health. After initial successes chairing the Synod of Bern in 1532 (Epp. 461 and 469) and mediating in the ongoing Sacramentarian controversy, Capito gradually lost ground. His skills as a negotiator were no match for the partisan spirit displayed in the opposing evangelical camps. His efforts to reconcile the parties were often reduced to sermonizing and prevarication. Indeed, in Kempten he failed spectacularly, setting back rather than aiding the process of reconciliation (Ep. 492 head-note).

For Protestant theologians aiming to present a common front in the event of a general church council,<sup>1</sup> the interpretation of the Eucharist remained a crucial and divisive issue and is a frequent subject of discussion in letters between Capito and his correspondents.

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1 See Epp. 564, 593, and the discussion below.

In Basel, Oswald Myconius, a follower of Zwingli, expressed open doubt about the position of the Strasbourg and Wittenberg theologians (Ep. 491) and lashed out against Luther's arrogance and the 'insane temerity' of his interpretation of the Eucharist (Ep. 502). To clarify the views of the Strasbourg theologians, Bucer wrote a treatise on the Eucharist in 1532, addressing it to the city council of Kempten. In an accompanying letter (Ep. 492), Capito implored the preachers not to quarrel over terminology when interpreting the sacramental union or the benefits of taking communion. He insisted that the differences with Luther were small and 'could be reduced to a common understanding' (Ep. 492; see also Epp. 493–4). He wrote in the same vein to the theologians of Frankfurt in 1533 (Ep. 500), advising them to show moderation in their response to the Lutherans, to concentrate on what they had in common, and to approach the articles of faith in a spirit of simple piety.

Zurich, especially, resisted the efforts of the Strasbourgers to level the doctrinal differences. They adhered to Zwingli's interpretation and could not be induced to adopt a more conciliatory stand toward the Lutherans. In the hope that Heinrich Bullinger might take the city into the desired direction, Capito discussed the matter with him at length. He insisted that Zwingli's views could be reconciled with Luther's (Ep. 496). It was best to take an inclusive approach to interpreting the Eucharist, he said, and to administer the sacrament in the same spirit.

Zurich remained a hold-out, however. They could not be persuaded to send representatives to a meeting in 1534, when theologians from southern Germany gathered at Constance to discuss outstanding points (Ep. 545; see also Epp. 588a and 589). A basis for a mutually palatable formula was developed during a subsequent meeting between Bucer and Melancthon in Kassel toward the end of December 1534 (Ep. 545, note 5).

Capito's letter to Ambrosius Blaurer (Ep. 585) shows the difficulties the Strasbourgers faced in their campaign for concord. 'We must make a decision about the core of our teaching: what to guard firmly and what points to concede to the papists and to what extent,' Capito stated. He professed to be optimistic: 'We shall easily come to a decision if we look to God and are not hatefully divided by passions. [...] I do not discern any notable discrepancy in the Eucharist and the whole doctrine; for we all preach Christ as the justifier and perfecter.'

Writing to the city council of Bern, Bucer and Capito expressed their message in terms that would appeal to an assembly of laymen with a vested interest in preserving the peace in their community. Engaging 'in a horrible quarrel about what to believe and how to teach the divine gospel service and the holy sacraments' was a grave impediment to their mission of spreading

the gospel, they wrote. 'The Lord has given us such a simple, correct, and clear account, which was understood by many in the better church of old without difficulty and dispute and thus practised. After all, the Lord revealed these things not to wise and clever people but to simple minds with little understanding' (Ep. 586). Thus concord should not be endangered by quarrelling over terminology.

After last-minute discussions with the ministers assembled at Basel in January 1536 (see Epp. 593b, 594, 594a, and 597), Bucer, Capito, and representatives of other South German cities went to meet with the Lutherans in Wittenberg. They still clung to the hope that the Swiss churches would eventually join in a negotiated concord. Instead, the untimely publication of Zwinglian writings in Zurich hampered the proceedings and got the meeting with Luther off to a bad start. But the hurdles were cleared eventually, and the Concord was signed by the participants on 29 May 1536. The most striking point was their agreement on the body and blood of Christ being received also by unworthy communicants. The term 'unworthy,' however, remained subject to interpretation. Not surprisingly, therefore, Melancthon noted that little had been achieved, and important disagreements remained (MBW 7, Ep. 1430).

However inclusive the wording of the Wittenberg Concord, the Strasbourgers still found it difficult to make it palatable to the Swiss churches. Capito's correspondence from the years 1536–38 is dominated by that campaign, which was ultimately a failure. The Wittenberg meetings had led to a 'concord of the mind,' but needed the endorsements of local authorities. The Strasbourgers tried to pave the way for a formal ratification with carefully worded letters to the interested parties. In his first report about the Wittenberg meeting (Ep. 612 of 14 June 1536, to Johannes Brenz), Capito paid homage to Bucer's skills as a negotiator. He was reluctant to acknowledge the opposition of the Zurich theologians. 'The Swiss do not disagree,' he stated diplomatically (Ep. 612). He clung to the notion that they were, 'with the exception of a very few,' favourably inclined toward the Concord (Ep. 614). In the case of Basel, the Strasbourgers wrote separate letters to the mayor, to the council, and to the preachers, gauging the content of their missives according to the recipient. Writing to the mayor (Ep. 616), Capito emphasized the compatibility of the Lutheran position with the Tetrapolitan Confession and the doctrine of the Basel theologians, and asked him to guard against allowing any criticism to be published at this sensitive time. Writing to the whole council (Ep. 616a), Bucer and Capito stressed that the Concord depended on their endorsement and asked them to forward the articles to other Swiss cities, allowing them to join forces as well. Appealing to the interests of the governing body to keep the peace, they emphasized that without concord,

they could not be effective in establishing discipline or serving the community. Their statement to the Basel preachers (Ep. 618), by contrast, dealt with specific theological concerns. It discussed doctrinal points in more detail, insisting that the Wittenberg Concord contained nothing that could not also be found in scripture and the Fathers and was not taught by Oecolampadius and Zwingli.

At a colloquy held in Basel in September 1536, Capito and Bucer reported to the participants on the Wittenberg Concord (Epp. 623–4). They recapitulated the efforts they had made over the past seven years to achieve unity, once again emphasizing that the Wittenberg Articles agreed with the teachings of Oecolampadius and the Tetrapolitan Confession. They pleaded with their colleagues to overcome fears and suspicions and embrace these common tenets. The Swiss representatives replied that they were heartened to hear that the ‘Wittenberg Articles sum up our Confession and teaching here in Basel, and neither weaken nor overturn it,’ but nevertheless distanced themselves from the accord. They noted that they had no authority to commit to the articles and attended the colloquy only ‘to listen and bring back the message we receive’ (Ep. 625). Constance, too, was hanging back and wanted to negotiate with Luther directly. Capito warned them not to stand in the way of the Concord and play into the hands of their enemies. He maintained that ‘Bullinger also agreed that there was nothing wrong with the articles’ (Ep. 627) and asked the council of Constance to specify what reservations they had. He offered to meet with Luther, emphasizing that they must agree on the meaning rather than dispute about words. These and other letters written in the aftermath of the Wittenberg Concord serve to illustrate that differences remained, even among those whose representatives signed the accord.

Differences also persisted within regional churches, and it is a mark of the respect Bucer and Capito commanded that they were frequently invited to settle internal disputes. The difficulties in Kempten have already been mentioned. A similar situation existed in Augsburg. In October 1533, Gereon Sailer reported that the preachers there were ‘divided among themselves and cause division among their adherents’ (Ep. 517). Bucer, who was sent to mediate the dispute, found dissension everywhere. ‘I have spent the last week visiting Memmingen, Isny, Lindau, and Constance. I had to bypass Kempten, which had the greatest need and had asked me to come – such was the tumult Satan caused here [in Augsburg]. [...] They completely disturbed all reasonable thought in the church built up in Augsburg’ (Ep. 554). The peace was disturbed also in Esslingen, obliging the Strasbourg preachers to write to the city council in 1534, in the hope of persuading the parties to adopt

a more Christian attitude (Ep. 528a). In the same year Capito wrote to the preachers of Schaffhausen, urging them to use moderation. 'Modest discussion has some value for discovering the truth – modest, I say. For the truth is lost in excessive discussion' (Ep. 525c). In February 1535, Capito was invited to settle a bitter dispute surrounding the actions of the preacher Dionysius Melander, Sr., which had led to his resignation. Capito advised the city council either to reinstate him or at least give him an honourable discharge to maintain peace in the church (Ep. 550). As a result Melander left Frankfurt and entered the service of Philip of Hesse as court preacher. In Zweibrücken, Capito attempted to mediate between Johann Schwebel and his colleague Georg Pistor, who had come to Zweibrücken on the recommendation of the Strasbourg theologians, but whose Anabaptist leanings led to a bitter dispute with his colleague (Ep. 486). The intervention was not successful, and Pistor was expelled from Zweibrücken in 1538.

Other ministers transplanted from Strasbourg performed well in their new environment. The central role of Strasbourg in shaping doctrine prompted a number of cities to ask for ministers trained there or recommended by the Strasbourg theologians. In the general shortage of ministers, Strasbourg was an 'exporter,' a role they did not relish. A request from Ulm prompted Capito and his colleagues to make a plea to city councils (Ep. 513) to encourage theological studies and the training of ministers. 'We have given up so many highly learned and experienced men,' they wrote, listing them by name. 'Dr Paulus [Phrygio] went to Basel; Master Otto [Binder] went to Mulhouse; licentiate Jakob Otter went first to [Neckar]steinach, then to Aarau, and then to Esslingen; Master Lienhart [Brunner], Dr Sebastian [Meyer], [Wolfgang] Musculus, and Boniface [Wolfhart] went to Augsburg; Musculus also moved around to many places, so that we cannot afford to lose any more men.' Cities did not give enough thought to the importance of the ministry, and students preferred other professions that were more lucrative and less laborious, they noted. The papists had hopes that the Reformation would die out with the present generation of evangelical preachers, 'and there is considerable danger that this will happen,' they warned, unless the authorities actively support theological studies.

Strasbourg was not the only city that experienced 'brain drain.' Basel gave one of its prominent theologians, Simon Grynaeus, a temporary leave of absence to assist in reforming the University of Tübingen. The move was facilitated by an intercession of the Strasbourg theologians, but less than a year later the Basel council recalled him, turning a deaf ear to the pleas of Philip of Hesse and the Strasbourgers for an extension of his leave (Epp. 538 headnote and 556). Another controversy developed concerning the relation-

ship between church and university, involving Grynaeus and Oswald Myconius (Ep. 501 and headnote), and by extension Capito and his colleagues. From 1532 on, the University of Basel put pressure on its lecturers to obtain a doctorate. Myconius held only a bachelor's degree and had acquired his knowledge of theology through private study. Grynaeus, by contrast, had the qualifications to obtain a doctorate, but both men objected to the university conferring on them a degree, which had, in their eyes, a connotation beyond academic learning. Myconius remonstrated with Capito, who urged him to obtain the degree (Ep. 547): 'The doctorate demands and means spiritual ministry, not a proud title. Have I not satisfied the church so far by teaching, correcting, encouraging, and consoling according to the power of grace God has granted me? Believe me, I have so satisfied the church, that the most pious men said they would not listen to me if I accepted that title, voluntarily or under pressure, and thus disdained the Spirit. [...] The church together with the ministers bestows on us the ministry, and they are "doctors," [that is,] learned. [...] You are not a doctor unless you are a doctor of the church with Paul; there is no need to be freshly minted by a university. If you do that, how will you avoid charges of vanity and ambition?' The controversy subsided for a while, but flared up again in 1538, when both the university and the city council insisted on all faculty members obtaining a doctorate. Grynaeus and Myconius stood firm, and the issue was resolved only by their deaths of the plague in 1541.

The advice of Capito and his colleagues was sought not only in matters concerning the churches in southern Germany, but occasionally also concerning the fate of the evangelicals in neighbouring France. In an emotional appeal to their colleagues in Switzerland and southern Germany, Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret described the lives of the persecuted Waldensians in Provence: 'They wander through the pathless wilderness with their wives and children, or hide in remote caves, feeling safer living with wild beasts than with men of that kind. The scarcity of all things increases their misery, for the enemy reaps what they have sown. Wherever they turn, they find themselves in such straits, that they cannot see even the smallest chink through which they might escape. They can neither remain in the place, nor leave safely, for the enemy has set traps for them everywhere' (Ep. 562). The French reformers asked their colleagues to help the Waldensians materially or at least with counsel and prayer. In reply, Capito promised to approach the duke of Württemberg and the landgrave of Hesse to obtain from them letters raising the matter with the king of France (Ep. 565). In a letter to Bullinger, however, Capito did not hold out much hope for a quick solution (Ep. 577a). In Ep. 593, he referred more explicitly to the complex political situation which pitted France against the German Empire and led to absurd re-

sults – the French king offering his assistance to German evangelicals, while persecuting the evangelicals in his own country.<sup>2</sup>

Although the letters of 1532–6 document the regional and even international efforts of the Strasbourgers to promote the church, the majority of official correspondence concerns internal matters that needed the attention and support of the city council. The subjects range from financial questions to matters concerning the administration of the church, doctrinal questions in so far as they affected public order, and the education of future ministers. One exchange concerned the levy the city put on the chapter of St Thomas to finance the war against the Turks (Epp. 485a and 510a). Conversely, the ministers requested financial support to retain Bartolomeo Fonzio as a lecturer (Ep. 515b). The council naturally consulted the ministers on doctrinal questions. In 1532, the city fathers solicited their opinion about readmitting Jakob Kautz, who had been expelled from Strasbourg in 1528 for his Anabaptist views (Ep. 488a). The ministers in turn presented a summary of their teaching to the council and expressed a wish to have representatives of the city attend the Synod of Strasbourg (Epp. 508 and 525a headnote). They addressed the question of the relationship between church and secular government more fully in a report to the city council (Ep. 525a). This was in response to Anton Engelbrecht, who had challenged their views and wished to restrict the involvement of the magistrates in religious matters. In their report, the preachers stated that the secular government was able to serve and promote the kingdom of Christ through legislation and penal action; the preachers in turn had an obligation to counsel the secular authorities and admonish them if they failed to follow their advice.

A number of letters illustrate the collaborative efforts between magistrate and church, for example in matters of education (Ep. 530a). In 1533 the preachers were actively involved in choosing a headmaster for the Latin school, soliciting letters of reference for their preferred candidate, Petrus Dasypodius (Ep. 515a and headnote). Their promotion of Bartolomeo Fonzio has already been mentioned.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary letter from the preachers to the city council of Bern expresses the need for collaboration between magistrate and church in principle. The city council should allocate income from church properties to support the education of the poor and train capable

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2 For Capito's continued efforts to find an intermediary to approach the king of France, see Ep. 626.

3 For Capito's private efforts, see Ep. 489, in which he asks Bullinger to fund a stipend to finance Conrad Gesner's studies and promises financial support himself.

young men to become useful members of government and the clergy. It was their duty to ensure that those 'who are skilful by nature will become more skilful by training, and those who have a crass mind will nevertheless be advanced through training, so that they will be less awkward and more useful' (Ep. 518). Regulating marriage and divorce was also a joint task. In 1529, the city set up a marriage tribunal, in which the preachers had an advisory role. In 1534, Capito and his colleagues addressed a letter to the tribunal, urging them to clarify regulations about calling the banns and to ensure that the public was aware of them (Ep. 525d).

In 1535 the preachers admonished the councillors to punish religious dissent and immoral conduct, 'for that is our duty in ministering to the gospel, which opposes all injustice and evil. Through the grace of the Almighty the synod has finally decided to set up and partly renew suitable ordinances and to ratify them, followed by earnest action against the Anabaptists' (Ep. 552). They complained that vices went unpunished in Strasbourg, mentioning in particular the practice of fortune telling, the sale of idols, public drunkenness and prostitution. Turning a blind eye to such practices was detrimental to the authority of the magistrate, they argued. 'The government must deter evil deeds. That is their office, and that is why they are honoured. If evil remains undisturbed in their jurisdiction, the only result will be disdain, disobedience, and unrest.'<sup>4</sup> As is to be expected, politics play a peripheral role in Capito's correspondence. They become a central topic of discussion only when they have a direct impact on the practice of religion. Thus Capito and his correspondents refer to the harsh conditions of peace imposed on St Gallen in the aftermath of the Second Kappel War. The provisions included the return of the exiled Catholic prince-abbot, Diethelm Blaurer, and the payment of a substantial amount of compensation to him.<sup>5</sup>

Imperial politics and their impact on the evangelicals are a recurring subject. In 1532 Capito wrote to Bullinger about the emperor's request for support against the Turks. The Catholic princes had already given their assent, and the evangelicals could hardly object, since the emperor had given them permission to continue with the teaching and practices set down in the Augsburg Confession and had allowed the conversion of ecclesiastical goods

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- 4 Ep. 552; see also Capito's letter to Johannes Gast in Basel concerning clandestine marriage (Ep. 628) and the respective duties of government and preachers to settle such questions.
- 5 Epp. 469 and 473; see also Ep. 491, in which Myconius expresses fear that the Five Catholic Cantons might agitate against the evangelical cities before the emperor.

to social and educational purposes (Ep. 483). At the same time Capito echoes the concerns voiced to him by Myconius about rumours that the imperial troops wintering in Milan could be used against the evangelicals (Epp. 488b and 489). A letter from the Strasbourg preachers to those of Bern indicates, however, that they regarded the pope as more dangerous than the emperor. 'He is [not] as hostile toward the faith as he is said to be. Otherwise, he would not have granted us peace under such conditions, while our princes and cities have never agreed to yield to those who are now taking an interest in the gospel.' By contrast, 'nothing is beyond the pope. He wants to do something that will strike fear into our overly timid neighbours and will turn them away from the truth' (Ep. 490). The question of the emperor's attitude toward the evangelicals also comes up in the context of the continued power struggle between the empire and France. The situation made for strange bedfellows. As Capito pointed out to Bullinger in 1535, Francis I wanted to align himself with the German Protestants against the emperor (Ep. 576). In the same context, Capito opined that the emperor was under the influence of the pope, but more sincerely concerned about religious matters than the French king (Ep. 577a).

The pope's professed intention to call a general council and the imperial support for the idea is another recurrent theme in the correspondence. In 1535 the Strasbourgers counselled Frankfurt to ward off the demands of Catholic authorities by temporizing 'in the certainty that a future council or a soon to be called [imperial] diet would settle the schism in short order.' They could take comfort, moreover, 'in the fact that neither His Roman Imperial nor His Royal Majesty would at this time want any commotion among the Germans, for they are aware of French trickery and of the events in Münster and the actions of other Anabaptists, and also the situation of His Royal Majesty in Hungary' (i.e., the Turkish threat; Ep. 551b). In a number of letters Capito emphasizes the importance of presenting a common front at the planned council (Epp. 566 and 579 to Vadianus and Bullinger, respectively). In July 1536, finally, he announces that a general council has been called, but expresses fear that a settlement between France and the German Empire may allow them to concentrate on fighting the evangelicals (Ep. 619).

Many of the letters contain information about Capito's personal life.<sup>6</sup> We have already mentioned that one purpose of his extensive travels in 1532 was to overcome the depression brought on by the death of his wife. On the urgent recommendation of friends who thought that remarriage was

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6 See also the chronology of Capito's life in CWC 2, pp. 515–19.

the best way to overcome his melancholy, Capito proposed to and was accepted by Wibrandis Rosenblatt, Oecolampadius' widow (Ep. 469). Capito's financial situation, which had been dire for some years, continued to weigh him down,<sup>7</sup> as did frequent bouts of illness. In spite of his poor health and the work the ministry and teaching duties imposed on him, he produced a number of publications. In 1533 he published a translation of Desiderius Erasmus' *De amabili ecclesiae concordia*, entitled *Von der kirchen lieblichen vereinigung und von hinlegung diser zeit haltender spaltung in der glauben leer* [On the amiable concord of the church and the healing of the doctrinal schism prevailing in our time] (Strasbourg: Apiarius, 1533). It was dedicated to his former patron, Albert of Brandenburg, archbishop of Mainz (Ep. 516). The work provoked criticism from fellow reformers in Augsburg. They claimed that Capito, 'since becoming a printer [i.e., investing in Apiarius' firm] cares for only one thing: that his press may continuously prosper and make some profit' (Ep. 516 headnote). They were, moreover, displeased with the publicity given to Erasmus, who remained a supporter of the Catholic cause.

In the same year, Capito also published a posthumous edition of Oecolampadius' commentary on Jeremiah, *In Hieremiam prophetam commentariorum libri tres*. The commentary was left unfinished at Oecolampadius' death, and Capito 'supplied what was missing and edited what Oecolampadius authored in good faith' (Ep. 514a). In 1534, Capito edited another of Oecolampadius' commentaries, *In prophetam Ezechielem* (Ep. 526), and added a short biography of the author (Ep. 527).

It is likely that Capito had input in an apologia against Caspar Schwenckfeld composed in the name of the Strasbourg preachers in 1534.<sup>8</sup> He had originally supported Schwenckfeld, but eventually turned away from the Anabaptist cause, as can be seen from a lengthy denunciation in Ep. 533. His disapproval of dissenters is also evident from a pamphlet he published the same year: *Ein wunderbar geschicht und ernstlich warnung Gottes, so sich an eim Widertäuffer, genant Claus Frey, zutragen, der mit unerhörtem trutz und bochen sich hat ertrencken lassen, ehe dann er hat wöllen seine fromme ehewraw, bey der er XV. jar fridsam gelebt, und VIII. kind gezeüget, wider annemen, unnd ein andere fraw begeben, so er im schein eins geistlichen Ehestands an sich gehenckt hatt* [An amazing story and earnest warning from God: What happened to an

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7 See Ep. 613 headnote for his involvement with the printing presses of Apiarius and Rihel.

8 Ep. 519; see also 531, in which he complains to Blaurer that Schwenckfeld's works find a ready audience, whereas printers are reluctant to print their responses for fear that they will not be profitable.

Anabaptist named Claus Frey, who suffered being drowned with great and loudly proclaimed stubbornness rather than taking back his pious wife, with whom he had lived in peace for fifteen years and sired eight children, before taking another wife, joining her to himself under the pretence of a spiritual marriage] (Strasbourg: Apiarius, 1534). The title serves as a summary of this rather sensational story. It is written in the form of a letter addressed to the Christian Reader (Ep. 535) and thus included in full in this volume.

In 1536, finally, Capito published a volume of prayers, *Precationes christianae ad imitationem Psalmorum compositae & aliae quaedam, interiores pietatis affectus exprimentes*, dedicated to Marguerite de Lodieuse (Ep. 596).

Like the first two volumes of the *Correspondence of Wolfgang Capito*, this volume is based on Olivier Millet's finding list. Two new letters (Ep. 220a and 445a) that belong to the period covered in the second volume but came to our attention too late, are inserted at the beginning of the present volume. As a result of our continued research, more than thirty new letters dating from 1532 to 1536 are introduced here, representing 20 per cent of the letters in the present volume. The numbering of the letters follows that of Millet's finding list. The new letters have been inserted in proper chronological sequence and are marked by an 'a,' 'b,' or 'c' after the number. The absence of these letters in Millet's list is to some extent the result of a policy decision on his part. Millet focused on Capito's personal correspondence and, for the most part, did not include letters by groups (e.g., letters from and to the preachers) unless Capito's personal involvement could be demonstrated. The policy adopted in this edition is more inclusive. It rests on the assumption that Capito, being one of the leaders of the Strasbourg church, was involved in composing letters and statements issued in the name of the preachers and, conversely, that he was implicitly addressed in letters from the city or other authorities to the preachers. All such letters are therefore included in our edition.

As in the other volumes of the *Correspondence of Wolfgang Capito*, texts easily accessible in modern editions (for example, in the editions of Amerbach, Bucer, Luther, Vadianus, and other prominent scholars and reformers) are not translated but only summarized.<sup>9</sup>

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9 The Latin or German text on which our translations are based will appear on our website, <http://www.itergateway.org/capito/> as they become available.

would not have been possible without the assistance we received at libraries and archives whose collections we used, notably the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto, the Archives de la Ville et de la Communauté urbaine and the Archive départementales du Bas-Rhin in Strasbourg, the Zentralbibliothek and Staatsarchiv in Zurich, the Universitätsbibliothek Basel, the Sankt-Gallen Stadtsbibliothek (where the unpublished Blaurer letters are located), the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (Christian Hogueve), the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart (Regina Keyler), the Staatsarchiv des Kantons Bern (Vinzenz Bartolome). We have received invaluable assistance also from fellow scholars, notably Thomas A. Brady (professor emeritus, UC Berkeley), Amy Burnett Nelson and Stephen Burnett (University of Nebraska), Christine Christ-von Wedel (Basel), Mark Crane (Nipissing University), Reinhold Friedrich and Wolfgang Simon (University of Erlangen), Rainer Henrich (Winterthur), Debra Kaplan (Yeshiva University), Robert White (professor emeritus, University of Sydney), Thomas Wilhelmi and Stephen E. Buckwalter (Heidelberg), and Albert Wolters (professor emeritus, Redeemer University College). They contributed substantially to the information provided in this volume, and we want to express our gratitude to them.

ERIKA RUMMEL  
MILTON KOOISTRA

# Abbreviations and Short Titles

AK	A. Hartmann et al., eds., <i>Die Amerbachkorrespondenz</i> , 10 vols. (Basel, 1942–95)
Allen	P.S. Allen, ed. <i>Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami Opus epistolarum</i> , 12 vols. (Oxford, 1906–58)
<i>Anton Fugger</i>	Götz Freiherr von Pölnitz, <i>Anton Fugger</i> , 5 vols. (Tübingen, 1958–86)
ARG	<i>Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte/Archive for Reformation History</i>
ASD	<i>Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami</i> (Amsterdam, 1969–)
AST	Archivium Capituli Sancti Thomae / Archives du Chapitre de Saint-Thomas (in Strasbourg AVCU)
Basel SA	Basel Staatsarchiv
Basel UB	Universitätsbibliothek Basel
BDS	Robert Stupperich et al., eds., <i>Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften</i> (Gütersloh, 1960–)
Bern SA	Staatsarchiv – Kanton Bern
<i>Brady, Communities</i>	Thomas A. Brady, Jr., <i>Communities, Politics, and Reformation in Early Modern Europe</i> (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1998)
<i>Brady, Ruling Class</i>	Thomas A. Brady, Jr., <i>Ruling Class, Regime and Reformation at Strasbourg, 1520-1555</i> (Leiden: Brill, 1978)
<i>Brady, Sturm</i>	Thomas A. Brady, Jr., <i>Protestant Politics: Jacob Sturm (1489-1553) and the German Reformation</i> (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1995)
Brecht	Martin Brecht, <i>Martin Luther</i> , trans. James L. Schaaf, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985–93)

- BrOek E. Staehelin, ed., *Briefe und Akten zum Leben Oekolampads zum vierhundertjährigen Jubiläum der Baseler Reformation* (Leipzig, 1927–1934; repr. New York, 1971)
- Buckwalter Stephen E. Buckwalter, 'Bucer as mediator in the 1532 Kempten eucharistic controversy,' *Renaissance & Reformation Review* 5.2/3 (2005): 188–206
- CCSL *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina* (Turnhout/Paris, 1953–)
- Centuria *Centuria epistolarum theologiarum ad Johannem Schwebelium* (Zweibrücken, 1597)
- CICan *Corpus juris canonici*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols. ed. E. Friedberg, (Leipzig: 1879–81; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1995)
- CICiv *Corpus juris civilis*, edited by Theodor Mommsen et al., 3 vols. (Berlin, 1915–28)
- CorrBucer Reinhold Friderich et al., eds., *Correspondance de Martin Bucer* (Leiden: Brill, 1979–)
- CS Chester David Hartranft et al., eds., *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*, published under the auspices of the Schwenckfelder Church Pennsylvania, 19 vols. (Leipzig and Pennsburg, 1907–61)
- CSEL *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, edited by the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Vienna, 1866 –)
- CWC *The Correspondence of Wolfgang Capito* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005–)
- CWE *The Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974–)
- Dacheux L. Dacheux, ed., 'Annales de Sébastien Brant (suite et fin),' *Bulletin de la Société pour la Conservation des Monuments Historiques d'Alsace* n.s. 19 (1899): 33–260
- Dürr/Roth Emil Dürr and Paul Roth, eds., *Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Basler Reformation in den Jahren 1519 bis Anfang 1534*, 6 vols. (Basel, 1921–50)
- EA Jakob Kaiser et al., *Amtliche Sammlung der älteren Eidgenössischen Abschiede*, 8 vols. (Lucerne, 1839–86)
- Eells Hastings Eells, *Martin Bucer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931; repr. New York: Russell & Russell, 1971)

- Franz Johann Friedrich Franz, ed., *Die schwärmerischen Gräuelszenen der St. Galler Wiedertäufer, zu Anfang der Reformation. Ein historischer Beitrag zur Kenntniß dieser Secte und ein Seitenstück zu den Wildenspucher-Unruhen; aus den Original-Handschriften Johannes Keßlers, eines Zeitgenossen und Augenzeugen* (Ebnet-Kappel, 1824)
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- HBBW *Heinrich Bullinger, Werke*, eds. Fritz Büsser et al., 2 Abt.: *Briefwechsel* (Zurich, 1973–)
- Herminjard A.-L. Herminjard, ed., *Correspondance des Réformateurs dans les pays de langue française*, 9 vols. (Geneva and Paris, 1866–97; repr., Nieuwkoop, 1965–6)
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- Lenz Max Lenz, ed., *Briefwechsel Landgraf Philipp's des Großmüthigen von Hessen mit Bucer*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1880–91; repr. Osnabrück, 1965)

- LW Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, eds., *Luther's Works*. American Edition. 55 vols. (Philadelphia: Muehlenberg and Fortress; St Louis: Concordia, 1955–86)
- MBW T Heinz Scheible and Christine Mundhenk, eds., *Melanchthons Briefwechsel. Kritische und kommentierte Gesamtausgabe. Texte* (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, 1991–)
- Meyer Helmut Meyer, *Der Zweite Kappeler Krieg. Die Krise der Schweizerischen Reformation* (Zurich, 1976)
- Millet O. Millet, *Correspondance de Wolfgang Capiton (1478–1541): analyse et index* (Strasbourg, 1982)
- Paris Bibl. SHPF Bibliothèque de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français, Paris
- PC H. Virck et al., eds., *Politische Correspondenz der Stadt Straßburg im Zeitalter der Reformation*, 5 vols. (Strasbourg, 1882–1933)
- PG Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologia cursus completus. Series graeca*, 162 vols. (Paris, 1857–66)
- PL Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologia cursus completus. Series latina*, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–64)
- Pollet Jacques V. Pollet, *Martin Bucer. Etudes sur la correspondance, avec de nombreux textes inédits*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1958–62)
- QGT Manfred Krebs et al., eds. *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer* (Leipzig and Gütersloh, 1938–2011)
- QGTS Leonhard von Muralt et al., eds. *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz*, 4 vols. (Zurich, 1974–2008)
- QGWT Gustav Bussert and Karl Schornbaum, eds., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1930–34)
- Roth Friedrich Roth, *Augsburgs Reformationsgeschichte*, 4 vols. (Munich, 1901–11).
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- RTA J *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Karl V., Jüngere Reihe*, ed. the Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Gotha et al., 1893–)

Schiess	T. Schiess, ed., <i>Briefwechsel der Brüder Ambrosius und Thomas Blaurer, 1509–1567</i> (Freiburg, 1908–12)
Singer	Samuel Singer, comp., <i>Thesaurus proverbiorum medii aevi = Lexikon der Sprichwörter des romanisch-germanischen Mittelalters</i> , ed. Kuratorium Singer der Schweizerischen Akademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften, 13 vols. (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1995–2002)
Steck/Tobler	Rudolf Steck and Gustav Tobler, eds., <i>Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation, 1521–1532</i> (Bern, 1923)
St Gallen KB	Kantonsbibliothek Vadiana, St Gallen
Strasbourg ADBR	Archives départementales du Bas-Rhin, Strasbourg
Strasbourg AVCU	Strasbourg – Archives de la Ville et de la Commu- nauté urbaine
Strickler	Johannes Strickler, <i>Actensammlung zur schweizerischen Reformationsgeschichte in den Jahren 1521–1532 im Anschluss an die gleichzeitigen eidgenössischen Abschiede</i> , 5 vols. (Zurich, 1878–84; repr. Zurich, 1989)
TB	Thesaurus Baumianus (manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire, Strasbourg)
VadBr	E. Arbenz and H. Wartmann, eds., <i>Die Vadianische Briefsammlung der Stadtbibliothek St. Gallen</i> , 7 vols. (St Gallen, 1890–1913)
VD-16	<i>Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts (VD 16)</i> , ed. the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München in Verbindung mit der Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, 22 vols. (Stuttgart, 1983–95)
WA	<i>D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe</i> , 120 vols. (Weimar, 1883–2009)
WABr	<i>D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Abteilung 4: Briefwechsel</i> , 18 vols. (Weimar, 1930–85)
Wander	Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wander, ed., <i>Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon. Ein Hausschatz für das deutsche Volk</i> , 5 vols. (Leipzig, 1867–80)
Wittmer/Meyer	Charles Wittmer and J. Charles Meyer, eds., <i>Le livre de Bourgeoisie de la ville de Strasbourg: 1440–1530</i> , 3 vols. (Strasbourg, 1948–61)

Wolgast	Eike Wolgast, ed., <i>Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts. Bd. 20: Elsass, Teilband 1: Straßburg</i> (Tübingen, 2011)
Zurich SA	Staatsarchiv – Kanton Zürich
Zurich ZB	Zentralbibliothek Zürich

## Addenda to Volume 2

### Letter 220a: 9 October 1524, Mulhouse, Nicolaus Prugner to Capito

For Nicolaus Prugner, an evangelical minister in Mulhouse at the time, see the headnote to CWC 2, Ep. 221, which is Capito's response to the following letter.

A copy of this letter is in Speyer, Landesbibliothekszentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Pfälzische Landesbibliothek, Hs. 412, f. 39r-v.

Grace and peace from God our Father. Two months ago, if I am not mistaken, I wrote you a letter in which I revealed to you the plans I have in mind.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Capito, best of men, I beg you in the name of Christ Jesus to help me obtain a post, be it in Strasbourg or anywhere else where the Word is well received. I don't know what discord the most evil Satan has sown (as a result I lack the necessities of life) and the plans he now has against me in the absence of any public accusation.<sup>2</sup> Observe, my Fabricius, what I have failed to achieve. Recently I gave a structured account of my teaching (for thus it was decided by the council) and, to give it more meaning, arranged it in individual articles.<sup>3</sup> I was going to reply to anyone who asked me and to justify myself. On the pre-established day I omitted nothing that would be appropriate in an excellent man. But what can I say? You know the machinations of the Swiss and their increasingly evil designs on me.

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- 1 This earlier letter is no longer extant.
- 2 In the manuscript, Prugner wrote the name Satan in Hebrew, שטן, which can mean 'the adversary,' as in Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-7; for Satan as the sower of discord, see Prov. 6:14 and 19.
- 3 Cf. Prugner's twenty theses, printed together with Balthasar Hubmaier's eighteen theses under the title *Acht und dreyßig Schlußrede so betreffende ein gantz Christlich leben waran es gelegen ist. Angeben von zweyen Christlichen lerern, durch Nicolaum Prugner, predicant zû Mülhausen und Balthasar Fridberger, predicant zû Waldtshût* ([Strasbourg], 11 June 1524).

This is the gist of what happened, for in my grief I cannot write about the details. I hoped the Word would be received better after a disputation, but private and personal interests have a great impact. I ask you again: If there is a vacancy for a preacher, wherever it may be, remember me or, as I have asked once, write some words of encouragement to the people of Mulhouse, if you can, urging them in brief to be more constant in accepting, retaining, and preserving the Word. Furthermore, I would like to know how you fare in your city, how that enemy of the Word, that loudmouth Provincial is doing, and why he is allowed to go free, for I have heard a long time ago that he is free.<sup>4</sup> How does the Word fare? Does it increase and bear fruit? In sum, how is everything? Use some of your free time on behalf of your friend and do what I ask. Farewell, best Fabricius, and love me. From Mulhouse, 9 October in the year of grace 1524.

I also want to know your opinion: how do you like the [*Free*] *Will* of Erasmus against Luther?<sup>5</sup> For I know that some scholars are not pleased with it. Greet Hedio in my name and the rest of the brothers. Johannes Oswald,<sup>6</sup> our chief scribe, sends his greeting. Let this be poured into your heart. Once again, enjoy good health together with your wife.<sup>7</sup> In haste.

N[icolaus] P[rugner].

**Letter 445a: [Between 18 April and 24 July 1531], Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Strasbourg**

Since the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, the city had been plagued by bitter conflicts between Lutherans and Zwinglians over the Lord's Supper – most notably between Michael Keller, the Zwinglian pastor at the Franciscan Church, and Stephan Agricola and Johannes Frosch, two Lutheran ministers at St Anna's, both of whom left the city in the spring of 1531 (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 537, note 12). In the spring of 1531 Strasbourg sent Wolfgang Musculus, Sebastian Meyer and Boniface Wolfhart to Augsburg (see below, note 2). The present letter discusses the selection of a fourth man to fill the vacancy at St Ulrich's in Augs-

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4 For Conrad Treger, the Augustinian Provincial of Rhineland-Swabia, see CWC 2, Ep. 222 headnote.

5 Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio diatribe* (Basel: Froben, 1524). For Capito's opinion, see CWC 2, Ep. 221.

6 For Johannes Oswald Gamsharst, see CWC 2, Ep. 221, note 10.

7 For Agnes Roettel (1503–1531), whom Capito married on 1 August 1524, see CWC Ep. 215, note 3. For the Roettel family, see Thomas A. Brady, 'Wolfgang Capito's in-laws: the Roettels of Strasbourg,' *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 85 (2005): 43–50.

burg. It had been created by the departure of Wolfgang Haug in 1531, who had accepted a position as assistant at the Franciscan Church in Augsburg. The preferred candidates of the Strasbourg preachers were Caspar Glaser (see below, note 4), then tutor to the young Prince Bernhard von Baden, and Jakob Otter (see below, note 6).

The *terminus post quem* for the letter is 18 April 1531, when the Augsburg physician, Gereon Sailer, wrote to Capito, Bucer and Hedio, asking them for their help in bringing Glaser to Augsburg (see CWC 2, Ep. 439; cf. CWC 2, Ep. 443). Glaser, however, was not granted leave from his employer, either Bernhard III von Baden-Baden or his brother, Ernst I von Baden-Durlach (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 501, note 34, and Ep. 506, notes 13–14). Instead, the city council of Strasbourg sent Theobald Nigri, preacher at Old St Peter's, to fill the vacancy at St Ulrich's in Augsburg. The *terminus ante quem* for this letter, therefore, is 24 July 1531, the date on which Nigri arrived in Augsburg and began to preach at St Ulrich's (see Friedrich, p. 160, note 22). Soon after his arrival, however, Nigri became involved in theological quarrels with his colleagues. Dissatisfied, moreover, with his living conditions, he wrote to the city council of Strasbourg begging them to allow him to resume his position at Old St Peter's (see Friedrich/Kooistra, nos. 7–9). The council complied, and Nigri returned to his former position in the summer of 1532. Sailer unsuccessfully continued his efforts to procure Glaser for the position at St Ulrich's, writing to Bucer on 10 September 1531 that the church in Augsburg needed someone like Glaser to keep the peace (CorrBucer 6, Ep. 462).

A copy of this manuscript is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 28.

Strict, honest, circumspect, honourable, wise, and gracious lords. Your Graces are aware to some extent of the dangerous strife in the city of Augsburg, which has been divided now for a long time because of enmity between the preachers.<sup>1</sup> This strife has now been calmed through the grace of God after the three men, whom Your Graces sent from here, preached Christ in com-

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<sup>1</sup> For earlier comments regarding the sectarian divisions in Augsburg, see Luther's letter to Georg Spalatinus, 11 March 1527: 'Augsburg is divided into six factions' (WABr 4:175, no. 1087). Joachim Helm, an Augsburg citizen, reports to his father-in-law on 7 March 1528: 'Things are not going well here, for we have great heresies – five different factions! [...], and it is such a pity that the entire city of Augsburg is distressed/Es steht übel bei uns, denn große Ketzerei ist bei uns, fünferlei Sekten [...], und ist ein solcher Jammer, daß die ganze Stadt Augsburg betrübt ist' [qtd. in Reinhard Bodenmann, *Wolfgang Musculus (1497–1563): destin d'un autodidacte lorrain au siècle des Réformes* (Geneva, 2000), p. 225, note 150].

plete agreement and succeeded in pacifying everything.<sup>2</sup> There is only one parish, St Ulrich, which has no pastor yet, and it includes the most noble and influential people. Considerable differences arose in the city council about this business, for several people wanted to install in that parish a preacher they had in mind, while others thought that this man would not serve the peace there.<sup>3</sup> Several weeks ago, however, they called a pious, learned man to serve in that parish – Caspar Glaser,<sup>4</sup> who has until now been the tutor and mentor of the young prince in Baden<sup>5</sup> and of several other young noblemen. Since they have not yet found anyone to replace him in Baden, he is unwilling to depart, however. Because of the lack of an appointment in the parish, the devil tried to revive the division in the council and, after that, in the city of Augsburg, and the people of Augsburg wrote earnestly and urgently to us, the ministers of the Word here, asking us to press as much as possible for the above-mentioned Caspar's arrival without delay, and if that was not possible, to look out for another man for them, who would be ready at once and come to them. But we know of no suitable man for them, considering

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- 2 I.e., Wolfgang Musculus (see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote), who began his service as preacher at the Holy Cross Church in Augsburg on 4 March 1531, upon the recommendation of Capito and Bucer; Sebastian Meyer (see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3), who began to preach at St George's Church in Augsburg on 4 April 1531; and Boniface Wolfhart (see CorrBucer 8, p. 47, no. 44), who assumed a new position at St Moritz on 4 March 1531. For the calling of Musculus, Meyer, Wolfhart, and Nigri from Strasbourg to Augsburg, see Friedrich, pp. 159–60. See also Friedrich/Kooistra, pp. 220–2, nos. 4 and 6, for two letters from the city council of Augsburg to the city council of Strasbourg, written 4 March 1531 and 18 October 1531 respectively, thanking them for having sent them preachers.
- 3 Identity unknown.
- 4 Caspar Glaser (c. 1485–1547) was a candidate for the first rectorate in Esslingen. He attended the Latin School in Pforzheim and studied at the University of Erfurt (BA, 1503). He worked in Pforzheim as canon at St Michael (7 December 1510–March 1519) and as schoolmaster (May 1512–14). In Baden-Baden he was a vicar for the chapter (17 December 1518–1 February 1519) and tutor of Bernhard von Baden (see below, note 5), likely at the court of Ernst I von Baden-Durlach (see CorrBucer 6, Ep. 501, note 34). In 1531 he was called, together with Otter, to Augsburg as preacher at St Ulrich's but instead went together with Johannes Schwebel and Michael Hilspach in the summer of 1531 to the duchy of Pfalz-Zweibrücken, where he helped introduce the Reformation. In 1532 he was a teacher at the school in Gemmingen and at the beginning of June 1533 he became the tutor of crown prince Wolfgang von Zweibrücken and court chaplain. In 1540 he became superintendent.
- 5 Bernhard von Baden (1517–1533), one of the many illegitimate sons of Margrave Bernhard III von Baden-Baden (1474–1536).

the situation in the parish and the whole church of Augsburg, at least no one who could be ready to go there in a short time. Yet we took to heart the importance of Augsburg and the grave harm it would cause to disrupt the peace and unity that has just come about, also the significant improvement that could be hoped for if they remained unified in the Christian spirit. We therefore thought Your Graces might appoint one of us to go there for one or two months on loan, so that the above-mentioned parish of St Ulrich would more patiently wait for Caspar. The delay cannot be long, for Caspar Glaser does not want to go back on his promise as they suspect; after all, he has long ago obtained the desired permission to depart, but with the proviso to stay until a replacement can be found. And should the delay be longer, we could obtain for them Master Jakob Otter, erstwhile preacher at Kenzingen.<sup>6</sup> Thus we humbly request Your Graces to take pity on the urgent need of the Augsburg church. Your Graces have helped them once before to obtain evangelical preachers and to arrive at an agreement in all things, and you might help them now to remove this stumbling block as well. In our opinion we should lend them Johann Steinlin,<sup>7</sup> assistant in the cathedral, until the aforementioned parish may be looked after by Caspar or Otter, for Steinlin is a particularly good orator and has other skills as well, so that we hope he can maintain peace in the aforementioned parish for that short period of time. We cannot recommend installing him in the parish permanently, for we need him ourselves, and there are other reasons why we would prefer to have the aforementioned parish looked after by someone from elsewhere rather than from here. Furthermore, they have a special need of a scholarly man with knowledge of languages, such as Caspar or Otter. We do, however, think that it would be a very good thing to lend them Steinlin for a month or two at the most, so that the church of Augsburg might at last be brought to complete agreement. May Your Graces notify us of your decision.

Your Graces' humble servants,  
 Wolfgang Capito,  
 Caspar Hedio,  
 Matthew Zell,  
 Martin Bucer, and other ministers of the Word.

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6 For Jakob Otter, see CWC 2, Ep. 205, note 2. On 2 April 1532, Otter, at the time a pastor in Aarau, was called to Esslingen, where he worked until his death in 1547.

7 For Johann Steinlin (Latomus), see CWC 1, Ep. 171, note 3.



THE CORRESPONDENCE OF WOLFGANG CAPITO

VOLUME 3: 1532–1536



**Letter 460a: 3 January 1532, Strasbourg, [The Chapter of St Thomas to Wilhelm von Honstein]**

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 26 (unnumbered). Even though Capito was in Bern at the time this letter was written (see below, Ep. 461 headnote), we have decided to include this letter, since it was written on behalf of the chapter of St Thomas of which he was a canon.

To our gracious lord of Strasbourg.

Very Reverend Prince, gracious lord. First we wish to offer Your Princely Grace our indefatigable good will and service at all times, with our humble effort.

Gracious prince and lord, we know well that Your Princely Grace has graciously commanded a long time ago that we be paid and satisfied concerning the rent past due in Breuschtal,<sup>1</sup> which is owed to us from [the feast day of] Philip and James<sup>2</sup> for the period [15]25 to [15]31. A yearly sum of 80 gulden is due, for a total of 560 gulden, but the gracious command of Your Princely Grace has not yet been executed.<sup>3</sup> In addition, there is our claim against Philip Blank of Saverne, at present *Unterschultheiss* and formerly bailiff of Schirmeck.<sup>4</sup> At first, he promised to pay us the five overdue rent payments no later than St Martin's Day 1530,<sup>5</sup> for he was hoping in the meantime to sell the wood that was near the city of Molsheim. Later, he promised both verbally and in writing to pay by St Martin's Day 1531, whether or not the wood was sold. He indicated that he did this at the command and on the advice of Your Grace's counsellors. He vowed in the presence of the current bailiff of Schirmeck<sup>6</sup> that he would do as he promised and that we would also be paid and compensated for the two additional rents that would accrue in the meantime. Recently, on the eve of the feast of St Andrew the Apostle,<sup>7</sup> we sent our administrator<sup>8</sup> to the above-mentioned *Unterschultheiss*, to find

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1 I.e., the valley of the Bruche in Alsace, in which the town of Schirmeck is situated.

2 I.e., 1 May.

3 Cf. CWC 2, Ep. 248c, a previous claim of a payment of 80 gulden for the pastor of St Nicolaus-in-Undis, Strasbourg, from the chapter of St Thomas.

4 No information is available about him.

5 I.e., 11 November 1530.

6 Identity unknown.

7 I.e., 29 November 1531.

8 For Gervasius Sopher (d. 1556), see CWC 2, Ep. 246a, note 16.

out from him the reason why he has not followed up on his earnest promise. He wanted a further delay, referring to the above-mentioned wood of Molsheim. At last your Princely Grace's *Amtmann* in Molsheim<sup>9</sup> and our administrator reached an agreement [with Philip Blank] that he himself would come in person the following Christmas and satisfy our demand. This has not happened, and we do not know what kept him from coming.

Furthermore, gracious prince and lord, we are also owed 40 gulden due on the feast of St Matthew the Apostle<sup>10</sup> and thereafter 100 gulden due on the next feast day of Ambrose,<sup>11</sup> which Your Princely Grace used to pay us from your treasury annually through the *Landschreiber*.<sup>12</sup> This, too, we requested through our administrator. But the *Landschreiber* said he could no longer pay these two outstanding rents without Your Princely Grace's order. Both rents, however, are due again shortly, and the lack of the outstanding funds, as indicated above in the order of events, causes great harm and detriment to our community and collegiate church. And if Your Princely Grace were to delay the payment any longer, which we hardly expect, we must check the damage which accrues every day, using ways and means we would rather avoid and do without (since they are hardly useful to our collegiate church).

Thus it is our necessary and earnest request to Your Princely Grace and our desire that Your Princely Grace grant us a lasting settlement and, seeing our urgent need, graciously command and order the bailiff of Schirmeck (past and present) as well as the above-mentioned *Landschreiber* to pay us the outstanding sum, which totals over 700 gulden, without further delay. Have no doubt that we shall try with humble diligence to earn Your Princely Grace's gratitude, as far as is in our power. We humbly place ourselves at Your Princely Grace's disposal and ask for a gracious reply. Given at Strasbourg, 3 January in the year of our Lord 1532.

Your Princely Grace's humble and willing  
The provost, vicedean and [chapter of St Thomas].<sup>13</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

9 Identity unknown.

10 I.e., 21 September.

11 I.e., 4 April.

12 Cf. the settlement of 100 gulden regarding the bailliwick of Schirmeck by Wilhelm von Honstein in favour of the chapter of St Thomas in Strasbourg, dated 8 April 1518 (Strasbourg ADBR, G 1156, no. 10).

13 The bottom edge of the manuscript is missing.

**Letter 460b: 12 January 1532, [Strasbourg], The Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Strasbourg**

Printed in CorrBucer 7:191–94, Ep. 541. Even though Capito was in Bern at the time this letter was written (see below, Ep. 461 headnote), we have decided to include a summary of this letter, since it was written on behalf of the Strasbourg preachers.

[*Summary*]: Fourteen days earlier, Pilgram [Marpeck] asked the preachers to justify in writing their position on infant baptism [see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 544]. After having read their submission, he drew up a response, with the agreement of the preachers, containing opposing articles.<sup>1</sup> He submitted the response to the preachers on 10 January, with the request to discuss the articles with them in the presence of one *Ammeister* or the whole committee of six [*Ammeisters*]. The preachers gave him the choice of audience, but they themselves wanted one or two church wardens (*Kirchspielpfleger*)<sup>2</sup> to attend. Marpeck asked them to approach the city about this matter – hence this letter to the council from the preachers. They ask the council to give authorization as soon as possible, because Marpeck, [whose expulsion from Strasbourg has already been decided], is pressed for time.

**Letter 461: 15 January 1532, Bern, Capito to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The following letter is Capito's report to the council about the success of the recent Synod of Bern, which ran from 9–14 January 1532.<sup>1</sup> Although he was not invited until days before the synod began, he ended up playing a significant role as its chairman, mediating between the various parties. By the time the synod concluded, Capito had persuaded the parties to agree that the reformers depended upon the assistance and support of the magistracy for the maintenance and benefit of the churches. He was commended for his role in the synod by

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- 1 Marpeck's Confession of Faith is printed in QGT 7:416–519, no. 302. For an English translation, see *The Writings of Pilgram Marpeck*, trans. and ed. William Klassen and Walter Klaassen (Kitchener, ON: Herald Press, 1978), 107–57.
- 2 After an ordinance from the Strasbourg city council on 30 October 1531, each of the seven Strasbourg churches received three church wardens (*Kirchspielpfleger*). The power of the twenty-one wardens was limited to the supervision of doctrinal conformity and discipline of the church ministers.
- 1 For a day-by-day account of the synod, see Berchtold Haller's letter to Bucer (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 543).

those in attendance. On 14 January 1532, the city council of Bern wrote a letter to the council of Strasbourg reporting to them on Capito's successful work during the synod: 'No doubt it came about by an act of God that the very learned Dr Wolfgang Fabricius Capito came here around eight days before the synod. We approached him with the most urgent request to remain [here] with us and to help conduct the synod. He obliged us in this regard and chaired the synod with such great earnestness and fervour for God's glory and the reformation of the entire priesthood that we have good hope in God that much fruit will come from this.'<sup>2</sup> The success of the synod helped redeem Capito's reputation in the eyes of his fellow reformers, who suspected him of espousing Anabaptist beliefs.<sup>3</sup> The synod was the highlight of a three-month-long journey Capito took to Switzerland and southwest Germany in the winter of 1531/32. The purpose of the journey was to consult with the evangelicals there on the various problems that gripped the reformed churches after the defeat of the evangelicals at the second Battle of Kappel in 1531.<sup>4</sup> Capito set out on the journey without the express approval of the city council of Strasbourg.<sup>5</sup> He did, however, have the blessing of Bucer, who felt that the opportunity for Capito to be away from Strasbourg and meet with other reformers would allow him to get over the depression from which he was suffering due to the recent death of his wife.<sup>6</sup> Bucer also hoped that pressure from Swiss and south German reformers would draw Capito away from the influence of Michael Servetus and from his sympathies for the Anabaptists.<sup>7</sup> Capito began his tour on 21 December, visiting first Basel, then Bern, Zurich, Constance, Lindau, Augsburg, Kempten, Memmingen, and Ulm, before returning to Strasbourg toward the end of March 1532.<sup>8</sup>

The manuscript of the letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 40, no. 45. The text is published by Hans Rudolf Lavater in *Der Berner Synodus von 1532* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), vol. 2, Appendix 1.

Strict, noble, firm, circumspect, honourable, wise, gracious lords, may the

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2 Bern SA, A III 22, pp. 317–18 (printed in Steck/Tobler 2:1495, no. 3281).

3 See HBBW 2, Ep. 56 and CorrBucer 7, Epp. 543, 548, and 565.

4 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 528.

5 See below, Ep. 476.

6 Agnes Roettel died on 17 October 1531 (see above, Ep. 220a, note 7, and CorrBucer 7, Epp. 528 and 548).

7 See CorrBucer 7, Ep. 543, note 23.

8 On the details of his journey, see below, Ep. 462 headnote, and Hans Rudolf Lavater, 'Wolfgang Capitos Reise durch Oberdeutschland, 21. Dezember 1531 bis Anfang April 1532,' in *Der Berner Synodus von 1532*, ed. Gottfried Wilhelm Locher (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1988), vol. 2, 362–7 (Beilage III).

grace of God be with you through Christ our Lord. First let me offer you my humble service, as is my duty. I still cannot tell you anything more than I wrote earlier.<sup>9</sup> I left on God's urging to lay a better foundation in the churches that have heard something of the gospel, so that the broken hearts might be firmly guided to God through Christ. For now is the most suitable of all times, when the flesh has very little hope. God has shown much grace in Basel and here in Bern, which has resulted in a great improvement, as I find, surpassing even my hopes. May the Almighty further build up his edifice among us and other people who honour his name. Amen.

Thus I beg Your Graces not to be displeased with my absence, for I shall come home as quickly as possible, and with God's help will make a concerted effort to catch up on everything I have missed. I would like you to know that Strasbourg enjoys high repute in the city and region of Bern. People often say, 'We wish we had followed the pious lords of Strasbourg!' There are other good things they say, which I cannot entrust to writing. I therefore ask you, for God's sake, to give this messenger<sup>10</sup> a friendly and fair reply. He has been sent by the council and the citizens called 'The Two Hundred'<sup>11</sup> (like the

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- 9 Cf. Capito's letter to Nicolaus Kniebs in CWC 2, Ep. 458 (dated 25 December 1531).
- 10 Identity unknown. This Bernese messenger probably also delivered the council's report on the Synod of Bern, dated 14 January, to the Strasbourg city council (PC 2:100, no. 122).
- 11 Bern's city government consisted of two bodies, the Great and Small Councils (*Großer und Kleiner Rat*). The Great Council, also called the Council of the Two Hundred (despite a membership of up to 300), was open to all residents of the city who possessed citizenship, belonged to a local guild and were over the age of fourteen. The Small Council consisted of twenty-seven members and met daily to conduct the day-to-day business of governing. It customarily determined city policy, which the Great Council then ratified. Among these twenty-seven individuals were two mayors (*Schultheißen*). Upon the completion of a two-year term, the 'old' mayor attended to matters of defence, while the new, officiating mayor chaired the sessions of both councils. In addition, four standard-bearers (*Venner*) sat on the Small Council, each elected from one of the city's four leading guilds: the Butchers, the Blacksmiths, the Bakers and Millers, and the Tanners. The standard-bearers were responsible for the administration of one of the city's four quarters, and together with the two mayors and the treasurer (*Seckelmeister*), held the highest political power in the city. See Glenn Ehrstine, *Theater, Culture, and Community in Reformation Berne, 1523–1555* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 42–3.

*Schöffen* in Strasbourg<sup>12</sup>), which convenes only on very important occasions. Who knows, gracious high lords, what benefit such mutual good may bring to the two cities? What is more, God and nature demand mutual friendship from us. Thus I recommend myself to Your Graces. May God increase your knowledge and grace. Amen. Given at Bern on the fifteenth day of January in the year, etc., '32.

Your Graces' willing servant,  
Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 462: 26 January 1532, Constance, Capito to [Conradus Pellicanus]**

The following letter to Pellicanus was written from Constance, one of the cities Capito visited on his three-month-long journey to Switzerland and southern Germany. He first went to Basel and from there he travelled by horse to Bern, where he arrived on 29 December and stayed at the home of Berchtold Haller. At the request of the city council, he remained in the city to chair the Synod of Bern (see above, Ep. 461 headnote). Capito turned down the offer of 20 gulden from the council for his role at the synod, and agreed instead to be escorted at the council's expense to Zurich.<sup>1</sup> His stay in Zurich was brief, but while there he participated in a meeting of the local church ministers.<sup>2</sup> From there, he set out for Constance, where, according to the chronicler Gregor Mangolt, Capito preached three times on 18 January.<sup>3</sup> The following letter to Pellicanus proves that Capito remained in Constance at least until 26 January. From there he travelled to Augsburg with stopovers in Lindau<sup>4</sup> and Memmingen. Capito arrived in Memmingen from Lindau on 8 February. Early the following morning, three city councillors had a lengthy conversation with Capito and asked him to remain, but around noon, he left by horse for Augsburg.<sup>5</sup> He arrived there no

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12 In Strasbourg, there was an assembly of 300 *Schöffen* of the guilds, which was subordinate to the Senate (*Grosser Rat*) and the two privy councils, the XV and the XIII. Like the Council of the Two Hundred in Bern, this assembly of *Schöffen*, which consisted of fifteen masters from each guild, was convoked in times of crisis to vote on proposals put to them by the governing bodies.

1 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 543.

2 See below, Ep. 466, and VadBr 5, Ep. 663.

3 See CorrBucer 7, Ep. 543, notes 63–64. On 2 February 1532, Ambrosius Blaurer wrote to his brother Thomas in Constance that he was happy that Capito visited Constance (Schiess 1, Ep. 262).

4 See below, Ep. 464, and VadBr 5, Ep. 672.

5 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 558. See also below, Ep. 465.

sooner than 11 February and left shortly after 5 March.<sup>6</sup> On 18 February, Capito preached at St Ulrich's in Augsburg on Luke 3.<sup>7</sup> Already in early January, Ge-reon Sailer had written to Bucer, requesting that Capito visit Augsburg as well. Because of sectarian divisions in the city between Lutherans and Zwinglians (see above, Ep. 442a), Sailer suggested that Capito spend the night with Georg Regel, an Augsburg patrician, rather than at the home of Sailer or the mayor, which might arouse suspicion.<sup>8</sup> From Augsburg, Capito travelled to Kempten, where he inadvertently reignited the Eucharistic controversy between the city's reformers after meeting with them on 8 March.<sup>9</sup> From there, he travelled to Memmingen and Ulm,<sup>10</sup> arriving back home in Strasbourg some time before 3 April.<sup>11</sup>

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 47, f. 6. For Pellicanus, see CWC 1, Ep. 89 headnote.

Grace and peace! I have made an effort to buy a small present for your wife<sup>12</sup> in this area, but nightfall intervened. I shall record my debt, lest time make me forget what I owe you. Thank you for your kindness and that of your friends. Greet all well-wishers most affectionately in my name. It bothered me that I left the booklet<sup>13</sup> at [your] home. That was the reason why I forgot to pay the servant<sup>14</sup> of the inn the small sum for the horse supplied to me. I am sending it through this public messenger,<sup>15</sup> who is travelling on horse-back. Think about the advice I gave you at the time of my departure: you will turn enemies into friends with mildness. Don't be rash. There is a risk of turning your friends into enemies through harshness. Our army must be

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6 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 554, note 2.

7 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 556.

8 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 537.

9 See below, Ep. 492 headnote.

10 See below, Ep. 480; cf. Lavater, 'Wolfgang Capitos Reise durch Oberdeutschland, 21. Dezember 1531 bis Anfang April 1532,' in *Der Berner Synodus von 1532*, vol. 2, ed. Gottfried Wilhelm Locher (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1988), 366–7 (Beilage III).

11 CorrBucer 7, Ep. 574, note 17.

12 On 7 August 1526 Pellicanus married Anna Fries of Zurich (d. 1536). They had a son, Samuel, and a daughter, Elisabeth (1528–1537).

13 I.e., his notebook recording financial matters.

14 Identity unknown.

15 Identity unknown.

reinforced now that the enemy camp has a multitude of soldiers.<sup>16</sup> Farewell. Constance, 26 January 1532.

Yours, Capito.

Please send these letters to Comander at Chur in Switzerland,<sup>17</sup> including or appending them to yours.

### Letter 463: [End of January 1532? Constance?], Capito to Werner Steiner

This note (described in the margin as a 'letter fragment') is in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Carl von Ossietzky, ms. Sup. Ep. fol. 5, f. 447. The addressee, Werner Steiner (Lithonius, 1492–1542), received his education in Zurich and Paris, returned to Switzerland after 1513, became a priest in Schwyz and in 1517, at the latest, an assistant. In 1518, he was made a papal protonotary, and in 1519 he took part in a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. After his return from the Holy Land, he received a canonry in Beromünster. On 24 March 1521, he preached his first public evangelical sermon from the Musegg tower of the cloister in Lucerne. On 2 July 1522 he was one of the co-signatories of a supplication for permission to preach evangelical sermons for clerical marriage. Soon he was the leader of the evangelicals in Zug. Since 1525, he and his friend, the parish priest Bartholomäus Stocker, were frequently cited before the council, and warned or interrogated because of their Lutheran sympathies. After 1528 Steiner no longer said mass. He criticized the alliance of the Five Catholic Cantons with Austria, and openly professed his evangelical faith. On 26 August 1529 he settled in Zurich and became an invaluable promoter of the Reformation. On 30 October 1530 he married Anna Rustin, with whom he had thirteen children. In 1541, he was blackmailed for a homosexual experience in his youth, for which he was apprehended and placed under lifelong house arrest in Zurich. On 6 October 1542 he died of the plague.

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- 16 A reference to the political and military situation following the defeat of the evangelicals at the Second Battle of Kappel in 1531, when the Catholics gained the upper hand.
- 17 Johannes Comander (or Dorfmann, c. 1484–1557) studied at the University of Basel from 1502. In 1521 he became parish priest in Escholzmatt (Canton Lucerne). He joined the Reformation and was called to St Martin's in Chur (Canton Graubünden). He was in contact with Zwingli and defended him at the colloquy of Ilanz (1526). After Zwingli's death he worked with Bullinger on the organization of synods. He was one of the authors of the first Graubünden catechism (1537), was responsible for the church order of Chur (1548), and co-authored (with Philipp Gallicius) the *Confessio Raetica* (1553).

Send me the poems and verses about the death of Zwingli.<sup>1</sup> His widow<sup>2</sup> reportedly has some in her possession. Also, there are some poems in Pellicanus' study.<sup>3</sup> Ask him to have them sent to me with a short commentary.<sup>4</sup>  
W. Capito.

**Letter 464: [End of January/Beginning of February 1532, Lindau(?)],  
Capito and Johannes Zwick to the City Council of Lindau**

At the end of January 1532, Capito and Johannes Zwick travelled from Constance to Lindau. Capito left Lindau on 7 February at the latest, arriving at Memmingen on 8 February (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 558, note 20). Hans Vogler (1498–1567) wrote a letter to Joachim Vadianus, reporting on Capito's and Zwick's visit to Lindau. Vogler had been mayor (*Stadtammann*) in Altstätten from 1523–31, until he was forced to flee in December 1531 on account of the victory of the Catholic Cantons in the Battle of Kappel. His flight took him to St Gallen, Lindau and Zurich. Vogler wrote to Vadianus, 'The faithful Capito was here [in Lindau] for several days, along with Dr Hans Zwick. They both preached. By the grace of God, he demonstrated great strength; he called together into a room all the clergymen, the preachers and other beloved brothers, and for up to two hours, he admonished, comforted, prayed, and instructed them. All the people in the room with him fell on their knees before God. He said, 'Do not be ashamed about that,' and in their midst he led them in a very earnest prayer with many tears' (VadBr 5, Ep. 672). Together with Zwick, Capito authored the following instruction for the city council of Lindau on how to introduce 'order in the divine service.'

The manuscript is in Lindau, Stadtarchiv und Ehemals Reichsstädtische Bibliothek A III: 63/8. It is partially printed in K.Wolfart, ed., *Geschichte der Stadt Lindau im Bodensee*, vol. 2 (Lindau: Stettner, 1909), 301–3. For Johannes Zwick (d. 1542), see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1.

Instruction of Dr Wolfgang Capito and Dr Johannes Zwick, preachers and ministers of Christ in the gospel, to the honourable city of Lindau, concerning the method and manner of introducing order in the divine service.

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- 1 It is unclear which poems and verses Capito means.
- 2 For Anna Zwingli, née Reinhard (d. 1538), see CWC 2, Ep. 455 headnote.
- 3 For Pellicanus, see CWC 1, Ep. 89 headnote. Millet surmises that Capito left these verses at Pellicanus' house. The word translated here as 'study' is *hypocaustum*, i.e., a heated space.
- 4 Literally, 'described in four words.'

Changing a bad practice generally prompts much trouble and dispute – especially when that practice has been commonly regarded as good and has prevailed over a long time – and such trouble and dispute cannot be stopped unless a good practice is introduced and maintained through an appropriate instruction. Thus a government is at risk when the gospel is preached and accepted from an external source and publicly tolerated in the community, unless a good instruction has previously been issued and observed that is in agreement with the gospel and regulates morals and the divine service. And more specifically, it is dangerous when two religions are publicly maintained and practised in a city. This leads to a split among the citizens, as each party wants to do away with the other and each party defends the divine service they regard as good. Thus there can be no greater poison in the cities than division and factions concerning the divine service. This prompted the emperors of old to accept our Lord Christ for the whole world, although many of them were hardly serious about maintaining a government conforming to Christ. Yet they could not eradicate Christ, just as it has been impossible to the present day (thank God) for any earthly power alone to do so, unless God himself is involved; for who can understand God, etc.?<sup>1</sup>

So far the gospel has been preached and willingly accepted in your city, worthy sirs.<sup>2</sup> A great part of the evil practices has been abandoned and moral discipline has been established, which speaks of the strong effect of God's grace on you. But the head of popery has prevailed, which has prevented the introduction and establishment of good order, which promotes God's honour and preserves peace and unity among the citizens. Or rather, there is one temple in which God is honoured by the congregation through true counsel and prayer, and another temple beside it, in which God is gravely dishonoured through the mass and is roused to anger. Each practice has followers among the citizens. But what good can come from such a division in the long run? If you want to have the gospel and Christ the Saviour, why do you tolerate what goes against Christ and salvation, while the community of citizens is split and your standing is lowered in the eyes of many? For the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Job. 36:26, Rom. 11:34, and 1 Cor. 2:11.

<sup>2</sup> In March 1525, communion under both kinds was distributed for the first time; the following year, the city council of Lindau formally engaged Thomas Gassner as the first city pastor. In 1527 marriages and baptisms were first celebrated in German. In 1528, the images were removed from St Stephan's. In 1530 Lindau was one of the co-signatories, along with Strasbourg, Memmingen, and Constance, of the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, which was presented to Charles V at the Diet of Augsburg, as an alternative to the Augsburg Confession.

nobility, who have committed themselves to Christ through the gospel, do not wholeheartedly accept you as fellow believers, since you openly permit blasphemy. This also goes for the followers among the counsellors and citizens, who would like to defend the gospel, as far as is in their power.

Every magistrate knows from experience how unsteady and uncertain government is in such a divided city, even if loyalty has been pledged with grave vows and in writing. Thus you will not prevail in this manner with unwilling people, even if you wanted to accept the papacy, which the Almighty God may forfend. Indeed, nothing will be left undone against you, as happened earlier to others who allowed the pope to rule once again. Although one need not worry about external trouble (or so we hope in these dangerous times), it will nevertheless be harmful publicly to maintain two opposing parties in a city. Any city which has factions is corrupted, as is obvious from the example of the Italian cities. Where there are two opposing divine services, there are necessarily factions.

Thus, circumspect, honourable, wise sirs and pious Christians, it is first of all necessary to restore faith in your city. Everyone must decide for himself once again whether he wants to belong to God and to Christ or to the world and the princes of the world, who are bound to come to ruin together with their followers. Thus the divine service of our opponents shall and must come to an end or else, the longer it lasts, the worse you will fare. We say nothing of the enemies, who will be more encouraged, the more opportunity they have to cause you trouble. A man who wavers is easily pushed over. What city cannot easily be conquered by the enemy when it is divided among itself? In such a case, the enemy is within the walls, for some citizens expect much good from the enemy. Yet, if things go badly they will suffer personal injury and damage to their possessions together with the other citizens. No distinction will be made. Those who are most powerful must expect the greatest loss, from which God may preserve you.

Therefore, honourable, wise sirs, it is our friendly request, since you have accepted the gospel and allowed it to be preached, that you come to a Christian understanding with the evangelical princes and estates. Then you may hope for loyal assistance from them in your need. Undertake to give instructions to make the divine service and public morals conform to the gospel and see to it that uniformity be maintained in external rites, which will be agreeable to God and praiseworthy among all the faithful. And even if some counsellors and citizens want to cling to the papistical ceremonies, they should consider that even according to the papal laws these rites are not necessary where they cannot be suitably obtained. And it is not suitable to do ruinous damage to the whole community by maintaining a division over the divine service and causing ongoing disorder for the sake of such foibles, etc.

If, however, you are planning to establish good order and take other measures in the interest of peace among the citizens, honourable and wise sirs, we will gladly serve you to the best of our ability. It is necessary, then, to act in this manner, as described in the following:

First, the mass and Latin songs must be abolished.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, baptism and the Holy Supper must be conducted according to Christ's commandment.

Thirdly, a lasting order must be introduced with ministers, pastors, assistants, and teachers; marriage and matters of marriage must be regulated, as well as public almsgiving and moral discipline.<sup>4</sup>

In this manner one may achieve peace and quiet and put an end to ill will and trouble among the citizens, for a patchwork [of measures] does no good. One must build a new edifice from the ground up. In true evangelical doctrine we must look to the eternal truth in all things.

The mass must not be permitted alongside the preaching of the gospel – it is best to abolish it.

To do this properly, it is our request first of all that you abolish the mass and Latin songs as soon as possible, for the reasons mentioned above and now partly cited. And every person of good will must chiefly consider God's severe punishment for two wrongs committed by the kings and the people of the Old Testament: first, idolatry or false worship; secondly, oppression of widows, orphans, pilgrims, and poor and needy persons, whom God especially wants to be shielded and protected.

For in idolatry God is denied and his covenant abandoned, and there is an inclination to self-love. This immediately causes a lack of charity and a disdain for all from whom the idolater cannot hope for any advantage, such as poor wretches from whom greedy people can hope for nothing. The consequence is tyranny, harassment and oppression of the poor, all kinds of pride, desires and shameless carnal lust. For the idolater is without true fear of God, since he has committed himself to a false fear of idols. That is why God must rise and severely punish such idolatry and blasphemy of his name, to maintain his honour among human beings and to protect the forlorn.

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3 The mass in the convent was abolished by an order of the council on 2 July 1534 (see below, note 11).

4 On 23 February 1533, the city council issued its first set of discipline ordinances (*Zuchtordnungen*) and on 7 September, the first poor ordinances (*Almosenordnung*) were issued [printed in *Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, Bd. 12: *Bayern*, Teilband 2: *Schwaben*, ed. the Institut für evangelisches Kirchenrecht der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland zu Göttingen (Tübingen, 1963), 186–97, 200–2].

Thus is it obvious that the mass is the highest form of idolatry that ever existed in this world, for it is against Jesus Christ himself, on whom the highest divine service rests. Among the ancients it was considered idolatry when the people abandoned the ark of the covenant, from the cover of which (called the 'throne of grace'<sup>5</sup>) God answers his servants and gives them assistance; similarly it was considered idolatry when they attached themselves to foreign gods or when they abandoned the temple of Jerusalem and the prescribed service and instead established another according to their own will. Among the people of the New Testament idolatry specifically means abandoning Christ, the very truth, rather than merely a figure.

Just as Christ is greater than the throne of grace on the ark or the temple of Jerusalem, so idolatry against Christ is immeasurably worse. The idolatry of the Old Testament people went against the figure and shadow of Christ; the people of the New Testament go against Christ, the body of light. For in the Old Testament God was seen in a veiled manner; in the New Testament, however, Christ is seen openly, is experienced and comprehended. Thus the idolatry of the ancients is a denial of God prefigured in signs, whereas the idolatry of false Christians is a denial of God, not merely prefigured and depicted in his only Son, but powerfully brought into the heart of the believer, so that the idolatry of the mass denies and persecutes the present and eternal God. Thus there is greater reason to abolish it than there ever was to abolish the idolatry of the Old Testament, if we want to escape the wrath of God, who has always terribly punished idolaters and those who permitted idolatry among others, as he punished Jeroboam and Ahab,<sup>6</sup> and all the other kings of Israel until the people came to ruin.

It is obvious that the mass is idolatry, for Christianity worships God in the Holy Spirit and in Jesus Christ, the truth of God (John 4<sup>7</sup>), whereas in the mass bread and wine are worshipped instead of Jesus Christ, and the people take comfort in the action of the priest saying mass at the altar. The mass reduces and erases the memory of Christ, which is the meaning of the Supper, for the Lord God instituted the Supper in memory of his body and blood. He was sacrificed once and in that one sacrifice he found eternal deliverance for us, whereas the mass speaks of sacrificing Christ again, and this sacrifice is the blessed bread and wine for the sins of the whole world. This is bound to be a denial of Christ, in whom alone our sins are forgiven, who is at the side

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5 Exodus 25:17–22; Heb. 4:16.

6 On Jeroboam, see 1 Kings 12:25–33 and 13:1–34; on Ahab, see 1 Kings 16:29–34, 20:35–43, and 22:1–40.

7 John 4:21–4.

of the Father in his immortal nature, not here or there in visible form or a creature made of bread. Yet they claim that their mass is the Lord's Supper, although the Supper has been abolished and denied through the mass. Christ is the way to the Father and the Father is pleased with him, whereas the mass asks the Father to take pleasure in the Son as in the sheep Abel sacrificed<sup>8</sup> or as in the sacrifice of Abraham which pleased God<sup>9</sup> – as if anything could be more pleasing to the Father than his only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.

We have no doubt that the Catholic priests are persuaded [of the truth] in their hearts after we preached Christ's kingdom, and its glory resounded throughout the whole world. For how else can one explain the failure of the Catholic priests together with their pope, cardinals, bishops, universities and most learned scholars everywhere in the monasteries and collegiate churches, to come forward and undertake to justify the mass? They would have done so long ago if they had anything to proffer to prudent and upright citizens. They take comfort only in the power of the emperor – may the Almighty God prevent him from raising his hand and spilling the blood of innocent believers in Christ. They have been challenged by all the princes, lords, and cities where the gospel has been preached, and especially at numerous diets, where they offered some pretence to which they stuck, but their own conscience makes liars of them, for every day they change their line of defence, admitting at one time this and at another time that morsel of truth proffered by us. Why does the pope baulk and put up opposition to the command of His Imperial Majesty to consider a Christian and free council? What is he afraid of, except our professed truth, which is too powerful for him and all his followers, and which he cannot and will not accept? For, as they keep saying, he prohibits preaching altogether in many places in Italy, and generally there is very little preaching there, lest some preachers speak according to the truth. For – praise be to God – in these times the truth emerges everywhere, and there are people everywhere who attest to it.

It is not surprising, however, that they act with excessive force and disregard scripture, for the mass gives them all their respect, glory and power, and on account of the mass they are tolerated – in spite of their shameful lives – as mediators between God and us poor human beings, whereas this is a title that belongs to Christ alone and to no one else, just as Moses was the only mediator in the Old Testament.<sup>10</sup> It is on account of the mass that they have all

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8 Gen. 4:4.

9 Gen. 22:1–19.

10 Cf. Gal. 3:19; Col. 1:15–20; Heb. 8:3–6, 9:15, 12:24; and 1 Tim. 2:5.

their wealth and glory and surpass princes, lords and all kings in their earthly pomp. Who does not know that? Yet they want to allow this abomination to go on, contrary to common sense and their own consciences. If anyone in the city were to disparage the mayor, you would not suffer or permit it, yet you have permitted for a long time the abominable mass, as if you were more concerned about worldly honour than the honour of God. Oh God, bring us timely help against such lack of faith before launching your avenging wrath!

Now, there are two ways to abolish the mass in your city: first, that you, the honourable members of the council, act with true faith and forbid the celebration of mass to priests, reasoning as follows: 'Recognizing that the mass is blasphemous and goes against Christ, we honourable, wise lords do not wish to have it, since no one should act against what he believes even if there are all sorts of human considerations.'

The second method is also valid before God and cannot be punished by the opponents: that you, honourable, wise sirs, command the mass priests no longer to say mass in your city until they have improved it so that it is in accord with holy scripture. That may happen here or elsewhere, for example at the diets or general councils or through a special dispatch. Since you and other preachers publicly declared that type of mass blasphemous, citing scripture, you must agree with them in your conscience, until someone gives you a better report. So far no one could provide such a report, as far as you know, and if they wanted to set up the mass and bring it back sooner, they should try sooner to corroborate the mass on the basis of holy writ.

Furthermore, the abbess,<sup>11</sup> who is inclined toward this business, should be asked through candid messages to omit for a time the vespers and songs, which have contributed more to the abbey's disgrace than to God's glory, es-

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11 Katharina II von Bodman (abbess of the convent in Lindau from 1531 to 78), who at the age of nineteen, succeeded Amalia von Reischach, who was abbess from 1491 until her death in 1531 at the age of 84. In 1532, the abbess and the nuns of the convent moved to Bregenz, apparently intimidated by the common people [see Johannes C. Wolfart, *Religion, Government and Political Culture in Early Modern German: Lindau, 1520–1628* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 240]. In the summer of 1534, the city council of Lindau introduced further church reforms, which was a first step toward the abolition of the mass in the convent church. In June the abbess conceded to the council of Lindau the parish of Bösenreutin, despite the protest of the duke of Montfort, and from that time onward Lindau's preachers looked after the parish. On 2 July the council decided to abolish the mass in the convent [see Albert Schulze, *Bekennnisbildung und Politik Lindaus im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Nürnberg: Verein f. Bayer. Kirchengeschichte, 1971), 87].

pecially after the honourable council has prorogued the mass until shown to be correct. Their intent was not to reject, but rather to assist in every action of the church that the clergy could confirm on the basis of holy writ. Who could disapprove of that? If a man has a plausible claim to a neighbour's field and corroborates his complaint, he obtains sequestration and judgment. Until the case is settled, his opponent must withdraw from the field, so as not to benefit from another man's goods. Why then should Your Honours yield and allow the mass – often proved to be blasphemous – to be celebrated in your city, which has been entrusted to your government in God's eyes? If the Catholics want the mass and can defend it, they will make an effort sooner and establish its worth, in which case they will not be hindered in their practice but receive assistance. May those in your honourable council, who still value the mass, also assist in this enterprise, for in this manner there will be a reason to confirm it and once again conduct it in the proper manner.

Furthermore, the abbess, a young, agreeable woman, cannot be expected to abolish the mass on her own authority, for she does not understand the matter and would invite great rancour, from which she should be rightly protected. Thus the measure is not directed against her privileges and liberties. Imperial law clearly states that no liberty can prevail against God and to the disadvantage of the community. Rather all liberties should serve the honour of God and protect the commonweal. It is not customary, even in this time, to have liberties other than those concerning secular possessions and exemptions from common imposts. Thus the nuns would suffer no loss on account of the mass, especially since the honourable council is inclined to offer the abbess protection and support with respect to all liberties, authorities, income from interest, rents and leases, which are not related to the mass. We hope that she will be satisfied with that, since she is not deprived of honour or possessions, not even of a farthing's worth.

No one should argue that we should be concerned about arousing enmity, for God wants us to trust him in his affairs, however they may turn out. In Christian governments, he wants a person who will be his steward wholeheartedly and look only to him. It should be a Christian's comfort to know God in heaven as his merciful father through Christ Jesus.

But to speak in human terms, we believe that no one who is prepared to harm you will lack a reason to do so. No one will make a special case for your city, Lindau.<sup>12</sup> If a general war breaks out in the land, neither the

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12 Literally, 'No one will hang a special kettle over the fire for you people from Lindau (Man wurt von euer von Lindaw willen khain sundren kessel uber das fur hencken).' Cf. Wander 2, col. 1259.

mass nor anything else would give you peace. Only the Almighty, whom you serve in his gospel, can do so. We believe that Dr Fabri<sup>13</sup> is much more concerned about the tithe than about the mass. Yet he has left the area of the city of Lindau alone so far, however great his anger. Thus it is not plausible that His Imperial Majesty will invoke the ban against you and Lindau for the sake of the mass and abstain from Saxony and Hesse, and from the free imperial cities, which have also abolished the mass and cleansed the church of idols and altars. Should you be attacked on account of this, you will not be abandoned, for if the least of the cities is attacked for the sake of the gospel, the other evangelical states understand well what they may expect. Therefore it is not plausible that they could or would remain inactive. Rather they will immediately come to your assistance, as soon as the enemy uses actual force against a community on account of the gospel, especially since this would lead to their own ruin and collapse.

Under no circumstances should you wait until the Diet of Regensburg,<sup>14</sup> for you must not put your hopes in any Diet in these times, nor must you despair in the face of grave edicts, for the opponents will then have an even greater opportunity, right in your city, to cause disturbance and unrest.

We have had this experience in Strasbourg. They gave the clergy one month' grace, and this encouraged the princes and lords in the cathedral chapter bravely to hold out as individuals against the governing council.<sup>15</sup> They pressed for at least one mass to be retained in their collegiate church, adding threats [that they would call on] powerful friends. The bishop of Strasbourg<sup>16</sup> wrote likewise and afterwards sent a bold message with the same request. Furthermore, an injunction was sent to the council of Strasbourg by the imperial government, forbidding any initiative concerning the mass before the conclusion of the Diet, under threat of the ban.<sup>17</sup> The Diet had just begun at that time and had indeed been called for the sake of the gospel.<sup>18</sup>

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13 For Johannes Fabri, see CWC 1, Ep. 110a headnote. Already in 1524, the council of Lindau demanded that Fabri relinquish all control over the affairs of St Stephan. When his tithe was not paid, he held the council responsible and initiated a lengthy legal action.

14 The Diet of Regensburg sat from 17 April–27 July 1532.

15 See CWC 2:11, Ep. 189.

16 For Wilhelm von Honstein, bishop of Strasbourg, see CWC 1, Ep. 174 headnote.

17 See PC 1, nos. 548–9, 554–5.

18 I.e., the Diet of Speyer (1529). Originally the diet was convoked on 30 November 1528 at Speyer for 2 February 1529, but because of a delay in the dispatch of the message, which did not take place until mid-January, the diet was prorogued until 2 February 1529. The two principal themes were the war against the Turks and the religious question (see RTA J 7:1073–5).

Finally, Count von Helfenstein,<sup>19</sup> the knight Dr Sebastian Schilling,<sup>20</sup> and another assessor<sup>21</sup> of the imperial government were officially sent to the city of Strasbourg.<sup>22</sup> We need not tell you of the pressure they put on us and of the grave threats they uttered. After much negotiation, the final request was to delay the business, but no more than one month, to see what the Diet, which had started by then, might undertake in this matter, since it had been summoned primarily for confessional reasons.<sup>23</sup> We shall say nothing of the secret machinations set afoot among the citizens by the rich and powerful clergy and others.<sup>24</sup> But the honourable council valued the honour of God and the concord of the citizens higher than all these terrible threats. The remaining four masses which were celebrated every day for a time were abolished as well, which was to their great advantage. Otherwise the parties in the city would have become stronger over time, and the opponents would have always had the opportunity to cause unrest in the community. They could not have come to an agreement thereafter without great harm, for the machinations of the clergy have always aimed at rebellion. This was not acceptable to the council, and so they abolished the masses with great steadfastness in the face of all the world's terror.<sup>25</sup>

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- 19 Ulrich XVI (1486–1548), Graf von Helfenstein-Wiesensteig (1493–1548), and regent of the duchy of Württemberg. Upon the death of his father, Ludwig X, in 1494, Ulrich and his brother Ludwig Helfrich were still underage. He matriculated at the University of Tübingen in 1499/1500 and was a member of the imperial council as of 1500. In 1511, he married Katharina von Sonnenberg, who came with a dowry of 10,000 gulden. In 1525–31 he was a counsellor and regent in Württemberg; in 1532 Hofpfalzgraf; and in 1539 chief counsellor of Philip the Contentious, Duke of Palatinate-Neuburg.
- 20 Identity unknown.
- 21 Sebastian Schmidt (d. 8 September 1532) was a *Schöffe* in Frankfurt. Nothing further is known about him. For the *Credenzbrief* for Ulrich XVI, Schilling and Schmidt, see Andreas Jung, *Geschichte des Reichstages zu Speyer in dem Jahre 1529* (Strasbourg and Leipzig, 1830), Beilag LXIV (unpaginated).
- 22 See PC 1:312–14, no. 549 for the report of Ulrich XVI, Schilling and Schmidt, who arrived in Strasbourg on 23 December.
- 23 Cf. CorrBucer 3, Ep. 217, in which Bucer asked the 300 *Schöffen* of Strasbourg not to wait for the end of the Diet to decide to abolish the mass with CorrBucer 3, Ep. 217bis, another proposition, also from mid-January 1529, reflecting the point of view of moderate members of the city council, proposing to wait until the Diet opened on 21 February before making a decision on the mass.
- 24 Cf. Capito's similar remark about the 'tricks the adversary will use to impede us' in the abolition of the mass (CWC 2, Ep. 379).
- 25 On 20 February 1529, the city council of Strasbourg abolished the mass by a vote of 184 to 94 (see Brady, *Sturm*, 64–65).

There were no terrible consequences other than much tougher talk against those of Strasbourg behind their backs, but that brought no harm to the citizens of Strasbourg – praise God! Nor do we know of any place, however small, which has suffered harm on account of the mass [being abolished]. Think of Reutlingen,<sup>26</sup> Esslingen,<sup>27</sup> Heilbronn<sup>28</sup> – how do they com-

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- 26 Under the influence of the reformer, Matthäus Alber, the Reformation was introduced in Reutlingen. On 14 August 1524, he celebrated mass for the first time in the German language and shared communion under both kinds without first listening to aural confessions. The council approved the abolition of the mass in the parish church and the Franciscan monastery first in 1526, perhaps after the end of the Diet of Speyer. As nineteen Reutlingen priests opposed the reforms, the evangelical clergy called for a disputation on the matter. Although the Catholic clerics did not support the idea, the council decided to support only scriptural-based church services. The abolition of the mass was also retained against the wishes of the abbot and convent of Königsbronn, to which the parish church was incorporated. The church service was reduced in Reutlingen to the reading of scripture, a sermon, psalms and singing. In the summer of 1530, Reutlingen co-signed the Augsburg Confession and in early 1531, joined the Schmalkaldic League.
- 27 In September 1531, Esslingen joined the Schmalkaldic League, which strengthened the evangelical movement within the city that had been around since 1522. On 20 August 1531, the city council issued its first mandate that the preachers deliver evangelical sermons. Since the city itself had no real reformer, they called Ambrosius Blaurer to take the lead. He arrived there in September 1531 and remained until July 1532. Under his leadership, he convinced the citizens to vote in favour of abolishing the mass, which the city council officially abolished on 11 November 1531. On 10 December, the city issued a further ordinance banning its citizens from attending mass in neighbouring towns and territories.
- 28 On 18 November 1530, the city council of Heilbronn resolved to introduce the Reformation in its city, and on 26 November, its citizens assembled in the town square pledging their support should the city or the council be persecuted because of its religious actions. In March 1531, the city council called for the abolition of the mass in favour of weekly sermons, a move not altogether supported by the priests and chaplains. In the fall, the council forbade the mass in the Carmelite monastery and secured its decision to abolish the mass in all the monasteries through a new decision by the citizens on 8 December 1531. Upon the appeal of the affected monasteries to the imperial chamber court (*Reichskammergericht*), the bishop of Würzburg, Konrad II von Thüngen, and the Swabian League, the council agreed to reduce its demands: it allowed the monks to perform the mass two or three times a week and to attend mass in the church of the German Order (*Deutschordenskirche*), though the mass was banned in the parish churches. In all, the council was not successful in the total abolition of the mass in the city (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 540, note 12).

pare to the strength of Lindau and to their neighbours? Yet God protected them without any alliance. Therefore, this should be your concern: if you do not act now, you will achieve your goal later only with great difficulty and besides, you will turn away from you in some measure the Almighty God and his believers, and your name will be diminished among people on account of the gospel. Even if someone were to offer a defense of the mass on the basis of holy writ and argue against your preachers, they would give a satisfactory response to anyone according to the same gospel truth. In any case, we offer to come to your city, either both of us or one of us, as the matter requires, and to give satisfaction to the whole world, with the help of God, such that our argument will prevail in truth, in the conscience of all people and in eternity before God.

Since it is an uncertain and dangerous thing to keep house without order, we will gladly assist you with our labour in drawing up an ordinance that is useful and pleases God, but we cannot produce a lasting and effective solution anywhere unless the main stumbling block, the mass, is removed. Thus it is our earnest request that you act in a timely manner in the matter of the mass. Then we shall draw up an ordinance, including articles concerning your ministers of the Word as well as the pastors, assistants, schoolteachers and students, alms and discipline in the community, a marriage tribunal and confirmation of marriage, and especially the two sacraments of baptism and the holy Supper. Thus you may achieve a certain and lasting order in religious matters, which will win you the respect of the people, for we should live for the edification of others as well.

We beg you: do not disdain the effort we make on your behalf according to the will of God. Rather, accept it for the improvement and edification of God's community. We seek nothing but the salvation of your souls and the welfare and advantage of the city of Lindau together with the honour of God. We ask for your friendly and Christian reply, from which we may understand what the precious Word of God has effected in you. Inform us so that we may praise you on that account among the other communities of God. May the Almighty preserve you in your godly government and impart to you his grace and spirit – that is our sincere prayer.

Dr Wolfgang Capito,

Dr Johannes Zwick, both ministers of Christ and apostles of his gospel,  
your willing servants.

#### **Letter 465: 9 February 1532, [Memmingen], Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

The autograph original of this letter is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 32/91b. It is partially printed in Schiess 1:324–25, Ep. 266. For Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 192 headnote.

Grace and peace, dearest brother (for I use this word gladly, especially when addressing you). Church matters here are in a very bad state.<sup>1</sup> Discipline has almost collapsed. There is great luxury, much lack of self control, and lethal hatred against Simprecht,<sup>2</sup> which prompts some people to loosen the reins controlling the young people, who are crazy enough by themselves.<sup>3</sup>

The council asked me to stay a few days, which I did not dare promise because I had to hurry off to Augsburg.<sup>4</sup> I agreed, however, that I would share this task with you so that the whole city could be united under some solid ordinance, should you be able to come after your return home, and I told them that I would gladly submit myself to your leadership and judgment as the more experienced man.<sup>5</sup> They eagerly accepted this proposal. I

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- 1 Despite being one of the four co-signatories of the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, the city of Memmingen was plagued by sectarian strife: Georg Guky, a Lutheran, against Simprecht Schenk, a Zwinglian (see below). Furthermore, Hans Ehinger, a city councillor and diplomat, tried to stay the middle ground between Luther and Zwingli, and to retain the changes introduced by the reformers without being disloyal to the emperor. His purpose was to avoid Memmingen's political isolation. In view of this goal, he admonished Schenk not to preach provocative sermons anymore (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 558, note 28).
- 2 Schenk or Schenck (c. 1485–1559) entered the Carthusian monastery in Buxheim, near Memmingen. As of 1522, he was working as a chaplain in Meilen by Lake Zurich and from 1525 to 35 (with interruptions) at the Frauenkirche in Memmingen. In 1528, he participated at the Disputation of Bern. Contrary to his Lutheran counterpart in Memmingen, Georg Guky, Schenk represented the Zwinglian position. Ambrosius Blaurer attempted to mediate between the two men in 1528. Guky was eventually expelled. In 1532, Schenk was granted leave to study in Strasbourg. In 1534, he was working in Altingen/Remmingsheim, then in Herrenberg (1539) and ultimately from 1549 onward in Dornstetten, where he served as catechist, then as pastor and finally as superintendent.
- 3 On 21 February 1533, Schenk wrote to Bucer, 'We very much hope for Capito's return, and at the same time that of Master Ambrosius [Blaurer], who until now has been working in Esslingen' (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 558).
- 4 According to a letter from Schenk to Bucer, Capito had a lengthy conversation at six o'clock in the morning of 9 February 1532 with three members of the Privy Council, Eberhard Zangmeister, Ulrich Lieber and Jorg Triesch, who asked him to stay in the city longer; instead, however, Capito left around noon for Augsburg (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 558).
- 5 On 15 February, Blaurer reported to Bucer from Esslingen that he had received a letter (presumably Ep. 465) from Capito: 'Capito has arrived in Augsburg. I shall not remain here much longer; the situation is not very good in Memmingen and demands that I offer my services there. Capito will be there as well; he wrote to me from Memmingen asking that I inform him of my arrival' (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 555). On 5 March, however, Bucer proposed to Blaurer that

therefore ask you to hasten your journey to Kempten and Memmingen, but write to me first in Augsburg, that I may meet with you there on a day that suits you.<sup>6</sup> In the meantime I will do in Augsburg what God grants in his kindness. So much for now as I am about to take my leave from here. Farewell and be happy in the Lord, 9 February 1532.

Yours, Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 466: 14 February 1532, [Augsburg], Capito to Joachim Vadianus**

Printed in VadBr 5:42–43, Ep. 671. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito had plans to visit Vadianus in St Gallen, but was obliged to go to Augsburg instead [see above, Ep. 465, note 4]. Indeed, he has no advice for Vadianus, who has given proof of his ability to deal with politics and religion. He hopes to visit St Gallen on another occasion. He has conceived great hopes from the meetings in Bern and Zurich. He recommends the bearer of the letter to Vadianus.

**Letter 467: [After 11 February 1532, Augsburg], Capito to Martin Bucer and the Strasbourg Preachers**

On 3 January 1532, Luther wrote a letter to Caspar Huberinus in Augsburg (WABr 6, Ep. 1894). Capito sent a copy of this letter from Augsburg to Strasbourg, with the following note addressed ‘to Bucer and his brethren in Strasbourg.’ The text of this note is published in CorrBucer 7:264–65, Ep. 554.

[*Summary*]: The [Lutherans] in Augsburg are treating the other evangelicals

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he remain in Esslingen and suggested that Capito instead take care of the situation in Memmingen (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 567). Six days later, Blaurer replied that he himself was reluctant to leave Esslingen, where he had been since September 1531, because his premature departure would be detrimental to the Reformation in Esslingen on account of the Anabaptists, who were regrouping in a nearby village (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 571). Blaurer remained in Esslingen until the summer. He finally went to Memmingen on 19 July 1532 and remained there until September 1532, after which time he moved to Isny, arriving there on 14 September (CorrBucer 8, Ep. 613, note 28).

<sup>6</sup> Capito and Blaurer did not meet up at this time, either in Augsburg or in Esslingen, as Bucer had expected (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 551, note 50).

like certain princes treat their soldiers. They employ them to wage war when necessary, then dismiss them wounded and injured. They prefer to obtain favour with [Charles V] by disparaging the other evangelicals.

**Letter 468: 5 March 1532, Augsburg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 2:66–67, Ep. 72. The addressee, Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575) of Bremgarten, succeeded Ulrich Zwingli as head (*antistes*) of the churches in Zurich as well as pastor at the Grossmünster. At the age of twelve, Bullinger was sent to the distant but celebrated gymnasium of Emmerich in the Duchy of Cleves. In 1519, at the age of fifteen, he matriculated at the University of Cologne (BA, 1520; MA, 1522). In 1522, he returned home, accepting a post as head of the cloister school at Kappel, though only after negotiating special conditions that meant he did not need to take monastic vows or attend mass. On 1 June 1529, he became a regular parish minister in Bremgarten (canton of Aargau). There, on 27 August 1529, he married Anna Adlischwyler, with whom he had eleven children. After the Battle of Kappel in which Zwingli died (11 October 1531), the Aargau region, including Bremgarten, returned to the Catholic faith. Bullinger and two other pastors had to leave the town. Bullinger fled to Zurich on 21 November, where he turned down calls from Basel and Bern to serve their churches. On 9 December 1531, he was chosen by the Small and Great Councils of Zurich as Zwingli's successor. In his function as Zurich's *antistes*, he played a critical role in the ministerial and synodal ordinances of 1532, the worship service ordinance of 1535, the First Helvetic Confession of 1536 and the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566, as well as the *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549.

[*Summary*]: Capito hopes that rumours of a war against the Five Cantons are false. He asks for news about efforts to restore friendship between Zurich and Bern and hopes that they will be fruitful. War is ruinous for both parties. He was pleased to see the high standard of education and piety in Zurich. He recognizes that Bullinger has taken on a demanding task, being responsible for the well-being of the church in Zurich. He must be careful to ensure that 'the city council does neither too much nor too little in matters that concern the kingdom of Christ.' Capito would like to know whether the council has released the clergy from military duty. He sees no place for them in battle. Their duty is to console and care for widows and orphans. The battlefield offers no opportunities for spiritual growth. At home they might encourage penitence. They must exercise the arts of peace, not learn the stratagems of war. He sends greetings to all friends in Zurich.

**Letter 469: 16 March 1532, [Bern], Berchtold Haller to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, no. 7. For Haller (1492–1536), evangelical preacher in Bern, see CWC 2, Ep. 290, note 71.

Grace, peace and an innocent life from God our Father and our Saviour, Jesus Christ!

You have thus far asked me in many pious and likewise learned letters to write to you, expressing a great desire to be informed about our affairs.<sup>1</sup> Since the Spirit of God has spoken through you and since you have restored and regenerated the church that earlier brought forth unheard-of monsters, you are deservedly acknowledged as its father.<sup>2</sup> I therefore wrote to Constance through a servant<sup>3</sup> of Konrad Zwick<sup>4</sup> of Constance. I thought my letter could easily be conveyed to you from there, but I see I have been frustrated in my expectation, unless you have received the letter in the meantime, for I sent it before this month of March.<sup>5</sup>

But to return to our affairs: if only things were as steady as they are pious! And if only everything in the church, the magistracy, and among the citizens and ministers were as it was when you left! So far everything has been more peaceful than when you first came to us,<sup>6</sup> although I do not trust the papists and even less the faction of Geneva and the duke,<sup>7</sup> who forever

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1 These letters are no longer extant.

2 For Capito's success at the Synod of Bern, see above, Ep. 461 headnote.

3 Identity unknown.

4 Konrad Zwick, Jr., (c. 1500–1557), a brother of Johannes Zwick (see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1) was, since 1525, a member of the city council of Constance. He took part in several delegations. He helped draft the Constance ordinance on excommunication in 1531. After the occupation of Constance by the Austrians in 1548, he lived in exile in Thurgau and Zurich.

5 The letter is no longer extant.

6 Capito was in Bern from 29 December 1531 to mid-January 1532 (see above, note 2).

7 Charles III (1486–1553), duke of Savoy (1504–53). In 1521, he married Beatrice of Portugal, the sister-in-law of Charles V. While his efforts to retain control of Geneva failed and his domestic policies showed little imagination, the Habsburg alliance gained him the county of Asti in 1530. The prize he coveted, however, Monferrato, eluded him in 1536 when Charles V assigned it to his rival, Federico Gonzaga of Mantua. In 1536, these lands were invaded by France, and all but the strategically unimportant part of Piedmont and the region of Nice were occupied by either the French or the Bernese. After the death of his wife in 1538, Charles retired to Vercelli, where he spent his remaining years.

threatens war and rages so wildly that he could hardly be held off, unless God should act through his Word. Yet even so we should always have hope. The proceedings, which were printed a month ago,<sup>8</sup> could not be conveyed here on account of the piles of snow.<sup>9</sup> In the meantime Cratander has printed a Latin translation of them.<sup>10</sup> The magistrate will receive 100 copies for the French.<sup>11</sup>

The Five Cantons know how to make use of a victory and how to tri-

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- 8 The proceedings of the Synod of Bern were first printed in German under the title, *Berner Synodus Ordnung wie sich pfarrer zu Statt und Land Bern, in leer und leben, halten sollen, mit wyterem bericht von Christo, unnd den Sacramenten, beschlossen im Synodo da selbst versamlet, am ix. tag Januarii An. MDXXXII* (Basel: [Froben, before 13 February 1532]). To Haller's disappointment, the proceedings were not printed by Christoph Froschauer in Zurich, the customary printer for official statements from Bern, because of tensions between the two cities (HBBW 2, Ep. 56). Instead, it was decided on the last day of the synod that the proceedings be published in Basel (Steck/Tobler 2: 1495, no. 3282). On 9 February, Haller announced to Bullinger that the proceedings were about to appear from Froben's press (HBBW 2, Ep. 63). On 5 March, Bucer sent a copy of the proceedings to Blaurer, asking him to read them through and give his opinion. In Bucer's mind, the proceedings seemed to demonstrate that Capito was finally in line theologically with him and Blaurer (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 567).
- 9 Cf. VadBr 5, Ep. 670, a letter from Haller to Vadianus, 13 February 1532: 'The proceedings of our synod have now been published, but given the sorry condition of the roads, they cannot be conveyed to us'; and HBBW 2, Ep. 65, ll. 21–22, a letter from Haller to Bullinger, 20 February 1532: 'The proceedings of the synod have been printed, but they have not yet been delivered to us on account of the snow.'
- 10 Already on 9 February, Haller had reported to Bullinger that Simon Sulzer would translate the proceedings into Latin and that Cratander would publish them (HBBW 2, Ep. 63). Sulzer's translation appeared under the title, *Acta synodi Bernensis ...* (Basel: Cratander, [before 16 March] 1532).
- 11 Since 100 copies of the closing speeches (in Latin) of the 1528 Disputation of Bern were sent to Lausanne, Aigle, and the other French-speaking regions of Switzerland, Hans Rudolf Lavater proposes that 'for the French' means that these 100 copies too were meant for the personal needs of the French-speaking preachers of Aigle, Murten, Grandson, and Echallens. See Lavater, 'Der "Synodus" in der Berner Kirche bis zum Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts,' in *Der Berner Synodus von 1532*, vol. 2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), 311–12.

umph. St Gallen has paid the abbot<sup>12</sup> 10,000 gulden.<sup>13</sup> The abbot and his monks have been restored, brought back to the monastery together with their papistical impieties.<sup>14</sup> In Bremgarten they have reportedly banned those who refuse to go to aural confession and take communion, [believing that] God is in the bread.<sup>15</sup> What can I say? Oligarchy will be our ruin. It will take away religion, and those who do not know how to accept their rule will yet learn to serve, unless the Lord protects us. For the rest, Bern and Zurich have paid 5,000 crowns in compensation; Basel, if I am not mistaken, 1,200; Mulhouse, 400; Schaffhausen, which otherwise keeps to the Word very well and has a new, most sensible mayor,<sup>16</sup> 1,000; St Gallen, 600.<sup>17</sup> You see what we can

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- 12 Diethelm Blaurer of Wartensee (1503–1564) began his schooling at the Latin school in Lindau. As of 1523, he was a monk at St Gallen. By 1528 he had advanced to become the *Statthalter* of Rorschach. In 1530, he was elected prince-abbot of the St Gallen abbey by the monks living in exile at the abbey in Mehre-rau while their abbey was suppressed (1529–31). Blaurer was not able to return to St Gallen until 1532, after the end of the Second Battle of Kappel. During his term of office, Blaurer achieved the restoration of the abbey's right of sovereignty in Toggenburg in the Treaty of Wil (1538). He also built a new library in 1551.
- 13 It was decided at a Diet in Wil in February 1532 that St Gallen pay the reinstated abbot of St Gallen, Diethelm Blaurer (see above, note 12), 10,000 gulden in compensation for the damage done three years earlier, when, on 29 February 1529, the citizens of St Gallen stormed the abbey church and destroyed its images. Blaurer, however, had demanded 30,000 gulden. See Meyer, 248.
- 14 Fleeing the advancing Protestant troops, the recently elected abbot of St Gallen, Kilian Germann, along with some of the monks, left the abbey on 7 July 1529 and crossed Lake Constance to Meersburg. He drowned shortly afterwards in the Bregenzer Ache. Thereafter, Zurich placed the abbey under a secular protectorate and liquidated many of its assets, against the will of Lucerne and Schwyz, and only with the lukewarm support of Glarus. After the Second Battle of Kappel, the Catholics reinstated Diethelm Blaurer, as was agreed in the terms of the Peace of Kappel.
- 15 As of mid-January 1532, Bremgarten was forced by the Five Catholic Cantons to return to the Catholic faith (see HBBW 2, Ep. 71; cf. HBBW 2, Ep. 76; and Strickler 4:348, no. 1061d). Unlike Zurich and Bern, Bremgarten was given no guarantee that the Protestants there would be allowed to practise their faith (see EA 4/1b:1220, no. 651.6). For the recatholization of Bremgarten, see EA 4/1b:1226, no. 655, and p. 1265, no. 672.
- 16 The new mayor was Hans Peyer. As in many other cities in Switzerland, there were in fact two mayors in Schaffhausen: a *Bürgermeister* and an *Unterbürgermeister*. As of 1516, Peyer was the *Bürgermeister* in the even years, while Hans Ziegler (1464–1550) was the *Bürgermeister* in the odd years (1515–46). Haller's

learn from these vicissitudes, what the gospel brings when it is mixed up with politics and, what is worst of all, that we can hope little from the leaders of the cities as far as a return to any kind of concord is concerned.

In the castles and monasteries of Thurgau the impiety of the mass has been brought back.<sup>18</sup> In Glarus, they say, nine ministers were ousted because they were foreigners – only one is left.<sup>19</sup> Thus it is hard for me to write about how great an evil, calamity, and misfortune this war has brought to the entire people of Switzerland.<sup>20</sup> Here Megander<sup>21</sup> is still holding his own, but

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characterization of the new mayor matches much better with the reformed-minded Peyer than the conservative Ziegler.

- 17 At the diet of 29 January 1532, the Five Cantons pressed for 20,000 gulden from Zurich and Bern, whereas these cities offered to pay together a lump sum of 3,000 gulden. The smaller Protestant towns rejected any demand for reparations, since they had been drawn into the war not on their own accord, but on account of defensive alliances. They hoped at the very least that Bern would lead the negotiations for them and succeed in negotiating a lump sum to be divided up among individual towns, but neither Bern nor the Five Cantons wanted that; no one had any hope of getting support from Zurich. Through the mediation of the *Schiedorte*, at the end of February 1532 they came to an agreement, after the Five Cantons had lowered their demands: Zurich and Bern each had to pay the Five Cantons 2,500 gulden; Basel, 1,200; Schaffhausen, 1,000; St Gallen, 600; and Mulhouse, 400. Zurich accepted this solution at the diet, Bern several days later. There was nothing for the small towns to do but to bite the bullet (see below, Ep. 479). The Five Cantons thus received 8,200 gulden. Only Lucerne considered challenging the outcome and bringing a legal suit. Zurich secured a more clement attitude from Uri by agreeing to its future participation in controlling the free bailiwicks (*Freier Ämter*). See Meyer, 309, and 454, note 84.
- 18 The nobility (i.e., the lords of the castles) were in favour of returning to Catholicism. By 'monasteries,' Haller means the Augustinians of Kreuzlingen and the Dominican nuns in St Katherinental. Their residents had fled in 1529 and returned in 1532.
- 19 We know of only two men who were driven out: Paul Rasdorfer and Peter Rümeli.
- 20 I.e., the Second Battle of Kappel of October 1531.
- 21 Caspar Megander (1495–1545) was a preacher at the cathedral in Bern and a follower of Zwingli. After studying at Basel (MA, 1518), he worked first as hospital chaplain (*Spitalkaplan*) and since 1524 as hospital preacher (*Spitalprediger*) at the cathedral in Basel. On 12 February 1528, he became preacher at the cathedral in Bern as well as professor at the *Hohe Schule*. In the dispute between Zurich and the Five Cantons, his vehement support for the war policy of Zurich led to his temporary suspension, which was revoked after Capito's intercession in January 1532 (see above, Ep. 461 headnote). Megander worked on the Zurich Bible translation and helped draft the First Helvetic Confession of 1536. He opposed

his authority has been taken away among certain people you know well. Yet it will gradually grow when things are more propitious and peace returns. The articles you proposed to the senate and Great Council<sup>22</sup> have not yet been implemented because the synod introduced a delay, but the council will still implement them in response to the initiative we took over the last few days, and our communities plan to do the same.<sup>23</sup> You have summoned Otter<sup>24</sup> to join you in Ulm, which the council has readily permitted, so long as he returns to us again and no other man is called to the ministry without obtaining Otter's agreement. For the majority of the people of Bern are keen on him. If we are deprived of him, you will become the subject of unkind remarks and will not be forgiven.

Michael of Spain<sup>25</sup> has reportedly written an apologia<sup>26</sup> for the book

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the Wittenberg Concord of 1536. When the city council of Bern authorized on 6 November 1537 Megander's catechism, he returned in February 1538 to Zurich as archdean and canon at the cathedral.

- 22 The word used is *'diacosiiis,'* at term which Haller frequently employs in his correspondence (cf. HBBW 2, Ep. 81, l. 27). They were the members of the Council of 200 (see above, Ep. 461, note 11).
- 23 I.e., the communities under Bern's authority. On 14 January 1532, the city council of Bern issued its formal approval of the acts of the Synod of Bern by way of a mandate, and ordered that they be read at future annual synods to be held at the beginning of every May. The text is printed in *Der Berner Synodus von 1532, Band 1: Edition* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 18–27 (German), 176–80 (Latin), 249–56 (French).
- 24 For Jakob Otter, see CWC 2, Ep. 205, note 2. On 23 March, Haller wrote to Bullinger, 'Capito has summoned Otter from Aarau to Augsburg. The council has consented, but [under the condition] that he return. Capito has left Augsburg and has been expecting Otter in Ulm for some time' (HBBW 2, Ep. 79, ll. 23–24).
- 25 Michael Servetus or Villanovanus (c. 1511–1553) was the son of the noble notary, Antón Serveto. Between 1525 and 1526 he was in the service of Juan de Quintana, the future confessor of Charles V. From 1528 to 1529 he studied law at the University of Toulouse, but he returned to the service of Quintana and with him attended the coronation of the emperor at Bologna on 24 February 1530. From there he travelled to Basel, where he remained for more than six months at the house of Oecolampadius, with whom he debated christological and Trinitarian theology. In May 1531, he settled in Strasbourg. Over the next year he published in Haguenau two antitrinitarian works (see below, notes 26–7). After that, Servetus studied medicine in Paris under the pseudonym Michel de Villeneuve and as of 1534 worked as editor, physician and natural scientist in Lyon. There he prepared an edition of Ptolemy's *Geography* (Lyon, 1535). In 1541, he settled in Vienne, where he served as physician to Pierre Palmier, the archbishop, and where he wrote his magnum opus, *Christianismi restitutio* (Vienne, [1552/3]), which also contained an important section on the circulation

he published earlier,<sup>27</sup> which is full of thousands of monstrous errors. You have drawn on the same sources as he for the mysteries of the Trinity. If you do not write against Servetus, he will not only disturb the churches but also cause you to become suspect of either agreeing or conniving with him. The brethren therefore want you to be forewarned.<sup>28</sup> They even beseech you to help those who are not yet endowed with the great light of the Truth. The brethren fear not only that the people will be gravely imposed upon, but also fear for the people when they see that you, who have until now filled the world with books, keep silence, turn a deaf ear, and remain idle in the face of such serious matters.

Franz, that best of men, looks very well after the old people, and is an indefatigable defender of your name.<sup>29</sup> Several ministers in the countryside have delayed the baptism of children until the [next] Lord's Day, as if they were acting on instruction and command of the council and the decree of the synod. They are ill-advised, since the people have not yet been properly instructed. They almost muddled everything with this awkward business. We have done our best to prevent it. There is nothing else to report except to caution you to seek a suitable wife<sup>30</sup> from the Lord, unless you want to

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of the blood. In 1546, he began an exchange of letters with John Calvin on theological issues. Denounced as a heretic by a close friend of Calvin, Servetus was imprisoned by the Inquisition at Vienne in 1553. He escaped on 7 April but was apprehended at Geneva on 13 August. He was tried and convicted of spreading heresy, and burned at the stake on 27 October 1553.

26 Michael Servetus, *Dialogi de Trinitate* (Haguenau, July 1532).

27 Michael Servetus, *De Trinitatis erroribus* ([Haguenau], 1531).

28 For the concern expressed over Capito's sympathies for Servetus, see CWC 2, Ep. 450 and CorrBucer 7, Epp. 527–9, 531, 535, and 565, as well as Kittelson, 189–90.

29 Franz Kolb (1465–1535) studied in Basel (MA, 1497). From 1497 to 1502, he was teacher at St Martin in Basel; from 1502–4 cantor in Bern; from 1504–9 cantor and preacher in Fribourg, during which time he spent a half year in Murten (1505). From 1509 to 1512 he was preacher in Bern. As of 1512, Kolb lived as a Carthusian monk in Nürnberg and worked thereafter until 1525 in Wertheim (Franconia), where he helped introduce the Reformation. On account of his Zwinglian views of the Lord's Supper, he had to leave the city. He went first to Nürnberg, then in 1527 ended up back in Bern. With Berchtold Haller, Kolb assumed a leading position in Bern. He participated in the Disputation of Bern (1528) and in discussions with the Anabaptist, Hans Pfistermeyer.

30 In April 1532, Capito married Wibrandis Rosenblatt (1504–1564), a widow who had been married twice before: in 1524, she was married in Basel to Ludwig Keller, with whom she had one daughter, Wibrandis (b. 1525), but Keller died in the summer of 1526; on 15 March 1528, she married Johannes Oecolampa-

ruin yourself with melancholy and continuous bad health.<sup>31</sup> We wish you a wife who has no children at all and bears you children with the blessing of the Lord, whether you marry a widow or a virgin. Once you consider the love parents have for their children, you will easily recognize why we wish for this. For if you want to be burdened with a morose woman who has children, you can guess yourself what trouble and misery she would cause you. In sum, when you return home, have more regard for your health lest you leave your church desolate through your premature death. And write some time about the outcome of your journey. Farewell. May he, for whom you do battle, preserve you and guide you back. 16 March in the year '32. Consider the mind of the writer rather than his writing. All the best men salute you and wish you well. I write from the heart.

Your host, whom you know so well,  
B.H.

**Letter 469a: 29 March [1532], Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg  
Preachers to Johannes Schwebel**

Printed in *CorrBucer* 7:403–5, Ep. 576. The addressee, Johannes Schwebel (c. 1490–1540) studied theology at Tübingen (1508), Leipzig (1509), and Heidelberg (1511), where he was a member of the Hospital Order of the Holy Ghost. In 1514, he was ordained as a priest in Pforzheim and became a preacher at the Holy Ghost hospital. In Pforzheim, he came under the influence of Nikolaus Gerbel, Johann Reuchlin, and Philip Melancthon, through whom he became acquainted with Luther's works. As of 1519, he was preaching evangelical sermons in Pforzheim. In 1522, he sought refuge with Franz von Sickingen at the Ebernburg and possibly worked as Bucer's successor in Landstuhl. In the spring of 1523 he became court preacher of Duke Ludwig II von Pfalz-Zweibrücken and championed the evangelical cause in his territory. In 1529, he

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dius, with whom she had three children: Eusebius (1528–1541), Irene (b. 1530), and Aletheia (b. 1531). After Oecolampadius' death in 1531, she married Capito in April 1532, and gave birth to Agnes (b. 1533), Dorothea (b. 1535), Johann Simon (b. 1537), Wolfgang Christoph (b. 1538), and Irene (b. 1541). In November 1541, Capito, as well as Eusebius, Dorothea, and Wolfgang Christoph, succumbed to the plague. In 1542, Wibrandis married Martin Bucer, with whom she had two more children: Martin (b. 1543) and Elisabeth (b. 1545). She accompanied Bucer to England in 1549, but returned to Strasbourg after his death in 1551, where she eventually died of the plague.

<sup>31</sup> For Capito's depression after the death of his first wife, Agnes Roettel, on 17 October 1531, see above, Ep. 461 headnote and note 6.

attended the Marburg Colloquy; in 1530 he subscribed to the Augsburg Confession and to Melancthon's Apology. After Duke Ludwig's death, Ruprecht von Zweibrücken became regent for the six-year-old heir, Wolfgang. Ruprecht continued to support the Reformation and in May 1533 appointed Schwebel as principal pastor (*Stadtpfarrer*) and superintendent of Zweibrücken. In this capacity Schwebel wrote church regulations and conducted visitations. From 1528 he combatted Anabaptism, and more particularly the views of Georg Pistor, who rejected exorcism (see below, Ep. 511). He was at odds with Capito over his views on church government and supported a strict division between church and state. In the sacramental controversy, he came closer to Bucer's than to Luther's interpretation. He was prepared to attend the colloquy of Hanau, but died on 19 May 1540.

[*Summary*]: Due to lack of time, the Strasbourg preachers will send their response to Schwebel's question [concerning his difficulties with Georg Pistor?] with the next courier. They will use as courier the pastor, about whom they have recently written [letter not extant], [Bartholomaeus Bauer?], from Wolfisheim, a small town in the territory of Duke Philip III of Hanau[-Lichtenberg]. He was compelled to give up his position on account of malicious remarks from his superior. The Strasbourg preachers recommend him for a position as pastor, provided that Schwebel first examine his beliefs and life style.

#### Letter 470: 3 April 1532, [Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Schwebel

This letters concerns the efforts by Capito and the Strasbourg preachers to recommend a suitable candidate as schoolteacher in Zweibrücken (see below, Ep. 471). Printed in *Centuria*, pp. 159–60, no. 50. For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote.

Wolfgang Capito to Johannes Schwebel, his lord and cherished brother.

Grace and peace. While I was writing another letter, people came who tried to keep Georg<sup>1</sup> back from his intention. Your messenger repeated his

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<sup>1</sup> I.e., Georg Pistor. The dates of his birth and death are unknown. At the end of January 1532, he travelled to Zweibrücken on the recommendation of Bucer in order to assume the position of assistant in the neighbouring town of Ernstweiler. There he came into conflict with Schwebel and Johannes Meisenheimer on account of his undiplomatic attempts at reform and his affinity to the Anabaptists. Around November 1538, he was deposed and banished from the territory. He is not documented after this time.

story: the people were dying of the plague without consolation from a minister of the Word. They were urgently begging us to see to it that the messenger return with a minister. Then we thought of sending Michael Hilspach,<sup>2</sup> but I fear that he would be deterred by the small salary and would rather stay here, if he absolutely had to leave Pforzheim. Therefore, we have sent this brother, an innocent man and sedulous, who will be very well suited to teach boys, for whatever he is lacking in learning, his diligence will make good.<sup>3</sup> I recommend either man to you. Georg offended you with silly talk. Please forgive him for my sake. Farewell. Bucer has still not arrived in Gemmingen;<sup>4</sup> he will tell you himself about his activities. Again, farewell. 3 April 1532.

**Letter 471: 4 April 1532, [Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Schwebel**

Printed in *Centuria*, pp. 160–1, no. 51. For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote.

Grace and peace. We have no one who is more suited to teaching children

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2 Michael Hilspach (1482–1570) was a candidate for the first rectorate in Esslingen. After his studies at Heidelberg (BA, 1511; MA, 1513), he became schoolmaster in 1513 at the Latin School in Ettlingen and in 1514/15 he married Caspar Hedio's sister, Margarete Heyd. As of 1518 he was the director of the Latin school in Haguenau, during which time he published two works on the Latin language: *Primitium seu incunabula Latinae linguae* (Haguenau, 1520) and *Isagogicum in literas latinas* (Haguenau, 1521). On account of his evangelical activities, he was dismissed from Haguenau in 1525 and became director of the Latin school in Pforzheim, a position he was forced to quit in 1531. After a brief stay in Strasbourg, he became schoolmaster in Zweibrücken in the fall of 1532 and as of 1533 worked also as a deacon there. In 1536, he supported the adoption of the Wittenberg Concord and in 1547 succeeded Caspar Glaser as superintendent.

3 Identity unknown.

4 The text in *Centuria* has 'Memmingam,' but it is very unlikely that Bucer would have made a stopover in Memmingen on his way from Strasbourg to Schweinfurt, from where he wrote a letter to Blaurer on 18 April (CorrBucer 8, Ep. 578), given the fact that Memmingen is situated far from Schweinfurt. It is much more likely that there is a typographical error in *Centuria*, and that one ought instead to read 'Gemmingam,' that is, Gemmingen, a small town in Bavaria, which Bucer visited from 30 April–3 May 1532 (see CorrBucer 8, p. XVIII), and where Schwebel's new colleague, Caspar Glaser, had recently arrived. Perhaps Bucer wished to touch base with Glaser before arriving in Schweinfurt.

and who is available for the task than this man,<sup>1</sup> who has agreed to bring this letter to you. He has been sent to take on the position of teacher in your city.<sup>2</sup> If you find him lacking in any aspect of the humanities, he will easily make it up under your initiative and guidance. He is pious and leads a blameless life. Michael Hilspach<sup>3</sup> will not travel there, as his relative says,<sup>4</sup> for he has hopes of obtaining a position here, as the magistracy has most kindly promised him. I therefore commend this man to you. Use your judgment. He will obey you like a parent. Farewell. 4 April 1532.

### Letter 472: 7 April 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Nicolaus Kniebs

The manuscript of this letter is in Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, ms. Thott 497, f. 82.

Circumspect, honourable, wise lord. I wish you an increase in the grace of God and a happy return journey, and first offer you my most willing service. Maternus<sup>1</sup> gave me your greetings and offered to convey a letter to you, an offer I accepted with thanks. Yet I have nothing to write other than that everything is as of old and we are expecting the return of my lords from the

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- 1 Not identified, but presumably the man recommended in Ep. 470.
  - 2 I.e., Zweibrücken.
  - 3 For Michael Hilspach, see above, Ep. 470, note 2.
  - 4 The Latin word used here is *gener*, which normally means 'son-in-law.' According to a letter from Hedio to Schwebel, written in 1535, the son-in-law of Hilspach was a man named Thomas (*Centuria*, p. 237, no. 72). On the other hand, in this case the word may mean 'brother-in-law' – in other words, Caspar Hedio, whose sister married Hilspach. Hedio wrote a letter of recommendation for Hilspach to Ambrosius Blaurer and Konrad Sam on 30 August 1531. According to Hedio's letter, Hilspach, who was teaching at the Latin school in Pforzheim at the time, faced one of two choices: either take part in the Catholic rite of the mass or give up his position at the school (see Schiess 1, Ep. 205; cf. CorrBucer 6, Ep. 488).
- 1 Maternus Hatten (d. 1546) was a vicar at the cathedral of Speyer in the mid-1510s. On 1 September 1517 he was appointed curate of Loffenau, resigning this benefice at the end of 1518. He was sympathetic to the reformers, even offering refuge in his home to Bucer, when he sought permission to leave the Dominican Order (see CWC 1, Ep. 74). In June 1527, Hatten was suspended from his office for his Lutheran views, and received a canonry at St Thomas in Strasbourg in August of that same year. He became a citizen of Strasbourg on 31 August 1527. He died on 14 March 1546, leaving behind a wife, Barbara Heger, and a son and daughter.

meeting in Schweinfurt.<sup>2</sup> I am willing conscientiously to undertake the business of the church.

When you come to Regensburg<sup>3</sup> and meet Johannes Aventinus,<sup>4</sup> I ask you to negotiate with him most diligently, requesting him to come to us<sup>5</sup> and have his history printed here,<sup>6</sup> for this would be a special honour to our

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- 2 From 31 March–9 May 1532, the members of the League of Schmalkalden, Albert of Brandenburg and Ludwig V Count Palatine met in Schweinfurt, while Charles V was hurrying from the Netherlands to stage an imperial diet at Regensburg. The Strasbourg legates were Jacob Sturm and Jakob Meyer. At Schweinfurt, Sturm convinced Bucer to subscribe to the Augsburg Confession, thereby allowing Strasbourg to join the League of Schmalkalden, an action that officially distanced the city from the Swiss.
- 3 The Diet of Regensburg sat from 17 April–27 July 1532.
- 4 Johannes Aventinus or Turmair (1477–1534) was a Bavarian historian and philologist. After attending the local school of the Carmelite cloister in Abensberg, he matriculated at the University of Ingolstadt in 1495, where he received lower orders. Soon thereafter he followed his teacher, Conrad Celtis, to Vienna, where he pursued humanistic studies. These he continued in Cracow and Paris (MA, 1504). After stays in Abensberg, Straubing and Vienna, he was appointed tutor to dukes Ludwig and Ernst of Bavaria from 1509–17. During this time, he wrote an unpublished history of Bavaria (1511) and a Latin grammar (Munich, 1512; reprinted eleven times). In 1517, he was named historiographer to the dukes of Bavaria in Regensburg. Between the years 1519–21, he wrote the *Annales ducum Boiariae*. In 1522, he published an epitome in German, *Bayrischer Chronicon [...] ein kurtzer Auszug* (Nürnberg, 1522), which established his reputation as one of Germany's leading historians. From February 1531 until his death, he worked on his *Germania illustrata* and its German version, *Zeitbuch über ganz Teutschland*, both of which remained incomplete.
- 5 Bucer addressed a similar request to Kniebs in a letter on 29 May 1532 (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 589, note 10). Bucer had already issued an invitation to Aventinus on 8 December 1531, enlisting the help of Beatus Rhenanus (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 521). The three Strasbourg scholars promised Aventinus an annual salary of 60 gulden, but Bucer thought that it might eventually be raised to 100 gulden (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 520). Around the same time, however, Bucer wrote to Blaurer that he did not think that Aventinus was suited for the position of preacher in Strasbourg on account of his Bavarian dialect, but that he might instead be employed to teach theology, since he had begun studying Hebrew (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 518). The attempts to draw Aventinus to Strasbourg did not come to fruition, however [see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 556, note 6 and M. Lenz, 'Aventins Berufung nach Strassburg,' *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* n.s. 9 (1894): 629–37].
- 6 Capito must be referring not to Aventinus' *Bayrischer Chronicon* (see above, note 4), but to his incomplete *Germania illustrata*, which Aventinus worked on from 18 February 1531 until his death on 9 January 1534 (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 520, note 9).

fatherland and help the poor craftsmen. You may also speak with him to see whether he would be willing to entrust his history to us and have it printed in his absence. We would spare no effort. Furthermore, dear sir, I would very much like, if possible, that Your Honour was present when we engage in the business of the church, because the matter must be done in an orderly fashion, and we could put our trust in you first of all. But no doubt you will have your work cut out at the imperial diet. May God grant you his grace and a happy return journey. Given at Strasbourg, 7 April 1532.

Your Honour's willing servant,  
Dr Wolfgang Capito.

Your Honour should put Aventinus at ease, for I am worried that the dangerous situation may hold him back, and that he will be rather reluctant to come at this time, considering [the defeat] Zurich and Bern have suffered.

**Letter 473: 21 April 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Joachim Vadianus**

Printed in VadBr 5:53–4, Ep. 680. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito asked Nikolaus Guldi why St Gallen accepted the harsh conditions of peace [see above, Ep. 469, note 13]. He replied that they could not reject the demands of the abbot, [Diethelm Blaurer], after he proved his rights. They did not make concessions concerning scripture. Capito wishes he had visited St Gallen and spoken to the preachers when he was in the vicinity [see above, Ep. 466]. He has written to Dominik [Zili?] about the duty of the magistracy and the moderation necessary in reprehending others. He hopes he will take his advice in good stead. Capito asks Vadianus to reply to his guest, [Jakob] Ziegler. Bucer has gone to Schweinfurt with a delegation from the council [see above, Ep. 472, note 2]. There is a rumour that a large Turkish army will invade Hungary.

**Letter 474: 21 April 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 2:109–11, Ep. 90.

[*Summary*]: Capito will keep his reply brief because he also needs to write to friends in Memmingen, Esslingen, Basel, Bern, and Zurich. He counsels Bullinger to retain [Diethelm] Röist as mayor and to ensure that negotiations with Bern stay on course. The unfortunate events of the recent past call for a return to the old alliances. The Five Catholic Cantons have imposed harsh conditions on the defeated cities and driven out the ministers of the gospel. The evangelicals must keep a common front against them. Capito is pleased that the church is doing well in Zurich and that Bullinger is preparing a re-

sponse to [Johannes] Fabri's [*Trostbüchlin*, 1532]. Luther's [*Sendschreiben an Herzog Albrecht von Preußen*, 1532] must either be met with silence or be answered by someone who is not closely connected with Zwingli. Capito has written about this in private letters to friends.<sup>1</sup> If an official reply is necessary, he would prefer to wait until he knows the outcome of the meeting at Schweinfurt. Who can bear hearing Zwingli compared with the rebellious followers of [Thomas] Müntzer? But it is God's will, who allowed this to happen. Bullinger's reply to Fabri [*Tröstliche Verantwortung*, Zurich, June 1532] must be politic and refrain from mentioning Luther's name. [Charles V]'s aim is to obtain troops against the Turks who have invaded Hungary and to have Ferdinand endorsed as king by the princes who favour the Reformation. The election was against the regulations set down in the Golden Bull [of 1356, because it took place in Cologne and not in Frankfurt]. [Charles V] wishes to contain the Reformation, seeing that he cannot suppress it. Our delegates have been away for six weeks now without reporting back. This would indicate that no decisions have been made, and neither party is ready to make concessions. Capito has read Bullinger's letter to his friends, who send their greetings in turn. He commends [Andreas] Karlstadt to Bullinger and cautions him against the French [seeking mercenaries].

#### Letter 475: 30 April 1532, Augsburg, Gereon [Sailer] to Capito

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, p. 369. For Sailer, see the headnote to CWC 2, Ep. 411a.

Salvation through our Christ! Your counsel<sup>1</sup> to send away the sons<sup>2</sup> of Dr

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1 Cf. Bucer's letter to Ambrosius Blaurer, 28 June 1532, 'Capito persuaded Bullinger not to link Luther with Fabri/Ne Bullingerus Lutherum Fabro coniungeret, Capito persuaserat' (CorrBucer 8:181, Ep. 604, ll. 3-4).

1 No longer extant.

2 Timotheus Jung, dr. iur. (c. 1529-1580) is recorded as a resident of the Preachers' College in Strasbourg in 1534 and 1535 (see Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST 41/1, bundle I, f. 2v and 2AST 41/1, bundle Ia, f. 16v). He then studied at the universities of Tübingen (1536), Ingolstadt (1539), Ferrara, and Bologna (1546). In 1555, he married Helena Braun. He was a counsellor-at-law (*Ratskonsulent*) in Augsburg and later, after his conversion to Catholicism, a jurist at the imperial court chancellery (*Reichshofkanzlei*) in Vienna from 1568 until his death. His brother, Ambrosius Jung, Jr., (c. 1510-1559) also studied at the Preachers' College in Strasbourg (see above) before matriculating at the University of Tübingen on 1 April 1536. In 1543, he married Regina Koler.

Ambrosius<sup>3</sup> is prudent and pious, and I have taken it in good stead. I know from experience that nothing is better for them, but as you can see there are two reasons why it will not happen immediately. First, because anyone advising him to send away his sons appears to pass a death sentence on this old man, for he loves them so foolishly and incorrigibly. He is an old man and truly at death's door. He cannot live much longer. For this reason I need the help of a teacher to relieve the weariness of his old age and at the same time not to neglect the boys. There is another reason why he retains them here: Dr Ambrosius has much authority among us. If he sent his sons elsewhere, especially on my advice, he would give the people in Augsburg, who are otherwise not particularly inclined toward learning, an incentive either not to care for our school at all or to send all boys elsewhere. They would immediately say that I am running to all the houses and exhorting them to give their children the benefit of schooling, since they could now do it locally, and that I was the first now to see to it that the boys in our region were sent elsewhere. Therefore I beg you by all that is sacred to ensure that a young man who is moderately learned and not too old will come to us as soon as possible.<sup>4</sup> You will do us a great favour, moreover, if you send an eloquent and upright preacher. Please do your best and work with greater diligence and speed than ever to bring it about and ensure that we obtain such a man. We would need a learned man. Oh my dear Capito, how I would like you to consider and look upon our church at greater length! I can write no more about it. I see the great harm done to us by the gross vices of certain priests, but more about that at another time.

Dr Ambrosius' wife will write to you.<sup>5</sup> My congratulations on obtaining a most auspicious wife (for I hear about this from all sides).<sup>6</sup> You have

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- 3 Ambrosius Jung (1471–1548), city physician of Augsburg. He studied at Tübingen (BA, 1487), Padua and Ferrara. He was the personal physician of the bishop of Augsburg and the canons of the cathedral chapter. He was married twice: first, to Elisabeth Lauginger in 1499, and then to Magdalena Manlich in 1519 (see below, note 5). Ambrosius and Magdalena had several children: Ambrosius, Jr., and Timotheus (see above, note 2), Nathanael, Magdalena, Sabina, and Susanna. See J. Fleischmann, 'Die Ärztefamilie Jung,' in *Lebensbilder aus dem Bayerischen Schwaben* (Munich, 1955), vol. 4, 25–53.
- 4 Possibly the Bernhard N, about whom nothing else is known, and who is mentioned below in Ep. 478.
- 5 Magdalena Manlich (1503–1563) married Ambrosius Jung on 3 October 1519. If she did write, the letter is no longer extant.
- 6 For Wibrandis Rosenblatt, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

acted piously by marrying an honourable woman, and taking care of the widow of your dead brother,<sup>7</sup> and her children.<sup>8</sup> Various rumours are being spread here about the meeting at Schweinfurt.<sup>9</sup> Satan and his minions hope that the concord of the evangelicals will be ruptured. I ask in the name of God that you write back as soon as possible about this matter, if you have any news. The mandate of Bern<sup>10</sup> pleases me more with every reading. I hope you have received my earlier letter. Please greet Hedio. When you settle on a teacher, inform him also that Geldenhouwer<sup>11</sup> will be his superior and direct both teacher and students. Some rascal from the vicinity of Zurich has caused another small offence, the old scandal of sodomites having not yet been buried.<sup>12</sup> Farewell, I am in the midst of innumerable difficulties. I shall write more together with Theobald.<sup>13</sup> Augsburg, on the last day of April in the year 1532.

Yours, Gereon.

#### Letter 476: 11 May 1532, [Strasbourg], Capito to Simon Grynaeus

The autograph original of this letter is in Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Berlinka f. 91, no. 50. For Grynaeus, see CWC 2, Ep. 447 headnote.

Greetings. I shall certainly come to the synod if God and the council permit it.<sup>1</sup> For I undertook and completed my last journey without the knowledge of

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7 For Johannes Oecolampadius, see CWC 1, Ep. 11, note 16.

8 For the children of Oecolampadius and Wibrandis, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

9 See above, Ep. 472, note 2.

10 For the Bernese mandate, see above, Ep. 469, note 23.

11 For Gerard Geldenhouwer, see CWC 2, Ep. 336, note 1. Around 1527, Geldenhouwer moved from Wittenberg to Strasbourg, where he became a citizen on 24 October 1528. In December 1531, Bucer, with Capito's endorsement, sent a letter of recommendation to Ambrosius Blaurer in Esslingen on behalf of Geldenhouwer for him to teach theology there (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 518). Blaurer responded on 23 December that the people of Esslingen would not accept Geldenhouwer (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 527). Bucer acquiesced, not wishing to burden the people of Esslingen (see CorrBucer 7, Ep. 528). At some point in 1531, Geldenhouwer went to Augsburg in order to set up the school of St Anna. Finally, in 1532, he was appointed professor of history, and in 1534 professor of theology, at the University of Marburg, where he lived until his death in 1542.

12 Identity unknown.

13 For Theobald Nigri, see CWC 2, Ep. 289, note 15, and above, Ep. 445a headnote.

1 The Synod of Basel took place on 28 May 1532. For the proceedings of the synod, see Dürr/Roth 6:83–4, no. 101. Already on 1 March 1532, Paulus Phrygio

the magistrate.<sup>2</sup> As a result, they may be reluctant to give me leave, I believe. Yet if Bucer joins me in this request, as he will, I shall easily obtain permission for this brief absence, even if they are reluctant. It would be better if you [both] wrote a letter requesting it, lest this situation provide an occasion for others to cast suspicion on my zeal for the churches that are torn everywhere.<sup>3</sup> For they interpret my actions as levity and think I am excited by a desire for travel. I readily disdain these inane rumours, but I am making every effort to avoid them.

Thank you for wishing me well in my marriage.<sup>4</sup> I myself have no unhappy premonitions, for the character of the widow is wonderfully virginal, and she appears to be responsive to the shaping hand of her husband even now. Yet she bears with difficulty [the thought of] leaving the place where her husband died, etc. Farewell. 11 May 1532. Please greet the brethren diligently in my name, if you have occasion to meet them. Bucer likewise greets you most officiously.

Your Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 477: 12 May 1532, Augsburg, Boniface Wolfhart to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 162, pp. 571–74; a modern edition is available in *CorrBucer* 8:41–54, Ep. 584. For Wolfhart, see *CWC* 1, Ep. 102 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The evangelical preachers of Augsburg are in a difficult situation. They have spoken to the mayor, [Ulrich Rehlinger], about a concord with the Lutherans, but he feared that any shift in their teaching would cause scandal and draw on them the anger of the people. They ask for advice from the Strasbourg preachers on how to handle the Sacramentarian question. If

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had urged Bucer to persuade Capito to come to Basel and stay until all the affairs there were in order (see *CorrBucer* 7, Ep. 563; cf. *HBBW* 2, Ep. 98, ll. 5–6). Capito left for Basel on 21 May (see *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 586) in order to take part in the synod. The main topic of discussion among the Basel theologians was the question of whether people who had stopped taking communion should be subject to church discipline, and if so, whether this should be the responsibility of the church or the city. Capito was able to settle the matter (see below, Ep. 481 and *CorrBucer* 7, Epp. 560 and 569, note 10).

2 For Capito's journey, see above, Ep. 462 headnote.

3 A letter from Grynaeus to this effect does not seem to be extant.

4 For Wibrandis Rosenblatt, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

they use the words 'corporeally' and 'substantially,' they will disturb the people. They fear that they will have to offend either the Lutherans or their own people, and they want to be sure to support the correct view. They ask to be informed of the exact conditions of the proposed concord with the Lutherans. They must answer their opponents, who are making trouble for them and want [Johannes] Frosch and [Stephan] Agricola recalled. They will gladly follow the advice of the Strasbourgers, as long as it does not prejudice the gospel truth. So far the Lutherans have shown a lack of charity, calling them '*Schwermer*,<sup>1</sup> messengers of the devil, and destroyers of piety, who trample on the sacrament.' The only difference between their preaching concerning the sacraments is this: 'We do not attribute to them the power of justification, which is through faith in the Spirit. Nevertheless I confess that we are split and divided, for we have neither the true power of the keys, nor true administration of the sacraments, nor church discipline, but I leave it to other people's judgment whether the Lutherans have those things.' The Augsburgers do not want concord with Luther at the price of losing 'concord with the Spirit.'

[There follows what appears to be a postscript (1AST 162, p. 574), which is not included in CorrBucer 8:41–51, Ep. 584, and is therefore given here in full]:

Furthermore, I almost forgot to tell you what happened with that Swiss [?] impostor.<sup>2</sup> Let me briefly tell you: He left his wife<sup>3</sup> here with us and took a lover, a young woman from Augsburg, pretending to be married to her. Soon afterwards, letters were sent here from Strasbourg, one to me by Capito, another to the relatives of the young woman by the goldsmith Kreler,<sup>4</sup> saying what a great rascal the man was. I immediately sent a messenger to Ulm to have him summoned, for he had gone there on our recommendation.

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- 1 'Schwermer' or 'Schwärmer' was a term usually reserved for the Anabaptists.
- 2 Identity unknown. Some of the letters at the edge of the manuscript are illegible because of the binding. The word in question may be 'Hel[vetic].'
- 3 The identity of his wife is unknown.
- 4 Laux Kreler was a goldsmith from Augsburg. He had visited Anabaptist meetings in 1527, but had not been re-baptized by 19 September 1527, when he was compelled to promise on oath not to attend further meetings. He was, however, rebaptized in the spring of 1528 by Jörg Nespitzer (though Augustin Bader reported later that he himself had baptized Kreler). As soon as the arrests of Anabaptists increased in number after the Easter meeting of 12 April 1528, Kreler, and presumably his wife, fled Augsburg for Strasbourg. On 17 October 1528, he purchased citizenship in Strasbourg.

We explained the case to the preachers, and they persuaded him to return, although reluctantly, in the hope of obtaining a position here. Travelling with his so-called wife, he had some ill presentiment, as she herself afterwards related, and still en route opened the letter which the professor of Greek<sup>5</sup> had addressed to me in the name of the preachers. He could not read the unsealed letter, however, for it was written in Greek, except for a passage in which he was congratulated on supposedly having obtained a position. That had been written in Latin for the purpose of removing any suspicion. On arrival, having a bad conscience, he sent his wife to us, while he himself waited outside the city walls, so that he could quickly leave if there was no convenient position for him. Earlier he had warned his wife not to believe any rumour that might be spread of him having more than one wife. We indicated all this to his wife in the presence of her<sup>6</sup> relatives, and she finally understood his deception. He was pointed out by the relatives, searched for, found, and brought into the city. As for the rest, they were only after retrieving the young woman, not him. He produced a statement written in his own hand to the effect that he had fraudently given her a marital pledge, as you can see from his confession, which is attached to this letter.<sup>7</sup> In addition, he stole a chalice<sup>8</sup> from me, which he at first denied, but when his wife proved him a liar, he lost courage and restored it to me in the presence of Musculus<sup>9</sup> and others. You can see, dear brothers, that nothing is safe in this world, and how true are Pliny's words: All other animals rage against a species of beast different from their own, but men do the greatest harm to fellow men, and brothers to brothers, and friends to friends, and neither faith nor shame keeps them from harming others.<sup>10</sup> Since so many fraudulent actions are committed by evil men, and we have been so often entrapped by wiles, we

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- 5 Likely a reference to Wolfgang Binthäuser, a Greek teacher at Ulm. He studied at Ingolstadt and subsequently worked as a Greek scholar in Munich, possibly at the St Peter monastery. After a short stay in Augsburg, he accepted a position as teacher of Greek in Ulm. On account of his lack of popularity, the city council of Ulm let him go in the summer of 1532. Binthäuser moved to Augsburg, where he held a position at the St Anna Gymnasium.
- 6 It could also be 'his'; the Latin is unclear.
- 7 This confession, which is not attached to the manuscript of the letter, is presumably no longer extant.
- 8 The Latin is 'coclear,' which may denote a spoon, cooking vessel, or liturgical vessel such as a chalice. In the circumstances, the latter is perhaps the most plausible meaning.
- 9 For Wolfgang Musculus, see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote.
- 10 A paraphrase of a passage in Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis historiae* 7.1.5.

shall be more cautious in future when accepting strangers as brothers, unless they have been recommended to us by you or by other churches. We advise you to do the same. We don't mean to say that you should not trust anyone, which would be against our faith, but do not rashly believe just anyone, for those fraudulent actions bring ill repute not only on us but also on the gospel we preach. Once again farewell and take this rather long letter in good stead. Since I can only write infrequently to individuals, I wanted to be prolix in writing to you all, and my pen ran on at greater length than I intended.

**Letter 478: 13 May 1532, Augsburg, Gereon [Sailer] to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 371–2.

Salvation in our Christ! Nothing sweeter could have been offered me than your letter, most learned Capito, best of friends. It introduced and established the young man<sup>1</sup> you sent in a most wonderful way. His presence, gifts and candid character please me as much as Hyblaeon honey.<sup>2</sup> Today he will go to the house of Dr Ambrosius.<sup>3</sup> So far he could not conveniently preside over his pupils because Johannes<sup>4</sup> of Strasbourg was occupying the building against the will even of Dr Ambrosius' wife,<sup>5</sup> for it was through her effort that we hired him for a month. He is a vagabond, raised above his age and erudition. My Bernhard is completely happy and has, apart from other gifts, a certain becoming simplicity that pleases me wonderfully.<sup>6</sup> I shall assist him, just as I want him to assist me. First of all I shall take care that his talent not be neglected. He has incurred modest expenses, for which I shall have the merchants pay you this week.<sup>7</sup> The wife of Dr Ambrosius will give you many thanks, as will Ambrosius himself when he comes.

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- 1 Bernhard, whose last name is unknown, was hired to tutor Ambrosius Jung's children (see above, Ep. 475, note 4, and CorrBucer 8:169, Ep. 600).
- 2 Virgil, *Eclogues* 7.37; Martial 11.42.
- 3 For Ambrosius Jung, see above, Ep. 475, note 3.
- 4 Identity unknown.
- 5 For Jung's wife, Magdalena Manlich, see above, Ep. 475, note 5.
- 6 It is unclear if this is the same Bernhard mentioned above in note 1.
- 7 For Capito's reimbursement, see Sailer's letter to Bucer, dated 25 June 1532: 'The money will be sent to Capito' (CorrBucer 8:170, Ep. 600).

Bucer wrote to me a letter which he wants me to communicate to the brethren.<sup>8</sup> Among other things it refers to the Saxon Confession<sup>9</sup> and Apology, which our cities approved on my and Blaurer's counsel, although the Apology uses the terms 'corporeally' and 'substantially.'<sup>10</sup> We must take this to mean that the Lutherans are rather weak in this article, but very much superior to us in others. Even as far as those others are concerned, no one can describe how terrifying they are to us all. It would spell the end of gospel teaching here [they say], if our preachers were to recant and adapt their beliefs. I cannot bear to write more about this to you because I am still in the grip of strong emotions. You will find out everything from the brethren. Our inconstancy will be our ruin, especially if the leaders of the Word are willing to waffle. Please greet Hedio on my behalf and give him my thanks for wanting to bestow his books on me.<sup>11</sup> I do not have them yet. I believe that the bookseller<sup>12</sup> has suffered a great loss<sup>13</sup> and does not dare enter the city, but I shall sort out the details. Otter has gone to Esslingen and has gravely offended those in charge<sup>14</sup> of St Ulrich. They have various suspicions about this matter.<sup>15</sup> We must be particularly careful in religious matters at this time

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8 This letter is no longer extant (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 584, note 4); cf. CorrBucer 8, Epp. 591, a letter from Bucer to the Augsburg preachers, written toward the end of May 1532, and Sailer's response to Bucer, 9 June 1532 (CorrBucer 8, Ep. 593).

9 I.e., the Augsburg Confession of 1530.

10 Melancthon, *Apology* 10.54, and 56. Cf. CorrBucer 8, Ep. 584, note 15.

11 For Caspar Hedio, see CWC 1, Ep. 47 headnote.

12 Identity unknown.

13 The Latin has 'multa decoxisse.' The exact meaning is unclear. The literal meaning of 'decoquere' is 'to prepare a meal, to boil down'; metaphorically it can mean 'to waste, go bankrupt.'

14 In the Latin text, Sailer uses the classical term 'prefectos.' In Ulm, a city situated 80 km west of Augsburg, the term was used to refer to city officials (usually two patricians and a member of the guilds) in charge of the assets of a parish church, and the maintenance of the churches, the pastors' houses, as well as the supervision of the church and school ordinances (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 613, note 24).

15 For Jakob Otter (1485–1547), see CWC 2, Ep. 205, note 2. In a letter to Blaurer, written on 10 April 1532, Otter reported that he had accepted a call to Esslingen, but turned down a call from St Ulrich's in Augsburg, because he was not granted leave from the authorities in Aarau, where he was then pastor (Schies 1, Ep. 277). This evidently upset and made suspicious the governing body at St Ulrich's, prompting Sailer to write to Bucer on 9 June 1532: 'It would have been better if Otter had never been promised to our people/Satius fuisset Otherum nunquam nostris fuisse promissum' (CorrBucer 8, Ep. 593). On 11 May 1532,

and be diligent and circumspect lest we provide an opening for slander.<sup>16</sup> It will not bode well for us if we do not have a parish priest for his church before Theobald leaves.<sup>17</sup> Greet Bucer when he returns to you.<sup>18</sup> Tell him to obtain a concord that will not be the cause of greater discord. Farewell and greet the brethren together with your wife. Augsburg, 13 May 1532.

Your Gereon.

**Letter 479: 14[?] April[?] 1532, St Gallen, Joachim Vadianus to Capito**

Printed in VadBr 5:51–52, Ep. 678. According to the editors, the date given in the letter (14 April) is most likely a mistake and should read either 24 April or 14 May. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: St Gallen had to accept the harsh conditions of peace because the people of Zurich were rash in entering on a war [see above, Ep. 469, note 17]. They were singled out for punishment because they had abolished monasticism. The council of St Gallen considered it the least of evils to accept

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Otter left Strasbourg, where he had spent a few days, before heading to Esslingen in order to take over the leadership of the church there from Ambrosius Blaurer. For his journey from Aarau to Esslingen via Strasbourg, see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 582, note 5.

- 16 In a letter to Bucer, dated 9 June 1532, Sailer wrote of his regret that Sebastian Meyer, pastor at St George's in Augsburg, had declined an offer to be the preacher at St Ulrich's, which was a more prestigious position. According to Sailer, Meyer already had his heart set on returning to Strasbourg. Sailer lamented that there were no candidates for the position matching Meyer's qualifications. Johann Heinrich Held (see below, note 17), Nigri's successor at St Ulrich's, was, in his opinion, satisfactory, but 'our church needs someone like Bucer' (CorrBucer 8, Ep. 593).
- 17 Theobald Nigri returned to Strasbourg from Augsburg in the summer of 1532 (see above, Ep. 442a headnote). He was succeeded by Johann Heinrich Held von Tiefenau (1499–1570). Nothing is known about Held's educational background. In June 1532, he was sent by the city council of Strasbourg to Augsburg to take over from Nigri as pastor of St Ulrich. He also worked at St Moritz and St Anna, and was the city librarian (1537–51). He opposed the Augsburg Interim and was consequently expelled from the city on 26 August 1551 and then moved to Switzerland. Already on 12 June 1552, however, he was called back to his former position at St Ulrich's, where he remained until his retirement in 1568 due to ill health.
- 18 Bucer, who attended the Diet of Schweinfurt, left Strasbourg on 27 April and returned to the city on 4 May (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 582).

the conditions. They do not have the means to enter on another war. It was a prudent decision to allow the return of the abbot [Diethelm Blaurer; see above, Ep. 469], especially because it did not prevent their teaching the gospel and it put the abbot under constraint not to preach against them. Vadianus asks Capito to visit them when he goes on a journey next time [see above, Ep. 473]. His presence would be a comfort to the people. They have heard nothing about the Diet [of Regensburg, 17 April–27 July 1532], but hope that the negotiations will go in their favour.

**Letter 480: 28 May [1532], Kempten, Jakob Haistung to Capito**

Jakob Haistung (d. 1536) studied at the University of Freiburg (BA, 1518). In 1520, he became chaplain at the Holy Ghost hospital of Kempten and in 1523, assistant to Sixtus Rummel, a parish priest inclined to Lutheranism, at St Mang in Kempten. Haistung soon became an evangelical reformer and came under the influence of Zwingli. On 19 August 1527, he became preacher at St Mang's. After Rummel's death in 1529, disputes over the Lord's Supper between the Lutheran and Zwinglian factions began in Kempten. Haistung acted as spokesman for the Zwinglians, and Johannes Seger and Johannes Rottach for the Lutherans. The Zwinglians prevailed in the end (see below, Ep. 492 headnote).

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 40, no. 22, pp. 533–4.

Greetings, most pious sir. The messenger<sup>1</sup> who brings this letter to you was in a great hurry to depart. Therefore I was not able to write what I wanted and what was necessary. Nevertheless I would like you to know in a few words that our Christian republic is not yet at peace. There has been a delay in our affairs. We were waiting for the conclusion of the meeting at Schweinfurt.<sup>2</sup> But now the man, who represented our city there, has returned. I hear that he was recently your companion on the journey from Memmingen to Ulm.<sup>3</sup> His name is Melchior Soiter,<sup>4</sup> and he has brought back some monstrous news. Most importantly, he says that the so-called Zwinglians are

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1 Not identified.

2 For the meeting at Schweinfurt, see above, Ep. 472, note 2.

3 See above, Ep. 462 headnote.

4 For Melchior Soiter, see below, Ep. 493 headnote and note 7. Cf. CorrBucer 8:6, Ep. 478, note 38, where the representative of Kempten at Schweinfurt is identified as Heinrich Seltmann, mayor of Kempten (RTA J 10/1, p. 135, note 35). The list of representatives at Schweinfurt, however, may only include the high-ranking officials.

completely defeated. Also, that they have practically subjected themselves to the Lutherans, stopping short only of recanting their 'errors'. As proof he adduced the fact that your (indeed, our) Bucer shook hands with Dr Spalatinus<sup>5</sup> during a disputation they had; he also asserts that Bucer left secretly afterwards and avoided the light of day, that he fled precipitously and left the meeting without saying good-bye.<sup>6</sup> That is what the Lutherans whisper in the corners and which I now write to you and Bucer, that you may clearly see the perfidy of those men. For I am quite certain that all these things are nonsense and slander. In the meantime I want you to know, my brother, that I have not left off doing what I decided to do when you were here. Rather, I have embarked on the matter once again, with new confidence and trusting in divine help, that is, to celebrate one Supper together with my church, for the sake of the truth of Christ who instituted this rite. I will do so, no matter what the risk, in defiance of my enemies and the efforts against it, unless I am, by God's will, dismissed from my position in the church. May the Lord do what is good in his eyes. In the meantime pray sedulously and unceasingly with your brothers for me and our church, which is truly Christ's. In addition, I ask you to console me with your letters, as soon as you have an opportunity and obtain a messenger going to Augsburg. Allow no opportunity to go by, and reply to my letter, if there is anything worthwhile in it. I ask you especially to inform me about the man whom you earlier designated as our pastor.<sup>7</sup> Is it still possible for us to obtain him? If ever the breath of divine inspiration is directed more graciously toward our affairs, let me know so that we need not lose all hope. Farewell meanwhile and live in Christ, most learned man. Given at Kempten, in a hurry, 28 May.

Jakob Haistung, cleric at Kempten.

#### **Letter 481: [28 May 1532, Basel, Capito to the Synod of Basel]**

The manuscript of this report is in Basel UB, Ki. Ar. 22a, no. 17, ff. 169r–70v. For

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- 5 For Georgius Spalatinus (1484–1545), see the headnote to CWC 1, Ep. 29. On 18 April 1532, Bucer reported to Blaurer about the events at Schweinfurt, explaining that Spalatinus had polemicized in only one of his sermons, but preached the gospel truth and with great benefit to the faith in Christ, much to Bucer's joy. Bucer met Spalatinus in person, and found him conciliatory, but somewhat reserved (see *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 578).
- 6 Any report that Bucer left shortly after having met with Spalatinus is false, since according to Bucer, he was in Schweinfurt until 27 April and arrived in Strasbourg on 4 May (*CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 582, note 9).
- 7 Identity unknown.

Capito's participation at the Synod of Basel on 28 May 1532, see above, Ep. 476, note 1.

[*Summary*]: Capito remarks upon the nature, scope and proper use of excommunication. Drawing a distinction between the internal church, made up of those who truly believe, and the external church, made up of all those who claim to be Christians whether or not they are partakers of divine grace, he begins by making clear that excommunication pertains solely to the external church. It has no authority to separate the individual from God or Christ, nor is excommunication intended as a form of punishment or a way to afflict an offender's conscience. Rather, it is a means of publicizing that an individual is to be excluded from the external community and from all outward manifestations of Christian fellowship, thereby maintaining God's honour and preventing the faithful from being misled by the bad example of others.

Excommunication, Capito says, should be reserved for those who do not repent of their violation of church law, and only as long as this disciplinary action can be shown to produce more benefit than harm for the individual and the community. Some guidelines should be observed in pronouncing a sentence of excommunication. If, for example, someone sins grievously, but privately, that person should not immediately be referred to those church officials responsible for administering excommunication (the '*Bannherren*'). Certain designated people should first approach such offenders in friendship and give them a warning. This should be done repeatedly, so long as the offenders are receptive. Only when they cease to listen and their sinful behaviour escalates should the matter be referred to the *Bannherren*. In cases where the sin is more public in nature, the warning should be public as well and should come from the *Bannherren* themselves.

Capito claims that the reference in scripture to two or three warnings (Matt. 18:15-7) is not meant to be read literally. Warnings should be repeated as many times as necessary so long as the offender continues to listen and there is hope of improvement. Once that hope of improvement is lost, the matter should be referred to the church as a body. If offenders remain obstinate even after this communal confrontation, they ought to be considered 'as tax collectors and heathens' (cf. Matt. 18:17) and be denied Christian fellowship. This action should not be taken precipitously. At times, such obstinacy may be the result of genuine misunderstanding rather than evil intent, and a pronouncement of excommunication in such a case is not appropriate.

Only those who are members of the external community – who are believed to be Christians and who have participated in the religious activities of the local church – are subject to excommunication. Differences of interpretation, such as the differing Lutheran and Zwinglian interpretations of the

Eucharist, need not provoke excommunication, so long as Christ remains the foundation of faith. For this reason as well as the fact that the Lutherans have not received communion in fellowship with the Zwinglian brethren, there is no basis for excommunicating the Lutherans, even though certain Lutherans err in persecuting their brethren in Christ. Likewise, those who are deemed Christians but refuse to receive the Eucharist on specific theological grounds should be reasoned with. They should be assured of the compatibility of Zwinglian Eucharistic beliefs with the basic tenets of the Christian faith. And those who once received communion but now refuse it because of the example of some prominent individuals should be made to see that worldly power and wisdom do not always ensure good judgment in divine matters. Individuals who use another person's lack of participation as an excuse for their own lapse, or claim that their previous reception of the Eucharist was forced, should be vigorously prosecuted and excommunicated. Similarly, anyone who actively spreads false teachings, whether he belongs to the church or not, should be excommunicated, as should anyone who incurs judicial punishment from the secular authorities.

**Letter 482: 15 June 1532, Basel, Oswald Myconius to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, ms. F 81, f. 311. For Myconius, see CWC 1, Ep. 37 headnote.

Salvation and peace from the Lord. In my last letter<sup>1</sup> I wrote about myself; now I shall briefly write about public matters, but of such matters that seem to deserve rather careful consideration. Heinrich Utinger,<sup>2</sup> once canon at Zurich, a man deserving respect for his age, wisdom, and upright life, recently warned me and asked me to prevail upon our people as much as I could,

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1 No longer extant.

2 Heinrich Utinger (c. 1470–1536) was the most important member of the old cathedral chapter of Zurich. Since 1502, he was *Kommisar* of the bishop of Constance in Zurich. As a humanist and friend of Vadianus, Utinger played a significant role in procuring Zwingli for the Grossmünster. Utinger joined the Reformation and became Zwingli's friend and advisor. He played a key role in the Reformation in Zurich as *custos* of the cathedral foundation, scribe of the marriage court, member of the supervisory body of all Zurich publications, and overseer of the new reformed method of handing out alms. In 1532, he was the appointee for the reorganization of the cathedral foundation and ensured that the revenues of the foundation would be used for the ecclesiastical and educational purposes in the city.

to see whether the cities professing the gospel can somehow be reunited in friendship. For the insolence of the Five Cantons was increasing by such leaps and bounds that ill consequences for the gospel were to be feared. If a good relationship were restored, or even a semblance of it, this development might not be suppressed completely, but at least kept at bay or arrested. I do not want you to remain ignorant of what we have done in the meantime to comply with his request, in case (in view of the importance of your counsel) you find anything relevant to the present affair. It is certain, in my opinion, that if we make ourselves clear from the beginning, we shall easily achieve what all good men want to happen. I have no doubt that you have heard about the Zurich mandate,<sup>3</sup> indeed that you have already read it, or else I would have sent it. We had news recently that people were discovered in Zurich who were celebrating mass in their wine cellars. They decided to flee. Among them was a relative<sup>4</sup> of the mayor, Röst.<sup>5</sup>

A few days ago the [positions on the] council there were filled with good and evangelical men, which greatly distresses the impious, but elates the others. Furthermore, the [Five] Cantons met in Zurich this week, but I have no certain knowledge of the transactions. One thing is for sure: they complained to the council about the fierce looks they got from the people of Zurich and said they did not know whether they were friends or not. A tumult is feared on account of the arrest of a priest<sup>6</sup> – wrongly, but through his own fault – made by certain peasants in the jurisdiction of Zurich. This matter was greatly exaggerated by the [Five Cantons], and they demanded that Zurich either punish the peasants or deliver them up to them for punishment. They are therefore very much in a quandary, especially since many of their subjects are speaking out, saying, 'If the council punishes them for

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- 3 I.e., Zurich's mandate concerning the mass of 29 May 1532 (printed in *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Zürcher Reformation in den Jahren 1519–1533*, ed. Emil Egli (Nieuwkoop, 1973), 797–9, no. 1853). On 4 June, Haller in Bern reported that he had received a copy (HBBW 2, Ep. 101). The city council denied any rumours that they would reinstate the mass (see HBBW 2, p. 129, note 12).
- 4 Identity unknown. The Latin has 'gener,' which normally means 'son-in-law' but might also mean 'brother-in-law' on either his or his wife's side. The Röstes were one of the leading political families in Zurich.
- 5 Diethelm Röst (1482–1544) was a Zurich nobleman. As of 1518, he was a member of the Small Council, from 1522/3, he was treasurer (*Säckelmeister*), and from 1525 until his death, mayor of Zurich. From 1524 to 1541 he was an envoy of Zurich to the Swiss Diets (*Tagsatzungsbote*), and in 1537 he was an emissary to Francis I speaking in favour of the evangelicals in Provence.
- 6 Identity unknown.

a matter taught by the elders and enjoined by mandates so far, we will see how matters stand, namely, that no one will henceforth defend the peasants against injustice suffered on account of the Word of God. It will be best to surrender what we have maintained for some years now and give ourselves up to the [Five Cantons].<sup>7</sup> Others are of a different opinion, and so the council is hesitant. In the meantime people are not lacking who want to oppose them with riots. We must pray to God therefore that everything turns out to his glory. But enough of this matter.

Now about the man who brings you this letter.<sup>7</sup> He is the person about whom you heard from me recently in Strasbourg and again here, a talented young man from Zurich. At the time when you heard that he would be entrusted to you, you said you would not allow his exceptional talent to be lost. His father,<sup>8</sup> who was killed in the last war, left behind many children, although I hear that the plague has now taken some of them. The mother and the rest of them live tenuously, but piously. They all labour, each according to his measure. He alone appeared apt for studies. We have educated him, starting with the alphabet, since he was commended to us by his father. He turned out so well that I marvelled at his progress and encouraged him to study literature. He had a relative on his mother's side, an old priest,<sup>9</sup> who supplied him with food and the necessities of life, but he was reduced to such

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- 7 Conrad Gesner (1516–1565) received his upbringing under Oswald Myconius and Thomas Platter at the Fraumünster school in Zurich, and later under Rudolf Collin and Johann Jakob Amman at the Carolinum. After a brief stay in Strasbourg, where he was a servant-pupil of Capito in the summer of 1532, he returned in November to Zurich, but soon continued his studies in Bourges (1533) and Paris (1534). After his return to Zurich in 1535, he married on 4 April 1535, and worked as a Latin teacher. After studying medicine at Basel, he accepted a call in 1537 to be professor of Greek at the newly founded University of Lausanne (MD, 26 February 1541). He worked thereafter in Bern, Montpellier, Lyon, and Basel as a physician, and later as professor of physics in Zurich.
- 8 Urs Gesner (d. 24/25 October 1531) was born in Solothurn, but moved to Zurich, where he made a living as a furrier and became a citizen in 1511. Urs married Agathe Frick (or Fritz, Frizzi or Fritzin), though some sources identify her as Barbara. Of his children, only Hans, Conrad, and Elisabeth are known. Urs was killed in the Battle of Kappel in October 1531.
- 9 Conrad Gesner spent his childhood in the house of Hans Frick (or Fritz), an uncle of Gesner's mother and chaplain at the Grossmünster in Zurich. Frick seems to have been favourably inclined toward the Reformation. In that spirit, he volunteered to take care of the sick in 1525 and check the church attendance of the cathedral canons and chaplains in 1526. Frick's great love of nature, especially of botany, kindled Conrad Gesner's interest in the natural sciences.

a state by these unhappy times that he could barely look after himself. When the boy began to understand both Latin and Greek, Amman,<sup>10</sup> who teaches Greek in Zurich, took him in and provided him with the necessities of life until we met with that calamity.<sup>11</sup> On account of it Amman was obliged by the council to pay a certain sum every week (for he was a canon) to support the priests exiled by the people of the countryside. That was the reason why he could no longer support Conrad. I need not praise his talent at length, for you will soon see his nature. I hope he will please you. He is a good youth and will gladly learn what he does not know, and he will most diligently do what he knows. I say this because I know him from childhood on, and unless God changes him, I know he will be most dear to you.<sup>12</sup> Don't worry about him being so tall. He is sixteen and no more. You will find him tractable and handy, and you can put him to any use you want. If you take him in, you know whom you will oblige most of all, but you will also oblige his relatives in such a manner that the immortals will thank you. One of them wrote to me – an uncle of his, who has recently been made a council member.<sup>13</sup> Hence

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- 10 Johann Jakob Amman (1500–1573) studied from 1517 to 1519 with Heinrich Glarean in Paris and in the summer of 1519 with Beatus Rhenanus in Basel. Since the fall of that year he studied jurisprudence together with Rudolf Collin in Milan. In 1521, he went to Basel and Zurich, where in 1524 he became canon.
- 11 I.e., the Second Battle of Kappel.
- 12 Capito complied, but Gesner seems to have been unhappy with the living arrangements. Toward the end of October 1532, Gesner wrote to Bullinger, complaining about the situation in Capito's home and imploring him for his advice and aid (HBBW 2, Ep. 144). In his *Bibliotheca universalis* (Zurich, 1545), 180r, however, Gesner expressed no such misgivings: 'Then, after the death of our father, who had supported us with his industry while he was alive, there was only a small inheritance for many children. I was for some time afflicted with edema, but by divine grace I was soon restored to my former health. Since I lacked patrons to support my studies in my fatherland, I went to Strasbourg, where for some months I devoted myself to the humanities under Wolfgang Capito of blessed memory, and not without good results'; cf. Gesner's entry for Capito: 'When I was a young man I served him for several months and, at close quarters, experienced the singular piety and erudition of the man' (*ibidem*, p. 628v).
- 13 Andreas Gesner (1484–1568) was the brother of Urs Gesner. Andreas moved to Zurich in 1504, where he became the owner of a shop that sold medicinal herbs and spices. At the Battle of Kappel, he suffered fourteen wounds, some of them quite severe. He was sentenced to death, but the judgment was not carried out. He recovered from his wounds and lived long enough to marry twice, sire twenty children, and outlive his famous nephew. In 1532, he became a guild-master and thereby an *ex officio* member of the Small Council of Zurich.

you will easily understand what I am saying. Thus I commend Conrad to you. Act as his father for a while, and he will be most obsequious to you. Farewell in the Lord Jesus, together with your wife,<sup>14</sup> and let me always be commended to you. Give my greetings to Bucer if he deigns to receive them. I greatly admire his genius. Basel, 15 June 1532.

Oswald Myconius.

**Letter 483: 24 June 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 2:149–51, Ep. 108.

[*Summary*]: Capito was elated on receiving the Zurich mandate [of 29 May 1532, abrogating the mass] together with Bullinger's letter. Capito has urged concord between the three cities [Bern, Basel, Zurich?] personally and through letters. He has high hopes of Bullinger being successful in this cause. He approves of Bullinger's moderate reply to Fabri [see above, Ep. 474], but doubts that they can hope for the same from Leo [Jud]. While lay people support their efforts to come to an agreement with the [Lutherans], many ministers fear that they are weakening the gospel message. Bullinger must remind them that neither the princes nor the evangelical cities want to label the Zwinglians enemies. Luther's attacks [on the Zwinglians] must be ignored and are disdained even by his own people. Capito refers Bullinger to his letter to Karlstadt [not extant]. He hates nothing more than quarrels between the evangelicals. It will be sufficient if they agree that justification comes through faith rather than works. The emperor asks for support against a Turkish invasion. The Catholic princes have already given their assent; the evangelicals will hardly object, even if the emperor does not accept the conditions of religious peace. The emperor has given them permission to continue with the teaching and practices set down in the Augsburg confessions [i.e., Augsburg Confession and Apologia]. He has also permitted the conversion of ecclesiastical goods into private property and will take measures that they are not transferred from our magistrates to another Catholic jurisdiction. Finally they hope to obtain assurance that the Zwinglians will not be mentioned in an adverse manner in the articles of the concord, for they demanded earlier on that we 'combat the errors of the Zwinglians and Anabaptists.' The Strasbourgers promised to keep away from anyone not in agreement with the Augsburg Confession. Capito wishes that moderate

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14 For Wibrandis Rosenblatt, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

minds would prevail. He sends greetings to all the ministers, to [Diethelm] Röist, and the magistrates.

### Letter 484

This letter is now Ep. 644a.

### Letter 484a: [Before 12 July 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to the Preachers of Basel]

Capito's letter is no longer extant, but a portion of it is cited in a letter from the preachers of Basel to the preachers of Bern, dated 12 July 1532 (Zurich ZB, F 81, ff. 312 r–v). In the passage preceding the one below, the Basel preachers refer to rumours of ill will existing between the preachers of Zurich and those of Strasbourg – rumours that also seem to have affected the preachers of Bern. The rumours arose when the preachers of Strasbourg criticized [Bullinger's] and Leo [Jud]'s recent publication *An den Durchlüchtigten, Hochgebornen Fürsten und Herren, Herrn Allbrechten, Marggraven zu Brandenburg ... ein sendbrieff und vorred der dieneren des wort Gottes zu Zürich* (Zurich, 1532). They argued that the publication would only serve to exacerbate Luther at a time when more conciliatory methods were needed. Ep. 485, below, indicates that the preachers of Strasbourg were rumoured to be in agreement with the Lutheran understanding of the Eucharist.

[...] Believe me, dearest brothers, there is nothing in Strasbourg, as far as we can see, that suggests such nefarious motives. Recently, when we enjoyed Capito's presence,<sup>1</sup> he was confronted with this rumour (for it had been disseminated earlier by the Swabians, Brenz, and others through letters). It has now been diluted to the point of no longer causing us fear or even giving us pause. Furthermore, we have been amply instructed through letters about what those men are plotting to do. For Capito wrote these words a few days ago: 'The fire has been fanned and become too intense. Now finally we are working on extinguishing it. There is no other reason for this than that both parties are running the same course, and we regard each other's views with mutual zeal.' From these words it is abundantly clear what the people of Strasbourg are trying to do. [...]

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<sup>1</sup> I.e., when Capito participated in the Synod of Basel on 28 May 1532 (see above, Ep. 476, note 1).

**Letter 485: 14 July 1532, Basel, Oswald Myconius to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, no. 313.

Greetings. In the last few days the brethren of Bern sent us a letter<sup>1</sup> from the Zofingen Disputation with the Anabaptists.<sup>2</sup> It contained a most terrible message: they had been informed by people from Zurich that the brethren of Strasbourg had subscribed to Luther in the matter of the Eucharist. Good God, how grievous that message was! When the letter was opened and shown around, all of us present were so consternated that it was almost an hour before we folded it up again. It soon occurred to us that something had gone awry. Either the people of Zurich had misunderstood what you had written a few days ago<sup>3</sup> (although they had not yet read your last letter) or had attributed too much to rumours from elsewhere. For if you were serious in the letter we read, the matter must be as we said. We were aggrieved not on our own behalf, but on behalf of the people of Bern who are disturbed. For there is no doubt that they are all overcome with sadness, even if they are meanwhile putting on a brave front, for they are exhorting us most diligently to do the same. But because you were aware, according to the letter we just read,

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- 1 This letter is no longer extant. Cf., however, the letter from the preachers of Bern, along with those of Solothurn and Biel, to the preachers of Zurich, written on 9 July 1532 from Zofingen, noting the rapprochement between Luther and the Strasbourgers with regards to the Lord's Supper (HBBW 2, Ep. 109). See also above, Ep. 484a headnote.
- 2 The Bern city council convened the Disputation of Zofingen with the Anabaptists, which ran from 1–9 July 1532. To ensure attendance and fair play, a safe conduct was offered to all the Anabaptists participating in the disputation. It was decided that no magisterial reformers from outside the canton of Bern, not even Bullinger himself, should be asked to attend. The disputation was attended by 23 Anabaptists, of whom Martin Weniger (Lingg) and Hans Hotz were the main speakers. Berchtold Haller, Caspar Megander, and Sebastian Hofmeister led the eight-man reformed delegation. Four delegates of the Aargau and the city of Bern were designated as chairmen and instructed to guard against possible impropriety. Eleven points were selected for discussion, including the nature of the true church; obedience to civil authority; the swearing of oaths, paying tithes and taxes, and charging interest, as well as infant baptism. The colloquy in Zofingen clarified the reformed principle of love as a concern for the unity and peace of Christian society and as a major exegetical standard. See *Handlung oder Acta gehaltner Disputation und Gespräch zû Zoffingen* (Zurich, 1532); a modern edition of the proceedings, with two other *Gespräche*, is available in QGTS 4:67–256.
- 3 See above, Ep. 484a.

of our opinion about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we immediately consoled the people of Bern with the judgment of the truth. We indicated to them what we knew with certainty about you in this matter. We wrote this to keep the rumour, which we already knew, from spreading further and causing huge damage. For if it reached lay people, I believe a fire would break out that could scarcely be extinguished.<sup>4</sup> The people in Zurich must be warned not to disquiet good men with false rumours, for in this manner things will be conceived which afterwards, when the truth is discovered, can hardly be undone.<sup>5</sup> For we hope we are not wrong about you. Whenever we think of what Bucer wrote<sup>6</sup> (we agree with you), we are encouraged and have no doubt about your views and intentions. I therefore beg you in the name of the Lord not to procrastinate in this matter, for in my opinion we must hurry as if the most hostile enemies were besieging us. There is not much to reply to what I found out from the letter to the people of Zurich. My opinion is that we must face Luther. If we keep silent, it will be as with raving people when they have no one against whom to rave, for there are many empty rumours about the Lutherans themselves. If it is absolutely necessary to write in order to defend the truth, let us make certain that no one thinks we have no confidence in our cause, and let no one be attacked personally. It also occurred to me repeatedly that Luther writes so ineptly, not to say impiously, raging against good and innocent men, that it must hurt rather than help the cause of the Lutherans and cannot please even those whom he wanted to gratify when he wrote with such furor. I was afraid, I admit it, when I heard that Luther had once again taken up arms,<sup>7</sup> but when the booklet was read by Ruberus<sup>8</sup> of blessed memory, I recovered my balance, thinking to myself

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4 Cf. above, Ep. 484a.

5 Cf. the letter from the preachers of Basel to the preachers of Zurich, 17 July 1532 (HBBW 2, Ep. 112).

6 See Bucer to Leo Jud, 23 June 1532 (CorrBucer 8:150–65, Ep. 598); cf. Bullinger to Bucer, 12 July 1532 (HBBW 2, Ep. 110 and CorrBucer 8:202–18, Ep. 610); and Bucer to Bullinger, 12 July 1532 (HBBW 2, Ep. 111, and CorrBucer 8:199–202, Ep. 609).

7 Myconius is likely alluding to Luther's *Sendbrieff* (see above, Ep. 484a), to which Bullinger and Leo Jud responded with a similarly titled *An den durchlüchtigen ... Herrn Allbrechten ... Ein sendbrieff* (Zurich, 1532). See CorrBucer 8, Ep. 610, note 71.

8 There is little known about Jacobus Ruberus of Winterthur, a proofreader for Johann Herwagen in Basel. Ruberus assembled the annotations to Erasmus' edition of Demosthenes' *Logoi dyo kai hexëkonta* (Basel, September 1532). Petrus Dasypodius' *Philargyrus comoedia* (Strasbourg, 1565) begins with a letter to Ruberus, written from Frauenfeld in 1530 (ff. Aii r–Aiii v). Ruberus also

that such a bad book cannot please good men. And if it pleases bad men, it does not matter. There is one thing, however, that bothers me in this affair. Luther appears to be so incensed about us all, that anyone who makes an effort to calm things down will labour in vain as far as he is concerned. Are we to believe that he will come to an agreement with 'the sons of the devil,' with 'schismatics,' with 'condemned men,' with 'the most depraved men under the sun'? If he had the attitude we all undoubtedly have, I would fear nothing at all. But since he has this attitude, I cannot hope for anything unless we go over to his views 'with hand and feet' (so to speak).<sup>9</sup> If we consider those whom we desire to win over, I do not see how they can be persuaded, except by our modesty, but that would not work if we completely leave off writing in defence of the truth. In sum, if we keep silent, many good people will be offended by our taciturnity, who wish to see the Lord's Truth increased in every way. If we write, Luther will be irritated, a man who is, in my opinion, so far from being able to be placated, unless he is adored, as tranquillity is from the ocean. Thus I willingly concede to men who are learned, prudent, and firm in the truth of the Lord, as long as that truth of God remains unharmed. May God Almighty grant abundantly that everything redound to the sanctification of his name. My worldly grief over my wife's<sup>10</sup> precarious health hardly allows me to write. Farewell, most pious man, together with your family. Greet Bucer and Bedrot<sup>11</sup> in my name. Basel. 14 July 1532.

Yours, Oswald Myconius.

**Letter 485a: [Around the end of July/beginning of August 1532, Strasbourg, The Chapter of St Thomas] to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The draft of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 16, no. 46. It is a response to an undated announcement from the city council of Strasbourg that it was

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befriended Simon Grynaeus, Thomas Platter, and Johannes Oporinus in Basel. Ruberus' edition *Epitaphia Ioan. Oecolampadii et Huldrich Zwinglii* (Basel, 1532) contains a prefatory letter to Oporinus (ff. A2–3). There is also a gift copy of Georg Agricola's *De re metallica* (Basel, 1530) in the library of the Imperial College London (Annan Collection) with the inscription 'D. Joanni Oporino amico suo chariss. Iacobus Ruberus D.D.' on the title page. He is casually greeted in a letter from Theodor Bibliander to Myconius, dated 29 May [1532] (Zurich SA, E II 340, 138). He died of the plague in 1532, after which time Simon Sulzer took over as proofreader for Herwagen.

9 Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.4.15.

10 Nothing is known about Myconius' wife.

11 For Jakob Bedrot, see CWC 2, Ep. 260, note 1.

imposing a levy of 800 gulden on the chapter in order to satisfy part of the city's agreement to provide financial and military aid to the imperial war effort against the Turks (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 16, no. 43). This agreement was the price the city paid to enjoy the protection of the Truce of Nürnberg concluded between Charles V and the Schmalkaldic League, of which Strasbourg was a member.<sup>1</sup> In the truce, it was agreed that all legal disputes with Protestant powers 'in matters of faith' before the imperial chamber court (*Reichskammergericht*) in Speyer were to be suspended and that the current religious status quo should be maintained until the convening of a general church council. Charles V thereby conceded de facto toleration to the Lutheran authorities, who agreed to keep the public peace and support the defence of Hungary. He was willing to negotiate with the Protestants because he needed their financial aid against the Turks and against France, as well as their support for the election of his brother Ferdinand as Roman King and designated heir to the imperial throne. After the truce was signed, Strasbourg supplied foot soldiers (29 July 1532, under the command of Bernhard Wurmser von Vendenheim) and a mounted troop (12 August 1532). The city also paid about 12,000 gulden, or three quarters of its levy, its largest tax payment under Charles V. For a more detailed account, see István Hunyadi, 'Participation de Strasbourg à la défense de la Hongrie pendant les guerres turques (1521–1555),' *Études finno-ougriennes* 6/7 (1969/70): 171–237, esp. 195–8.

In the following response to the city council, the chapter asks them to reconsider the amount of money requested, explaining that it was still recovering from the financial losses caused by the schism of 1525 and the resulting settlement of 1529, and was therefore unable to pay the requested sum (see CWC 2, Epp. 233b, 237, 243a and 246a). The response from the city council does not appear to be extant, but another letter from the chapter shows that the amount was lowered to 600 gulden (see below, Ep. 510a).

The *terminus post quem* for the letter below is 23 July 1532, the date of the Truce of Nürnberg. Given the necessary time lapse between the signing of the truce and the collecting of the funds, the request for money by the city council (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 16, no. 43) and the response of the chapter probably date from the end of July or beginning of August 1532.

Strict, etc. Your Strict, Honourable Wisdoms had an honest and respectable

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<sup>1</sup> The truce was signed on 23 July 1532 and published as *Abschiet ynn der Religion sachen zu Nurnbergk und Römischer Kaiserlichen Maiestat Mandat auff den Fridlichen anstand des Glaubens vnd Religion halben, sampt der Vermanung Kaiserlicher Maiestat widder den Türcken ausgangen jm MDXXXII* (Wittenberg, 1532).

council's representative read to us your message containing the following instruction: in recent years the common treasury had encountered difficulties; therefore Your Honourable Worships announced that a levy of 800 gulden had been imposed on us.<sup>2</sup> You asked us to reply to the senate and the XXI. In this matter we would like to inform our wise and circumspect lords that we are not against this initiative, although the obligations of the foundation are divided up annually among the canons, and charged to each man's account. For we understand that the possessions of the church are meant primarily for such emergencies, and we would be quite willing to contribute (for we have shown ourselves willing and obedient in other matters in the past), were we not prevented by the following difficulties, which we ask Your Honourable Wisdoms to consider in full, since the foundation is a significant treasure for the community and may not last if we are often burdened with levies of this kind.

First reason: we the canons of St Thomas have in the past obliged Your Graces for the most part, whereupon some people who were of a different opinion left the foundation.<sup>3</sup> The resulting split brought on a dispute that cost the foundation some 4,000 gulden.

Second reason: following these events, the Roman Imperial Majesty put a stop to our income and rents, so that we lost interest on more than 2,000 [gulden] in outstanding payments for the quarter. We shall say nothing of the burden of the three parishes, of which we took care partly on more generous terms than requested initially. Then there are the heavy costs of keeping up the buildings, which amount to 2,000 gulden, and the fact that we had to make up for all the missed payments<sup>4</sup> to absent persons, which meant and

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- 2 For the levy of 800 gulden, see Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 16, no. 43: 'Thus the mayor, senate and XXI, together with the *Schöffen* and *Amman* have decided on a general levy to be imposed on their clerical and secular citizens and their associates in the city and the rural areas, as agreed in the edict of the Holy Empire, and as is being done by the other estates. [...] Therefore the honourable council has imposed upon you to that end [a levy] of 800 gulden/So haben Meister, Rhat, auch die Ein und Zwentzig, sampt Schöffen und Amman erkannt ein gemeine anlag uff geistliche und weltliche Burger zu und angehörigen in stat und land zulegen, wie dann Inen das des heiligen Rychs abscheidt zugeben, und durch andere stend dergliche beschehen ist. [...] haben darumb ein Ersamer Rhat daran zugeben Inen ufferlegt, namlich acht hundert gulden.'
- 3 For the schism in the chapter of St Thomas, see CWC 2, Epp. 233b, 237, 243a, and 246a. Cf. CWC 2, Ep. 404c, where the reduction in the chapter's income is valued at 6,000 gulden.
- 4 The German term used here is 'Versess,' i.e., a legally binding financial obligation that has been missed.

necessitated drawing heavily on the capital. Since we have no money to fall back on, the costs involved and the annual taxes were borne by the remaining persons of the foundation, according to the statutes and customs. Earlier on some people were not in residence and missed out on a great deal, all of which went into the common coffers, which was meant for maintenance and upkeep and all sorts of costs, but today hardly anyone is absent, as is the case in other foundations, which is to their advantage, whereas we are overwhelmed and have notable problems.

Since we have no fallback and our capital has been reduced because of those necessities, we would like to build it up again if only we had some discretion in this matter, but there is no way [to rebuild the capital] other than by distributing the cost among the present persons; this is hardly possible, for many vicars have no capital<sup>5</sup> and no more than 40 gulden in residence fees, from which they have to pay for their household expenses and their civic duties. Alternatively, we would have to burden the foundation with 40 gulden once again to satisfy the levy. We who have livings and are in residence do not consider this a great disadvantage, but it sets a precedent detrimental to the whole foundation. We must take careful counsel moreover when we touch the capital and there is no gain, for similar incidents may come to pass in the future. Thus we ask Your Strict and Honourable Worships to consider in your hearts the fact that our foundation is always willing to do what is useful, what furthers knowledge, and what promotes God's glory and the welfare of our common city and the pious people. Moreover, this splendid foundation is, along with the other three, a lasting treasure. These foundations educate and maintain, without burdening the common treasury, many honest people who will lead the city in spiritual and secular matters. We are most willing humbly to continue to do so and to do even more, given the opportunity. Furthermore, one must consider the harmful effects, if no one keeps a careful watch on discipline and teaching. We therefore ask you to reconsider this levy, so that people will understand the intent of Your Strict and Honourable Worships, namely, to keep our good will and allow the foundation to further the common weal in spiritual and secular affairs, according to your commandments. And if Your Strict and Honourable Worships decide to hear some people who are knowledgeable and experienced in public matters, we would be willing to report at greater length what will make our honourable and necessary request more understandable.

We humbly commend ourselves and our foundation to Your Strict and Honourable Worships.

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5 The legal term used here is 'corpus,' i.e., a trust fund generating interest.

**Letter 486: 7 August 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Schwebel**

This letter is concerned with conditions in Zweibrücken, where the reformer Schwebel was minister at the Alexander Church. For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote. The letter is printed in QGT 7:547, no. 332, and *Centuria*, pp. 161–4, no. 52.

Grace and peace in the Lord, brother. We have received the sad message that Georg,<sup>1</sup> whom we sent on your request to be your colleague, has become your enemy and that you now quarrel over the subject of baptism, which is controversial in the eyes of many. I beg you, who are the more prudent man, to forgive the lesser faults of an inexperienced man.<sup>2</sup> Vain rumours are being circulated against him. It behooves you to use solid judgment. I pray the Lord that we will one day hear everyone speak in concord everywhere. Please remember what Philip<sup>3</sup> once said to the emperor in his Apology. 'It is abhorrent,' he said, 'to attribute as much to the work of the priest as to the death of Christ.'<sup>4</sup> 'Remission of sin can be received in no other way than by faith,'<sup>5</sup> and again, 'What is mortal has nothing to do with immortal grace.'<sup>6</sup> From these words you can easily understand that the external use of signs is the work of God if God is in a work, which may be the case before, or after, or in the work itself.

God is never harmful: external baptism is necessary, when it includes the sacrament and the work of God. For what can be called Christian without mortification of the flesh and the life of the spirit? Thus if you have affirmed the necessity of baptism, you will explain it such that Georg will accept it. Then both of you may say to those who disdain external rites, that their dis-

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- 1 For Georg Pistor, see above, Ep. 470, note 1.
- 2 Cf. Bucer to Schwebel, 17 March 1532: 'Everything is full of sects and factious people, and you act prudently in looking out for your church. What Georg [Pistor] says among you is spoken more out of inexperience than in favour of the sects/Plena sectis et factiosis hominibus omnia sunt, et prudenter facis, quod caves ecclesiae tuae. At Georgius quae dixit apud vos, magis ex imperitia, quam quod sectis faveat, dixit' (CorrBucer 7, Ep. 573).
- 3 For Philip Melancthon, see CWC 1, Ep. 29, note 7.
- 4 Melancthon, *Apology* 24.89. Translating the text of the *Apology*, 'operi sacerdotis.' The *Centuria* and QGT both have 'uxori sacerdotis' (wife of the priest), which does not make sense.
- 5 Melancthon, *Apology* 24.90.
- 6 The point of reference is unclear. Capito may simply be paraphrasing Melancthon, *Apology* 7–8.15.

dain is wrong: 'You do not understand what piety is and what is separate and divided from piety.' There is no controversy between you over justification, for both of you attribute it to faith in Christ Jesus. I have no time to write more. I trust in your prudence and piety. Ensure only that peace and concord are preserved. Yield a little to the weaker man, until his insight returns. Consider how miserably we are tossed about by turbulent emotions. We shoulder the burden of brotherly love, which will accrue to eternal glory. Take this in good stead, as you usually do.

A strong army is being gathered against the Turk.<sup>7</sup> I wish we did penance and obtained forgiveness for our sins and thus be found worthy of God granting us victory. Farewell. 7 August 1532.

**Letter 487: [24 August 1532, Strasbourg], Martin Bucer to Capito and his Colleagues**

Printed in *CorrBucer* 8:264–7, Ep. 621.

[*Summary*]: Bucer informs his colleagues of the council's decision to hold a day of prayer on [31 August 1532] rather than on [28 August], as originally planned. The *Ammeister* [Hans Lindenfels] asks the preachers to announce this to the congregation in their sermons and encourage the faithful to pray with penitent hearts. God has sent the Turks to punish them for their sins. The preachers should cite biblical examples for decreeing a day of prayer (e.g., 1 Cor. 7:5 and Joel 2:15) to avoid the impression that the practice was popish or Jewish. Bucer furthermore asks everyone to make a special effort to establish better relations between pastors and congregation.

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<sup>7</sup> The figures for the size of the Ottoman and imperial armies vary. Suleiman I left Constantinople on 24 April 1532 with 140,000 men, and increased this contingent by around 15,000 Tartars near Belgrade and a further 10,000 men in Osijek (in modern-day Croatia). Already at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, the Estates of the Holy Roman Empire had agreed to budget for a contingent of 48,000 men, which Charles V sought to increase. In the end, an imperial army of 44,000 men and 38,000 cavalry, alongside the troops of Ferdinand I (6,000 heavy and 2,000 light cavalry; 42,000 foot soldiers; 10,000 men of the Danube flotilla as well as more wagons, horses and guns) fought against the Turks (see *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 609, note 4). For Strasbourg's own contribution to the war effort, see above, Ep. 485a headnote; PC 2:170–71, no. 160, and *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 619, note 18; cf. *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 605, note 15.

**Letter 487a: [Shortly before 4 September 1532, Strasbourg], The  
Strasbourg Preachers to [the City Council of Strasbourg]**

The following letter is a request written by the Strasbourg preachers on behalf of the inhabitants of Honau, who were seeking a new pastor to replace the one who had recently passed away. For an earlier request for a pastor, written by Bucer to the city council of Strasbourg, see *CorrBucer* 2, Ep. 102.

The text is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 98, no. 41. On the reverse is a note stating that the letter was 'read on 4 September 1532.'

Strict, noble, honourable, circumspect, respectable, wise, gracious lords. The Almighty has called the pastor of Honau<sup>1</sup> from this world to him. The chapter of Old St Peter's has the right of presentation in this parish.<sup>2</sup> The community of Honau adheres to the pure and holy gospel and the rites that are in agreement with it, as practised here since before the Peasants' War. Their sincere request is – as their messenger<sup>3</sup> related to us yesterday and asked for our assistance – to be again supplied with a pastor who would serve them as before and to the extent possible according to the divine scripture. Every Christian is obliged to further the glory of Christ. Therefore, this is our humble request and considered advice in the Lord: May Your Graces act according to the command of Christ and direct those at Old St Peter's to supply the community, according to their Christian request, with a pastor who will nourish them with the pure gospel. Since those of Old St Peter's are citizens of Your Graces, and the people of Honau are the citizens of citizens<sup>4</sup> (for they

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1 Identity unknown.

2 Honau (in modern-day Baden-Württemberg) was the see of an abbey founded in the eighth century on an island in the Rhine 10 km north of Strasbourg. It became a collegiate chapter in the ninth century, but was transferred first to the Rheinau and then in 1398 to Old St Peter's in Strasbourg, which from then on held the right of presentation (*Leihnung* or *ius patronatus*) and became the collector of the rents from the parish. Honau used to be a temporal possession of the bishopric of Strasbourg, but in 1435/68 passed into the hands of the Grand Chapter and Grand Choir of the cathedral as security. The date of the intervention of the Strasbourg city council with the chapter is unknown, but must have taken place around the beginning of 1525, when the villages of Wantzenau, Gamsheim, and Kilstett, which were part of the same bailiwick as Honau, addressed the Grand Chapter of the cathedral in order to obtain an evangelical preacher.

3 Identity unknown.

4 Already in 845, Emperor Lothair I granted the inhabitants of Wangen the right to be 'citizens of citizens' of Strasbourg. See T.H. Röhrich, *Geschichte der Refor-*

belong to the *Deputaten*<sup>5</sup> of the cathedral in matters of secular government) and since the living became vacant in the pope's month, it was until now necessary to grant the right of appointment to the pope. May Your Graces take care now to direct those of Old St Peter's to act in this matter as they are in any case obliged to act on account of God and their own regulations. But on account of their citizens' oath, they would not oppose anything Your Graces did on the basis of divine right. Nor would they, against all that is right, ignore such a proper request from the citizens of citizens who are under obligation to you. They would not give them a pastor who might lead them astray from the truth and, as a wrong-minded pastor surely would, speak ill of what Your Graces consider the truth, and is indeed the truth.

It would be appropriate for Your Graces to send a messenger to the chapter, requesting that they immediately name the man they intend to appoint to the parish, and unless Your Graces can think of a better man, you might nominate a chaplain of the hospital. The man called Elter Jacob would be suitable in our opinion.<sup>6</sup> We beg you, our lords, to consider in your hearts how troublesome it might be for so many poor souls and how shameful for the truth of Christ, if true Christians, however small their number, be driven out. To prevent that from happening, Your Graces, you must make as great an effort as you would make in worldly matters, as if you were to lose as much territory as is lost to the kingdom of Christ if the community is given a wrong-minded pastor. May the Almighty grant Your Graces to do what he demands from them, and to do so speedily, to prevent the chapter from anticipating your action.

Your Graces' humble servants and citizens,  
The Preachers.

**Letter 488: [After 1 October 1532, Strasbourg], Capito and the Strasbourg Ministers to Caspar Steinbach**

Printed in CorrBucer 9: 9–15, Ep. 631. Caspar Steinbach was a native of Rottweil

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*mation im Elsass und besonders in Strasburg* (Strasbourg, 1832), vol. 2, 18, note 23, and Jean Rott, *Investigationes historicae* (Strasbourg, 1986), vol. 1, 162, 200. A similar concession may have been made to the inhabitants of Honau.

5 I.e., the seven *Deputaten* who led the Grand Choir and who never ceased to contest the authority of the Grand Chapter and its dean. In contrast to the Grand Chapter, the *Deputaten* were hostile to the Reformation, a stance that was strengthened by the Peasants' War.

6 Nothing further is known about him.

and a former Dominican monk. On 19 December 1525, he became a citizen of Strasbourg. From 1529 to 1533, he was a pastor at Illkirch-Grafenstaden, Alsace. He was briefly an assistant of Matthew Zell at the Strasbourg cathedral. From 1534 to 1542, he was the pastor at St William's, the former Williamite monastery in Strasbourg, where on 1 February 1534 he celebrated the first evangelical service, and during that same period, he was also the weekday preacher at the cathedral. In 1542 he was chaplain of the Strasbourg contingent sent against the Turks.

The theological assembly of the Strasbourg church to their dearest and well-respected brother, Caspar Steinbach, our fellow minister and brother in the Lord. We affirm our concord with the theologians of Zweibrücken concerning the sacramental signs and the power and efficacy of the sacraments.

[Our instructions are:] Go to our respected brother Johannes Schwebel<sup>1</sup> and to Master Michael Hilspach;<sup>2</sup> greet them in our name, and explain how distressed we are to hear that the edifice of the Lord, in which, as we know, Schwebel has laboured so faithfully for many years, is now disturbed, and that we are especially aggrieved that among the disturbers of the peace appears to be the very man whom we firmly trusted to become a faithful collaborator.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, we pray strenuously that both help you with all their might, for we send you there to reconcile Georg and Schwebel if it can be done somehow, so that Georg will preach the gospel of Christ henceforth in the same spirit and avoid giving any indication of being alienated from Schwebel or disagreeing with him.<sup>4</sup> We prefer that Schwebel obtain another colleague with whom he has no quarrel, but we do not want to give the impression to people who are in any case inclined toward schism that Georg is being forcibly driven out on account of the Truth. His departure in unpleasant circumstances may perhaps be an obstacle to peace, and so

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1 For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote.

2 For Hilspach, see above, Ep. 470, note 2.

3 I.e., Georg Pistor, see above, Ep. 470, note 1. At the end of January 1532, Pistor left Strasbourg to assume a position as an associate pastor (*Hilfsgeistlicher*) in Ernstweiler, a town just 2 km northwest of Zweibrücken.

4 On account of Pistor's sympathies for the Anabaptists and his undiplomatic attempts at reform, there quickly arose a disagreement between himself, on the one hand, and Schwebel and Johannes Meisenheimer, on the other hand. Pistor attempted to convince the Strasbourg preachers that he was only opposed to exorcism. Schwebel sent the preacher Nikolaus Thomae to Strasbourg to explain his view of the situation (see below, note 6).

we wish for the time being, if it is somehow possible, to reinstate him, so that he may thereafter be of one mind with Schwebel and be his useful collaborator.<sup>5</sup> Nothing is more divisive in the minds of rather simple men and gets in the way of the truth than us being suspected of applying force. They tend to gather from this that we do not rely on scripture and the truth. For that reason Schwebel is willing to bear it (kind and easy-going as he is) and will accept, we have no doubt, your attempt to reconcile him with Georg. Note carefully the shortcomings he sees in Georg, in case there is something beyond what he has explained through Thomae.<sup>6</sup>

Afterwards you will go to Georg, and on arrival greet him with our words, and remind and beg him urgently in Christ's name to consider how harmful it would be to the kingdom of Christ if there were any sign of disagreement between him and Schwebel. For if his authority begins to falter, after preaching Christ there with some success (if you consider the kind of people there), what can remain firm if the man who professes the same gospel of Christ appears to differ in opinion from him? The edifice he has built for God must then necessarily fall silent. For 'faith comes from hearing.'<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, if people begin to suspect that it is not the Word of the Lord that is preached, or at any rate, not the genuine Word, they will see no benefit in it and will not consider it conducive to the rebuilding of faith. Let Schwebel take note where he is preaching Christ and with what authority he has been preaching thus far. It is certain that here he cannot be slandered for not preaching the pure gospel, a horrible offence, of which many people

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5 The dispute between Pistor and Schwebel reignited in 1533 (see below, Ep. 511). On 22 January 1533, Bucer recommended Johannes Hechtlin (see below, Ep. 498, note 1 and CorrBucer 9, Ep. 653) as pastor for the church, but the dispute ended only in November 1538 when Pistor was deposed and banished from the territory.

6 Nikolaus Thomae (c. 1492–c. 1546) studied at Heidelberg (BA, 1512; MA, 1520). In 1520, he became a parish priest in Flinsbach, close to his hometown of Siegelspach. In 1525, he was working as a pastor in Bergzabern in the Palatinate, where, along with Peter Hescher, he helped introduce the Reformation. He was a close friend of Oecolampadius in Basel and Johannes Bader in Landau. He engaged in a debate with Hans Denck, and wrote a detailed report about this encounter in a letter to Oecolampadius on 1 April 1527 (BrOek 2:51–5, Ep. 479). He spent a week in Strasbourg and discussed sixteen difficult points, especially the matter of baptism, with Capito and Bucer. He had frequent contacts with Anabaptists, with whom he associated on a friendly basis, as is attested by the many letters to his fellow countrymen, Conrad Hubert.

7 Rom. 10:17.

throughout the realm of this prince are accused.<sup>8</sup> He will therefore obstruct the cunning of the devil, who leaves nothing untried and makes the Word of God unpopular by slandering his ministers and thus ruins the concord of the churches.

We know that Schwebel attributes all justification to Christ and acknowledges both audible and visible words (thus Augustine calls the signs of the sacraments<sup>9</sup>), in so far as we must provide planting and watering, for it is God who provides for growth and makes our preaching bear fruit.<sup>10</sup> The Spirit teaches faith in Christ, which is shown in love.<sup>11</sup> No one is so holy, therefore, that he cannot progress much further if he hears Schwebel, especially because he is a man of exceptional judgment, a skilful orator, and the foremost clergyman in the realm of the prince.

What madness is it to make him unpopular on account of external rites, when there is agreement about God's teaching itself? [Georg] acts just like someone who allows a man to become unpopular who supports and supplies with grain an area that suffers the greatest poverty, with the result that people no longer want to accept grain from him and die of hunger, for no other reason perhaps than that he brings the food at a time or in a manner the other man does not approve of. True, we hope that one day and even today people do not approach baptism as if it were a thing that brings a child salvation on account of an act that is performed. We rightly ask that this great sacrament be celebrated with greater gravity and solemnity, as it was the custom among the ancients and as the religion of Christ demands. It is for this reason that we exhort people to bring their children for baptism on Sunday when the congregation is present.

We do not doubt, however, that Christ has instituted the invocation of God's name on behalf of our infants and that children ought to be presented to the Saviour himself in some form for benediction. Therefore, we do not deny anyone baptism, on whatever day he comes. Therefore, if Georg be-

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8 To the disappointment of Thomae and Schwebel, Ludwig II von Pfalz-Zweibrücken (see below, Ep. 503, note 2) was not yet ready to introduce the Reformation in his realm (CorrBucer 9, Ep. 631, note 16).

9 For Augustine's use of the term 'visible words' with regards to the Lord's Supper, see his *De doctrina christiana* 2.4 (CCSL 32:34, ll. 5–10); *In Ioannis evangelium*, tract. 80.3 to John 15:3 (CCSL 36:529); and his *Contra Faustum* (CSEL 25:513). Augustine did not write an extended treatise on the Eucharist, and so his understanding of it must be gleaned from the sermons, letters, and other works in which he discussed it.

10 Cf. 1 Cor. 3:6–9.

11 Cf. Gal. 5:6.

lieves that they seek salvation for their infants on the basis of a ceremony being performed, let him teach them that baptism is a ceremony and a gift of Christ, and that this is signified in baptism when they are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and when we pray that Christ embrace them, who are to be baptized in the Spirit. Let him be careful not to disturb anyone's conscience. The Romans were in error when they thought they must not eat certain foods, and Paul was content to teach them the truth of Christ in the most amiable manner. He did not want them to change anything that was done physically while they could not as yet understand its meaning. Indeed, he was very pleased with those who merely asked for it following his example, and forbade any more contentious discussion among them about this matter.<sup>12</sup> That is how highly he valued charity and peace among Christians; he wanted everyone led gently to the knowledge of the truth. The same applies to the observance of other ceremonies of the Law.<sup>13</sup> He strenuously defended our freedom from the laws and vehemently opposed those who were dogmatic about their compulsory nature. Yet when he met truly pious people who had not yet been freed from this error, he not only refrained from disturbing them with untimely disputation, but observed the ceremonies himself (as we read he did in Cenchrea and afterwards in Jerusalem<sup>14</sup>), unwilling to offend them and be seen as a transgressor of the Law.

Therefore if Georg wants to imitate Paul, indeed if he wants to listen to Christ, he will teach gently that all our salvation consists in grace and comes through Christ's merit, that it is not achieved through any work of ours, even if there is a divine precept about it and the ceremony itself is holy. For this reason we consecrate our infants to Christ in baptism, although they have no understanding of it, and salvation is given to them through Christ, as we attest in our sermons and schools. For the sprinkling with water signifies that they are buried in Christ's death.<sup>15</sup>

For the rest, you know how schismatics are to be treated, how those must be supported who faithfully labour in the vineyard of the Lord and how those are to be respected who flourish in the Word, to the benefit of the church.<sup>16</sup> Therefore speak urgently with Georg and see to it that his prom-

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12 Cf. Rom. 14:1-23.

13 Cf. Gal. 4:1-31.

14 See Acts 18:18 and 21:15-26.

15 Cf. Rom. 6:1-5.

16 Cf. Matt. 20:1-16.

ises, if he makes any, are genuine and that he will earnestly stand by them. This is what we all pray for with one mind and what we beg of Christ. Even if Georg shrinks from it, he must take care not to interrupt the work of the Lord we have begun. Thus he should yield in this matter rather than continue to be suspected of not getting along with the foremost preacher in that region. You can do the rest. May God's grace be with you and allow you to remove this obstacle to his glory and obtain a lasting peace. Farewell and good luck.

Your brothers,

Capito, Hedio, Zell, Bucer, and the rest [of the brethren].

**Letter 488a: [Between 14 and 16 October 1532, Strasbourg], The  
Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The following letter is a response from the Strasbourg preachers to the city council of Strasbourg, who, on 14 October, had asked their advice concerning Jakob Kautz, the well-known Anabaptist who had requested permission to enter the city to seek medical attention. In their response, which was read before the council on 16 October, the preachers urge the council to permit a disputation in the hope that the whole Anabaptist cause could be publicly repudiated in Kautz's presence. Kautz (1500–c.1532/3) was a Lutheran preacher at Worms in 1524, but soon came under the influence of the Anabaptist Hans Denck. On 9 June 1527, Kautz appended seven Anabaptist theses to the door of the Dominican Church in Worms (printed in QGT 4:113–14, no. 129), explaining his Anabaptist views to a large audience on 13 June. Consequently, the city council banished him on 1 July. After his expulsion from Worms, Kautz sought refuge in southern Germany, visiting Rothenburg/Tauber and Augsburg. In June 1528, he arrived in Strasbourg, where he was imprisoned on 22 October 1528 along with Wilhelm Reublin and other Anabaptists. In prison he became ill and declared himself willing to renounce Anabaptism. He was nonetheless expelled. Thereafter he attached himself to Peter Schöffler in Haguenau, the printer who had published several editions of the translation of the Old Testament prophets by Hans Denck and Ludwig Hätzer in 1527 and 1528. Seriously ill, he sought medical aid in Strasbourg. On 9 October 1532, he petitioned the city council to allow him to enter for health reasons (QGT 7:557, no. 340), but on 14 October the city council rejected his request on the ground that he had not clearly renounced Anabaptism (QGT 7:557–8, no. 341). At this time they also asked the opinion of the Strasbourg reformers. In a second petition for toleration, Kautz, broken in body and spirit, wrote that he had renounced Anabaptism in prison and now 'knew nothing but Jesus the crucified, that he is Lord.' It seems that this petition was denied as well. Kautz died soon afterwards.

The manuscript of this letter, with corrections and insertions by Bucer, is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 76, no. 7. The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9: 23–31, Ep. 634.

Strict, noble, firm, circumspect, honourable, wise, gracious lords. On Your Graces' instruction, the circumspect, honourable, worthy lords Matthis Geiger<sup>1</sup> and Franz Bertsch<sup>2</sup> have explained that Jakob Kautz has made an application<sup>3</sup> to Your Graces to favour him with permission to reside here to look after his health, and that you therefore wish to be informed by us of what we know of his actions and attitudes. In reply we humbly indicate to Your Graces that we have no knowledge of Jakob Kautz's present attitude in matters of holy faith, but that when he was in Your Graces' keeping, he averred that other people's zeal was untimely when they so vehemently insisted on punishment of opponents. Conversely he had fallen into a grave error at that time, completely deprecating the use of the holy sacraments and saying that no one should quarrel on their account. This view is not only contrary to the express instruction of the Lord, the practice of the apostles and all good Christians from the beginning, but is also regrettable because it leads to the complete collapse and desertion of our common church and of the upholding of Christian teaching, admonition, and punishment. This would clearly be the end and abolition of all godliness and honesty together with Christian discipline, for God bestows the power of his Word and his Spirit only on his community that wants to join him like members of one body, and he will assist only them.

Furthermore, Kautz insisted that we, the preachers of the holy gospel, had not yet served this purpose and would not serve the purpose of unity in Christ now or later. In this manner he got in the way of all teaching and opposed it and rejected what we accepted here as Christian and what we

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- 1 Matthias Geiger (Gyger, d. 27 December 1549) was a member of the guilds 'Zum Freiburg' and 'Zum Spiegel' from 1530 to 1531. He was a member of the Senate of Strasbourg in 1529/30, Ammeister (1535, 1541, and 1547), a member of the XV (1532–3), and a member of the XIII (1533–49). He was married twice: first to Anna Günter (d. 1512) and then to Agnes Hammerer. Geiger was a merchant with a shop in a house called 'Zum Winden' in the Münsterergasse; he was one of the merchants who pressed for trade privileges in France in 1548. He was also the guardian of Israel Minckel, later a very wealthy merchant-banker.
- 2 Franz Bertsch (d. 1547) was a wealthy apothecary and city councillor in Strasbourg (1527/8, 1532, 1541/2, 1544), as well as church warden of the cathedral as of 1531.
- 3 See above, headnote.

introduce and know with certainty to be the correct, unique, and undoubted teaching of Christ, through which all Christians in the past and future have been shaped and will have to be shaped. Yet the Lord must grant us to grow, a favour Paul could not bestow.<sup>4</sup> This we explained to him and others with the help of clear scriptural passages, as we always do, and if he or anyone else declares that they are willing to accept the punishment dictated by God for false prophets, namely, death, we offer to aver the same.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, Kautz associated at that time with the leaders who introduced this terrible and deadly error and promoted the belief that in the end the devil and all the condemned will be saved, although divine scripture clearly and obviously teaches the opposite. We do not know whether Kautz has now retracted such grave and fundamental errors. If he has retracted them and undertakes not to go against the simple, true teaching of Christ, and especially if he recants the belief making Christ's redemption general for everyone, which is against the express Word of the Lord – his greeting in the present supplication to Your Graces seems to hint at that, namely, that he will point those whom he has misled here to the clear judgment of Christ – if he does so, we will humbly beg Your Graces to show him mercy and allow him to stay here. Since Your Graces should judge everyone by his own words, however, you will no doubt be able to discover where he stands in these and other matters.

If he has not recanted, however, which we would be very sorry to hear, we ask Your Graces, as we have often done over the last five years, orally and in writing, to allow an effective and broad-ranging discussion in the presence of all the guilds, in which the religious issues under dispute are once and for all explained. Let them be explained on the basis of holy writ, in which the divine Word is used against daily sins and errors, and let them do away with the excuses of demagogues, who wrongly claim that they are being suppressed by force rather than with scriptural arguments.

Thus we once again humbly and obediently beg Your Graces to permit such a discussion to go forward at this time, while Jakob Kautz is present, who unfortunately initiated this terrible error, which has infected many, namely, that everyone will be saved and that there is neither hell nor devil. This belief was furthered considerably here, and the blasphemy of these people has now reached the point (God have mercy on us!) that they no longer shy away from publicly proclaiming it. The result is a shocking abandon-

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4 1 Cor. 3:6.

5 Cf. 2 Pet. 2:1.

ment of the divine teaching and of all honesty, while every day more odd and unprecedented fantasies and errors arise and are rampant – more here than in any other place anywhere in the whole empire. May Your Graces consider for the sake of God where this will lead when they laugh and mock at the difference between believers and unbelievers, blessed and ungodly people – a difference that scripture points out clearly and in dreadful terms. And if scripture is cited, they say, ‘Who knows by whom or how scripture was written down?’ – and that is said by people who are not insignificant, as you well know.

Gracious lords, if the honour of him who has created us from nothing, and the well-being of those, for whom the Son of God has shed his blood, does not move us, be moved by the solemn pledge you have given to His Imperial Majesty and the imperial estates on behalf of the whole city and most of all on behalf of the honourable council, averring your belief in holy writ. You have sworn to maintain it according to your power, averring that God is the judge and will forever condemn those who do not believe in him, and save those that do believe in him. On the basis of this pledge you have joined with so many other princes and cities. How, then, can you defend the fact that you allow such teaching being blasphemed without shame in the most terrible manner here in your administration and elsewhere? How can you allow people to state, among many other unprecedented blasphemies against God, that there is neither hell nor devil? We accept what was unprecedented in the past, and we teach with foolish freedom, and that is why people say, ‘The swordsmith<sup>6</sup> had to pay with his life, so that we may laugh now.’ The result is not only that everyone talks, writes, and even prints whatever he thinks of holy writ, but also that this may lead to ruin, rebellion, and bloodshed. Recently, for example, the dreams of Lienhard Jost<sup>7</sup> and

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- 6 Little is known about Thomas Salzmänn, except that he was a swordsmith by profession and purchased citizenship in Strasbourg on 19 January 1512. His wife’s name was Barbara. He was interrogated twice for heretical beliefs: first on 27 November 1527 and again on 9 December. According to the reports, he denied the Trinity, placed his faith alone in the Pentateuch, and denied the divinity of Christ and his redemptive work on the cross. He was executed on 20 December 1527 (see QGT 7, nos. 110–11, 113–14).
- 7 Lienhard Jost (d. c. 1549) and his wife Ursula (c. 1500–1530/7) were the most famous figures among the sixteen so-called Strasbourg Prophets, all fervent followers of Melchior Hoffman (for Hoffman’s unpublished list of the sixteen Strasbourg prophets, see Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 166, f. 198r). Lienhard Jost, a visionary, was either a butcher or cobbler by trade (see QGT 8, nos. 66 and 68) and came from Illkirch, a village immediately south of Strasbourg. He and

other simple-minded people were made out to be prophecies and published a second time under a splendid title and announcing our city [as the place of publication].<sup>8</sup> In it we find not only terrible errors against God written in the name of the prophets that must not be doubted and are inspired by God but also such evil, rebellious fantasies that our common city might come to grief if one does not pay attention. Therefore, dear lords, keep your eyes open and do not worry about being prudent in your office or keeping a policy of peace, as long as you principally keep the Word of God before your eyes, and do everything according to it. You boast before others of the Word of God and our pure, Christian belief, and do so before the whole world while you permit the Word of God and scripture to be publicly disdained and blasphemed.

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Ursula lived in the Krutenau, a city quarter in Strasbourg near St William's. He was held in the Strasbourg insane asylum for many months in 1524, but eventually released and able to return to his wife (QGT 8, no. 461). Both he and Ursula experienced more visions in 1528–9. Ursula is most famous for her *Prophetische gesicht und Offenbarung der göttlichen würckung zu diser letsten zeit* [Prophetic visions and revelations of the workings of God in these last days], ed. Melchior Hoffman ([Strasbourg], 1530), which contains a description of 77 visions that she had between 1524 and 1530. It was reprinted in 1532, but that edition is no longer extant (QGT 7, nos. 210 and 343). Together with Barbara Rebstock, Ursula Jost (d. between 1530 and 1537) was one of the most influential prophetesses of Strasbourg. She and Lienhard had one daughter, Elisabeth. In 1537 the records mention a woman called Agnes among the Anabaptists in Strasbourg. In 1539 they state that Agnes was Lienhard Jost's second wife (see QGT 15, nos. 907 and 980). Lienhard was still alive in 1549.

- 8 This is likely a reference to the first and second editions of Ursula Jost's prophecies (see the preceding note). There is only one extract of a vision from Lienhard Jost from a report, written in October 1533, to the city council of Strasbourg. At that time a synodal commission examined the writings of Hoffman and Schwenckfeld presented in June 1533: 'In the *Book of the Seven Prophecies*, Lienhard Jost says, among many similar bothersome prattlings, that neither Luther nor Zwingli have the correct belief according to the gospel; that Strasbourg is Jerusalem; that the number of the sealed apostles is 144,000; that godly men are tyrannized here; that a dragon will appear in Strasbourg; a prophecy about Dr [Caspar] Hedio – that he will fall to his death from the pulpit in the cathedral and kill some members of the congregation, to the point that the people will wade in blood up to their ankles; prophecies concernings the emperor [Charles V], Ferdinand, Lorraine, etc.; regarding such and similar prophecies, he said that he knew by the grace of God, that no letter could be omitted from this prophet Lienhard Jost and the prophetess Ursula; and he says that these two books are worth as much as [the prophecies of] Isaiah and Jeremiah' (QGT 8:186, no. 444).

Truly this will bring nothing but serious corruption and ruin of everything that is good.

But to see more clearly what God's Word is and commands, permit a discussion to take place, as mentioned, so that you may see the direction in which things are going, and that only a minority agrees in their mind on the true Christian doctrine. Bringing out the Word of God can only do good. That is the way in which errors have been successfully combatted in past times and that is how it is also done today. That is why we wished to remind Your Graces again that Kautz and many others make such a discussion highly necessary, and it will perhaps comfort the common simple-minded people if they could attend such a discussion. If God has given Kautz a better understanding since that time, we wish him well with all our hearts, and he could wonderfully correct those who departed from the way of God, being led on by him and others.

May Your Graces consider this our recommendation, as far as God grants us to admonish various people and especially the authorities to do everything to see the sacred Word of God honoured and people live their lives according to it. Please understand that in this we seek nothing but God's honour and the welfare of the church.

Your Graces' humble and obedient servants,  
The Preachers.

#### **Letter 488b: 10 November 1532, Basel, Oswald Myconius to [Capito]**

The original manuscript of this letter is no longer extant, but there is a German translation in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 176, f. 343v. Since Myconius did not have any direct contact with Martin Bucer until 5 March 1533 (Zurich ZB, F 80, pp. 126a–127b), Capito is the most likely addressee of the letter.

From a letter of Oswald Myconius, cathedral preacher at Basel.

If we do not receive advice and help from you and your people, and the special help of God, we must suffer ruinous harm. His Majesty the Roman Emperor is said to want to take up winter quarters in Milan and the vicinity of Bellinzona with his Italian and Spanish troops.<sup>1</sup> This is done against the people of Zur-

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<sup>1</sup> A reference to the imperial army after the unsuccessful war against the Turks earlier in the year. For the rumour that it would winter in Milan and Bellinzona, see PC 2:177, no. 170, and below, Ep. 489. References to the quartering of the army can also be found in Myconius' letter to Haller, 19 November 1532 (Zurich ZB, Ms. F 81, 316) and in Haller's letter to Bullinger, 15 November 1532: 'On

ich and others as well who have taken to the gospel. That is the reason why the Five [Catholic] Cantons act against us in all matters with such force and hatred and practically lord it over us, command us, and threaten us if we do not give in to their demands. Their actions look exactly like those of the duke of Burgundy in the past.<sup>2</sup> Thus it is necessary for your lords and other governments to take serious thought in this matter, as they have done formerly. Therefore consider the measures that should be taken to ensure that God's justice does not go under. There is talk that his Majesty, the Roman Emperor, let it be known in his circles that he had no intention of using his army against those who had adopted the gospel. But what would be the consequences if he suppressed the gospel in our region? [Given], Basel 10 November. Read on Wednesday, 20 November 1532.

**Letter 489: 17 November 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger and Leo Jud**

Printed in HBBW 2:261–2, Ep. 151.

[*Summary*]: Capito is sending Conrad [Gesner] to Zurich in the hope that he will be given a stipend to travel and study. Capito himself will contribute to his support. He praises Gesner's talent and asks for consideration in view of the fact that his father died in the [Battle of Kappel]. Rumour has it that the emperor will spend the winter in Milan, but this should not intimidate the Swiss. Capito believes that the emperor will not undertake a costly war. Gesner will report other news. Capito sends greetings to the scholars and preachers at Zurich, especially Theodor [Bibliander] and Diethelm [Röist].

**Letter 489a: 22 November [1532], Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Zurich**

The following is a letter of encouragement and advice from the Strasbourg

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that day we were advised by Myconius and our leaders were advised by the leaders of Basel that the emperor would spend the winter in the citadel of Milan and that his army would be dispersed through all of Italy, up to Lake Como and Bellinzona' (HBBW 2, Ep. 150, ll. 2–4).

- 2 Possibly a reference to Charles the Bold (1433–1477), duke of Burgundy from 1467 to 1477, who suffered a shameful defeat by the army of the Swiss Confederacy at the Battle of Grandson, a fortress located on Lake Neuchâtel, on 2 March 1476.

preachers to the city council of Zurich, which was then embroiled in a conflict with the Five Catholic Cantons (Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Zug, and Unterwalden) over its mandate abolishing the Catholic mass in the city (29 May 1532, see above, Ep. 483). The Five Catholic Cantons, had complained about the mandate to the Diet of Baden on 10 June. On 10 July, they issued their own mandate for the Rhine Valley region of Switzerland, which was co-governed by Catholic and Protestant authorities and imposed a fine of 100 gulden on any preacher who should break the terms of the Peace of Kappel. The Catholic cantons considered the Zurich mandate of 29 May an infringement of the terms. At the Diet of Baden of 4 September, Zurich, however, asserted its territorial sovereignty and in turn complained about the mandate of 10 July. The deliberations in Zurich, at which the papal emissary, Ennio Filonardi (see below, note 1) was present, ended on 22 April 1533 with a judgment rendered at a court in Einsiedeln. Zurich was ordered to withdraw the mandate of 29 May 1532 in which it had declared the mass an 'abuse' (see below, Ep. 502, note 12).

The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:46–53, Ep. 640.

We recently heard that there is a papal emissary at Zurich, the bishop of Veroli,<sup>1</sup> such a holy man that anyone can immediately tell by the way he lives that he is a papal legate. His local mission was to ensure that the leaders and perhaps also the communities of the Five Cantons would every day become more hostile toward the holy teaching of Christ our Lord and begin to act against Your Graces and others in a manner inappropriate to the peace agreement.<sup>2</sup> In this matter we truly sympathize with Your Graces out of Christian charity and concern, and beg our heavenly Father to let you recognize all ruses and artifices of Satan and to counter them in a salutary manner and keep you from being afraid of his power. Our merciful God has used you in preference to many other cities and realms for the glory of his name and the glorious propagation of his holy gospel, and for the great comfort of many of the elect; after such grave temptations he has once again deigned to

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1 Ennio Filonardi (1466–1549), bishop of Veroli, was appointed papal legate to Switzerland eight times between 1513 and 1533. His tasks as papal legate to the Swiss cantons were to maintain peace in Switzerland, to return the Swiss evangelicals back to the Catholic faith, to preserve and strengthen the papal alliance with the cantons, and to raise troops. While he had considerable success in carrying out these functions, he failed to grasp the true significance of the reform movement and its effects upon Swiss politics. Paul III made Filonardi prefect of the Castel Sant'Angelo in 1534, cardinal in 1536, administrator of Montefeltro in 1538, and cardinal-bishop of Albano in 1546.

2 I.e., the Second Peace of Kappel of 20 November 1531.

use you, that you may be sustained through the Spirit in such blessed and salutary and righteous dealings, that you may be strengthened every day and grow and increase. The enemy can see that our Lord Jesus, who alone has been given by his Father power in heaven and on earth,<sup>3</sup> will not allow them to cause war and bloodshed on account of this matter, as they tried earlier through their representatives, petitioning His Majesty the emperor with indescribable zeal, although, God be praised, they achieved nothing. For, although everyone was willing, the emperor alone was unwilling, as we know for certain. Therefore, the enemy acts in the usual way, trying to strike fear into the people with lies and invented incidents. That murderer of old must be watched carefully to detect everything he plans through his chief instrument, the pope. It would not be unlike him to start a fire while the emperor is still present – as he was advised – to involve him even against his will, for he knows how eager he is to rob you of your freedom. One can see how those who have once been enabled to rage against Christ can be bought, and only few among them worry about starting something that could lead to their own ruin. Nothing is more dangerous than a community in which Satan rules. And he must be in charge among people who live such shameful lives of excess and yet brag about being the protectors of our ancient and unimpeachable faith.

Dear God, what is the ancient and unimpeachable faith? Is it not trust in God our holy Father through our Lord Christ Jesus, as we are taught in our common articles of faith? Is it not doing good to everyone, and living piously and honourably? Let Satan tell lies and scheme and cause trouble every day as much as he may. We have a power in us that is stronger: Christ, our only Lord. Let us trust in him sincerely, be careful and courageous, and concerned first and foremost in all things to maintain his glory. Let us live for him alone and do and refrain from things accordingly; let us take note who has the Spirit and who searches for it, and have no consideration for other relationships, for reason, cleverness, works and power, for God alone will show his power in everyone. One should pay attention to the special abilities God has given to each man, but only among believers, and one should particularly take note which man has the greater fear of God. For where there is no fear of God, Satan has power, and the more ability a man has in these circumstances, the more harm he can do. God is the cause of everything. Thus where God is, there is hope of salvation. Otherwise one may expect only misfortune of every kind. Perhaps God uses godless men for the strict discipline

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Matt. 28:18.

of his people, and grants them external victory and fortune, but when his people want to negotiate with them and seek their advice and help, their affairs go to ruin, as the Israelites experienced. Whenever godless people ruled and whenever they sought the help of people like the Egyptians, Assyrians, and others, they suffered evil; yet the pagan tyrants, who obtained fortune and victory over God's people, were fated to perish when they wanted to fight on behalf of God's people and were empowered to do so by their lack of faith.

Therefore, dear and pious, Christian lords, watch out among yourselves and others, however many there may be, and when you deal with those who have God before their eyes, give preference to those who possess fear of God among their other blessed gifts and excel in it. Make every effort to get along with those of your people who have God before their eyes so that, together with those who share with you one Lord, Christ, you may help defend the glory of God with one mind. To appease those who are against you anywhere, you need to do nothing more than look to God and speak confidently of him, join those who are your kin in faith, maintain your courage, and look up to heaven. The enemy tries his luck. If you allow him to strike fear into you, he will make use of it. Then, when he wants to cause a fire among his followers, even if they will be the first or the only ones to burn to death, it is still to his advantage, for he is inimical to all men, even his followers. But this fire will not harm you, if you are strong-willed. You need only contribute a little water to extinguish the fire, and it will not catch on.

God has seen to it that the emperor has little desire for war. It is his firm plan to journey home as soon as he can set sail, as we know for certain.<sup>4</sup> War causes a great deal of evil, unfortunately, so that his realm is ruined by both friend and foe. The pope acts like a pope, causing war and bloodshed where he can. But he has not achieved much – God be praised! Thus we have no doubt that you will find support among Christian princes and cities, when needed. All honest people in the Swiss Confederacy, moreover, will easily recognize the games those people are playing and the use they want to make of the religious strife. No doubt it has become known among you how the Spanish and Italian [soldiers] treated the poor subjects of their own

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4 After the end of the Diet of Regensburg, Charles V left the city on 2 September 1532 and travelled to Passau (11 September), Linz (13–20 September), Vienna (24 September–3 October), Mantua (7 November), where he met with Pope Clement VII, and finally Bologna, where he remained from 14 November to 27 February 1533. On 21 April, he landed in Rosas, a coastal city in the south of Spain (see CorrBucer 9, Ep. 640, note 43).

lord.<sup>5</sup> The Turks showed more clemency than they, except that they dragged off manservants and maids and killed children!<sup>6</sup> Wherever the [Spanish and Italian soldiers] went, they committed robbery, ruined, raided, burned and murdered, and raped wives and daughters in front of their husbands and parents, whom they tied up and forced to watch. Surely the Five Cantons are not so uncivilized that they need such helpers.

Therefore, keep your eyes straight on God. Remember the mercies God has shown you. Do not allow yourselves to be misled. Anyone who is not with Christ is against him.<sup>7</sup> You must realize: all those are with Christ who desire piety – which is Christ alone, even if he cannot be defined in subtle terms. Your Graces are, thank God, well supplied with men to advise you how to act in a godly manner. If you did not have our loyal helpers of the gospel, who are trained theologians, we would come to you ourselves and loyally promote Christ's affairs among you, and with Christ's help do more than the bishop of Veroli can do in the affairs of his lord.<sup>8</sup>

Gracious, Christian lords, may Your Graces accept in good stead what we write and interpret it as written for your consolation and advice, and as addressed to you entirely in a Christian spirit. May the Lord grant you courage to profess and defend his glory as you have done so far, and to prevent all further trouble, so that you need not rue Satan's evil intentions. For if anything bad came to pass, which God may prevent, it would truly ruin not only the kingdom of Christ among you, but also all liberties and good government, and bring about in all the world more grievous troubles than have ever struck German lands. May our Lord Jesus Christ graciously prevent that and strengthen his power among you more and more, and gloriously expand it and build it up through you, as before. May all glory and praise be his, Amen. Given at Strasbourg, 22 November.

Your Graces' obedient servants,

Wolfgang Capito, Martin Bucer and other ministers of the gospel in Strasbourg.

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5 Adrien de Croÿ, count of Le Rœulx, complained about such assaults by the imperial soldiers in his letter to Charles V, dated 6 September 1532 (see CorrBucer 9, Ep. 640, note 45). See also Philip of Hesse's letter to the XIII of Strasbourg, 7 November 1532 (PC 2:175, no. 168), and a letter from the city council of Basel to the XIII of Strasbourg, 24 November (PC 2:177, no. 170).

6 Cf. Bucer's letter to Ambrosius Blaurer, dated 11 November, in which he mentions a rumour that the Turks had deported 30,000 people (CorrBucer 9, Ep. 637).

7 Cf. Matt. 12:30 and Luke 11:23.

8 I.e., Ennio Filonardi (see above, note 1).

**Letter 490: 26 November 1532, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Bern**

The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:54–64, Ep. 641.

May the Father grant you grace and peace, noble, strict, honourable, pious, circumspect, wise, and gracious lords. When we preachers here in Strasbourg think of you in our prayers, which we often do, we thank God Almighty, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who first granted you to receive the truth with such steadfastness after it was explained and confessed at the Disputation,<sup>1</sup> and granted you also to go ahead and introduce it in the city and the region.

Afterwards, however, when God sent us great evil and terror, and when discord entered the minds of people in the city and region, it happened, not without the special grace of God, that you gave a friendly welcome to our brother Dr Wolfgang Capito.<sup>2</sup> You allowed him, as he was instructed, to treat about God's affairs with you. You gave him a kind hearing and welcomed him and helped him bring the synod in your city to a peaceful conclusion thereby furthering God's glory. No doubt God's glory was furthered through the holy gospel in your communities, with the result that all your subjects have been reduced to meek obedience and quiet penitence. Then your preachers and parish priests in the city and the region communicated with one another how the gospel business should be conducted without detriment to the worldly government, for government is also instituted by God, and God's work must not be obstructed by others. We are elated by the Christian ordinances which you have passed these days, so that the clergy and the church have been put in good order.<sup>3</sup> This you have achieved to a degree, as far as it is your obligation, and we hope you will make an effort to

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- 1 A reference to the Disputation of Bern, which Capito attended. It took place 6–26 January 1528, in the Franciscan church of Bern. Because the Catholic participants lacked strong leadership, the final vote resulted in a landslide victory for the Protestants. The city council of Bern subsequently acted swiftly to abolish the mass and remove the images from the city's churches. The proceedings were printed under the title *Handlung oder Acta gehaltner Disputation zu Bern* (Zurich, 1528).
- 2 For Capito's participation and reception at the Synod of Bern, which ran from 9–14 January 1532, see above, Ep. 461 headnote.
- 3 According to the Bucer editors, the Strasbourg preachers must have had in mind either the church ordinance of Ulm, written by Bucer himself, or the ordinance regarding church discipline, established by Ambrosius Blaurer (see *CorrBucer* 9, Ep. 641, note 10).

accomplish the rest as well. You have also undertaken to deal with morals, both of the preachers and of the community in the city and the region, in so far as it is appropriate for a Christian government to act. May God Almighty grant his grace to Your Honours together with your officials, that you may diligently maintain order, punish vice, and protect and shield good works. Otherwise, according to scripture, God is wont to bring dishonour on rulers and deprive them of power, such that great kingdoms have often been brought low and miserably destroyed.<sup>4</sup>

We have great hope, however, that our dear brothers, the preachers, will be motivated by true zeal and will admonish people gently and in a friendly manner, yet with grave urgency, in the way God's affair should be handled, and that Your Graces will eagerly obey them as God's messengers, as you have done hitherto, or so it is generally believed. Consequently, your precious name is now well known, and on the Last Day, at the judgment seat of Christ Jesus our Lord, your name will be glorified before the whole world. The shameful vices of your opponents, however, shall not remain concealed and will be made known on that day to all people.

Gracious lords, the reason why we have written to you in all friendship is this: We have a credible report that the Five Cantons are once again cruelly persecuting the faithful, including people who should to some degree be defended by you, and that this matter is not taken as seriously as is incumbent on valiant rulers and as is your duty and required by Christian love.<sup>5</sup> This report truly disturbed us. For it suggests that those who have willingly accepted the message and content of the gospel teaching under your direction, are perhaps not as keen as they should be to protect those who are being harrassed, or are perhaps not unanimous among themselves and cannot loyally help each other as members of one body and one realm.<sup>6</sup> As for the other people, even those who believe in Christ, but have accepted evangelical ordinances only because it pleased the majority, are obliged under every type of government steadfastly to maintain what has become the law of the city and the citizens. Some people are in the habit of interpreting these ordinances as it pleases them rather than in the sense that pleased the community and us in accord with God and justice – which is not as it should be. For if everyone acted according to his own will and if common policy and the ordinances that were passed concerning the divine service were for naught, there would be uncertainty, upset and tumult in the government. Now, you are under

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4 Cf. Psalm 107:40; Ezech. 17:13–14.

5 See below, Ep. 491, note 4.

6 Cf. 1 Cor. 12:12.

prompt obligation to help and defend in particular those to whom you owe help and protection.

Oh, how terrible it is when Christian magistrates look on while people are being persecuted for the sake of Christ, when they should help them! We will say nothing of the fact that you have abandoned people for whom you should care on account of moral and legal obligations. How does such negligence take hold among pious rulers, if not through secret or public factions, which ruin powerful governments? Christ teaches concord in his sermons.<sup>7</sup> Why do these strange and unpleasant people intrude on our gospel teaching and keep on trying to create discord, foster factions and sects? Why are they suspicious and incite hatred and arrogance among us? We hope things are better among you, and that this unwillingness to rescue those in tribulation comes from being too circumspect, too concerned about maintaining common peace, from fear that another war may break out as before. But truly, to wish for a peace that goes against God and for the sake of such a peace to leave the afflicted without consolation and peace, is more conducive to disquiet and ruin. Where does that leave the burden of the government, if it is their intention to sail with the wind and if they carry out their office not for the good of the subjects and dependents, but for their own security and tranquillity? God has made you rulers, not just to enjoy honours, but to work and labour for your subjects and dependents, that is, the people to whose aid you must come. It is God's will that you should manfully care for those who have been abandoned, according to temporal law, Christian love, and in all seriousness. God calls himself a father of the abandoned<sup>8</sup> and hates nothing more than idolatry, false service, and turning a blind eye to violence done to the weak.<sup>9</sup>

Your Graces have abolished idolatry now. Genuine love for your brothers in the faith should ensue, and that in a practical and truly engaged manner. God knows the human heart and is grieved to see the world so false, disloyal, vain, and arrogant in their mutual dealings.<sup>10</sup> More weight is given to appearances than to genuine piety. The gospel takes away such wrong desires and makes rulers true gods, that is, commanders and followers of God, and it makes them direct their rule always toward establishing God's honour and furthering the welfare of their neighbour.<sup>11</sup> Heathen rulers govern

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7 Cf. Matt. 12:25; John 17:20–1; and 1 Cor. 1:10–17.

8 Cf. Psalm 68:5, 102:17.

9 Cf. Deut. 32:21 and Prov. 14:31.

10 Cf. Psalm 44:21; Luke 16:15; and Acts 15:8.

11 Cf. Psalm 82:6.

for their own benefit and glory, but Christians use their authority as God's stewards for edification in God. They look after the pure teaching and after punishment of vice; they protect the aggrieved, they stand up to evil men, not just to ensure their own safety, but to ensure that they will not burden others. For charity does not seek its own benefit, but that of others.<sup>12</sup>

It is perhaps a sign of human weakness that nowadays some people rely on the emperor and his army. But for us God is greater than everything else. He helps those who trust in him.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the emperor's inclinations and thoughts are focused on Spain.<sup>14</sup> He is not keen on war. He knows that he cannot do you harm without upsetting the German nation. For he has been told that our princes and cities think that this concerns them too, and when you suffer harm, it is to their detriment as well. The emperor also likes his money too much. He has not wanted to spend it even on greater matters. Nor is he as hostile toward the faith as he is said to be. Otherwise, he would not have granted us peace under such conditions,<sup>15</sup> while our princes and cities have never agreed to yield to those who are now taking an interest in the gospel or may do so in future, without regard for their interpretation and for concord. They did not agree although the [Catholic] clergy was urging them to do so.

Nothing, however, is beyond the pope.<sup>16</sup> He wants to do something that will strike fear into overly timid neighbours and turn them away from the truth. Thus one must consider whether this malice of our enemies will progress and go against even those whom they now placate with friendly words. Indeed our opponents are not concerned with the glory of the church. It is more than counsel, more than an initiative by one part to attempt by this schism once more to take away your freedom. You will be under the domination of a few men, which we would much regret, although this is not our principal concern, given our mandate as servants of the Spirit. We are servants of Christ. We preach his rule, which he exercises over our con-

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12 Cf. 1 Cor. 13:5.

13 Cf. 1 Chr. 5:20; Psalm 5:11, 9:10, 17:7, 26:1, 28:7, 32:10, 34:22, 37:40, 40:4; Prov. 29:25; and Nahum 1:7.

14 Charles left the Holy Roman Empire in 1532 and returned to Spain (for his itinerary, see above, Ep. 489a, note 4), leaving the affairs of the empire in the hands of his brother Ferdinand, King of the Romans. As Charles gradually withdrew from German affairs, Ferdinand became more prominent, growing into his role of successor to the imperial crown.

15 A reference to the Truce of Nürnberg of 23 July 1532 (see above, Ep. 485a head-note).

16 Pope Clement VII (r. 1523–34).

science through his Spirit. Where Christ is in control and where there are pious Christians, affairs go well and take the right course, even if the world were full of tumults and even if heaven and earth collapsed. But since the praiseworthy [Swiss] Confederation has by now done away with much sin and with the power of evil men, and has sought the advantage of their subjects and pious people, and since recently the majority has accepted the gospel teaching, it is our duty, our special duty, gracious lords of Bern, even for the sake of our conscience, to pray God to maintain and make fortunate your government and all the other Christian lords and rulers. Therefore, we urgently pray that God's honour be maintained in you, which is now linked to your welfare, since you seek and uphold Christian truth.

Your Graces, our lords, accepted the gospel before others with great and admirable courage when the Disputation was held five years ago.<sup>17</sup> You abolished false service to God and instead established and proclaimed godly laws for the city and the region, which have recently been maintained in times of tribulation. You have renewed your Christian mandate and godly enterprise and once again sworn to it. You held another synod<sup>18</sup> with the grace and support of God, which may set an excellent example for many churches and governments, and with God's help has already inspired some people, so that more benefit will come from it than some people expected. Therefore, since you have a great reputation among governments on account of the gospel, we beg you humbly and request for God's sake, for your own welfare and the salvation of your souls, to stop all business that may cause ill will and resentment among yourselves and others, and to concern yourselves earnestly and loyally with those who are being troubled contrary to God and your alliance.

For God demands two things throughout scripture: that we know God and love our neighbour, as we said before.<sup>19</sup> We have proof that you know God, for you have taken down images and forbidden the mass as well as human law concerning conscience, and you have established divine service and life according to scripture. As for the other commandment, Christian love, you, a praiseworthy Christian government, can prove this in no other way than by giving your hand and your support to your dependents and neighbours, lest they be driven from the truth of God through the sinful violence of our opponents. For God's truth is more precious and should be dearer to

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17 See above, note 1.

18 See above, note 2.

19 Matt. 22:34–40.

a Christian than all earthly possessions. Anyone who tolerates injustice and does not come to the aid [of the wronged], if he has an opportunity or an obligation to do so, becomes a partner to the crime and will be regarded by God as the source of injustice. God will severely judge both of them: the doer and the abetter. For he regards what is done to his people and for the sake of his name as being done to himself. The prophet says, 'Whoever touches his people roughly, touches the apple of his eye.'<sup>20</sup> May the Almighty protect Your Graces, so that you will not offend any good man through your own actions or through acquiescence. Rather, may you further all godly people and continue to do so, so that God will maintain you in your government in good health and for a long time, to your honour and benefit, and to his praise and glory, and give you hereafter eternal life with Christ in the glory of his Father, Amen. This is our heartfelt wish, and we beg Your Graces to accept our simple-minded letter as coming from servants of Christ. Consider it and take it to heart, for it concerns your welfare, love of your neighbour, and your soul. We humbly commend ourselves to Your Graces. Given at Strasbourg, 26 November 1532.

Your Graces' willing servants,

Dr Wolfgang Capito

Martin Bucer and other preachers and servants of the Word of God in Strasbourg.

**Letter 490a: [After 29 November 1532, Strasbourg], Capito and Martin Bucer to the City Council of Bern**

Printed in BDS 10:138–62, no. 11. Marriage legislation was handled by a secular tribunal in Protestant cities; yet the questions addressed to the Strasbourg preachers show that ecclesiastical and secular law were closely linked in this case. The city council of Bern did not act on their recommendation.

[*Summary*]: Capito and Bucer give their considered reply to two questions addressed to them by the city council of Bern. Firstly, if the guilty party in a divorce remarries without permission of the marriage tribunal, is the marriage valid? Secondly, are adulterers permitted to marry the person with whom they have committed adultery? The Strasbourgers acknowledged that the Bernese laws are based on the gospel, but advise them to consider the spirit rather than the letter of the law. Bernese law obliges the guilty party

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<sup>20</sup> Zech. 2:8.

to wait for a minimum of one year before remarrying. If the marriage takes place earlier and without permission of the tribunal, the guilty party may be exiled or pardoned after paying a fine. While the Strasbourgers acknowledge the wisdom of dealing harshly with adulterers, they advise the judges to consider practical difficulties such as the parties' ability to remain celibate, earn a living or look after their children without a spouse. If concessions are made in the interest of allowing them to lead an honest and morally blameless life, a fine should be levied, and the marriage be recognized by the authorities.

In response to the second question, the Strasbourgers note that a marriage between adulterers is repugnant and may give the impression that the council tolerates or even rewards sinful behaviour, yet such a marriage should be accepted in the interest of allowing the parties to lead an honest life. Nevertheless, the fact is that they broke the law, and for that they should be punished. In making such decisions, the judges should remember that they are acting on behalf of God and must always take into consideration the moral well-being of the community. In passing laws it is important to spell out contingencies to leave as little as possible to the interpretation of individual judges.

**Letter 491: [End of December] 1532, Basel, [Oswald Myconius] to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, f. 418.

Greetings. You are right when you admonish me to beware lest the simplicity of my faith get the better of me, for so far I have frequently and diligently reported to friends the undertakings of others. I must be especially careful because everything is turning out so badly. For everything we have done in writing up to the present day is so ineffective that I have practically given up hope of concord among us. We dispute on all sides whether to do anything about the insolence of the [Five] Cantons. We are unwilling to listen, much less to follow, other people's advice, not even when we sought it with a humble petition. In the case of the last synod,<sup>1</sup> our counsel was rejected out of hand (as our scribe<sup>2</sup> reported reluctantly), even after the mayor of Schaff-

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- 1 Likely a reference to the Synod of Basel, which met on 28 May 1532 (see above, Ep. 476, note 1).
- 2 There is some ambiguity as to whether 'scriba nostra' refers to Caspar Schaller, then city secretary (*Stadtschreiber*), or to Heinrich Ryhiner, then town clerk (*Ratschreiber*), because contemporary documents indicate that the usage of either term was quite flexible (see Dürr/Roth 6, no. 162, a document dated 9

hausen,<sup>3</sup> who had read it, tried with all his might to persuade them. Nor did they offer an explanation for their impertinence other than that it was not our mandate. Yet because of the special esteem in which the said mayor was held, they had retreated from their obstinate view to the point of asking at last for a copy to bring back to their people. This request was denied with words to this effect: If we are so little respected among you that you do not deign to read what you requested, it seems best to return it to the senders intact. The people of Zurich agreed to negotiate with the [Five] Cantons only because they were moved by their threats. The [Five] Cantons complain that the truce has been violated, because a decree passed in Zurich prohibits the people from hearing mass.<sup>4</sup> They add another reason (or so it has been reported to me) that it is written in the articles of peace: 'If there is any matter, either concerning faith or concerning secular business, in which either party

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September 1532, and co-signed by Schaller and Ryhiner, both *Stadtschreiber*; cf. *ibidem*, 6, no. 289, a *Ratschlag* composed by Myconius, Markus Bertschi, Theodor Brand, Ludwig Zürcher, Konrad Schnitt, and Schaller (*Stadtschreiber*), to the articles, 'as was tendered by the preachers in the last synod,' dated 18 June 1533). Schaller (c. 1490–1542) is first mentioned on 28 January 1518 as a notary in Strasbourg, where he purchased citizenship. On 29 September 1519, he relinquished his citizenship and moved to Basel. On 5 October 1519, he was granted citizenship in Basel and became a member of the vintners' guild. From 1523 to 1534, he served as city secretary of Basel, a position he lost in 1534 following a complaint from Duke Ulrich von Württemberg. In 1532, he became city secretary of Bern, where he served until his death. Heinrich Ryhiner (c. 1490–1553) matriculated at the University of Basel in 1508. From around 1515–17, he was procurator of the bishop of Basel, Christoph von Utenheim. On 24 July 1518, he was granted citizenship in Basel. In 1524, he succeeded Schaller as town clerk (*Ratschreiber*) of Basel, serving later as city secretary (*Stadtschreiber*) from 1534 to 1553. As of 1529, he also served as church warden of St Alban's, and later, as of 1532, as one of the three *Deputaten* of Basel. On 27 December 1535, he received a coat of arms from Ferdinand I, around which time he also served as imperial notary. In 1542, he became a member of the Great Council of Basel, representing the Gardeners' Guild. See August Burckhardt, 'Stadtschreiber Heinrich Ryhiner,' *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 2 (1903): 34–66.

<sup>3</sup> See above, Ep. 469, note 16.

<sup>4</sup> Despite several diets held from October to December 1532, the Five Catholic Cantons in the end did not succeed in forcing Zurich to submit to the legal decision of a court of arbitration of the Confederacy in the controversy over Zurich's mandate concerning the mass of 29 May 1532. Bern, Schaffhausen, and especially Basel sought to keep Zurich away from making such a move (see HBBW 2, Ep. 165, note 7).

feels aggrieved, it must be settled by law.<sup>5</sup> What is this if not looking for a reason to indulge one's ill will? In truth, our people are so corrupted by fear and stupor that they can find no way to escape. For that peace agreement has already been violated so many times by our opponents, for example, by agitating against us before the emperor and before the pope, quite openly. And even if the conditions of peace allowed for what they have done, it does not require very keen eyesight to see that they themselves have good reason to blame the [Five] Cantons, to accuse them and prosecute them on many points. You see the hope you have conceived from the words of the scribe. Not that he said anything vain, for he kept to the counsel of the lords, but you must recognize their wretched condition, for we have all been equally disappointed in the hopes raised. Furthermore, the [Five] Cantons responded to the people of Bern with insolence. If that does not bother them, what good can we hope from them? They contend fiercely among themselves. There is disagreement even about the first article of peace. The [Five] Cantons contend that their faith, even by our own testimony, is the true, indubitably Christian faith of old.<sup>6</sup> When the people of Bern doggedly denied that they had admitted such a thing, the others said, 'If we had known that you would use this deception, we would have attempted to show you with all our might and with a steadfast spirit what kind of enemy you have aroused, but we do not disdain you in the meantime.' I'm asking you, most pious of men: Do you see what arrogant and cutting words they use? But let us see how the people of Bern are going to interpret this. And, to omit nothing, the [Five] Cantons furthermore said, 'We cannot, under any circumstances, ever be reconciled when our faith remains divided, for our mind shrinks from yours, and yours equally from ours.' Therefore, we must consider what must be done. These things clearly attest to the enemy's attitude. What then can we hope from them? The day will come when one party has to yield to the other in this or in some other way. That is the state of things. May God in his mercy grant that the cunning of the evil demon will not undo his justice. Help us with your advice, if you have any.

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5 See Article VIa (printed in Ernst Walder, *Religionsvergleiche des 16. Jahrhunderts* [Bern, 1945], vol. 1, 11).

6 See Article 1a, in which the people of Zurich promised not to argue and engage in disputations with the people in the Five Catholic Cantons with their 'true, unquestionable and Christian faith,' and in turn, the Five Catholic Cantons promised to allow the people of Zurich to maintain their reformed faith (printed in Walder, *Religionsvergleiche*, vol. 1, 7); cf. HBBW 2, Ep. 165, ll. 9–10.

This remains: If the matter is such as the scribe reported to us about Luther's most recent statement of belief<sup>7</sup> (which was not quite clearly explained in your letter) we are pleased and shall give much thanks to God, as we must. You are surprised that I do not connect you with Bucer in the matter of the Eucharist, which seemed on the verge of becoming a tragedy. The reason is the difference in your approach, at least to my thinking. Everything in you seems candid and, in proportion to your faith, simple and true. Bucer's, however, is mixed with the spirit of ambition. But I do not know the man, except from his writings, which show a magnificent mind, deep and capacious, so that I cannot wonder enough, thinking I must be mistaken. And I shall gladly acknowledge my error after I find that the matter is not as I thought it was. Therefore, take what I have written in good stead, for I deal with you in simplicity, as you see, and in a trusting spirit. Farewell. As always, we want to be commended to you. Basel. 1532.

**Letter 492: 31 December 1532, Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to Johannes Seger and Johannes Rottach**

The following letter, along with Epp. 493–95 below, were sent together with Bucer's lengthy treatise on the Lord's Supper addressed to the city council of Kempton, also dated 31 December 1532 (see BDS 8:67–154, no. 4). In these writings, the Strasbourg preachers attempted to mediate in the Eucharistic controversy that plagued Kempton from 1530 to 1533, bitterly dividing its citizenry and preachers. For a detailed account of the controversy and an analysis of Bucer's role as mediator, see Stephen E. Buckwalter, 'Bucer as mediator in the 1532 Kempton eucharistic controversy,' *Renaissance & Reformation Review* 5.2/3 (2005): 188–206.

Kempton had espoused the Augsburg Confession on 15 July 1530, a decision, however, that did not make the city officially Lutheran and did not settle the increasingly bitter controversy over the Eucharistic question between the city's three main preachers. Instead, Johannes Seger (see below, Ep. 494 headnote), supported by Johannes Rottach (see below, note 3), denounced Jakob Haistung (see above, Ep. 480 headnote) before the city council for having deliberately misinterpreted the Eucharistic article of the Augsburg Confession in his sermons. The council urged the preachers to overcome their differences. Consequently, they drafted three articles concerning the Lord's Supper on which they could all agree. As a public demonstration of their reconciliation, they were supposed jointly to administer communion on 10 March 1532.

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7 Unidentified. See HBBW 2, Ep. 165, note 31.

Capito's arrival in Kempten on 7 March, while on his way back to Strasbourg (see above, Ep. 462 headnote), however, disturbed these arrangements. On the day after his arrival, he met with the three preachers at his Kempten lodgings. It is not entirely clear what transpired during this encounter, but it is certain that Capito's visit destroyed any chances of a reconciliation between the three. According to an angry letter from Seger and Rottach to Luther, Capito criticized their three articles on the Lord's Supper (WABr 12, Ep. 4249). As a result, Haistung refused to take part in the administration of the Lord's Supper during the service of reconciliation on 10 March, as previously planned. Seger and Rottach, by contrast, proceeded with the planned communion service. The following day, during a meeting of the city council with Capito and the three preachers, Capito declared the three articles to be unsatisfactory. The council ordered Seger and Rottach to have further consultations with Haistung that afternoon, but they refused to do so. Capito left the following day.

The city council's subsequent attempts to keep the disagreements between the preachers under control failed. They, therefore, resolved to have each of the three preachers draft a summary of their Eucharistic views in the form of a written confession. On 20 November these three confessions were sent to the respective city councils of Strasbourg, Nürnberg, and Augsburg with a request for comment by their respective theologians (see below, note 1).

Epp. 492–95, together with Bucer's lengthy treatise, represent the response of the Strasbourg preachers. Bucer's treatise emphasizes the concept of a sacramental union. Ultimately, however, his treatise reveals that he was more inclined toward Haistung's confession than to Seger's and Rottach's. Augsburg's response is no longer extant. Despite a contrasting endorsement from Nürnberg, the city council of Kempten endorsed Bucer's proposal. On 31 January 1533, the council dismissed Seger and Rottach from their posts, appointing two new preachers in their place: Paul Rasdorfer (d. 1564) and Georg Veit Kappeler (d. after 1556), both natives of Kempten.

The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:78–86, Ep. 647.

Grace and peace, respected brothers. Our council has presented to us your confessions and instructed us to examine them before the Lord, to show how Christian concord can be restored between you and your readers, and to show at the same time what we regard as being in accord with or going against the Word of God in these statements.<sup>1</sup> We had to comply, even

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<sup>1</sup> For a modern edition of the three confessions of Haistung, Rottach, and Seger, see BDS 8:162–203, 211–29, and 237–50, respectively. For an analysis of their contents, see Buckwalter, 'Bucer as Mediator,' 195–9.

though we undertook that task reluctantly. For we have to give judgment on each point according to the council's instructions. But since the meaning is not always the same for the writer as it is for the reader, it is not safe to judge someone on the basis of his words, unless it is clear in what sense he used them. Indeed, we have tempered our judgment such that you will realize that we had no preconceived plan other than wanting sincere love and concord to prevail among you in the Lord and in the truth of Christ. Therefore, if we have misunderstood your meaning anywhere, we beg you take it in good stead. For we believe that words must be taken in the sense the writer has intended them. For this reason, we would have preferred to pass judgment and to counsel concord in person rather than in writing and to show you the way, which we believe is open to you, to reach true Christian consensus. But our council decided otherwise, and perhaps your council as well. The gist of our views is this:

We cannot but acknowledge that individual points in your statements are Christian. Since, then, we see you united in the Lord, we must interpret any point in which you slightly disagree in such a manner that we have no doubt that everything can be reduced to a common understanding. Neither side can be accused of not believing in the words of God or knowingly believing anything contrary to them. For example, looking at your statements about the holy Eucharist, we see that you both acknowledge without a doubt that the true body and blood of the Lord are received in the Supper and that Christ gave nothing but his true body and blood. It is clear, therefore, that two questions have arisen among you: how this bread can be the true body of the Lord and this wine the true blood, that is, what is the nature of the union between bread and wine? Dr Luther makes it a sacramental union; you, dearest brothers Seger<sup>2</sup> and Rottach,<sup>3</sup> seem to say the same. If that is the case, we can only say before the Lord, that you are in agreement. For when Master Jakob<sup>4</sup> says the bread is the body of the Lord sacramentally, he means: The bread is a sacrament of the body of the Lord, thus there is a sacramental union between the bread and the body of the Lord. Lest this seem to go against the true presence of Christ, we show how that expression must

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2 For Johannes Seger, see below, Ep. 494 headnote.

3 Johannes Rottach (d. after 1553) studied at the University of Tübingen (BA, 1511). As of 1523, he was an assistant in Kempten until his dismissal as a Lutheran on 31 January 1533. Thereafter, he was a chaplain in Crailsheim. In 1534, he became second pastor in Lorch, and in 1535, first pastor. In 1546, he was a pastor in Sersheim, but was dismissed in 1548 on account of the Interim. From 1549 until his death, he was a catechist in Sersheim.

4 For Jakob Haistung, see above, Ep. 480 headnote.

be interpreted, namely, that we understand the body and blood of Christ are given to us with the bread and wine.

The other question concerns the way in which the body and blood of the Lord are consumed by us. Here Master Jakob writes that they are consumed through faith and spiritually. The other two say, corporeally. But you, dearest brothers Seger and Rottach, will admit that those who clearly lack faith cannot take the body of the Lord, and undoubtedly you will also admit that the body and blood of the Lord are not taken like bread with our teeth, mouth, and stomach. Furthermore, [when you admit] that sacraments are of a nature such that there is something visible in them and something perceptible with the mind, you will no doubt also acknowledge that corporeal eating may equally be termed spiritual, for it happens through faith. Unless the actual physical act of eating, in which bread is eaten and wine is drunk, is taken to pertain directly to the body and blood of the Lord, the eating of the body and blood consists of a sacramental union.

There are other points that are certainly rather offensive if one does not consider that you are seeking God, for example, concerning ascension into heaven and the properties of human nature, but we accept all that in the best sense. We must stay with the simplicity of scripture. The Lord died, rose again, and ascended into heaven. Nevertheless he is also here, but in his own sense, as the church has always believed. It is a divine presence and cannot be called corporeal or local in the proper sense. On this basis, therefore, you agree before the Lord, more so perhaps than you yourselves recognize. You are serving the church, not yourselves, and you must temper everything for the sake of its edification. Since, then, no one regards the Eucharist as a natural union between the body of Christ and the bread, or food for the stomach; it is sufficient to believe and to state that the Lord is with the bread and wine. Hence, we use the minister to give the true body and true blood. When we eat the body of Christ and drink his blood, we can call it not merely a sacramental union, since we truly consume them and are changed into them rather than they into us, as the church has always believed and recognized. Dismiss the quarrel about 'impious' words, and direct your efforts toward administering the sacraments of Christ, the sacraments of the church, the true signs of grace. You are the ministers of believers not of infidels. Therefore, be concerned with them, not with infidels. Make an effort to lead each person to the Supper, and not just in the sacramental sense, but to the eating of the true body and blood, as St Augustine writes.<sup>5</sup>

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5 Cf. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 21.25. In reference to John 6:56–8, Augustine distinguishes between people who only come to the Lord's Supper, and those who truly receive the body of Christ (see CorrBucer 9, Ep. 647, note 21).

If one man offends the other, forgive him in the Lord, just as we pray that the Lord may forgive us in turn.<sup>6</sup> Let no one seek his own good, neither possessions nor reputation, nor anything else. We all belong to the Lord, such as we are. Consider also that Christ accepted all those who acknowledged him as the true Saviour, and it is therefore unbearable that we should reject some of these people, indeed that we should fail to make every effort to join them all in the Lord and make them one. Look at your church thus shaken up, as you fight each other in sermons. If your church must truly come together in the Lord, we cannot bear anyone saying or doing what might otherwise be permissible if the church were not so disturbed.<sup>7</sup> We must 'become all things to all men,'<sup>8</sup> we must support the weaker people in their faith. You must not turn your minds to contention therefore. Even if contention is allowed in observing the truth of Christ, defer to the other party who is of equal standing. If you can take the way we have shown earlier, we believe that matters will be tempered. You will teach of the sacred things that are contained in God's words, and the whole church will be sincerer in its beliefs and will accept what you have faithfully explained, to your benefit as well. Brothers, we all hate self-love and cannot guard enough against it. But we have given our names to the kingdom of God, which we preach and administer. Woe to us, if we do not completely divest ourselves [of secular concerns]. It is neither novel nor difficult to put on the Word of God, faith, and conscience. Certainly if we care about the Word of God and the kingdom of Christ, we are concerned most about what goes against them, both in us and in others. But we often connive at crass things, both in us and in our flock! Let us pray to the Lord, therefore, who first and foremost requires a true and simple heart and self-denial, to free us from all self-love and grant us to see what he himself approves, and pursue that alone.

This is what we hope to achieve in our prayers. It will no doubt satisfy our dearest brother Jakob if you two state that our Lord is truly God and truly man as well and has entered heaven with his true body, that is, entered into a divine state, so that he does not become one with the bread in a natural way, nor food for the stomach, and that we must seek in the Supper first of all a true communion in us with the body and blood of the Lord, to receive a benefit. Conversely, the others will be satisfied if he confesses that the Lord has truly given his true body in the Supper and that it is to be gained not

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6 Cf. Matt. 6:12 and 1 Cor. 6:1-11.

7 Cf. 1 Cor. 10:23.

8 1 Cor. 9:22.

through the stomach, but through the mind. Truly, the body of Christ is present in the Supper and the bread, but not locally, nor can it be received except through the Lord's Supper, which was instituted by his disciples. As such, it cannot be received by mice nor by any who are not disciples of Christ. May the Lord grant that you accept and interpret everything we say, just as we sincerely ask in the Lord that you and your church achieve concord. Farewell in the Lord, and commend us and our church to Christ. Strasbourg, on the day before the Calends of January 1533.

Devoted to your love.

Dr Caspar Hedio,<sup>9</sup> writing in his own hand, asks by the coming of Christ not to disturb the church on account of the subtleness of your beliefs. Matthew Zell,<sup>10</sup> writing in his own hand, asks the same thing as Hedio, that you emphasize one thing most of all, as did Christ and his apostles, namely, to do this in remembrance of him. For that is the one thing he commanded<sup>11</sup> and it is undue curiosity to look into the nature of his presence, when he will never be absent in true believers. Nor should we overlook the fact that we shall never achieve anything by contention. I hope you obtain what I pray for: the food of life in death,<sup>12</sup> and beware, when you will be asked for the sheep entrusted to you, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, etc.<sup>13</sup>

Dr Wolfgang Capito,  
Symphorian Pollio,<sup>14</sup>  
Martin Bucer.

### Letter 493: 31 December 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Melchior Soiter

Melchior Soiter (Seuter, Suitter, or Suter) of Windach, Bavaria, was the son of a nobleman born in Kempten and who matriculated at the University of Freiburg in October 1516 (BA 1518). He was a member of the *sodalitas* of humanist scholars in Ingolstadt, founded by Johannes Aventinus (1477–1534), to whom he wrote two letters in 1530 (see Edmund von Oefele, 'Aventiniana,' *Oberbayerisches Archiv* 44 (1887): 25–6, Epp. 15–16). While in Freiburg, Soiter studied law under Ulrich Zasius, who, on 15 March 1521, wrote a letter to him, when he was chancellor of Landgrave Philip of Hesse (see J.A. Riegger, ed.,

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9 For Caspar Hedio, see CWC 1, Ep. 47 headnote.

10 For Matthew Zell, see CWC 1, Ep. 167 headnote.

11 Cf. Luke 22:19.

12 Cf. 1 Cor. 11:29.

13 Cf. 1 Pet. 1:18–19.

14 For Symphorian Pollio (Altbisser), see CWC 2, Ep. 217 headnote.

*Vdalrici Zasii ... epistolae ad viros ...* [Ulm, 1774], 448, Ep. 265). By 1524, Soiter was a doctor of canon and civil law. On 15 February 1525, he married Konstanze, a daughter of Konrad Peutingner (see Peutingner's letter to Soiter, dated October 1534, congratulating Soiter and Konstanze on the birth of their son, in *Konrad Peutingners Briefwechsel*, edited by Erich König [Munich, 1923], 470, Ep. 286). Soiter is documented as the secretary, privy councillor and chancellor of Philipp von der Pfalz, prince-bishop of Freising and Naumburg, whom he represented at the Diets of Nürnberg (1524) and Augsburg (1525/26); Soiter then represented Friedrich II von der Pfalz at the Diet of Augsburg (1530). Soiter described Friedrich II's campaign against the Turks in Hungary (1532) in a book entitled *De bello Pannonico per Illustrissimum Principem ... Fridericum Comitem Palatinum Rheni ... adversus Soleymannum Turcarum tyrannum ... libri duo; Item, Stratagematicon ac rerum Turcicarum epithome ...; Item, De Turcorum militaribus magistratibus ... liber unus* (Augsburg, 1538), with dedicatory letters from Soiter to Philipp von der Pfalz and to Ferdinand I, both dated 1 January 1538. His name appears in documents at the Augsburg Stadtarchiv (Fürststift Kempten) in 1536 and 1541, and at the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munich (Kloster Altomünster Urkunden, 1256–1760, 318/1).

The text of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 174, f. 302r–v. For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 492 headnote.

My willing and deliberate service, according to the will of God, honourable and wise sir! We are truly sorry that the disagreement among your preachers has not yet come to an end, and have therefore made every effort to get to the root of the affair without prejudice to anyone, to avoid that anyone act against the truth and peace of God. Since both parties want to respect God and aim at increasing the glory of God rather than carrying on a hateful quarrel, we hope very much that they will henceforth maintain peace, using the means we have proposed to them in our reply to our lords.<sup>1</sup> By God, I wish the honourable council had listened to me at the time when I was among you, then this quarrel would long be over and done with, God willing.<sup>2</sup> But such was the will of the Almighty God. Now, here are the means we propose,

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- 1 Likely a reference to Bucer's lengthy response to the city council of Kempten, dated 31 December (see above, Ep. 492 headnote). For an analysis of Bucer's response, see Buckwalter, 'Bucer as Mediator,' 199–202. Bucer summarizes the contents of the response in a letter to Blaurer on 4 January 1533 (Schliess 1, Ep. 315).
- 2 For Capito's role in the Eucharistic quarrel in Kempten, see above, Ep. 492 headnote.

our confession, which is based on the confessions of both parties, as were composed, written, and sent to us. We confess Christ our Lord being present in the Supper, not as food for the stomach, but truly giving his true body as food for the soul.<sup>3</sup> This does not go against Haistung<sup>4</sup> and does not mean that Seger,<sup>5</sup> together with Rottach,<sup>6</sup> makes decisions based on us alone. We consider what that dear man of God, Dr Luther, demands from everyone: not to give what is holy to the poor congregation when they are unworthy and without any understanding or unable to benefit, like shoving it down the throat of an impure animal, as I said to you, speaking freely, when we were riding to Ulm.<sup>7</sup> Is there anyone who would not, for the sake of peace, eschew the little controversial words that are not in the scriptures? Would we not all prefer to think about those things that strengthen [unity] rather than those that favour certain parties? No doubt, if one of us could have been present in your city, as we wished and offered to do, we could have done everything that is conducive to peace in a nobler manner. But now let us pray to the Almighty to grant us his grace and remove this trouble from his church. I therefore wish to commend to you God's business and ask you to assist this cause, and to act in a way that will forever be consistent with God and a pious conscience. Whatever I can do as a lowly servant of God for your benefit and honour, Your Lordship, I am willing and ready to do. Thus be commended to the Almighty. Given at Strasbourg, on the last day of December, in the year 1532.

Yours, worthy lord,  
Wolfgang Capito.

#### Letter 494: 31 December 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Seger

Johannes Seger (Serranus, Serarius, d. 1552) studied at Leipzig (BA, 1522) and possibly at Wittenberg. From 1528 on, he was an assistant at St Mang in Kempten. Expelled as a Lutheran on 31 January 1533, he became a chaplain in Ansbach in July 1533 and later served as a pastor in Lehrberg (from 1536) and Roßfeld (from 1543). He wrote a *Dictionarium Latinogermanicum* (Nürnberg, 1539) and a *Synonymorum libellus* (Nürnberg, 1552).

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3 See BDS 8:81–2.

4 For Jakob Haistung, see above, Ep. 480 headnote.

5 For Johannes Seger, see below, Ep. 494 headnote.

6 For Johannes Rottach, see above, Ep. 492, note 3.

7 See above, Ep. 480, note 3.

There are two extant manuscripts of this letter: Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 155, no. 29, p. 74 and 1AST 174, f. 302. For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 492 headnote.

Grace and peace. Here you have the whole business in a joint letter.<sup>1</sup> If I were in your presence, I would have no other wish than to see you end these quarrels and teach our pure Christ purely. I beseech you, my brother, to interpret everything in the best sense. We have written exactly the same thing to you as to the people of Kempten. Nor should you think that we have attacked any man on purpose; rather, we have acted as patrons of the truth and did not want to accuse anyone of manifest and dangerous error. If the Lord grants you to put away judgments and simply concentrate on the essence of faith, the quarrel will clearly come to an end. As for the rest, one must take into consideration harmful ills and the truly preposterous judgment of the multitude or the magistrate, a matter to which you recently had to give your attention. The truth must not rest on anyone's private authority, but on its own strength. Thus it will draw less nourishment from human passions. I pray to the Lord that he may finally grant a happy outcome to this tragic pitched battle. The man who brings this letter is very much devoted to you.<sup>2</sup> We believe he is a good man. There was a great deal of material [to deliver].<sup>3</sup> For that reason we detained him here for a considerable time. Everything had to be done by one man's hand. Give my best regards to Rottach.<sup>4</sup> Farewell in the Lord. Strasbourg, on the last day of December, in the year 1532.

Yours, Wolfgang Capito.

If the occasion permits, I would like our opinion to be read by all of you together. For with the Lord present as the bringer of peace, advocate, and judge, peace will no doubt be obtained. And so, my Seger, with our prayers joined together we must devote ourselves to pursuits of this sort. You will soon see the Sacramentarian controversy collapse. Therefore, adapt your vigorous mind even more to the solid truth, for I would rather see your acumen applied to other, worthier matters.

### **Letter 495: 31 December 1532, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Sonntag**

Little is known about Johannes Sonntag, city secretary of Kempten. He may

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1 I.e., sent together with Ep. 493.

2 Identity unknown.

3 I.e., Epp. 492–5, plus Bucer's response (see above, Ep. 492 headnote).

4 For Johannes Rottach, see above, Ep. 492, note 3.

be identified with the 'Joannes Sunentag' of Nürtingen (Baden-Württemberg), who matriculated at Tübingen in 1516.

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 174, f. 302v. For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 492 headnote.

Circumspect, honourable, and wise sir. I beg Your Honour to read our reply<sup>1</sup> diligently and recognize that it will further the glory of God and Christian peace. It would have been easier if one of us had transacted this in person, but this is how God has meant it to be. Glory be to him forever. In our view, the best method is to use the words in the confession we submitted at Augsburg,<sup>2</sup> as you can see from our response in the present business. If it pleases you, call together the preachers and have the letter read and considered by them in the assembly. It would be good, moreover, for someone to be present who might talk about it at greater length. You have Ambrosius Blaurer nearby,<sup>3</sup> who is a man of peace and very amicable. But I don't know whether other considerations will permit his presence. I regard him as unbiased, and truly that has been my experience with him. Furthermore, dear sir, regard this matter as a divine matter, which concerns the blessed state of the soul. The matter is understood well enough if the salutary presence of Christ is understood. Your preachers, who are my dear brothers, will agree in that point. Christian love should seek common ground and tolerate the rest. I wish to commend myself in all sincerity to the honourable council, offering my willing service to them. Given at Strasbourg, on the last day of December, in the year 1532.

#### **Letter 496: 5 January 1533, Strasbourg, [Capito] to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 3:29–31, Ep. 170.

[*Summary*]: Capito thanks Bullinger for the news about Zurich. The Strasbourgers have encouraged Basel to resume relations with Zurich. Bucer will write at greater length [see HBBW 3, Ep. 169]. He will also explain their views on the Eucharist. They want to give the Lutherans no opportunity

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- 1 I.e., Bucer's reply to the city council of Kempten (see above, Ep. 492 headnote).
- 2 I.e., the Augsburg Confession of 1530.
- 3 Blaurer was in Isny, approximately 20 km from Kempten, from 14 September 1532 (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 613, note 28) until the end of January or the beginning of February, when he moved to Lindau (see Schiess 1, Epp. 314 and 322).

to impugn them. Capito knows that Zwingli never denied the presence of Christ as seen with the eyes of faith, although he is otherwise in heaven. The Lutherans do not want the Eucharist to be interpreted merely as something done in memory of an absent Christ. They understand it as a spiritual eating. But Christ's spiritual presence is a true presence. The Strasbourgers say that 'the true Christ is truly present at the Supper and is being offered to the believer together with the bread, as food for the soul.' Augustine uses the word *significat* [signifies] and Tertullian *per figuram* [figuratively]. Some people believe that this amounts to a denial of Christ's presence. When the Lutherans use the terms *substantialiter* [in substance] and *corporaliter* [corporeally], they mean 'truly.' The Strasbourgers say Christ is present to the soul through faith. Thus they limit the sacrament to those who are pious; the Lutherans also include the impious. The Strasbourgers interpret everything in the best sense, for the sake of peace. Capito asks Bullinger to administer the Eucharist in the same spirit. The new council takes office at this time of the year, and there is no leisure to deal with religious questions. Capito asks Bullinger to write often and to greet Theodor [Bibliander], [Conradus] Pellicanus, and all the other professors and preachers. He will write to Leo [Jud] himself.

**Letter 497: 14 January 1533, [Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 3:46–8, Ep. 177.

[*Summary*]: Capito asks Bullinger to read Bucer's letter attentively [HBBW 3, Ep. 176]. He himself has written to the mayor, Diethelm Röist [letter not extant]. The Zurich council will obtain the help they ask for, but discretion is advised. Capito does not wish Bullinger to refer to the preachers' mediation. He regrets that they did not accept Philip of Hesse's help [in the Second Battle of Kappel]. Capito admonishes Bullinger to be more receptive to the reformed towns and avoid any quarrel with them, especially in view of the hostility of the common enemy, the Five Catholic Cantons. If they relapse into Catholicism, Zurich will be despised. Capito repeats that Zurich must ask for help from Strasbourg without mentioning the encouragement they received from the preachers. Discretion is also necessary in view of the peace settlement [of Nürnberg of 23 July 1532] with the emperor. Zurich is regarded as an enemy of the emperor. In soliciting help, Zurich must report the treatment they received from the enemy, profess their religious beliefs, and detail their expectations. First and foremost, they must restore relations with Bern and Basel. Capito has good hopes for the future.

**Letter 497a: [After 14 January 1533, Strasbourg, Capito] to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 3:48–9, Ep. 178.

[*Summary*]: Capito advises discretion. The people of Zurich must ask Strasbourg and Hesse for military help. Capito salutes all the brethren.

**Letter 498: 30 January 1533, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Schwebel**

The following two letters concern the ongoing efforts by the Strasbourg preachers to find an evangelical preacher to assist Schwebel as minister in Zweibrücken. The Strasbourg preachers reluctantly sent Johannes Hechtlin (see below, note 1), but something in the arrangements seems to have gone awry because they soon requested his immediate return (see below, Epp. 499, 503–4, and CorrBucer 9, Epp. 653–4, 656, 669–70, and 701). The letter is printed in *Centuria*, pp. 169–73, Ep. 55. For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote.

Grace and peace. Here is our dear Hechtlin,<sup>1</sup> whom we hardly managed to send off, in view of the opposition of the *Ammeister*<sup>2</sup> and the more prudent councillors.<sup>3</sup> We have very few ministers of the Word whose judgment is sound, for those who profess piety from the heart are rare. Most are driven into the dangerous business of the gospel by circumstances, just as a tempest drives the stormy seas. Thus it happens that they belatedly lament the fact that they have taken on their duty rashly. But this good man has entered the battlefield after taking counsel with himself. He will use apostolic arms in the battle against the enemies we confront.<sup>4</sup> He has fought a long time and victoriously. Thus I may rightly call him an experienced soldier, who has retired

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1 Johannes Hechtlin (d. 1535) was formerly an assistant at Old St Peter's in Strasbourg. After an unsuccessful attempt to call him to Zweibrücken in 1532 and 1533, he took over the leadership of the Preachers' College in Strasbourg in early 1534 (see Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST 41/1, bundle I, ff. 16r–v). He died in early 1535, according to the financial records of the college (see *ibidem*, f. 17r).

2 For Matthis Pfarrer, see CWC 2, Ep. 456, note 9.

3 In a letter to Johannes Schwebel, dated 31 January 1533, Bucer mentioned that the city council of Strasbourg had delayed the departure of Hechtlin because they did not wish to lose him (see CorrBucer 9, Ep. 656).

4 Cf. Eph. 6:10–18.

with honours, although we know the commander will not allow any Christian to retire until he has substituted someone better out of the number of pious ministers. This is perhaps what you will do, when you leave the pulpit of the parish church and become hereafter the moderator in the prince's hall among his courtiers and councillors. For there are people who say that you have left preaching the Word, and have been called elsewhere, that is, to the court, serving Christ in both places assiduously and that you will continue to do so.<sup>5</sup> The second post, being exalted, will affect more people, but you will be in a thousand dangers.

We therefore gladly give up to you our helper and fellow preacher of the gospel, with whom you will be able to talk safely about both serious and light matters. But remember, dear sir, he is a man who has been tossed about by varied circumstances, for whom this safe harbour was prepared here. He is most worthy of a gentler fortune, on account of his age, but also [on account of] the hospitality of the bishop.<sup>6</sup> Find means of treating him liberally, that is, allow him tolerable living quarters and the means of buying books. Therefore, make every effort to provide him with a decent annual stipend for the work he will do for your church. Indeed, if this man is not as useful to you as his absence will be detrimental to our church, I ask you in the name of Christ to equip him for the journey and send him back to us. For we have some nineteen men in the city and somewhat more than that number in the countryside, but among them all, you will find hardly one or two who match Hechtlin's talent. He has no Latin, and therefore you must provide him with key instruction; as for the other things required by our churches in these times, he will serve splendidly. He has been with us for two years now, living in obscurity for a long time, but coming to our notice in the last half year. I write at greater length than usual, because we are uncertain about sending him away, and writing more fully [is meant] to elaborate on the idea that he should stay where he believes he will be most useful. I therefore told him to explore the whole situation and make no commitment before talking to us first. Bucer, however, sees no other outcome than that it will not be easy to get him back, for he has his eye on the pious old man. Our region is certainly large, and we have a dearth of this type of man, but he also takes into con-

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5 In fact, Schwebel was court preacher for Duke Ludwig II von Pfalz-Zweibrücken from 1523 to 1533; in May 1533, Ruprecht von Zweibrücken appointed him as a pastor in Zweibrücken. For Ludwig II and his brother Ruprecht, see below, Ep. 503, note 2.

6 The point of reference is unclear. It may allude to Paul's list of qualities that a bishop or overseer must possess, including hospitality (see 1 Tim. 3:2-7).

sideration your consistently moderate attitude in fulfilling the work of the Lord, best suited to the wisest pursuit of God's glory, an approach in which Hechtlin excels among his neighbours. Farewell. Strasbourg, on the second last day of January 1533.

**Letter 499: 3 February 1533, [Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Schwebel**

For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 498. Printed in *Centuria*, pp. 169–73, no. 56. For Schwebel, see above, Ep. 469a headnote.

Grace and peace. The man<sup>1</sup> who has undertaken to bring this letter to you, has shown himself most skilful here. As far as we know, he does not subscribe to any erroneous beliefs. He deals with the Word of the Lord sincerely, yet with great tolerance. For he is a poor man and truly pious. This is the recommendation with which we are sending him to you. Although he cannot be compared with Hechtlin<sup>2</sup> in judgment and in the other qualities, he will nevertheless make a name for himself among pious people and followers of Christ, as he has done so far – unless he becomes a completely different man. Johannes Frosch has had his position restored to him.<sup>3</sup> If possible, we want to commend him to you as a worthy man to assume important offices. Send Hechtlin away quickly. I hope he will be back here before you receive this letter. May the Lord be your salvation. Bucer, Hedio and Gerbel<sup>4</sup> send you their special greeting. 3 February 1533.

**Letter 500: [22 February 1533, Strasbourg], Capito to the Frankfurt Preachers**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 151, f. 435. It is a postscript, in Capito's hand, to a letter from Bucer to the Frankfurt preachers advising them not to attack Luther, but to focus on what they had in common. Luther had just written a book addressed to the City Council and Community of the City of Frankfurt (printed in WA 30/3:558–71) which some considered offensive. For reactions to Luther's book, see below, Ep. 502, note 1.

Bucer's letter and Capito's postscript are printed in BDS 4:507–14.

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- 1 Identity unknown.
- 2 For Johannes Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.
- 3 For Johannes Frosch (Batrachus), see below, Ep. 521 headnote (cf. CorrBucer 9, Epp. 653–4). The point of reference remains unclear, however.
- 4 For Nikolaus Gerbel, see CWC 1, Ep. 145, note 10.

This is the opinion of the brethren, as Bucer has written in the preceding letter. The gist is this: You will not overcome an opponent like Luther without incurring unpopularity. Use modesty to overcome his petulance and arrogant talk. You must rest your case on gentle sermons and robust arguments. Thus you will succeed in affirming everything Luther says as far as it is in agreement with faith and love, and nothing more. This also goes for the articles of the Saxon Confession proffered in Augsburg,<sup>1</sup> which we too accept, and which they wanted to regard as written on the authority of the Fathers. We have regarded it as impious to have our truth burdened with their judgment. Therefore, ponder all these things, so that you may acknowledge modestly and candidly that you too believe what the piety of simple Lutherans has accepted, but that this piety has not accepted the Lutheran arguments regarding the body of Christ in the bread. Furthermore, it will be worthwhile to conceal that you are touching on points that seem ambiguous to many people – all this in the style of a continuous speech which only pursues what is useful and absolutely necessary to believe.

#### **Letter 501: 2 March 1533, Basel, Oswald Myconius to Capito**

This letter is significant as it marks one of the earliest indications of Myconius' reluctance to get a doctorate in theology. It foreshadows the acrimonious debate at the University of Basel that came to a head in 1538, ultimately pitting Andreas Karlstadt against Myconius and Simon Grynaeus (see below, Epp. 547–8; and Millet Epp. 690–1, 691a, 711–12, 713b, 718, 721a, 724, 726–7). The conflict was part of a series of efforts made by the university regents in Basel since 1532 to gain increased autonomy from the city magistracy. It is related to the issue of who had jurisdiction over the faculty of theology and the larger question of the division between secular and church government. The conflict over the doctorate centred on the question of whether the preachers of Basel, who were hired by the city, ought to belong to and be bound by the regulations of the Faculty of the Theology, and hence be obliged to obtain the academic title of doctor. Karlstadt insisted that it was necessary for the church and for the university that the pastors be incorporated as members of the university. He argued that Myconius and Grynaeus ought to obtain the title of doctor, given the fact that they taught at the university. Myconius was afraid of the influence the city council would hold over the faculty and, by extension, the university. Karlstadt, on the other hand, believed that the university was part of the civic community.

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1 I.e., the Augsburg Confession of 1530.

The debate began in January 1535, when Karlstadt postulated that all professors at the university should have or acquire a doctorate. Karlstadt's position offended Myconius, whose highest degree was a BA from Basel (1514). In 1532, Myconius had become Oecolampadius' successor as *antistes* of the cathedral in Basel and professor of theology at the university. His knowledge of theology, however, was the fruit of private studies. He was painfully aware of his inadequacies and sometimes appeared insecure in his relations with others. In a letter to Bullinger, for instance, dated 16 March 1535, Myconius did not hide the fact he had felt slighted that Capito had written to his colleagues in Basel, Paulus Phrygio and Karlstadt, but not to him, 'for I am nothing.'<sup>1</sup> Karlstadt, by contrast, was a well-published and accomplished scholar with a doctorate in theology (Wittenberg, 1510) and law (Siena, 1516). When he arrived in Basel in the summer of 1534 to assume an appointment as preacher at St Peter's and, on 1 July, as professor of Old Testament at the University of Basel, there could not have been a starker contrast between the two men. Grynaeus, however, was a renowned classicist and experienced university lecturer, who had given ample proof of his learning.<sup>2</sup> Capito made a special trip to Basel in the second half of January to discuss the matter with the opposing factions.<sup>3</sup> He presented the city councillors of Basel with a recommendation – without the knowledge of the theologians – in which he made a sharp distinction between the offices of the pastor and doctor of the church.<sup>4</sup> During his stay in Basel, he tried to convince

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1 HBBW 5, Ep. 556, l. 24.

2 Grynaeus was headmaster of a school in Buda from 1521 to 1523, professor of Greek at Heidelberg from 1524 to 1529, then at Basel from 1531 to 1534, when he became advisor to Duke Ulrich von Württemberg in the reorganization of the University of Tübingen, before returning to Basel in July 1535, to resume his lectures in Greek at the university. As for the formal certification of his skills, Grynaeus never acquired a degree higher than that of MA, which he got in Vienna before taking up residence in Hungary. But the fact that Grynaeus did not have a doctorate degree was not the crucial point in the ensuing conflict, for it would have been quite simple for him to acquire the degree. Grynaeus, however, refused to go through the ceremony, because he was principally opposed to the notion of academic titles validating preachers.

3 See HBBW 5, Epp. 507, 517, and 521.

4 HBBW 5, Ep. 538, and Willem van 't Spijker, 'Une disputation au sujet du Doctorat, par le D. Wolfgang Capiton où est soulevée la question de savoir si le nom ou le titre de Docteur peut exister dans l'Eglise de Dieu,' in *Horizons européens de la réforme en Alsace/Das Elsass und die Reformation im Europa des XVI. Jahrhunderts. Mélanges offerts à Jean Rott pour son 65e anniversaire*, ed. Marijn de Kroon and Marc Lienhard (Strasbourg, 1980), 95–106.

Myconius to acquiesce and obtain a doctorate, but that merely agitated him more (see below, Ep. 547).

The conflict subsided for a short period, but broke out again on 28 July 1538, on which day the rector of the university, Hieronymus Artulf, presented the city council with suggested changes to the university statutes. Despite much bitter wrangling over the next few years, the conflict petered out when two of the protagonists died of the plague: Grynaeus on 1 August 1541 and Karlstadt on 24 December 1541.

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, no. 326.

Greetings. We are all surprised that you did not address the books you sent here recently to all of us, as if their contents did not concern us. Since we do not know the reason, we make assumptions (I don't know whether they are correct), for the fact gives us occasion to think less well of your attitude. Whatever the case, you seem to disdain us. We take this in good stead, however, because we are conscious of our insignificance and admit it and confess that we are indeed contemptible. At the same time, we believe it is the task of pious teachers to improve whatever is insignificant in us, if that is possible, rather than show disdain, and to console us rather than to cast us down even further by regarding us as worthless. We talk freely to you, my dear Capito, because, if we err, it seems better to err. At least you will not take our simplicity the wrong way. There must be a reason why you have now omitted what you promised earlier and why you do not want us to share it. And unless you said it does not concern us, we can think of no justification even though we have inquired diligently. But enough about this matter.

I have explained to the mayor<sup>5</sup> what you have written about the emperor and the general council. It appears that you, like others, hint at the pope's desire to escape a council, lest his affairs suffer greater damage. For it is the pope's plan to preserve his See, not through letters, but through armed force, if possible. In former days the pope wrote, engaged in disputation, took part in meetings of princes, and invoked their help, but so far in vain. What else can he do now than what he is doing? Councils will not help the Roman See, unless they are characterized by violent fighting rather than fighting with the Word of God. If you take that away, the pope may not allow

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5 Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen (1473–1541) was, as a cloth merchant, a typical representative of the early capitalistic merchant class of Basel. As of 1509, he held various public offices, took part in the Battle of Marignano in 1515 and in 1530, became mayor of Basel. In general, Meyer was one of the most important secular leaders who urged adoption of the Reformation in Basel.

matters to proceed to a council. But whatever the future may bring, we shall pray to God not to allow his church to collapse.

You wanted to give me the title of doctor? Why, my Capito? That I, an insignificant man, should be humbled further, a contemptible man become even more contemptible? Let me express my feelings: I love and respect you for wanting to adorn me with such a title, but you seem to be the only man who takes into consideration that being *antistes* here is not without its honour, and who thinks that an increase in the knowledge of God comes to me from this position. What follows? The pulpit should have its proper honour. I should be as I was earlier and, I hope, no worse. And in many ways I am worse, of which I willingly say nothing at present. It is not seemly for an unworthy man to have the testimony of doctors, nor for doctors to promote wrongly a man who is unworthy of such testimony. It would put the [unworthy man] to shame, and would make [the doctors] appear unfair. It is better to be adorned with however little learning than to spoil whatever you have with a great title. For it is far from commending the teaching of Christ to the people; indeed I want to recommend nothing more diligently in each of my sermons than to leave the authority of the Word intact with Christ. For no man or title can add anything to it. If I do not want to become 'a crowned ass,' as the saying goes,<sup>6</sup> the glory of our city should inspire me more, and I should be eager to adorn it with all my resources. Yet when I take my own measure, I find that I would rather not be what I am than end up dishonouring the city. Take in good stead what I say, for I say everything from a most simple heart. Farewell in Christ together with your family and continue to love me. Basel, 2 March 1533.

Yours, Oswald Myconius.

### Letter 502: 19 March 1533, Basel, Oswald Myconius to Capito

The manuscript of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, ff. 327–8.

Greetings. It seems we can guess the reason for Luther's poisonous remarks.<sup>1</sup>

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6 A reference to the proverb 'Rex illiteratus, asinus coronatus [An illiterate king is a crowned ass].' See Samuel Singer, ed., *Thesaurus proverbiorum medii aevi* = *Lexikon der Sprichwörter des romanisch-germanischen Mittelalters* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998), vol. 7, 126.

1 Martin Luther, *Ein brieff an die zu Franckfort am Meyn* (Wittenberg: Hans Lufft / Nürnberg: Friedrich Peypus, 1533); for a modern edition see WA 30/3:554–71.

They must take care and make every effort not to be affected too much, especially by those that try the patience of a man. Whoever Luther is, to whatever degree he is extolled by you, I find no charitable spirit in him, unless I perhaps am ignorant of that spirit. Is it permitted to surrender to the evil demon a man, who makes Jesus Christ his salvation? Is he convinced that he is acting honourably in everything? Does he care about those in whose eyes his name will be less respected and his virtue diminished? No, Luther condemns such men, as if he were God. He does not leave judgment to the Son, but has reserved it wholly for himself. Can language that is so enormously arrogant proceed from a spirit of love? If [Luther thinks] we are lost, why does he not seek us out? We have not yet reached the point that he must thunder against us, using Christ's words, 'Woe to them!' We acknowledge the grace of God, through which we reach heaven, and which has been offered to us through the Son of God. We cling to this, trust only in his grace, and rest our hope solely on it. What else does Luther now require? That we believe in his distortions, indeed his falsifications, as far as the meaning of the gospel words are concerned? So far he contends, contrary to the pope, that the bread in the Lord's Supper is bread, and that the wine is wine; but arguing against us, he says that the natural body of Christ is in the bread, and that the true and real blood of Christ is in the wine. Is what he says expressed in the words, 'This is my body; this is my blood of the new covenant'?<sup>2</sup> I say, if these words are to be understood plainly without trope,<sup>3</sup> the pope, Cyril, Hilary, and others of this opinion, would convince me more easily of transubstantiation than Luther, who says that 'This is my body' means the same thing as 'My body is in this.' Whoever heard such insane temerity? It is not surprising that the sons

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For contemporary reaction to Luther's public letter, see Bucer's letter to Margaret Blaurer, 10 February 1533 (Schiess 2, p. 797, no. 14); his letter to Frecht and Sam, 12 February 1533 (Kolde, *Analecta Lutheriana*, p. 203); his letter to Bullinger, 14 February 1533 (HBBW 3, Ep. 191); Johannes Zwick's letter to Bullinger, 10 March 1533 (HBBW 3, Ep. 198); and Ambrosius Blaurer's letter to Bucer, 15 March 1533 (Schiess 1, Ep. 325).

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 26:26, 28; Mark 14:22, 24.

<sup>3</sup> I.e., a metaphorical understanding of the elements of the Lord's Supper. Cf. HBBW 2, Ep. 165, Myconius to Bullinger: 'Furthermore, the Strasbourgers frequently write about the matter of the Lord's Supper, but nothing beyond saying that we are doing the right thing. They add the hope that Luther's last confession, which the duke of Saxony extorted after the death of his father, will be published and make clear that he agrees with us about a trope being permissible in the words of the Supper.'

of men disdain us and our teaching when we make sport of the Lord's words in this fashion. Will they not be justified in saying that we are seducers, not doctors of the gospel? In sum, Luther's proud spirit, which his petulant language on the second-last page<sup>4</sup> cannot contain, does not permit grace to be revealed to another man, especially grace that has not been revealed first to him.<sup>5</sup> Thus we must leave this man alone until God gives him a humbler spirit.

Otto<sup>6</sup> is highly recommended to me, because of you.<sup>7</sup> I hope to be able to do something in his affair. I like the man for his character and learning. He acted courageously in the matter, on account of which he came to Basel. He encountered very ferocious opponents in the disputation, but he made no concessions until all were content, thinking him worthy of the victor's crown. Thus he provided a new spectacle for our city, for he made scripture acceptable to the least man, even those who had not been inclined toward scripture in a fair-minded way. He furthermore confirmed that the university has been restored, which many had not credited with the truth. Thus God effected that the enterprise he himself began had a fortunate outcome for you, and for us. You will say, 'You will be next.' I, an insignificant man, who suffers contempt, shall become even more insignificant and be more exposed to contempt. I say truthfully: I love you and rightly for being so concerned about my honour and for wishing to adorn the position of *antistes* with the title of doctor.<sup>8</sup> But consider: can the pulpit have honour without substance? I am not so inept that I would disdain everything which the world has thought up for the glory and advantage of a man. But I have attacked inane titles with an almost lethal hatred. Should I then bear or aspire to the title of doctor without

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- 4 See above, note 1. On the second-last page, Luther refers to the 'Schwermer' (WA 30/3:569-70).
- 5 Cf. 1 Cor. 14:30.
- 6 Otto Werdmüller or Myliander (1513-1552) was a student of Thomas Platter and Myconius in Zurich. In the winter semester 1532/3, he studied in Basel, then from 1533 to 1535 in Strasbourg, and since 1535 in Wittenberg, where he became MA. In 1538 he taught Latin and Greek in Basel and the following year in Paris and Orléans. In 1540, he returned to Zurich and in 1541 he became a minister and professor of philosophy. In 1545, he became *Leutpriester* and in 1547, the second archdeacon at the Großmünster.
- 7 No such recommendation from Capito is extant, but around the beginning of 1533, Werdmüller moved to Basel upon the recommendation of Bullinger to Myconius (see HBBW 2, Ep. 165).
- 8 Myconius succeeded Oecolampadius as *antistes* of Basel in August 1532. For the dispute over the move to require all the members of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Basel to obtain a doctorate, see above, Ep. 501 headnote.

the learning worthy of it? Should I expose myself to the ridicule of all learned men? I encounter many more men, who want to rid themselves of the titles they bear, if it were possible, rather than obtain them if they lack them, even if they were presented to them freely. Grynaeus is not the least among such men.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, when I take my own measure, should I not prefer to be what I am now than become what would dishonour me? Therefore, I have no reason to think about such matters. Let those who are worthy of them, use such titles, for such men please me as well. I respect and venerate them from my heart. Let those who are unworthy keep with honour what God has given them.

What can I write about the disturbances?<sup>10</sup> I thought they were over, but then everything started up again. May the Lord take care that there be no increase in hostilities. For Veroli<sup>11</sup> is doing his best to incite them and is supplying the material. He omits nothing that will, in his opinion, strengthen the Roman See, which is now on the verge of collapse. The people of Zurich will have to fight in the court of law.<sup>12</sup> No one knows what future accusation will be brought against them. They wrote to us for advice. Our people replied that they could not advise them without first knowing the accusation. I do not know what the future will bring. Our papists,<sup>13</sup> who so far have pretended to believe in the gospel, have turned so haughty that we can easily

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9 For Simon Grynaeus, see CWC 2, Ep. 447 headnote.

10 Rumours of an imminent alliance between the Five Catholic Cantons and Fribourg with Clement VII and Charles V likely contributed to the general mistrust during the controversy over Zurich's mandate of May 1532 (see below, note 12). Despite many negotiations from the end of 1532 to November 1533, this alliance never came about on account of the disunity of the Catholic cantons (see HBBW 3, Ep. 174, note 5).

11 For Ennio Filonardi, bishop of Veroli, see above, Ep. 489a, note 1.

12 A reference to the judgment rendered at Einsiedeln on 22 April 1533 in a court case involving Zurich and the Five Catholic Cantons. Zurich was ordered to withdraw its mandate of 29 May 1532, in which it had declared the mass an 'abuse' (see HBBW 3, Ep. 214, note 12).

13 Possibly a reference to evangelicals who converted back to Catholicism, such as Konrad Stücklin, who, since 1527, was pastor in Rottweil, where he introduced the Reformation. At the beginning of 1529, he was banned from Rottweil on account of disputes with the Catholic majority. In the summer of that same year, he moved to Constance and then became an evangelical preacher in the Cistercian nunnery of Feldbach in the canton of Thurgau. His conversion back to the Catholic faith in 1532/3 caused a sensation. He received absolution through the papal nuncio Ennio Filonardi (see above, note 11) and was appointed as a priest in Kreuzlingen (Canton Thurgau); or to Ulrich Stampfler, a preacher of Kienberg, who converted back to Catholicism in 1533 (see HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 11).

recognize what was their intention if matters fall out according to the wishes of the [Five] Cantons. Everything is in upheaval, for that is what we want. We reject concord, and thus give the enemy a handle to act against us at will. I can only lament our misery; I cannot help out with counsel. I pray that God may protect his church.

Farewell, together with all your friends. Greet Bucer diligently and tell him that I have not seen one word except Bullinger's name. For after I opened the package, as I was instructed, to see whether there was anything in it for me, I retied the rope very loosely, since I found nothing, and sent it away to Grynaeus. There is no worry, therefore, that I shall spread any news scandalizing the churches. There is enough scandal already. I pray to the Lord to take away these scandals as quickly as possible. Farewell again in the Lord Jesus. Basel, 19 March 1533.

Yours, Oswald Myconius.

**Letter 503: 19 March 1533, Zweibrücken, Johannes Schwebel to Capito, Martin Bucer and Caspar Hedio**

The following two letters concern the ongoing efforts to find someone who might assist Schwebel in preaching the gospel in Zweibrücken (see above, Ep. 498 headnote). The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:174–6, Ep. 669.

Greetings, excellent men. After much consultation, our parish priest<sup>1</sup> could hardly persuade himself to make up his mind to give up his position. The princes<sup>2</sup> urged me to undertake the task and forced the hand of the unwilling man. But I cannot preside over that church on my own. I know you will be reluctant to send out Hechtlin,<sup>3</sup> and perhaps he himself will be reluctant to

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- 1 Little is known about Johannes Meisenheimer, a Catholic priest at the Alexander Church in Zweibrücken from 1523 to 1533, and an opponent of Georg Pistor. He likely grew up in Kirkel, a town near Zweibrücken. He held a master's degree and matriculated at the University of Heidelberg on 25 October 1514. In 1533, he became a canon in Hornbach. On 5 May 1533, he was dismissed from his position and granted a life-long pension of 25 gulden per annum (*CorrBucer* 9, Ep. 669, note 6).
- 2 Upon the untimely death of Ludwig II von Pfalz-Zweibrücken (1502–3 December 1532), his son, Wolfgang (1526–1569), the heir apparent, was too young to rule. Consequently, Ludwig's brother Ruprecht von Pfalz-Veldenz (1506–1544) acted as regent of the Pfalz-Zweibrücken jointly with Wolfgang's mother, Elisabeth of Hesse, until 1543, when Wolfgang became of age.
- 3 For Johannes Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.

come to us, both because the remuneration is small and also because, if the rumour has not sprung from liars and is false, he does not like the institution and rites of our church. But I have warned him to heed your counsel. If only he were to come as willingly and promptly to us as I wish him to be my colleague. If I do not have someone who works unanimously with me for the edification of the church, I too shall relinquish my task. I cannot sustain the burden on my own. You have earlier on faithfully looked after the tranquillity of our church; now add this good deed and provide for it a faithful minister who agrees with me in sound doctrine. May the God of peace grant that we all have the same wisdom to build the church of Christ with one spirit. Farewell in the Lord, together with all the brethren. Zweibrücken, 19 March 1533.

Yours, Johannes Schwebel.

There is hope that Glaser<sup>4</sup> will come to us, for which reason little has been done regarding Frosch.<sup>5</sup> The princes wish to obtain a widower. I hope that venerable old man is well.

#### **Letter 504: 22 March 1533, [Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Schwebel**

Printed in *Centuria*, pp. 174–7, no. 57.

Grace and peace. Bucer has written about Hechtlin<sup>1</sup> and the assistant to be assigned to you.<sup>2</sup> I shall add a few words to let you know that we were not idle in pondering and discussing this matter among us. First, we congratulate the church on having obtained such a pastor, that is, on your willingness to undertake this task for the great benefit of the churches of Christ, for you already hold the title of bishop and inspector and are a man of very great faith, diligence, moderation, and keen foresight. We are of the opinion, however, that you need a faithful assistant. You have made a contract with Conrad Pellarba,<sup>3</sup> with the aim of retaining him. He is a very learned and at the

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4 For Caspar Glaser, see above, Ep. 445a, note 4. He came to Zweibrücken at the beginning of June 1533, but did not accept the position of helper for Schwebel in the city church. Instead he became a tutor to the six-year-old Wolfgang von Zweibrücken and acted as court chaplain (CorrBucer 9, Ep. 669, note 14).

5 For Johannes Frosch, see below, Ep. 521 headnote.

1 For Johannes Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.

2 For Johannes Meisenheimer, see above, Ep. 503, note 1.

3 Konrad Hubert (Pulbarbus, Pellarba, Ornipogonis, 1507–1577) was a colleague of Capito and Bucer, and the first editor of Bucer's works. After his studies

same time a pious young man, and of the greatest modesty and faith, apt to preserve the consensus of the churches. He is quite experienced in the three languages. He is a theologian of whom you need not be ashamed, and who is constant without being stubborn. But it is also my opinion that a position as lecturer (and he is almost overwhelmed with lectures here among us) would be of greater advantage to him. You would have in him a colleague in your studies and a faithful fellow-minister working in the church. Yet Hechtlin has more experience and he is very keen on being recalled to an ecclesiastical position. Yet, although learned, he is the kind of person who runs the risk of being incited by busybodies. Conrad, however, would completely depend on you, just as he will no doubt also depend on you to effect that everything will proceed with certainty. There is one obstacle: the low stipend. If it were increased even by 10 gulden, he would consider it a tolerable stipend to begin with. Here he receives over 80 gulden, but everything is cheaper there than here. I fear, however, that the city council will be unwilling to permit Hechtlin to depart for your region if you still have a contract with Conrad. Our church will be burdened with this contract; nor will yours be helped much. Furthermore, it will also be awkward for the young man to be in limbo. I have no doubt that we both hold the right views about the sacraments, for we both preach Christ in signs and in words. Through his divine grace alone are souls cleansed. Farewell. 22 March 1533.

**Letter 505: 26 March [1533, Strasbourg, Capito] to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 3:92–3, Ep. 202.

[*Summary*]: Capito is informed about the negotiations of [11 March] with the Five Catholic Cantons [about their insistence on court proceedings]. He reminds Bullinger of their earlier advice [cf. above, Ep. 497]. The people of Zurich must ask for and can expect military assistance. The city council of

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in Heidelberg, he moved to Basel, where, from 1523, he was a servant-pupil of Oecolampadius. In 1531, he travelled with Oecolampadius from Basel to Ulm. Bucer persuaded him to come to Strasbourg in 1531 (see CorrBucer 6, Ep. 435, note 11) for a salary of 80 gulden. In February 1532, he married a woman named Margaretha from Constance. In Strasbourg, he worked first as a deacon at St Thomas, and then in 1545, he became a canon there, and in 1547 a cantor. That same year he began working on an edition of the works of Bucer. In 1551, he co-signed the *Confessio Virtembergica*, but since he rejected the Lutheranization of Strasbourg, he was removed from his position at St Thomas in 1563.

Strasbourg has written to Philip of Hesse. Capito urges Zurich to stand fast and show no weakness in the negotiations.

**Letter 506: [Around 26 March 1533, Strasbourg, Capito] to Heinrich Bullinger**

This letter now appears as Ep. 497a.

**Letter 507: [Beginning of April 1533, Strasbourg], Capito to [Guillaume Farel]**

This excerpt is printed in Herminjard 3:37–8, Ep 413. For Guillaume Farel, see CWC 2, Ep. 347 headnote.

I did not know about the departure<sup>1</sup> of that good man. I shall write to Christophe.<sup>2</sup> Bucer will be present at the Synod of Bern.<sup>3</sup> I shall remain with our

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- 1 The Latin has *abutum*, which could also mean ‘death.’ Capito’s point of reference is unknown.
- 2 Christophe Fabri or Libertet (c. 1509–1588), born in Vienne, studied medicine in Montpellier. In 1531 the plague forced him to abandon the city and he moved to Paris, where he continued his studies. In 1531, he became acquainted with Farel. In 1532, he served as a minister in Neuchâtel and Boudry; in 1536, he went to Thonon with Guillaume Farel after the Bernese conquest and remained there for ten years, first as pastor and then as dean. Fabri always maintained his contacts with the town and church of Geneva; in February 1546, he became a pastor in Neuchâtel and in Lyon in 1563.
- 3 From 12–14 May 1533, Bucer assisted at the Synod of Bern, where he met Farel. The synod was attended by 120 pastors. Berchtold Haller praised Bucer’s agreement in doctrinal matters with Zurich and Bern and his successful attempt to reconcile the opposing parties of Caspar Megander and Haller (see HBBW 3, Ep. 228). Capito himself may have briefly attended the synod as well (see HBBW 3, Ep. 222). Bucer’s participation at the synod was part of his spring tour of the churches in Switzerland. Accompanied by Bartolomeo Fonzio, he arrived in Basel around the middle of April 1533. He visited most of the churches of the German-speaking regions of Switzerland. From 18–21 April, he was in Schaffhausen, where he was informed about the situation of the church there, and promised that he would help find a suitable candidate for an assistant (see HBBW 3, Ep. 223, note 2). He then spent around eight days in Constance (Schiess 1, Ep. 332) and was in St Gallen from 28/29 April–4 May (Schiess 1, Ep. 331, note 2). From 4/5–8 May, Bucer was in Zurich, where he discussed the Eucharistic controversy with the Zurich preachers (see HBBW 3, Ep. 219, note 1). From there he travelled to Murgenthal, near the border of the canton of Bern, arriving in Bern on 10 May in time for the synod (see HBBW 3, Ep. 220). On his way back to Strasbourg, he stopped in Fraubrunnen on 17 May (Schiess 1, Ep. 333).

church here in the meantime. I have just now received your letter, in which you indicate that you have written many times.<sup>4</sup> I am sorry that all our affairs cannot be more closely linked. May the Lord preserve you. More through the merchants.<sup>5</sup> May the Lord strengthen the people of Geneva. Here we shall ponder what you request in your letter.

Yours, Capito.

**Letter 508: [Middle of April 1533], Basel, Martin Bucer to Capito, Caspar Hedio and Matthew Zell**

Printed in BDS 5:378–82, no. 2.

[*Summary*]: Bucer would like representatives at the synod [of Strasbourg (see below, Ep. 511, note 9)] to include members of the council, for example, Jacob Sturm and Daniel Mieg, and perhaps even people who are opposed to the evangelicals, to make them aware of the merits of their cause. He would further like to include ministers from the rural parishes to attest to the teaching there and to life in the parishes. He outlines the procedure that should be followed: an introductory speech; a summary of their doctrine and a vote of confidence; a warning not to teach anything contrary to this doctrine; and an inquiry into the lives and teachings of the ministers conducted by senior people. This should be followed by a joint consultation on how to deal with shortcomings, on ways of spreading the Word of God, and on catechizing the young.

Informing the city council of their plans, they must avoid giving the impression that they want ‘to build up a new papacy.’ They should present a summary of their beliefs and answer questions on individual points. Attendance at the synod should be regulated and participation required. Uniformity of rites should be preserved. Baptism in private houses, as done by Anton [Engelbrecht], must be forbidden.

These preliminary remarks are followed by a German summary of Strasbourg teachings to be presented to the council:

- ‘1. We believe and wish to teach loyally what God has given us in his holy scripture, without any human addition or subtraction.
2. We hold that the confession we submitted at Augsburg contains

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4 This letter is no longer extant.

5 According to Herminjard, Capito is referring to the Basel merchants, who were on their way to the fair at Lyon, which opened on 22 April 1533.

a summary of what scripture teaches us, and we therefore hold to and teach all things as contained in that confession.

3. Thus we believe and teach the essential unity of the almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that there is no difference in their persons.
4. God is the creator and ruler of all things, that all things are from him, through him and in him, and that he arranges and gives everything according to his will.
5. Our nature is, alas, so wicked that we ourselves, without God, desire only what is evil; thus we think, speak, and do only evil (for the natural man cannot comprehend divine things), until we are born anew, given the Holy Spirit, and become holy beings.
6. For this purpose, by the marvellous counsel of God, we needed a mediator. Therefore, the eternal Word of God became flesh, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, true man, like us in everything, except that he is exempt from sin. Thus we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God and man, one person, but of twofold and unmixed nature.
7. He alone has taken away our sins and reconciled us to the Father, and has gained the good spirit and rebirth for all whom the Father has entrusted to him and who hear his Word. The Holy Spirit brings about the final fulfilment.
8. However, there are some who are not born of God, who have not been entrusted to the Son by the Father, who are vessels of wrath, ready for ruin, rams not sheep, who will be condemned to eternal fire.
9. Therefore, we believe and teach that we are endowed with understanding, desire, thought, and worth, to recognize good works and avoid evil through divine election alone and through our sole mediator and Saviour Jesus Christ, if we believe in him in our hearts.
10. This belief is a gift of God, earned by Christ, and given to us through the Holy Spirit. It always brings with it hope and love, a love that unites us in Christ our head, so that we are one with him and among ourselves in his body.
11. Therefore, we believe and teach that believers have the highest fellowship, a true church, that is, that they are a Christian community, in which no one seeks his own, but everyone seeks his neighbour's advantage and welfare.
12. God has established public servants of his holy gospel and wanted them to look after it publicly and every day with the greatest devotion.

13. Furthermore, it is all important to recognize that our whole salvation consists in understanding that our Lord Christ has delivered us through his death.
14. Baptism signifies the washing away of sins and the new birth, and is given and handed down to us by God for this purpose.
15. The holy Supper is the true body and true blood of Christ, to make us true members of the body, blood, and limbs of Christ.'
- 16–19. The sacraments are signs and take effect only according to election.
- '20. Those who deny the church and refuse to take its sacraments deny Christ.
21. We believe in an eternal afterlife and the eternal damnation of those who deny Christ.
22. It is the duty of the authorities, if they recognize God, to arrange, as far as is in their power, everything among their subjects according to God's pleasure, and also to admonish the preachers of the Truth to do so.

Conclusion: Whatever goes against the above we recognize as erroneous, which is therefore justly rejected.'

Continuing in Latin, Bucer invites his colleagues to modify this summary as they see fit. He apologizes for his delayed response, explaining that he had no messenger. He has been asked to be present at the Synod of Basel [of 12 May 1533 (see above, Ep. 476, note 1)] and is willing to return for that purpose. He will, however, go to Schaffhausen first, departing on the following day [see above, Ep. 507, note 3].

### **Letter 509: 20 May 1533, Wissembourg, Georg Kess to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The author, Georg Kess (Caserius), was a reformer and preacher in Wissembourg, north of Strasbourg. The years of his birth and death are unknown, and there is no information of his upbringing and education. Kess was the chaplain at the parish church of St John in Wissembourg until 1534, when he succeeded Panthaleon Spiess, as curate of the church of St Michael. After significant setbacks to the reformed movement, which had been initiated by Martin Bucer and Heinrich Motherer in the early 1520s, Kess fought hard to reintroduce the Reformation in the town. He immediately set out to preach the gospel and he stopped saying mass, despite threats from the local abbot and complaints from the provost and chapter. In 1535, he was joined in his efforts by Matthis Kleindienst, a curate at St John's. In 1537, thanks to the influence of Kess and Kleindienst, the town joined the Schmalkaldic League. Kess was deposed on

account of the Augsburg Interim, but the majority of the citizens remained evangelical.<sup>1</sup>

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 155, no. 63, ff. 153–4. It is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:220–2, Ep. 687.

Grace and peace through Christ. You know, excellent men, how the affairs of faith stand here and what my thoughts are by the grace of God, but I did not think that was reason enough to stop coming to you as my refuge, for you are my dearest benefactors, friends, and brothers. Thus, trusting in your counsels, my plans will be able to progress better, for I am alone here, like a widow left behind, destitute of all human help. I would have perished completely if the Spirit of Jesus Christ had not reanimated me. Indeed, there is no one in our small town with whom I could conveniently talk of sacred things and whom I would dare to choose as a suitable friend, except one man, Michael Otto,<sup>2</sup> who recently came from Switzerland to live here with his family. He is certainly a man burning with a great desire for Christian piety and therefore pleases me greatly. For this reason, he is the only man in whose company I take great delight. Both of us cherish the greatest hope that divine clemency will favour us in future and make the gospel of Christ a little more sincere and more valued in Wissembourg than hitherto, and that what I ask of the Lord so sedulously will come to pass. For I shape my mind wholly to please Christ Jesus my Saviour and loyally to serve his justice and truth. Furthermore, my brothers, I ask you humbly to come to my aid, sometimes by giving me salubrious advice, at other times by pious exhortations. With God's help, I shall be ready to show my piety. Michael Otto will tell you more about the state of all things here. Farewell, I offer my whole obedience to you, such as I am. Indeed, I ask you humbly to be my patrons in your prayers. Farewell again. Wissembourg, 20 May 1533.

Georg Caserius.

**Letter 510: 26 May 1533, Augsburg, [Gereon Sailer] to Capito and Martin Bucer**

In this letter, Sailer provides an account of an incident that had occurred in Augsburg just a few days earlier, on Ascension Day, 22 May, which pitted the great banking family of the Fuggers, who were devout Catholics and patrons of

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- 1 For background on the Reformation in Wissembourg, see Greschat, 40–5; and Jean-Frédéric Jung, *Histoire de la Réformation à Wissembourg* (Strasbourg, 1841).
- 2 No information is available on him.

the church of St Moritz in Augsburg, against the churchwarden, Marx Ehem, a fervent evangelical. Back in February 1533, Ehem had locked up the sacristy to prevent the celebration of the mass. In response, Anton Fugger, had new vestments, a chalice, altar cloth, candles and candlesticks made. Meanwhile, Ehem had the Holy Sepulchre sealed up in an attempt to make sure that the ceremonial 'laying Christ in the grave (*depositio*)' would not be performed on Good Friday, 11 April 1533. He also had spirited away all the necessary ritual paraphernalia of the liturgy for the Ascension Day service, including an image of Christ seated on a rainbow and surrounded by angels and the dove of the Holy Spirit, a statue that had traditionally been pulled up through a hole in the roof of the church to dramatize Christ's ascent into heaven. When Fugger found out about this, he commissioned, at his own expense, a new, more elaborate image for 20 gulden. When Ehem heard about Fugger's intervention, he had the hole in the ceiling used for the rite, the so-called *Himmelloch*, boarded up. On Ascension Day, the Fuggers managed to stage the drama nevertheless, forcing Ehem to ask the mayor, Ulrich Rehlinger, to stop the celebration. When this effort failed, Ehem gathered a group of followers and stormed the church, taking up position in the nave, armed with knives and swords. After breaking up the service, Ehem's men lowered the new image from the roof and 'accidentally' let the rope slip so that the new Christ-figure was dashed to pieces. The town council permitted Ehem to keep the church closed for three hours, then reopened it for public worship. Anton Fugger was summoned before the council, lectured sternly on causing a disturbance, and sentenced to several nights in the tower.

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 381–4. Even though the letter addresses Capito, it is directed to both Capito and Bucer. For Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

Greetings, dearest Capito. If our ministers do not write to you and Bucer of the poor showing of our church, indeed if they do not consult you in these tumults and upheavals, they do not act well.<sup>1</sup> If they are keeping silent, it is because they fear Michael,<sup>2</sup> for they cannot write about the condition of our church without pointing a finger at Michael, which is sad for everyone.

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<sup>1</sup> See the letter to the Augsburg city council of 1533 from Wolfgang Musculus, Sebastian Meyer, Michael Weinmaier, Michael Keller, Johann Heinrich Held, and Boniface Wolfhart, voicing their concern that preaching at the cathedral was dividing the congregation (Augsburg SA, *Literalien 1533: Januar-Juli*, qtd. in Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation* [Cambridge, 2006], 83).

<sup>2</sup> For Michael Cellarius, see CWC 2, Ep. 405, note 1.

Therefore they may spare Michael, while Christ is worsted; they will spare him, and if they do so any longer, their own authority and the dignity of the Word they preach will totter and completely perish.

The idol, which they used to hoist up to the ceiling with a rope on Ascension Day, has been sequestered. That was done on the authority and wish of the churchwarden of St Moritz,<sup>3</sup> with the approval of both mayors.<sup>4</sup> However, because they were not persistent enough in their intent, Anton Fugger,<sup>5</sup> who is a member of the church, and a parish priest<sup>6</sup> provided another idol of much better quality than the first.<sup>7</sup> The panels of the door, through which the idol was supposed to be drawn, had also been sealed up on the authority of the warden, Marx Ehem, and with the approval of the mayors. But they were opened up nevertheless, in fact forced open, and the idol pulled up through the rash and audacious enterprise of the Fuggers. When the warden and some of the people found out about it, they came running, but many others rushed up and hoisted the idol up to the rafters with the help of the

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- 3 Markus II Ehem (or Marx Öhem) (c. 1491–1554) was a Zwinglian merchant in Augsburg, a churchwarden at St Moritz, and became a patrician of Augsburg in 1538. He was married twice, first to Regina Paumgartner, with whom he had at least one child, Magdalena; and then to Anna Lauginger, with whom he had eight more daughters.
- 4 I.e., Ulrich Rehlinger, mayor of Augsburg on the odd years from 1521 to 1535 (see CWC 2, Ep. 456 headnote) and Mang (Magnus) Seitz (1486–1544). Seitz was a member of the Great Council from 1522 until his death. He became guild-master of the weavers in 1527. A follower of Zwingli, he acted as mayor of Augsburg in the odd years from 1531 to 1543. He was a member of the XIII and *Baumeister* from 1532 to 1542 (in the even years).
- 5 Anton Fugger (1493–1560), the head of the wealthy Fugger banking family of Augsburg. He received a thorough humanistic education and journeyed to Rome, where Leo X conferred knighthood upon him in 1519. In 1525 he assumed the general management of the family's banking firm, developing branches in Nürnberg, Wrocław, and Budapest. Throughout his life, he supported and bankrolled Habsburg military and religious policies in Europe and in the Americas. He remained a strong supporter of Catholicism, but was unable to stand his ground against the Zwinglian reformers in Augsburg. As a consequence, he retired in July 1533 to his estate in the small Swabian town of Weissenhorn.
- 6 Possibly Dr Georg Storr, whom the evangelical wardens had expelled on 20 April 1533, or Dr Johannes Speiser. Both positions at St Moritz were funded by the patronage of Anton Fugger. Speiser was embroiled in a legal dispute with Fugger in 1533, and Storr with the papacy (see *Anton Fugger* 1:265–6 and notes 42 and 47).
- 7 On this incident, see *Anton Fugger* 1:269–74.

Fuggers. From there it was cast down by the effort of the warden and the people. The Catholic priests and the two Fuggers, Anton and Raimund,<sup>8</sup> accompanied by thirty-one servants, took to flight when they saw how upset the people were. Yesterday the Fuggers were summoned by the council and made many excuses – I do not know how successful they were.<sup>9</sup> The matter will be dealt with tomorrow. I hope for the sake of dignity that nothing worse will come to pass if the people find that ‘the crows are granted pardon and the doves punished.’<sup>10</sup> In sum, the whole city almost came to blows. The preachers thought it was their duty to consult about this matter and to warn the council about the danger that was threatening if the city’s administrators were negligent. They summoned Michael three times to a meeting, but he pretended to have other more important business and carried on in his usual fashion. Then our ministers extracted some words from Michael. He said he had more foresight than they realized. He himself would transact the business before the council on their behalf. Since the magistrates consider only one thing – how dexterously this is done – I fear he will become notorious for giving great offence to the world.

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8 Raimund Fugger (1489–1535) acted as a business representative for the Fugger enterprise in Mantua and at the papal court in Rome (1511), in Cracow (1513, where he married Katharina Thurzó), and in Nürnberg (1522/3). In 1526 he was appointed imperial councillor to Charles V; in 1530 he attended the Diet of Augsburg. He was a patron of humanists and an art collector.

9 On 24 May, Anton Fugger was subpoenaed and called upon by Rehlinger to give an account of the incident on Ascension Day. Fugger pleaded his case and would not let himself be intimidated. The council met again on Monday, 26 May. Fugger denied that he had encouraged the canons to acquire a new Christ-figure. He claimed that his actions were motivated by piety and not by any ill will. As an explanation for his actions, he also cited the confusion generated by the apparent contradiction between the city council’s rulings and Charles V’s recent decision at the Diet of Regensburg regarding Catholic rites. The city council tried to take a middle course. They took into account the countless benefactions Fugger and his family had conferred on the city. They, therefore, sentenced Fugger to eight days in the Gögging Tower on 29 May, the first three of which were to be served in person while the remaining five days could be commuted through a payment of 5 gulden. Fugger accepted the judgment, but asked whether the first three days might also be commuted, if the amount of the fine were tripled. The city council adjourned to consider the proposal. In the meantime, Fugger was required to present himself on the evening of 30 May at the tower. He spent the night there and in the morning was informed that the city council had accepted his proposal of payment in lieu of the remaining nights of his sentence. See *Anton Fugger* 1:270–3.

10 Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 3.5.73.

There are a thousand more things to write about, but I suppress them on purpose, since you can easily guess the rest from this. If the brethren do not communicate such matters to you, they do wrong. See to it that Bucer and Fonzio<sup>11</sup> and the others read what I have written to you. I have no time to correct this letter or to write more. I would like to know whether the boys received the daggers from Hertzung<sup>12</sup> together with my letter. See to it that they write more often, which I also ask of you. Greet the boys and Bernhard.<sup>13</sup> I commend them to you. Urge Bucer, Hedio, and Bartolomeo<sup>14</sup> to write. We fear greatly for the church of Constance, that it may give offence to many by accepting the Catholic priests. Give my greetings to Hechtlin<sup>15</sup> and to your and his wife.<sup>16</sup> Farewell in haste, Augsburg, 26 May 1533.

The books you sent were transmitted by the driver. Our jurists published an *aviso*, on the initiative of the council, that the papists must not be suppressed. Two reasons are somehow regarded as convincing by those who are inexperienced; the rest are all vain talk. The first reason: we evangelicals say that the emperor has power only over bodies and possessions, not over souls. Therefore, he cannot and must not force anyone into accepting a certain belief. Why can the same not be said of us – that we cannot force the papists to accept a certain belief, because it is not in the power of the emperor? The second reason: All power is derived from the emperor, and the magistrates may only do what the emperor permits them to do. Thus the magistrates cannot reduce the privileges of the priests. I would like you and Bucer to write to us and respond to this at some length.

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- 11 Bartolomeo Fonzio (c. 1502–1562) was a Venetian Franciscan, who sympathized with the Reformation. After a provocative sermon in the Church of San Geremia in Venice, he was banned from preaching by a papal brief on 2 April 1529. He fled to Augsburg, where he arrived in August 1531 and preached at St Anna's. He then sought contact with Bucer, whom he visited in July 1532 in Strasbourg. On 6 October 1533, he was hired by the city of Strasbourg (see Dacheux, p. 218, no. 5015), but left on 23 October for Augsburg. He eventually returned to Italy, gained rehabilitation in Rome in 1536, wrote a catechism (1546/7), and lived from then on in seclusion as a teacher in Cittadella. There the Inquisition tracked him down and, after a four-year trial, he was drowned in the lagoon of Venice on the morning of 4 August 1562.
- 12 Millet has identified him as Peter Hertzung, but I have not been able to find any biographical information on him (see also below, Ep. 545, note 2).
- 13 For Ambrosius and Timothy Jung, see above, Ep. 475, note 2; for their teacher, Bernhard, see above, Ep. 478, note 6.
- 14 I.e., Bartolomeo Fonzio.
- 15 For Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.
- 16 The name of Hechtlin's wife is unknown; for Capito's wife, Wibrandis Rosenblatt, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

**Letter 510a: 28 May 1533, [Strasbourg], The Chapter of St Thomas to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 16, no. 47. On the verso is written 'Proffered on Wednesday, 28 May in the year, etc., '33.'

Strict, upright, circumspect, honourable, wise, gracious lords.

After you, our strict, honourable, wise lords, decided for cogent reasons, of which we were informed and which we regard as fair and honourable, that we of the foundation of St Thomas should pay 600 gulden levy for the Turkish war,<sup>1</sup> and told us to come to an agreement with the III of the Treasury Board,<sup>2</sup> we wanted to negotiate fair terms with the III. We did not get anywhere with them, however, because they had no other or no further instructions beyond receiving the money from us and the others. If we wanted to negotiate further on account of our difficulties, [they said], we would have to turn to you, our strict, honourable, wise lords, to give them further instructions according to which they would proceed.

Gracious lords, the affairs of our foundation are now such (as Your Wisdoms may know) that we cannot pay the aforementioned levy in cash without notably burdening our foundation, which should be your foremost concern. We have no financial reserves, and furthermore, because of past misfortunes, we must repay a significant amount of capital.<sup>3</sup> Thus we have no way of paying the 600 gulden except by converting it into an annual payment or lien,<sup>4</sup> both of which methods would be difficult for the foundation – otherwise we would have to draw on the capital. We have now come to understand that Your Wisdoms' final decision is to make the sum payable in cash. We therefore deliberated at the chapter meeting, and decided that we might be able to satisfy Your Strict and Honourable Wisdoms, if we give you from our silver and treasure, as much as will secure the 600 gulden and the rest for the missed term of payment, some 500 gulden in costs for the persons who have left the foundation. Although it is a general rule for the clergy not to draw on the capital and, most of all, on the treasure of the church without authorization from the pope who is the head, the clergy nevertheless has the right and ability to draw on it for paying ransom for captives who are in the hands of the infidels; also for financing war against infidels, such as the

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- 1 The council had originally asked for 800 gulden (see above, Ep. 485a).
- 2 The list of the III of the Treasury Board (*Drei auf dem Pfennigthurm*) has a gap for 1438–1598 (see Brady, *Ruling Class*, 172, note 37).
- 3 See above, Ep. 485a headnote.
- 4 The German has 'entweders uff ein jårlichen zinß, oder aber uff lypgeding.'

Turk in our time, and for the maintenance of the foundation if it is in significant decline, as is truly the case with our foundation. What is conceded by ecclesiastical law for the benefit of our foundation will no doubt also please Your Honours, who are inclined to aid in our recovery, for so far we have been, and still are, inclined and willing to obey the honourable council, even to our detriment. We wished to indicate our humble and friendly opinion to our strict and honourable lords, with the earnest request to accept such payment and graciously look with favour on our foundation, which highly values God's glory and the common weal. With the help of the Almighty we shall remain at your service as we have offered several times and are still earnestly offering, thus humbly commending ourselves and our foundation to Your Strict and Honourable Wisdoms' command.

Your Graces' willing citizens,  
The provost,<sup>5</sup> vice-dean,<sup>6</sup> and chapter of the collegiate church of  
St Thomas.

**Letter 510b: 29 May [1533], Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to  
Johannes Schwebel**

Printed in CorrBucer 9:240–1, Ep. 692.

Martin Bucer and his colleagues to Johannes Schwebel.

Greetings in the Lord, respected brother! Our Georg came to us for advice, setting everything before us in a very modest manner.<sup>1</sup> For since there should be no respect of persons,<sup>2</sup> we wish to be of help to him as well, for the glory of Christ. Like we, he no longer practises exorcism,<sup>3</sup> for people generally shrink from having their children appear to be under the influence of spirits. Exorcism was first wantonly assigned to be performed with learned

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5 For Lorenz Schenckbecher, see CWC 2, Ep. 237, note 23.

6 For Jacob Munthart (d. 1534), see CWC 2, Ep. 237, note 19.

1 For Georg Pistor, see above, Ep. 470, note 1.

2 Cf. Acts 10:34.

3 Initially the Strasbourg reformers drew their baptismal liturgy from Luther's baptismal handbook and consequently practised exorcism, as is evident from the city's baptismal formula of 1524 (see CWC 1, Ep. 228 and *Die evangelischen Kirchenordnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Bd. 20: Elsass, Teilband 1: Straßburg [Tübingen, 2011], 125). There was no mention of exorcism, however, in the city's *Straßburger Kirchen Ampt* of May 1525 or its ordinance of 24 June 1534 (*ibidem*, 153–5, 237).

and grave words at the confession of the original sin.<sup>4</sup> If you can tolerate liberty in your church we ask you to see to it that the prince grant the same liberty to this church of Christ as to other parishes. For if [Georg] must be dismissed on that account, I fear your authority will suffer in the eyes of many people, as if you could not perform baptism in the manner in which the apostles did. We have defended the practice of other churches. For why would they not metaphorically oust Satan when the [children] are being re-born in Christ? Luther and his followers always wanted this freedom, which is indeed a Christian freedom, to be safeguarded for us, as he clearly teaches in the book about the Saxon visitation.<sup>5</sup> For here it is in the interest of any concerned man, that the preacher of the Word maintain his authority and not lose it through a rash change in rites. We ask you in the name of Christ to reflect on this.

Farewell and give our regards to that brother who respects you and is rightly concerned about Christian liberty and the unity of the church. Thus he will realize that the recommendation we gave you benefitted him as well. Strasbourg, 29 May.

Yours truly, Bucer in the name of the other brothers.  
Hedio will write himself, if I am not mistaken. Your friend Wolfgang Capito fervently joins my request.

**Letter 511: 12 June 1533, Zweibrücken, Johannes Schwebel to Capito, Martin Bucer, and Caspar Hedio**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 161, pp. 381–2. A notation below the address indicates that it was delivered on 13 June. The letter is printed in *CorrBucer* 9:267–70, Ep. 702. Bucer responded to Schwebel about the exorcism controversy shortly thereafter (see *CorrBucer* 9:271–3, Ep. 703, and above, Ep. 510b).

Our illustrious regent, Ruprecht von Pfalz,<sup>1</sup> sends you greetings in Christ Jesus. He has received your letter,<sup>2</sup> excellent men, and read it with pleasure, especially because he realizes that you look out for the peace and welfare of

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4 For further discussion of the use of exorcism in the baptismal ritual, see below, Ep. 511 and *CorrBucer* 9, Ep. 670.

5 Martin Luther, *Unterricht der Visitatoren an die Pfarrherrn im Kurfürstentum zu Sachsen* (Wittenberg, 1528).

1 For Ruprecht, Pfalzgraf von Pfalz-Veldenz, see above, Ep. 503, note 2.

2 No longer extant.

the church, which is his own principal aim. Seeing that you are convinced that our statements and quarrels concern childish matters and are carried on in a childish manner, that we force others to go against their conscience, as they lay claim, and observe rites which, according to the complaints of some people, are offensive, our good regent wanted me to indicate to you in a letter how this tragedy began and the rationale for his advice. I will do so in very simple and brief terms:

A few days ago a citizen<sup>3</sup> publicly and most improperly reproached our pastor<sup>4</sup> in the presence of the congregation (although it was not very numerous) as he was baptizing a child. He accused him of using exorcism, which the ancients used and which is used today among us by churches that must not be disdained.<sup>5</sup> The man was arrested because of the tumult he caused, freed on the request of good citizens, and then cut himself off from the church. He did not meet with the faithful of that place to hear the Word or receive the sacraments or to pray. After some days his wife gave birth to a child, and he deferred the baptism. When he was asked why he deferred it, he responded that his conscience could not support exorcism. When this became known to the regent, – for everyone talked a great deal about it – he wanted to know why he had deferred baptism and was repelled by exorcism, and who were his associates or even the authors of his conviction. It was learned that he frequently saw Georg<sup>6</sup> and certain other people, who were opposed to exorcism. Therefore we, the ministers of the Word, were requested to indicate in writing whether exorcism contravened scripture, also why our ceremonies are not alike, since we preach Christ under one ruler.<sup>7</sup> We complied, and

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3 Identity unknown.

4 For Johann Meisenheimer, see above, Ep. 503, note 1.

5 In the early years of the church, catechumens were habitually exorcised as a preparation for baptism. This did not imply that they were considered to be possessed, but merely that they were, in consequence of original sin, subject to the power of the Devil, from whose dominion the grace of baptism was about to deliver them.

6 For Georg Pistor, see above, Ep. 470, note 1.

7 See Schwebel's defence of exorcism in his *Operum theologicorum ... pars prima* (Zweibrücken, 1598), 214: 'We do not use exorcism, thinking the child is demon-possessed, but to declare that Christ is stronger than Satan and has invaded his abode, chained him up, and destroyed his vessels. All of us who are born as sons of wrath are under the rule of Prince Satan. Reborn through water and the Spirit, we are freed from the wrath and the power of the devil. We announce his judgment to Satan and, calling on the name of Christ, command him to desist from harassing him, whom Christ has redeemed and made one of his flock.'

Georg openly testified that exorcism did not go against scripture; yet he refrained from this practice because he saw that it gave offence to many. He was asked who was offended and for what reason. It turned out that the offended people had been led into grave errors, and that is what gave rise to the scandal. For they consistently asserted that the infants of all people or certainly the infants of Christians were delivered from all sin and saved, because Christ says, 'Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'<sup>8</sup> Others did not openly deny original sin, but extenuated it to the extent that it did not bring evil or damnation on infants. They also say that infant baptism is a human institution which is neither necessary nor useful to children. When the regent saw that the scandal arose from their error, not from exorcism, he did not think it was advisable to change the rite of the old church. Indeed he fears that if it were changed, they would be confirmed in their error, although they also used in their defence the fact that I was not superstitiously attached to exorcism and have sometimes omitted it, just as Georg and some others who have never used exorcism. This prompted the regent to demand that Georg, too, accept exorcism, lest he appear to diverge from my teaching on account of using different rites.

I have told you the simple facts, from which you may conjecture many things in your wisdom. I have nothing against Georg, and if he wronged me in any way, I shall gladly forgive him, nor do I force him to adopt the rite of the old church. But let him look out lest he give offence to simple minds and appear to approve erroneous opinions by introducing and doggedly retaining rites without urgent necessity. Let him also consider whether this was not contrary to charity and against conscience to refuse to obey our pious regent when he exacts nothing impious. In this matter people's advice to the regent varies. I cannot write more because the messenger is in a hurry. Farewell in the Lord. I have heard something about a synod to be called in your city.<sup>9</sup> May Christ give you his spirit so that you may you take good counsel

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8 Matt. 19:14.

9 The Synod of Strasbourg met in three separate sessions: the first, essentially a preliminary municipal synod, convened from 3–6 June 1533 and was attended by all the teachers and preachers of Strasbourg, along with the 21 church wardens, all presided over by a commission of four men appointed by the city council. During this session, they discussed the XVI articles that had been produced in May, which defended the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, infant baptism, and notably the role of the magistrates in the reform and maintenance of the church and in administering discipline (printed in BDS 5:383–401). The XVI articles were endorsed and used in the subsequent sessions of the synod to

about the disturbance in the church. Hurriedly from Zweibrücken, 12 June '33.

Yours, Johannes Schwebel.

**Letter 512: 27 June 1533, Basel, Oswald Myconius to Capito**

The manuscript of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, f. 332; printed in QGT 8:99–100, no. 397. For Oswald Myconius, see CWC 1, Ep. 37 headnote.

I cannot fathom why you have not replied to the letter<sup>1</sup> I sent through Phrygio,<sup>2</sup> unless you thought perhaps he would serve as a living letter in the matter I requested as he did in other things. You forgot that he could not know anything because you did not entrust anything to him. Therefore I wish you would reply when you have time. It would not be surprising if the whole gospel perished here, and we together with the gospel, nor do I doubt that something will happen if we do not take care. For if the world discovers what has come to pass, as divine matters can be read and are open to all, learned and unlearned alike, I mean, and when it considers the shameful and noxious fruit it has borne among the profane, it would not be surprising if the world thought, 'Let papism return rather than us tolerating these abominable blasphemies.' For even if there are no sects here, one cannot find a trace of concern about the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, public order and justice among men, or anything else of that kind. In fact there is no sort of concern. Indeed I have no doubt, my Capito, but that you are in agreement with me.

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inspect rural congregations and to deal with sectarians. The main session of the synod, however, sat from 10–14 June. The village ministers were inspected and promptly endorsed the XVI articles. Then the sectarian leaders, most notably Melchior Hoffman, Clemens Ziegler, and Caspar Schwenckfeld, were interrogated as to their beliefs, but were not convinced by their interrogators to adhere to the XVI articles. The final session met on 23 and 29 October 1533. The writings of Hoffman and Schwenckfeld were inspected, but the matter was placed on hold, much to the irritation of the Strasbourg preachers. They urged the council to come to a final resolution about dealing with the sectarian divisions in the city. When the Anabaptists seized power in Münster in February 1534, however, the council decided to elevate the Tetrapolitan Confession of 1530 and the XVI articles of 1533 to the rank of official Christian teaching on 4 March 1534 (QGT 8, no. 518).

1 No longer extant.

2 For Paulus Phrygio, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote.

Up until now I have contended with some people about what human beings are capable of. I could never be persuaded that a man's reason would weaken because it has been deserted by the Spirit of God, but lo and behold, I am becoming convinced of it now that I see the evil power of reason erupt! Not even the devil would dare to sow such thought openly among men. But subtle reasoning dares to assert such things. It penetrates land, water, and heaven, as they say. Let them be! I shall not associate with them as long as they have such thoughts. Contemplating their impiety more closely, however, I am completely convinced that these filthy dregs of society have come together here by divine providence. Unless we take care to see that the world is not contaminated, my prediction will undoubtedly come to pass. You will take care, therefore, to act against the adversaries with the potent force of the Word, so that no one will be unaware and everyone will see and perceive the Spirit that is in you, and the spirit that inhabits and motivates them. In this manner you will convince the council not to do anything that is unworthy of the Christian name. The council decides not only for itself, but for the whole republic of Christ. For although the magistrates are nauseated by everything, I hear that some of them talk and think so highly of Schwenckfeld<sup>3</sup> that they all but prefer him to truthful men. First and foremost they approve that he has disputed against you so learnedly and ingeniously, taking his material from your writings, so that one can easily see the great and delightful talent of this man. And they have no doubt that he will truly win a victory, if he has sufficient means. A nobleman<sup>4</sup> has related this to us. I did not want you to remain ignorant of it. Farewell, together with your wife,<sup>5</sup> Bucer, and all the others. Basel, 27 June 1533.

Yours, Oswald Myconius.

**Letter 513: [Before 30 July 1533, Strasbourg], Capito, Martin Bucer and Caspar Hedio to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The manuscript of this letter is in Paris Bibl. SHPF, 756/1, f. 61. It is printed in Pollet 2:192–6, no. 19, where it is tentatively dated 1534. See notes 1 and 2 below for information suggesting that it was written before 30 July 1533.

Noble, strict, firm, circumspect, honourable, wise, gracious lords! Your

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3 For Caspar Schwenckfeld, see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote.

4 Identity unknown.

5 For Wibrandis Rosenblatt, see above, Ep. 469, note 30.

Graces permitted us to read the message of the Privy Councillors of Ulm,<sup>1</sup> and requested us to consider the matter, earnestly to inquire into it and indicate whether there was a man who could serve the holy gospel in the church of Ulm and move there, to replace our beloved brother, the licentiate Konrad Sam<sup>2</sup> of blessed memory. We therefore earnestly consulted among ourselves, discussed it and did a thorough search, but can think of no one at this time, either here or in any of the other churches with which we are familiar, who would be skilled enough for such a position, as our lords in Ulm desire, and who could be persuaded to go to Ulm. God be praised, however, for having given the church in Ulm a valuable, learned, and God-fearing man, Master Martin Frecht,<sup>3</sup> licentiate in theology, who has been professor ordinarius of theology in Heidelberg and who moved two years ago on the recommendation of Oecolampadius of blessed memory and of Bucer to serve the church of Ulm, where he was born.<sup>4</sup> There are many churches that do not have a minister like him. Therefore, our lords of Ulm should indeed be grateful to God for this man and, listening to God, should give him a friendly hearing, so that nothing will be left undone through God's will. We hope they will find loyal assistants for Frecht, some of whom they already have at hand.<sup>5</sup>

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- 1 In July 1533, the Privy Councillors of Ulm wrote a letter to the XIII of Strasbourg, requesting a replacement for the late Konrad Sam (see below, note 2). The XIII of Strasbourg responded on 30 July that they could not think of anyone suitable to replace Sam (see PC 2:197–8, nos. 199–200).
- 2 Konrad Sam or Som (1483–20 June 1533) studied at Tübingen (matriculation in 1498 and again in 1509) and Freiburg (matriculation in 1505), where he obtained a licentiate in both laws, which permitted him to become a preacher in Brackenheim. He adopted the evangelical cause in 1520 and was therefore dismissed from his position in 1524. The city council of Ulm called him to become preacher at the Franciscan Church in June. In 1525, he was nominated by the peasants as their arbitrator. In the controversy over the Lord's Supper in 1526, he opposed Luther and after the Disputation of Bern, sought closer contact with Zwingli. In 1528 he published a catechism with Michael Brothag. He criticized Bucer's approval of the Schwabach Articles and the Augsburg Confession.
- 3 For Martin Frecht, see below, Ep. 539 headnote.
- 4 There are no extant letters of recommendation from either Oecolampadius or Bucer on behalf of Frecht to Ulm.
- 5 I.e., Michael Brothag and Johannes Walz, both colleagues of Frecht, as he indicates in letters to Bucer, dated 20 June 1533 and 5 September 1533 (see Pollet 2:193, note 3), and in a letter to Blaurer from 23 June 1533 (Schuess 1, Ep. 341). Brothag of Göppingen (d. 1559) was the teacher of ancient languages in Ulm. After his studies at Freiburg (matriculation in 1518) and at Tübingen (matriculation in 1519), he worked as a teacher and preacher in various imperial cities. He served as city pastor of Markgröningen (1539–45) and Göppingen (1545–

If these men respect Frecht and allow themselves to be trained in scripture by him every day, they will be able to represent their city well and work for the improvement of the church. For we cannot hope these days that they will obtain anywhere in all of Germany another superior like Sam of blessed memory, who was learned, talented, and experienced, and who lived a holy and respected life. Should you need a loyal assistant to Master Martin and to the others in Ulm, we might perhaps find someone in time.

We have given up so many highly learned and experienced men: Dr Paulus went to Basel;<sup>6</sup> Master Otto went to Mulhouse;<sup>7</sup> licentiate Jakob Otter went first to [Neckar]steinach, then to Aarau, and then to Esslingen;<sup>8</sup> Master Lienhart,<sup>9</sup> Dr Sebastian,<sup>10</sup> Musculus,<sup>11</sup> and Boniface<sup>12</sup> went to Augsburg; Musculus also moved around to many places, so that we cannot afford to lose any more men.

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9), and thereafter as superintendent in Kirchheim/Teck (until 1558). Walz (d. some time before July 1568), who studied at Tübingen (MA, 1513), became a teacher in Hall in 1524. He was one of the co-signatories to the *Syngramma Suevicum* and worked as late as 1531 as a pastor and schoolmaster in Gemmingen. On 23 June 1532, the city council of Ulm called him to their city. He left Ulm on 18 March 1535 and eventually ended up in Nürtingen, where he worked as a pastor until 1547. From June 1547, he served in Neuffen.

6 For Paulus Phrygio, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote. As of 1519, Phrygio was parish priest in Eichstätt, then in Strasbourg (1525/6), and thereafter, he assumed a rectorate in Illkirch. In 1529 he was called to St Peter's in Basel, where he became professor in 1531.

7 For Otto Binder, see CWC 2, Ep. 265, note 3. Binder was preacher at Börsch in 1525, and then moved to Mulhouse, where he remained until his death.

8 For Jakob Otter, see CWC 2, Ep. 205, note 2. After fleeing to Strasbourg in 1524, Otter was preacher and then rector in Neckarsteinach. He dedicated his commentary on Genesis, *Das erste Buch Mosi* (Haguenau, 1528), to the believers in Neckarsteinach. Thereafter he became an assistant to Berchtold Haller in Bern (1529), then parish priest in Solothurn (1529), and finally in Aarau (end of August 1529). On 2 April 1532, he was called to Esslingen, where he worked until his death in 1547.

9 Lienhart or Leonhard Brunner (Fontanus, 1500–1558), a former student of Jakob Wimpheling, arrived in Strasbourg in 1520. In 1526 he was deacon at Old St Peter's and from 1527 to 1548, he was preacher at St Andreas' in Worms. A disciple of Bucer, he criticized the Lutheran views of a canon at Worms (9 May 1530) and drew the attention of Schwenckfeld by his assertions on infant baptism. Schwenckfeld addressed to him 44 propositions.

10 For Sebastian Meyer, see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3. From 1526 to 1531, he was a preacher at St Thomas in Strasbourg, but in March 1531, he was called to Augsburg, where he arrived in April of that year.

11 For Wolfgang Musculus, see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote. In 1528, Musculus was appointed deacon at the Strasbourg cathedral. On 27 December 1530, he was

Perhaps the cities do not give this enough consideration, for they are certainly able to help with the aid of God. And yet, if we are otherwise Christians, all salvation of the cities depends on the office of truly Christian preaching. But help is given to few men in their studies, and the rich turn their children to worldly things. In old times there was hardly anyone endowed with a higher ecclesiastical office among Christians who was not from the noblest and foremost families, for they are commanded by God to educate and promote their children to this high office, which requires so much knowledge, experience, and practice. And although today some people are studying, they want to become jurists or physicians. Because the study of theology is among all the arts the most dangerous, laborious, and thankless, everyone is reluctant to undertake it even though it is most useful to the world. May God give his grace to the lords in the cities and elsewhere, and make them consider the need of the churches. He would no doubt rouse sufficient pious, young people, who could be drawn to the office.

For this reason, we humbly request Your Graces to reply to the gracious lords of Ulm<sup>13</sup> and remind and admonish them to assist in training ministers, if they believe in the divine power of the holy gospel to save all who believe in it.<sup>14</sup> They are well equipped to do so – more so than many others – as Your Graces have to some extent done up till now, and intend to continue in future. We, in turn, have high hopes that other cities will do the same, for several already intend to support some young men here for a while to study theology, languages and literature, subjects on which we lecture here at the request of Your Graces as faithfully and as well as at any university.<sup>15</sup> May God grant that some twenty or thirty young men be trained in theology here, a discipline which must be very different and is much more demanding than is generally the case at universities (among the ancients, monasteries were founded and used for this purpose). Thus God will allow some people to

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called to Augsburg, where he was preacher at the Holy Cross Church from 4 March 1531 until 1548.

12 For Boniface Wolfhart, see CWC 1, Ep. 102 headnote. In the mid-1520s, Wolfhart worked in Montbéliard and Dettweiler. In February 1531, he was called to Augsburg and on 4 March was installed as preacher at St Moritz.

13 See above, note 1.

14 Cf. Rom. 1:16.

15 For the so-called Buffler Foundation, which provided funding for young men from Constance, Isny, Biberach, and Lindau to study in Strasbourg, see below, Ep. 549, note 17.

come forward, who are able to further and help others, as we have done for many people here.<sup>16</sup>

The papists have no greater hope today than that God will take away those who now look after the gospel, so that it will come to a standstill in our city for lack of truly learned men, and there is considerable danger that this will happen, as far as we are concerned. When shall we obtain another man like Oecolampadius, Zwingli, or Sam? The office requires so much divine grace, skill, effort, work, and money that there will be ever more need for such people. If, however, a council or a national assembly is called, as must come to pass, if the matter is not to turn into a war, we will stand in great need of such people, while we console ourselves with the common and usual benevolence of God and take no heed for this business.<sup>17</sup> One ought to train many people and give great thanks to God if a few of them turn out right. Good preachers are like all other gifts of God: as long as we have them we use them without scruple or thanks; when they are gone, we start giving some thought to them. It is just as with grain and wine: when they are cheap, we think little of them and frivolously waste them; when the harvest is poor and the stock is used up, there is much lamenting and much shortage, and people recognize what a great gift of God these things are.

This is our reply to Your Graces, as requested, and we beg Your Graces, as we did earlier, faithfully to remind our gracious lords of Ulm of this dangerous lack of truly learned men, and to admonish them as well to help provide for our daily need, for truly God will not work miracles every day and make Peters and Johns out of fishermen,<sup>18</sup> for he has given us an ample sup-

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16 These suggestions were noted by Frecht, who proposed them to the city council of Ulm: 'Concerning scholarship to be established in Strasbourg: one must give consideration to ways and means to send several adults to Strasbourg to study Holy Scripture, so that they may be employed as preachers in the most beneficial manner/Von stipendien so zu Straszburg anzürichten sey. Zu bedencken, wie ain weg furgenommen, das ettlich erwachsen zu Straszburg verlegt wurden, die in der hailigen geschriff studiert damitt sy züm predig ampt uffs fürderlichts gebräucht möchten werden.' The proposition was accepted by the council. See Pollet 2:194, note 5.

17 The formation of the Schmalkaldic League at Christmas 1530 made war a distinct possibility. Bucer personally urged a national council, but Charles V would not consent for fear of Rome; as an alternative, he set up a series of religious colloquies beginning in 1539, but they ultimately failed to prevent the outbreak of the Schmalkaldic War in 1547/8.

18 Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11.

ply of people and time and all that is requisite to train suitable ministers for the church. We, however, have neglected to do so and allow the old pomp of the world to go on without worrying about God who has given us different commandments. May the Lord grant us to desire the right thing and pray 'Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come'<sup>19</sup> – then these matters will turn out differently than they have so far.

Your Graces humble ministers to the gospel,  
 Wolfgang Capito,  
 Martin Bucer,  
 Caspar Hedio.

**Letter 514: [September 1533, Strasbourg], Capito to Wendelin Rihel**

This is the preface to Oecolampadius' posthumous *In Hieremiam prophetam commentariorum libri tres*, edited by Capito (Strasbourg: M. Apiarius, September 1533), f. Iv-IVv. Printed in BrOek 2:740–2, Ep. 970. Wendelin Rihel (d. 1555) was active as a Strasbourg printer between 1535 and 1555. On 19 October 1525, he became a citizen of Strasbourg. As of July 1531, he ran a bookstore (*Buchladen*), and between 10 and 19 October 1533, he co-signed the response of the Strasbourg preachers to Schwenckfeld's *Schutzschrift* (see BDS 14:280–355, no. 5). His first wife was Margaretha Metzler and his second was Margarethe Lux. He printed works by Bucer, Johannes Sturm, Calvin, Sleidan, and others. After Rihel's death in March 1555, his sons Josias and Theodosius took over the business until about 1557, when they established separate print shops.

[*Summary*]: When people ask Capito for the best method to read the prophets, he recommends the commentaries of Oecolampadius, Luther, and Zwingli. Capito himself and Bucer have also lectured on the prophets. He has agreed to write this letter because Simon Grynaeus, who had originally been requested to provide a preface, was unable to do so at this time. Capito can offer no better rule to study the prophets than Christ, who is the key to all mysteries. He objects to those who may disdain the letter, for the spirit of scripture is not a human but a divine gift, for which one must pray. Errors and sectarianism can be avoided through such simple and humble reading of scripture. He hopes that Oecolampadius' thoughts, which Capito has gathered here, will aid him in his scriptural studies.

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<sup>19</sup> Matt. 6:9–10; Luke 11: 2.

**Letter 514a: [September 1533, Strasbourg], Capito to the Reader**

This note appears at the end of Oecolampadius' *In Hieremiam prophetam* (see above, Ep. 514 headnote). Printed in BrOek 2:742, note 4.

[*Summary*]: Capito explains that he edited this commentary, which was left unfinished when Oecolampadius died in 1531. Oecolampadius wrote his comments as he found time and occasion; Capito 'supplied what was missing and edited what Oecolampadius authored in good faith.' He is planning to edit Oecolampadius' commentary on Ezechiel as well [see below, Ep. 527].

**Letter 515: 3 October 1533, Augsburg, Gereon [Sailer] to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 391–2. For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

I wish you well in Christ. We are keenly awaiting your advice in our affliction. I meant to write to you once I got your letter, but when a suitable messenger presented himself I did not want him to depart empty-handed. You wrote about a boy who is unusually talented for his age.<sup>1</sup> I ask you in the name of Christ to send him to me as soon as possible. I shall treat him like my son, as long as he obeys me and devotes himself to life and studies in a way that I could be of service to posterity through him. Make sure to commit him to a driver who will bring him to me before winter sets in, and make arrangements with his parents, if he has any, ensuring that they will not take him from me half-educated if a better chance presents itself.

In truth, I cannot say anything about our affairs other than that they are wretched and in a completely deplorable state. It would be an understatement to say that the gospel is not being advanced. If only it were not held back! Alas, we see many people every day deserting the gospel. Indeed, they favour no party at all. That is the result of the lethargy of those who should be most alert, but some of them are lukewarm, others quite frigid, and there are hardly one or two people who show fervour. But enough of this matter, of which we can hope nothing orderly. Schwenckfeld<sup>2</sup> came yesterday, dur-

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1 Identity unknown.

2 For Schwenckfeld's stay in Augsburg from 2 October 1533 until the end of February 1534, see Selina Gerhard Schultz, *Caspar Schwenckfeld von Ossig (1489–1561)*, 4th ed. (Pennsburg: Board of Publication of the Schwenckfelder Church, 1977), 220–9; and R. Emmet McLaughlin, *Caspar Schwenckfeld: Reluctant Radical*

ing the night, that he may hasten the ruin of our church. His brethren and consorts are spreading the news of his arrival to their consorts.

Greet Bucer together with all the brethren. I wish I could have more of the dialogues,<sup>3</sup> which pleased me wonderfully. Greetings to my boys and their teacher.<sup>4</sup> Farewell in haste. Augsburg, 3 October 1533. Please take care to have the boy sent to me.

Yours, Gereon.

**Letter 515a: [6 October 1533, Constance], Ambrosius Blaurer to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

When Otto Brunfels, the rector of the Latin school in Strasbourg, became city physician in Bern (3 October 1533), four candidates applied for the now vacant teaching position: Michael Hilspach (see above, Ep. 470, note 2), Christoph Lasius, Johannes Schäblin, and Petrus Dasypodius (see below, note 3). Around the first of September 1533, Melanchthon recommended Lasius (1504–1572), the son of a Strasbourg citizen and a student at Wittenberg, to Bucer and Jacob Sturm (see MBW T5, Ep. 1355). Lasius was apparently confident that he would get the position on account of this recommendation and his contacts in Strasbourg. Bucer, however, questioned Lasius' motives in a letter to Blaurer, dated 24 September 1533 (Schiess 1, Ep. 363). The Strasbourg preachers instead favoured Dasypodius who, at the time, was a teacher in Frauenfeld. In his letter, Bucer asked Blaurer to write to Sturm and to the preachers on behalf of Dasypodius within the next ten days. He spelled out what Blaurer should mention in his recommendation: that he had first heard of the vacancy from Jakob Bedrot, who had suggested that he recommend a possible candidate to Jacob Sturm and the Strasbourg preachers (Schiess 1, Ep. 363).

The present letter may very well be a draft of Blaurer's recommendation, because it begins with a mention of Bedrot and echoes what Bucer had written about Dasypodius. On 19 and 20 October 1533, Bucer again wrote to Blaurer, reporting that the preachers had translated his letter of recommendation into German. He regretted that the recommendation addressed to Sturm had not

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(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 164–8. Schwenckfeld hoped to continue his study of Hebrew in Augsburg with Boniface Wolfhart, whom he had known in Strasbourg.

3 I.e., Bucer's *Fürbereitung zum Concilio* (Strasbourg, 1533). For a modern edition, see BDS 5:259–360.

4 For Ambrosius and Timotheus Jung, see above, Ep. 475, note 3; for their teacher, Bernhard, see above, Ep. 478, note 6.

been made in the name of Konrad Zwick and Thomas Blaurer, since both men enjoyed such a good reputation with the city councillors (Schiess 1, Ep. 370).

The city council reviewed all four applicants on 15 October 1533, but ultimately decided to hire Dasypodius. They considered that Hilsbach would not be released from his duties in Zweibrücken. Schäblin, then an assistant at Johannes Sapidus (Witz)'s school in Strasbourg, was needed there. Lasius was found to be too young and arrogant for an administrative position at the Latin School: 'He was learned enough, but in addition to being young, was rather arrogant and proud in spirit, so that there was some concern about his skill to edify the young people' (Dacheux, pp. 218–19, no. 5019).

The autograph original of this draft letter is in St Gallen KB, ms. 41/184, and summarized in Schiess 1:431–2, Ep. 367. The manuscript is damaged, hence the elision points in the translation below.

May the grace of Christ be with you. I remember we [...]. When Bedrot was with us,<sup>1</sup> a man greatly [...] and lectures on rhetoric with happy results, I heard from him, reverend brothers, that you need a teacher of letters in your city. He asked us to be sure to inform you as soon as possible if we had a man suitable for the task or knew of one elsewhere, and to recommend him. We wish all Christian states well with all our hearts, and although no one at all occurred to us at that time, we undertook to look around with great diligence and neglected no means we thought might be helpful to your most Christian institutions. For anyone who, like Paul, is zealous for the glory of Christ will of course consider the welfare of the city, from which as from a fountain eternally pouring forth waters so many famous men have gone forth to other churches for the great benefit of many people,<sup>2</sup> a city that may seem to be born and destined by God to help the study of literature and piety, and may seem to merit being paid back with much interest.

I consider it the result of Christ's singular goodness that a few days ago mention was made of Petrus Dasypodius<sup>3</sup> in the personal conversations of

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- 1 For Jakob Bedrot, see CWC 2, Ep. 260, note 1. Bedrot was in Constance at the beginning of June 1533; cf. Schiess 1, Ep. 339.
- 2 See above, Ep. 513, where Capito lists the men Strasbourg sent to other cities.
- 3 Petrus Dasypodius (1490–1559) was chaplain of the St Michael's prebend in Frauenfeld since 1524. From 1527 to 1530, he taught at the school of the Fraumünster in Zurich, and in 1530, returned to Frauenfeld to be a schoolmaster and preacher. After the Second Battle of Kappel, his position became increasingly untenable. In the end, Bucer and Blaurer were successful in calling Dasypodius in the fall of 1533 to Strasbourg. There he worked first as principal of the Latin School at the Carmelite convent in Strasbourg and then as teacher at Sturm's

the brothers. One of our colleagues said he was very sorry on his behalf, and when I closely questioned the man about the reason for his grief, he said, 'Ah, how it bothers me every time when I think of that incomparable man, that such 'a light is put under such a dark bushel!'"<sup>4</sup> Then I began, 'Where does he teach?' 'Among his people, but he labours under a 'hatred more than Vatinian'<sup>5</sup> – the reason being that he was a singular friend of the former prefect<sup>6</sup> in Thurgau. He preaches and wastes his time on teaching one or two boys, and is so little aware of his worth – being practically the best among learned men – that he thinks he is nothing and, with regard to a position in life, did not even think of taking moderate measures.' Bedrot's request reminded me [of this conversation], and I soon danced with joy (and I am sure he would have danced with me), clapped my hands and shouted 'Io!' and again 'Io!', convinced that I had come across a quarry I would soon capture – not that I am pleased in my heart with other people's unhappiness [...] but that I congratulated myself on having found one I would soon capture.

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Gymnasium. From 1551 to 1559, he was dean of the chapter of St Thomas. He is most famous for his *Dictionarium latinogermanicum* (Strasbourg, 1535), which underwent numerous editions. He was also the author of *Philargyrus*, a comedy in Latin verse written for the school's theatre and published posthumously in Strasbourg in 1565, as well as *De schola urbis Argentoratensis* ([Strasbourg], 1556).

4 Cf. Matt. 5:15; Mark 4:21; and Luke 11:33.

5 Erasmus, *Adagia* 2.2.94, i.e., implacable hatred, like that of Cicero's enemy, Vatinus.

6 I.e., Philipp Brunner of Glarus was the brother of Fridolin Brunner, the first and most significant evangelical preacher of Glarus. In 1521, Philipp Brunner took out citizenship in Zurich. By 1528, he had joined the evangelical party of Glarus. Once the evangelicals gained the upperhand in the city, he entered public service. In early 1530, a new *Landvogt* for the Swiss Confederacy had to be appointed in Thurgau, and this time it was Glarus' turn to make the appointment. On 1 May the *Landsgemeinde* chose Brunner and on 24 June he arrived in Frauenfeld. His appointment lasted for only two years. Brunner, a Zwinglian, oversaw the Reformation in Thurgau (much to the dismay of the Five Catholic Cantons), and gave Thurgau its first Reformation ordinance, the 'Ordnung und Satzung' of 19 November 1530 (EA 4/1b, pp. 849–55, no. 435), which was inspired heavily by Zurich. After the Second Battle of Kappel, the Catholic cantons sought revenge. They excluded Brunner from the peace negotiations and demanded that he be removed from office. On 8 December 1531, a *Landsgemeinde* was convened in order to select a substitute *Landvogt* to finish out the rest of the term. Brunner was temporarily replaced by Bernhard Schiesser.

'Oh,' I said, 'lucky Strasbourgers, I believe this excellent man has been destined by God for them. I shall write, as soon as I have a messenger, asking you to try to cast your net, to call him, to summon him. We shall add our spurs, encouraging that neglected and suffering man to prefer to live there with you, where he can truly render service and prove himself useful to Christ, and to prefer to live where he can bring as many people as possible to Christ [...] a very modest and frank man [...] as a teacher he is consistently and modestly [...] and many other excuses, I think I could then promote the man. If both our and the senate's call urges him [to come], how could he not indicate his [...].'

Go to it, then, respected brothers, and unless another man has already been put in charge of the school, make an effort to obtain this Christian man to educate your youth, to our and your happiness. For with such a teacher and instructor, I would dare to call your school thrice fortunate and your boys truly literate.

I believe the man's name is not unknown to you, for it is very well known here. He lives in Frauenfeld, a town in the Thurgau, where he was born, has family, and spent his early childhood. He is well versed in languages, exceptionally sincere and pious, so that even his enemies commend his innocence. He is very suitable and apt for teaching and has a fortunate nature. In sum: He is so good that no one, unless he is very unfair, can see anything amiss with him or can say anything bad about him. You know our time brings forth few men who combine true piety with solid, ready and well-rounded erudition, and we see few men who wish, and even fewer who can, do well in this very beautiful but most difficult task. I am aware how many apt and most learned men you have there. I have your very precise views, and yet I dare to importune you and urge this man on you to the point of annoying you, for I know that it will not be me who will give thanks, but you who will return heartfelt thanks to the man by whose effort you have obtained an incomparable treasure. And I know how concerned you are for your own and the common Christian commonwealth. Make every effort [...] before the famous Sturm<sup>8</sup> and the other leading men of your town to summon Dasypodius. For at this time, Kempten and Isny are also lacking teachers, and there are people who are very determined to obtain his services, which we wanted to prevent.

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7 Reading uncertain.

8 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

**Letter 515b: [Shortly before 6 October 1533, Strasbourg], The Strasbourg Preachers and Teachers to [the City Council of Strasbourg]**

The manuscript is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 324, no. 3. A note on the reverse indicates that it was read to the council on 6 October 1533.

Strict, noble, firm, circumspect, honourable, wise, gracious lords. The Almighty, who always wants us to cooperate in the benefits he gives us, has always effected and granted among the people of the Old and New Testament that some men, apart from common preaching and exposition of divine law, might devote themselves to special research into it and explain it to those who in turn would instruct the community. The purpose was to facilitate correct and sound understanding and agreement in divine instruction among the people. All churches had such teachers until a great decline overtook them, and they all recognize the necessity to establish a special ordinance and benefices for them. Now that a benevolent God has graciously imparted to us the pure and true understanding of his Word, we did not want to be neglectful. In order to serve our heavenly Father, several of us preachers have assumed, in addition to preaching and other church business, the responsibility of giving lectures and expositions of the Old and New Testament, and have done so now for eight years, not without exceptional results, thanks to the Lord. Now we are prevented, either on account of poor health or by other church business, from consistently giving as much of our attention to these lectures as is due to them and as they merit. Yet pious people come here to hear them every day, and others are being sent from several cities, so that one must give more rather than less attention to these lectures.

Thus the Lord provided Dr Bartolomeo of Venice, who had been preaching the gospel in Venice, and has now resided here with us for a year.<sup>1</sup> He had been driven from his city by the pope and lived for a year in Augsburg, for several merchants of Augsburg, who knew his teaching and his life, maintained him there as well as during the year he has been here. The man leads a right and godly life and is gifted with a Christian understanding and is quite skilful in teaching it clearly and lucidly, as all those who have heard him attest. Thus he would be very useful to us by maintaining here the above-mentioned theological lectures, a task we have allowed him to

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1 For Bartolomeo Fonizio, see above, Ep. 510, note 11. Fonizio came in July 1532 to Strasbourg and remained there until 23 October 1533 (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 599, note 11).

do for several weeks. But now the Rems, a merchant [family] in Augspurg,<sup>2</sup> who have maintained him here so far, would like him to return to them, and he is unwilling to remain here if his material needs are not looked after. We have an obligation to promote the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest zeal by teaching his holy gospel, and our lectures mentioned above serve this purpose very well, as experience has shown. We have great need of such a man. For the sake of the Lord and his church, we therefore beg Your Graces unanimously and humbly to give out of the benefices that have principally been established and are meant for this purpose (for all collegiate churches and monasteries have been established for no other purpose than for such schools) as much material support to this man as will enable us to keep him here for the purpose of such necessary and salutary lectures. We could also use him for other necessary church matters, according to his ample talents. For we would need more lectures and exercises, and there is much other work to be done in defending and explaining God's teaching, should a council or other assembly be called. God has granted us to help many churches so far with these lectures, and to train preachers that have been of no small service in Worms, Steinach, Basel, Mulhouse, Augsburg, and elsewhere. Since God has given us better means than others for this purpose, we are expected to continue. The lack of learned and godly preachers is very great and becoming more serious every day. Thus we shall be judged responsible by God if we are found lacking in such a necessary and salutary matter. May Your Graces take this to heart and help us to keep the aforementioned Dr Bartolomeo here to be of service to the church. It would please the Almighty, would be most serviceable to his church, and would bring honour

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2 This letter is the only reference to a connection between Fonzio and the Rem family in Augsburg. The Rems were a prominent Augsburg patrician merchant family. Among members active at the time were Andreas I Rem (c. 1484–1537), a Protestant and a member of the merchant guild (*Kaufleutezunft*); his son Andreas II Rem (c. 1510–1546), also a member of the merchant guild and who joined the patriciate in Augsburg in 1538; Hans II Rem (c. 1490–1548), a citizen of Augsburg and member of the merchant guild, who joined the patriciate in 1538; Hieronymus I Rem (c. 1487–1562), also a member of the merchant guild and who joined the patriciate in 1538; Lukas II Rem (1481–1541), a Lutheran member of the merchant guild in Augsburg, who joined the patriciate in 1539. See *Augsburger Eliten des 16. Jahrhunderts: Prosopographie wirtschaftlicher und politischer Führungsgruppen 1500–1620*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996), 677–91.

to Your Graces in the eyes of all godly men. We shall gladly repay this favour to Your Graces whenever possible, in all humility and obedience.

Your Graces' subjects,

All the preachers, pastors, assistants, lecturers in language, and others involved in theological lectures.

**Letter 516: 10 October 1533, Strasbourg, Capito to Albert of Brandenburg**

This is the dedicatory letter to Capito's translation of Desiderius Erasmus' *De amabili ecclesiae concordia*, an exposition of Psalm 84 (see below, note 7), entitled *Von der kirchen lieblichen vereinigung und von hinlegung diser zeit haltender spaltung in der glauben leer* [On the amiable concord of the church and the healing of the doctrinal schism prevailing in our time] (Strasbourg: Apiarius, 1533), ff. [A]ii recto–[Aiv] verso. Capito's translation displeased many of the Augsburg reformers, who accused Capito of printing the work for the sake of profit, as Blaurer reported to Bucer on 23 December 1533: 'Many people in Augsburg are miserably upbraiding our most famous and excellent Capito on account of his translation of Erasmus' *Enarratio* etc., affirming that he, since he has now become a printer [*posteaquam nunc typographus sit factus*], cares for only one thing: that his press may continuously prosper and make some profit; for so they write in their letters sent to us from [Strasbourg].'<sup>1</sup> On 10 November 1533, Wolfgang Musculus also complained to Bucer about the decision to have Erasmus' *De amabili ecclesiae concordia* translated into German. Musculus, however, seems to have been mistaken about the source of the German translation, blaming Bucer and Gereon Sailer instead of Capito: 'I have sampled a bit of the book on the concord of the church, which you translated there [in Strasbourg] from the Latin and published, with the help of Gereon [Sailer]. This enterprise of yours altogether displeases me. Who would support concord of this sort without getting the idea that one is returning to his vomit? [...] I am very afraid that in your excessive concern for concord you will slip and not have enough regard for the Truth – which has been known, preached, taught and inculcated. May God prevent this from happening! [...] Avoid being a source of scandal for God's elect. [...] We can see the kind of people, my dear Bucer, with whom concord is being sought. For they are not sorry enough about their corrupt doctrine and life to distance themselves from it even a finger's breadth. Tell me, what do you hope to achieve? [...] Cursed be that concord, which cannot be

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1 Schiess 1, Ep. 385. For Capito's financial difficulties from his investment in a printing press, see above, Ep. 514 headnote, and below, Ep. 561, note 1, and Ep. 613.

established without prejudice and harm to the truth and kingdom of Christ [...] Who would not want concord? But at the same time, who does not see that the conditions stipulated by the pontiffs are still such, that it would be impossible to reach an agreement with them while trying to safeguard the Truth. I would like finally to see an end to books of this sort!<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Julius Pflug, to whom Erasmus had dedicated the Latin edition,<sup>3</sup> recommended the book to Melanchthon as a model for concord.<sup>4</sup> Bucer seems to have taken Musculus' criticisms to heart, for in January 1534, he wrote to Blaurer: 'Capito promises that he will show more restraint in choosing titles [to print]; [...] Augsburgers are Augsburgers, that is, the progeny of Athenians.'<sup>5</sup> It is apparent that Erasmus has given us many things; I wish Germans understood that. We expect certain ruin for them, if they do not seriously decide once and for all about religion.<sup>6</sup>

It is somewhat surprising that Capito produced a German translation of a work by Erasmus, who had earlier disowned him (see CWE 10, Ep. 1485/CWC 2, Ep. 210), and dedicated the translation to his former patron, Albert of Brandenburg, who refused to meet with him at the Diet of Augsburg (see CWC 2, Ep. 414). It may reflect his personal mission to stay the middle course amid the theological quarrels that plagued the period. There is no mention of Capito's translation in the extant correspondence of Erasmus.

To the most worthy, most illustrious, and most noble lord Albert, cardinal, archbishop, Elector of Mainz and Magdeburg, administrator of Halberstadt, margrave of Brandenburg, etc., Wolfgang Capito first offers his willing and humble service and the grace of God.

Gracious Elector and lord. The excellent, most learned Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam has recently written a well-crafted book in Latin, entitled *On the Amiable Concord of the Church*.<sup>7</sup> Our printers wanted to publish this also in German, hoping to provide advice and medicine to the Germans, where the disease of this schism in the faith is most serious and dangerous. I

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2 The Latin is printed in Reinhard Bodenmann, *Wolfgang Musculus (1497–1563). Destin d'un autodidacte lorrain au siècle des Réformes* (Geneva: Droz, 2000), 331, note 47.

3 Allen 10, Ep. 2852 (31 July 1533).

4 MBW T5, Ep. 1372 (28 Oct. 1533).

5 Possibly a reference to the proverbial thoughtless and headstrong Athenians, cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.8.44.

6 Schiess 1, Ep. 390.

7 The official title of Erasmus' work is *Liber de sarcienda ecclesiae concordia* (Basel, 1533). It is an exposition of Psalm 84. A modern critical edition is available in ASD V-3:245–313; for an English translation, see CWE 65:125–216.

myself have high hopes that peace-loving people of every party will find in this book reason and cause for peace. For it is error and ignorance rather than the matter itself that causes division among men of good will, whereas men of the world are forever divided and split among themselves out of greed and ambition while feigning affection and friendship in their speech.

By translating this book into German I hope to provide the means of concord to men of good-will among all parties, to contribute my mite to the glory of my Lord Christ, and to be of service to his people. I also hope that Erasmus, who wanted to promote future unity in his book, will gladly accept my efforts and the efforts of those like me who are aiming and working toward the same goal.<sup>8</sup> I wanted to address this principally to Your Grace the Elector because you regard the aforementioned Erasmus not only as especially learned in the humanities but also as a partisan of the Roman church, who understands the articles of faith better than others. He has, moreover, knowledge and experience of the arguments on which each party bases its considered views, and he understands how one may establish a lasting peace that does not violate God's honour and is acceptable to both parties, as he has said in practically all of his writings but mostly in brief. He speaks at considerable length about this matter in his polemics, but his message may not reach a sufficient number of people, especially among men who are experienced in secular government and are often burdened with more important obligations and may look at such matters only occasionally. Indeed it happens that both parties are dissatisfied with Erasmus because he does not describe the matter as they would wish, although he wants to be regarded only as an obedient servant of the traditional church and an opponent of the other side. He is, moreover, moderate in his writings and careful to avoid suspicion of wanting to do away with order and the authority of high- or low-ranking officials, of ecclesiastical or secular rulers. Nor does he wish to lessen the honour of God in the eyes of the pious or impede the Word purely preached. Yet it is in the nature of strife and the strange and perverse judgment of people sometimes to give in to their desire and ambition rather than stand back, and sometimes the understanding of the common mob is too coarse and uncouth and they interpret in the worst sense what could be interpreted in a better sense. But since Erasmus himself holds steady in his book, proffers his opinion consistently without fighting any party, and

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8 See Erasmus' statement in CWE 65:213: 'My aim in these suggestions has not been to put forward my remarks as possessing certain truth, or to anticipate the decisions of the church, but rather that, in the interim before a council is summoned, we may ourselves, so far as we can, remove all the causes of dissent.'

speaks very gently about what he recognizes as good or tolerable in each party, the reader should be without prejudice as well, ponder everything with equanimity, and interpret it in a positive way. And anyone who fears God should use his spiritual judgment, which will keep him from error and sin and from condemning what is good.

I have furthermore addressed my preface to this book to Your Grace the Elector so that my gracious lords and good friends, your counsellors, as well as others who esteem your name highly but do not understand Latin, might be persuaded more readily to read this work. In this way, they might themselves bear witness to the easiest path toward Christian unity. And furthermore, this will enable Your Grace the Elector and other noblemen to be defenders of these ideas, and it will allow you all the better to aid the union of the churches according to God's will and pleasure. Indeed it is with the same goal in mind that Your Grace the Elector has always made every effort and worked hard against those who would without justification call a man a heretic, whether it was the Imperial Majesty or the Roman See or Electoral princes and other estates, or indeed our party. Therefore, your precious name is rightly beloved among high and low estates and the common people. For nothing is more impressive than a benign and helpful prince who furthers first of all God's honour and furthermore peace on earth everywhere.

When I was in the service of Your Grace the Elector, working as your inexperienced counsellor,<sup>9</sup> I promoted this aim loyally and with great earnestness, and sometimes even suffered the ill-will and resentment of evil men for my efforts. But when I obtained a gracious discharge from you and became a preacher and parish priest on God's command and contrary to my intent,<sup>10</sup> I was not ashamed of professing the gospel and being thoroughly disdained, for that is what happens in our time. Yet I have maintained my resolve together with my dear brethren and all who share our hope of the future, and have never looked down on authority or honourable lords; indeed, I rejected misleading opinions with spiritual writings and with reason rather than causing unrest, until the praiseworthy magistrates of our city established a better order. But I did so, not without earnest admonition and while our enemies rattled and raged, incited by the Catholic priests, as is

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9 Capito was cathedral preacher in Mainz and counsellor to Albert of Brandenburg from 1520 to 1523.

10 For Albert of Brandenburg's letter of recommendation in support of Capito's claim to the provostship of St Thomas in Strasbourg, dated 15 July 1521, see CWC 2:493-4, Appendix 1a.

shown in this book. Thus God uses all our shortcomings and failures for the best purposes.

I am still of the same mind as I was earlier in Your Grace the Elector's service, although my mind is clearer, thanks be to God, and my actions more public. May God grant that my zeal grow even as nature's impulse lessens, but we old people are usually lax, powerless, and idle unless the grace of God is with us. Nor have I caused any dissent among my colleagues and servants of the Word here in Strasbourg, but have always furthered Christian peace in my teaching and in my life. May Your Grace the Elector and others consider this when they read this book and learn of our intent, which truly and principally works on behalf of our Lord and God. We preachers of the gospel care with all our hearts for poor, simple Christians and want them to see in our dear Lord and God Jesus Christ the only ground for salvation, and to see him as their sole mediator and only Saviour. We do not want him obscured; rather, we want him clearly and solely taught and offered at all times, through the Word and the sacraments established according to the holy Bible. Scripture shows him as the natural son of God, sent into the world by the Father, so that those who believe in him may have eternal life,<sup>11</sup> for in his humility he became a guilt offering<sup>12</sup> for us and paid for our sins, but in his glory, through the Holy Spirit, as prophesied, he gathers a church, adorns it, and makes himself the head of this union. Thus Christ joins us spiritually, that we may believe in his flesh and his bones, and be his members born from God through his divine power, living and growing toward eternal life. Thus he is with us, not only as God is with all creatures, but also as a natural head and mediator for his real members, to whom he gives grace and life all at once. Therefore, we need no steward here, who usurps the power to distribute this grace according to his power or dignity, but in the external administration of the churches we must have and need order, according to scripture.<sup>13</sup>

The heavenly man Christ, in his immortality and divinity, sitting at the right hand of the Father, does everything himself that pertains to God and eternity. What can a wretched mortal do for eternal life other than what he is able to do through the grace of God in the service of the holy gospel and the sacraments, in which the internal Christ on high is active, inwardly and without participation of another power? Thus good conscience is vested in

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11 Cf. John 3:16.

12 Lev. 5:14–16:7; 7:1–6.

13 Cf. 1 Cor. 14:26–40.

him alone, and that is the true liberty of Christ. For this he has freed us on the cross, roused us through his Spirit, and admonished us, and this is offered to our conscience and granted in the church service.

Furthermore, we believe that Christ on high alone should be depicted and represented in church through the preaching of the Word, through the sacraments, in the whole administration of the church, indeed in all creatures. Superfluous efforts made in vain please no one; rather, we wish to uphold necessary and useful ordinances; by contrast we must reject trust in ceremonies or the teaching of men beyond or against Christ as going against grace. How shall we arrive at peace, especially since no one can refute our confession of faith and we do not oppose any good decrees? We shall achieve peace through three principal means, as is set down in this book: First, both parties must want and desire an amiable concord in the community of God, which is a people of love. That is discussed in the greater part of the book. Everyone speaks in praise of unity, but we all choose to divorce ourselves from the community of God – that is how poisoned and self-centred our nature is – that is, as long as we remain in our old nature and act according to our will. Nature, separated from God, is strangely at variance with itself, for the writings of the apostles admonish us to love the assembled community, which possesses such glorious gifts.

Secondly, therefore, we add that all parties must repent, and we must take no pleasure in ourselves. We must begin with Christ Jesus, our one head, so that our desire and we ourselves may die and be united with him in whom all unity consists. Indeed, apart from him there is strife and dissension. Thus let peace among Christians be cursed if it excludes [some] Christians and drives them out, and if it is not based on Christ himself, for all things come together in him alone, as scripture says,<sup>14</sup> whereas in us all things are divided and set against each other in horrid fashion. We earnestly make both points in our sermons, for it is our duty to gather the people with Christ, not to disperse them. That will come to pass if we place before the eyes of the flesh and of men their damnation and curses, and by contrast offer the blessing of Christ in the service of our church. Indeed, people in whom this sentiment is strongly rooted through the Holy Spirit, cease to be pleased with themselves and stop disdainful of others who are of sounder mind. They know how to cover up other people's shame and do not honour or praise themselves. Why would they quarrel with a poor and errant sinner? They lament their own errors and sins without ceasing. And what could they praise in themselves

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14 Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17 and Gal. 3:26–9.

when they look with the eyes of faith and see nothing that is good except the gifts of God, for which they can take no credit and therefore must feel humbler? They know that God's grace is given to us to defeat the old Adam, the result of our cursed strife.<sup>15</sup> May God improve us. For not only do we deny that we have erred, but we even publicly defend deceit, injustice, and shameful vices that the pagans would not suffer, for cupidity and ambition are the sources from which the commotions of the flesh arise. Hot penitence will dry them out, when Christ shines his light into our dark hearts.<sup>16</sup>

Erasmus' third point concerning peace is the advice he rightly and justly gives, namely, to allow us our own interpretation in the main points which he recounts and proffers. Our interpretation is as follows: Concerning free will, we say that human beings do good or evil freely, but because the heart is bad and ignorant, human beings have no will to be truly pious and do just deeds, nor can they do it on their own, unless they are enlightened and motivated by the Spirit of Christ. That is obvious. How can anyone love God as the supreme good, when no one can understand divine things naturally – for how can one love what one does not know? Are faith and love not virtues that are infused in us, as the teachers say, and can any good work be done without these gifts? Thus it is true that man can do nothing of his own power. 'I am what I am through grace,' says Paul.<sup>17</sup> We attribute the justification of the sinner to his faith, which cannot be without love, just as there is no flame without heat and light. True, there is merit in works, but the good works we want to do and do with our free will are solely God's work and gift, which he nevertheless rewards, even though it is wholly his work through us. Apart from that, we do not use high and incomprehensible language, only words that are suitable for simple people and will benefit them. Our faith does not tell us how to pray for the souls of the dead, for we have no command from God, nor examples in holy scripture. We do admonish each other to make a greater effort in life and to do good deeds out of genuine faith and true love, and to aid the poor. Regarding the intercession of saints, we criticize only superstition and lack of trust in Christ. We do not reproach anyone who is God-fearing, for the Lord himself has taught us to pray to the Father in his name and promised that he would hear us and grant everything for which we ask.<sup>18</sup> We confess with Paul that Christ is the one,

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15 Cf. Rom. 5:12–19; 1 Cor. 15:21–2, 45.

16 Cf. 2 Cor. 4:6.

17 1 Cor. 15:10.

18 John 14:13–14.

perfect mediator and patron before God.<sup>19</sup> Sculpting and painting are not evil if done in the right spirit. We regard it as idolatry and call it blasphemy to adore images and idols and pray to them as divine. But I do not know of any reasonable Christian who wants to do away with decent paintings that are meant to glorify God or are useful in furthering good morals. But why does one need images in the church, where Christ lives with his congregation and where piety and godliness remind and admonish us of the path of grace?

Furthermore, we have the Word of the sermon and are given Christian sacraments. Of what use are images, when one may see without images by opening one's eyes to the face of Christ and the glory of the merciful Father? The Word and sacrament lead us to God in our heart; images lead us from our hearts to the contemplation of things and the works of men. We do not conceal our opinion of the so-called sacramental confession,<sup>20</sup> for it is done under compulsion and unwillingly, and makes the forgiveness of sins dependent on one's own work rather than on the grace of Christ alone. This goes against our belief in God, who alone forgives sins, and against Christian love, which does everything in peace pleasing to God. Any manifest sinner, who has caused scandal, should confess before the community and do penance as the man in Corinth did,<sup>21</sup> and as was done for a long time in the church of our fathers. A sorry conscience urges us to confess to a reasonable, pious confessor for the sake of consolation, as does a genuine desire for the consolation of the gospel and the knowledge of Christ, which we stimulate even more through our preaching. Beyond that, it would be of great use and provide protection to the inexperienced Christian, and especially to the poor, corrupt youth, to receive special instruction in the Christian faith and life, as well as admonition and consolation. One might call that confession. What godly man would not want to help the crude mob in obtaining that consolation and setting an example, as long as one left off the chapter 'Omnis utriusque sexus'<sup>22</sup> and did not require a confession of all sins including all

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<sup>19</sup> 1 Tim. 2:5.

<sup>20</sup> I.e., the traditional Catholic sacrament of penance, which required three 'acts' on the part of the penitent: contrition (sorrow of the soul for the sins committed), disclosure of the sins (the 'confession'), and satisfaction (the 'penance,' i.e., doing something to make amends for the sins).

<sup>21</sup> 2 Cor. 2:5–11.

<sup>22</sup> Fourth Lateran Council (1215), canon 21, 'Omnis utriusque sexus,' which commands every Christian who has reached the years of discretion to confess all his sins at least once a year to his own priest.

circumstances?<sup>23</sup> Rather we should require that everyone should confess as it seems best to him at any time and however he wants to handle it, avoiding scandal to the church community and making it not too burdensome to anyone.

We say that Christ has sacrificed himself, and through his sacrifice we have salvation. This is the main reason for our opposition to the canon of the mass, which common custom has interpreted in a way that is contrary to a simple commemorative understanding of the words '*these gifts, these presents, these holy sacrifices.*'<sup>24</sup> In that case it is wrong and inappropriate to call the mass a good work for it is nothing but a remembrance of a good work that happened long ago and was so dearly bought. For if a daily sacrifice is still needed, as is commonly assumed, then Christ has not done enough for us. Any church ceremonies which are derived from faith and love and do not hinder faith and love, do not displease us. Rather, we observe them willingly.

In the things mentioned, which constitute almost the whole substance of our strife, concessions should be made to us, according to Erasmus, and if our opponents tolerated them, the church would lose nothing nor would anything be taken away from the core. If Your Grace the Elector and others, who are willing to judge my intent and goal in its essence, will compare the last two or three folios of Erasmus' book with what I have said above, they would discover what makes for peace or discord. We cannot cede anything in that respect. Who, in good conscience, would forsake the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, when it is an essential part of faith and belongs to Christ? It is also shown in various clear and trustworthy scriptural passages, practised by the apostles, taught by the Fathers, and maintained in their churches. Not even the Scholastics were entirely opposed to it, nor have our opponents yet been able to disprove it. There is no doubt, if our opponents wished to do the will of God, they would not only tolerate us according to the advice of Erasmus and leave us in peace but would in addition further us in our true happiness in God. Anyone who is not blinded by avarice and self-love, must understand our clear and Christian truth. There is no need, however, for us to yield to our opponents, as long as there is concord among the churches in Christ and the straight path leads through the gate to life,<sup>25</sup> and as long as the common people are not kept and shut out from true re-

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23 I.e., the prescribed form of confession, which included such details as explaining the circumstances under which the sin was committed.

24 The italicized words, given in Latin in the original, are from the Catholic mass.

25 Cf. Matt. 7:13-14.

pentance in Christ, and we are allowed to punish superstition in moderation. Erasmus is kind enough to admit that, as long as we do not offend the simple minds of godly people, which we do not wish to do or allow to happen.

For the rest, most gracious Elector and lord, we shall hinder no one in his actions and his justice, for when we are sheep of Christ in our hearts, we shall leave the creeks unmuddied for the wolves.<sup>26</sup> But why talk a great deal? There can be no quarrel about articles where the penitent heart seeks concord in Christ. Selfishness and the pomp of the world are blinding our eyes. As that great prince is reported to have written with his own hand, 'The gospel would not be hard if our selfishness were not so great. May God give us improvement. Amen.'<sup>27</sup>

As for the mass, we shall soon come to an agreement. We have rejected those elements in the mass that go against the solid basis of our Lord Christ and the progression of grace. [Erasmus'] book does not consider this wrong, for it too points to the one Christ. But since our opponents wish to maintain all superstition and their own advantage in the mass, it was abolished among us and replaced by the Lord's Supper, which retains everything the prudent and thoughtful Erasmus counts as useful in the mass. For we have in the Supper psalms and songs of praise, and our practice is in agreement with scripture. We say diverse prayers, give thanks, and together break the bread. Thus Christ the Lord is offered in the service of the church to the faithful and is truly present and eaten for the nourishment of their souls. Our dear brethren, whom they call Zwinglians, do not teach or practise anything counter to that, except that each party perversely interprets the words of the other according to their passion rather than according to solid judgment. Did not the pious Zwingli customarily say that our Lord Christ himself is with his congregation? Being the head, he is present in us as our grace and life. For this we need no vicar governing our inner realm, that is, a man who gives us the grace of God and forgiveness of sins. Christ himself does that. Since Zwingli believes that Christ is truly and substantially present, anyone hearing Christ's offer and his words 'Take and eat, this is my body,' will no doubt receive from the Lord his true body, for he has no body now except the body of his glory. This has been our simple, uniform, and consistent sacramental practice at the time when the quarrel began and, as far as we know,

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26 An allusion to the fable by Aesop, 'The Wolf and the Lamb,' in which the wolf offers a number of justifications for killing the lamb, including the accusation that it muddied the water – the moral being that any excuse will serve a tyrant.

27 Source unknown.

the church has always maintained this practice, and all Fathers agree on it. But perhaps the Scholastics introduced much else besides, so that the practice of the church in this point and in public preaching is grossly wrong and erroneous, for it exacts belief in many useless and trumped-up miracles and omits the true custom, as instituted by Christ. Why should we not act humbly yet earnestly, in order to avoid attributing to a creature or to an external effect what belongs to our exalted Christ in heaven and on earth, and should be assigned to the heavenly order alone? Thus he handed over the keys of the church in the sense that he would nevertheless remain the supreme and singular master of it.<sup>28</sup> We serve each other in the salvation which Christ gives through the Holy Spirit alone. Therefore, we respect and value church service and the ministers as being assistants of God, although they obtain progress only through God who is everything. Everything heavenly is from heaven. The new, invisible creature of the divine and heavenly being does not cling in its nature to the old, visible, earthly things, although he uses the order of the laws in all earthly things and especially in the external church service.

When Erasmus writes, 'How many times have the sacramentarians changed their own ideas?' etc., it does not refer to us.<sup>29</sup> No one can possible state where and when we taught anything else but what they call 'Zwinglian' teaching. For we are not concerned with people who cause scandal, have been rejected by many people, and have no church. In the Sacramentarian controversy, we have rejected what our opponents, as they are called, do not wish to believe now and what some of them never have believed. In the Supper we offer the Lord's bread together with the cup to the lay people who desire it and are keen on the food of life. I do not wish to discuss here the reasons others give (as Erasmus does) for denying it to lay people.<sup>30</sup> If they are lazy and idle, as many bad Christians are, we leaders ought to admonish them seriously rather than wanting to improve the situation by introducing change and deviating from God's order. Christ our Lord, who alone speaks through his elect and works everything in them, is not furthered in the church through consistent denial of the rite by which he is in the most noble and real manner offered, a rite performed in the church service. But I have talked about this at length elsewhere.

Thus, gracious Elector and Lord, we are maligned in many points and

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Matt. 16:19.

<sup>29</sup> CWE 65:210; ASD V-3:310, ll. 834-5.

<sup>30</sup> CWE 65:209.

depicted as if we had in our Supper plain bread which is nothing but bread and a church without Christ. But if there is no Christ, there is no church and no Supper, for he is the bridegroom, and we cannot be separated from his body, when he is the head of the members.<sup>31</sup> Nor have we separated ourselves from the external church of Christ, in so far as it is preached and expressed in the sacraments in a Christian manner. Rather we share the belief of the apostles and Fathers, indeed, in its main points also the belief of the Scholastics, and have always done so, as my brother Bucer has recently written in a book entitled *Preparation for the Council*.<sup>32</sup> Your Grace the Elector may remember our conversations when I began my service as courtier, for we spoke of these matters in expounding the bull of Pope Leo,<sup>33</sup> namely, that the common church service, which pleased no theologian, should be improved, etc.<sup>34</sup> I therefore beg you humbly to deign to look at [Bucer's] book and compare it with the book of Erasmus, for Bucer's dialogue was printed before Erasmus' book reached us. These two books should remind everyone and lead them to consider what hopes we may have of concord and by what means it may be fruitful. Your Grace the Elector is most desirous of unity. On this account you have shouldered a great burden that cost you effort and work, but as far as I know, you have always sought peace with God and never suppressed the truth. This was no doubt the result of your interest in the divine service and your willingness to hear the truth, your tolerance of unthinking or simple-minded preachers, and your willingness to suffer unrefined minds for the sake of God. You have suffered much embarrassment in these matters, which should not befall a distinguished person. You have always lamented that the word, preached by unskilled servants, became unpopular, that all religion was ruined through the pretence of wanting to erect true religion, and that the poor common people were deprived of the fear of God. For truly much inappropriate matter has slipped into our gospel teaching. If there were many prelates of the same inclination as Your Grace the Elector, a godly peace would soon be concluded. For we only desire what is essential – justification through faith in the one Christ and permission to refrain from anything that goes against it – and we desire to point everyone toward true service to God which is vested in the Lord Christ.

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31 Cf. Eph. 5:22–3.

32 Martin Bucer, *Fürbereitung zum Concilio* (Strasbourg, 1533). For a modern edition, see BDS 5:259–360.

33 Leo X (1475–1521; pope from 1513 to 1521).

34 Likely a reference to Capito's attempts as counsellor to Albert of Brandenburg to suppress publication of the papal bull *Exsurge Domine*.

Herewith I humbly commend myself to Your Grace the Elector. May Christ the Almighty continue to enlighten you and grant you to show the gifts you received from the Almighty, so that through them his glory and praise may be furthered among your subjects and others. Amen.

Strasbourg, 10 October 1533.

**Letter 517: 11 October 1533, Augsburg, Gereon [Sailer] to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 395–6. For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

Greetings. The man<sup>1</sup> who brings you this letter may conveniently convey to me the boy Capito promised to send.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, see to it that I am not without the boy much longer. I have here with me a young noble von Emershofen,<sup>3</sup> not yet ten years old, who will join him in his literary studies, and I shall make an effort that they will both benefit – your boy financially from mine, and mine in his studies from yours. After one year I shall send both to you.

Our affairs are going very badly. The two Michaels<sup>4</sup> are cold comfort. Johann Heinrich<sup>5</sup> does a lot of shouting from the pulpit, but says nothing because he does not read anything. Boniface<sup>6</sup> does not act with severity, as

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1 Identity unknown.

2 Identity unknown. See above, Ep. 515.

3 This may be a reference to the Swabian ‘Bernardus ab Emersbosk nobilis,’ who matriculated at Tübingen on 16 April 1536. He was sent by his father to Bourges to study law under François Duaren. He died there on 4 August 1539 from *catarrh*, an inflammation of the mucous membranes, often in the respiratory tract. Cf. Johann Hospinian, *Epistolae duae ... de morte nobilissimi adolescentis Bernarti ab Emershofen Biturigibus defuncti* (Bourges, 1539). See also below, Ep. 536, note 5.

4 I.e., Michael Cellarius (Keller) and Michael Weinmaier. For Cellarius, then preacher at the Franciscan church in Augsburg, see CWC 2, Ep. 405, note 1. Weinmaier (d. 1542) matriculated at the University of Heidelberg in December 1511. From 1524 to 1531, he was deacon and from 1531 to 1542, preacher at the hospital church of Augsburg.

5 Johann Heinrich Held (1499–1570) was parish priest at St Ulrich’s from 1532, then at St Anna’s from 1545. At the end of August 1551, Held, along with nine other preachers, was expelled on account of the Interim. He returned in 1552.

6 For Boniface Wolfhart, see CWC 1, Ep. 102 headnote.

he should. Sebastian<sup>7</sup> preaches prudently and learnedly, but has very few listeners. Musculus has wonderfully grown.<sup>8</sup> As far as those two men are concerned, I wish only that they refrained from public and private banquets, which would be very desirable indeed. The other two, Johann Heinrich and Boniface, are always at their table. Everyone has his friends. They are divided among themselves and cause division among their adherents. Boniface has friends who are favourably inclined toward the sect of Schwenckfeld,<sup>9</sup> and he introduces Schwenckfeld, who is a shrewd man, to their families. Since they are a sad lot, he does not trust them and relies only on himself and his people. The council does not want to do the right thing, but I cannot predict what will happen.<sup>10</sup>

I was very pleased with Bucer's response to the Lutherans.<sup>11</sup> I have read nothing in which Luther is so well dispatched with his own sword. I

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7 For Sebastian Meyer (1465–1545), see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3, and above, Ep. 445a, note 2. Shortly before 18 November 1532, Meyer, then an elderly pastor at St George's in Augsburg, wrote a letter to the city council of Strasbourg, requesting permission to return to Strasbourg. He asked to be assigned a position in the church suitable for his age. In the letter he explains that he preached in Strasbourg for twenty years, both before and after the introduction of the Reformation. He thus considered Strasbourg his hometown, and had not even relinquished his citizenship, which he took out on 19 December 1525. He added that he had been sent to Augsburg, where he was well received and worked hard for two years, but now felt the burden of old age. Furthermore, his wife and their two children had not been happy with the transfer to Augsburg (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 29). On 15 September 1535, the city council of Augsburg informed the city council of Strasbourg that they had granted Meyer release from his duties on account of his age. They planned to send him back to Strasbourg by Christmas (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 33).

8 For Wolfgang Musculus, see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote.

9 For Schwenckfeld, see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote, and above, Ep. 515, note 2.

10 See the letter to the Augsburg city council, dated October 1533, in response to Luther's *Confession Concerning the Lord's Supper* from ten Augsburg reformers, including Wolfhart, Meyer, Held, Musculus, Weinmaier, and Keller, stating that they 'teach neither Lutheran nor Zwinglian doctrines, but remain with the simple teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ' (qtd. in Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006], 77–8).

11 In the summer of 1533, Luther wrote a preface for the second edition of the German translation of the Bohemian Brethren's statement of faith, which was published under the title: *Rechenschaft des glaubens, der dienst und Ceremonien der Bruder in Behemen und Mehrern* (Wittenberg, 1533), ff. [A1v]–A3v. In it he concluded that despite different formulations in terms of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the Bohemian Brethren were essentially in agreement with

have recently written that the learned *Scholia on the Therapeutica* by Johannes Agricola<sup>12</sup> should be printed if you have someone who can do the job and gives the author a text of fine quality.<sup>13</sup> It is a learned book, whether you are looking for a medical book or a literary and historical work. Farewell. Very hastily, Augsburg, 11 October 1533.

Yours, Gereon.

**Letter 518: 12 October 1533, Strasbourg, Capito and Martin Bucer to the City Council of Bern**

Printed in BDS 7:517–21, no. 11.

[*Summary*]: Capito and Bucer advise the council of the importance of schooling for the poor. They praise them for using the income from monasteries for that purpose and hope they will expand the programme, for there is need for capable people in government. The old monasteries used to run schools, and ecclesiastical laws speak of provisions for instruction. It is therefore right

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the Lutherans. Luther's claim prompted Boniface Wolfhart to declare from the pulpit that a consensus existed not only between the Bohemians and the Lutherans, but also between them and the people of Augsburg. When word reached Luther, he reacted on 8 August with an angry letter, in which he asked the city council of Augsburg to prohibit its preachers from proclaiming their agreement with him on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper (WABr 6:510–12, no. 2041). The city council of Augsburg, which received Luther's letter at the beginning of September, urged the preachers to take a stand. Since they could not agree among themselves, a separate draft statement was written by each of the preachers over the following weeks. Bucer also seems to have been asked by the Augsburg preachers to submit a response, for on 22 September 1533 he wrote to Blaurer that he was working on such a response (Schliess 1, Ep. 361). Bucer's intervention was logical, since just a few months earlier he had sought to arbitrate a similar conflict between Luther and the Frankfurt preachers. His response is published in BDS 8:251–92, no. 5.

- 12 Johannes Agricola of Gunzenhausen in Franconia (1496–1570) studied at Ingolstadt from 1506 and, after extensive travels, became professor of Greek (1515) and of medicine (1531) there. He seems to have remained in Ingolstadt until his death. He published a work on pharmaceutical plants as well as translations of and commentaries on Greek medical authors, including his *Scholia copiosa in therapeuticam methodon ... Galeni ... curandi artem* (Augsburg, 1534).
- 13 The Latin has 'vestem undulatam,' which literally means 'a pleated robe' or 'a robe of the highest quality,' an expression used by Pliny, *Natural History*, 8.74.195.

to use church property to pay for it. At present the school system is divided by regions, but for the purpose of higher education, the most capable boys should be singled out and brought to Bern for instruction by the preachers and lecturers. In this manner they would make better progress and become useful members of the government or the clergy. They call the council's attention to an especially talented young man from Bern, Simon Sulzer [see below, Ep. 534, note 18], who should be employed as a lecturer. They hope that Bern will one day have a surplus of such men and be able to supply the surrounding region with teachers. Caspar [Megander] and [Johannes] Rhellicanus will be instrumental in the process. It is important to provide schools at home and avoid sending boys abroad where they might be corrupted. They should use church property to allow citizens to keep their children at school. Several citizens should receive a small contribution to keep their children longer at their studies and to make sure that those 'who are skilful by nature will become more skilful by training, and those who have a crass mind will nevertheless be advanced through training, so that they will be less awkward and more useful.' Good schoolteachers would attract pupils from other cities to Bern and create much mutual good will.

**Letter 519: [Between 10 and 19 October 1533, Strasbourg], Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers [to Caspar Schwenckfeld/the Reader]**

Although included in Millet's list, this document is not a letter, but a statement or apology in response to Schwenckfeld's *Schutzschrift*, which he had written at the end of August/beginning of September 1533. The response from the Strasbourg preachers sometimes addresses Schwenckfeld directly, at other times speaks of him in the third person (apparently addressing the Reader). The statement is signed by the Strasbourg preachers, among them Bartolomeo Fonzo (see above, Ep. 510, note 11), who had been appointed 10 October, thus providing a *terminus post quem* for the apology. On 19 October Bucer sent a copy to Ambrosius Blaurer (QGT 8:175, no. 438/Schiess 1:434–5, Ep. 370), which is the *terminus ante quem*. Schwenckfeld's *Schutzschrift* together with the response from the Strasbourg preachers is printed on facing pages in BDS 14:280–355, no. 5.

[*Summary*]: Schwenckfeld had no business to comment on their relationship with the Lutherans. He was asked to give his opinion on the teaching and practices of the Strasbourg church. He is wrong to suggest that Capito said they were in agreement with Schwenckfeld. He has called their teaching into doubt before a large audience at the synod. They themselves will not condemn anyone on account of external rites, as long as his life is upright and

his teaching sound. They remind Schwenckfeld, however, that he is a visitor in Strasbourg and not a preacher. They accuse him of being ambivalent in his statements and want him to be precise of what he approves or disapproves in their teaching. He has said that he will judge preachers by the fruit they bear. He has been Capito's guest, and should be able to attest to his life and to the fruit of his preaching. Schwenckfeld condemns infant baptism and the Supper as celebrated in Strasbourg and has persuaded others to join him, which does not further the gospel. It is wrong of Schwenckfeld to demand proof of their mission in the form of miracles. He accuses them of reviving the synagogue. They remind him that Moses and Christ were Jews and deny that they are reviving the 'false synagogue' by practising certain rites. If he had any objections, he should offer them proof. It does not make sense for him to claim that they are in agreement and at the same time condemn their practices.

The Strasbourg preachers defend their method of administering the sacraments of baptism and the Supper and emphasize that this is not done in the 'superstitious manner' of the papists. They expect the participants to believe in the efficacy of Christ's grace to work improvement in them. Schwenckfeld argues wrongly that they must not take the sacrament because they are imperfect. They are all members of Christ and therefore his church. The weak brethren must be tolerated.

They protest his accusation that they have changed their teaching concerning the Eucharist. They have always rejected Luther's interpretation that there is a natural union between the bread and body of Christ; but since he allows a metaphorical interpretation, they stated that they agreed with him. They refer Schwenckfeld to Bucer's [*Vergleichung D. Luthers unnd seins gegentheyls vom Abentmal Christi. Dialogus, Strasbourg, 1528*] and deny that Bucer contradicted Luther. Zwingli did write against Luther, but he signed the articles of Marburg [1529]. 'We consider the church, in which Luther and his followers are serving and preaching salvation by faith in Christ alone, as the church of Christ and them as ministers of Christ' (p. 158). Brenz has written that it is the mouth of faith that eats Christ, and they agree with the Lutherans on that point. Schwenckfeld does not want to mingle the two elements – bread and body – but the Strasbourgers agree with the Lutherans that there is a sacramental union.

Schwenckfeld cannot hold the Strasbourgers responsible for being exiled as a result of the publication of his book [*Ein anwysunge das die opinion der leyplichen gegenwertigheyt unsers Herren Jesu Christi im Brote oder under der gestalt deß Brots gerricht ist, Zurich, 1528; printed in CS 3:1–23, no. 56*]. He sent the book to Zwingli, who had it published. The Strasbourgers had nothing to do with this [cf. *CorrBucer 3, Ep. 199, notes 1–2*].

They do not need Schwenckfeld to explain Luther to them. They can read his books themselves. Schwenckfeld has no understanding of either Luther's or their own teaching. The sacraments require visible signs, but the Strasbourgers have always said that those without faith do not receive the Lord. Luther agrees with the Fathers that the bread is given into our hand, but the body of Christ is invisible and intangible. There is no need for Schwenckfeld to talk about transubstantiation, for the Strasbourgers have never accepted it. They have trusted Schwenckfeld's intention to further the church and are disappointed that he now seems to condemn their teaching. Their main concern is that he may hinder the progress of the gospel in Strasbourg. How can he criticize their teaching when it is the pure gospel message? They realize that they are imperfect, but Schwenckfeld is not the man to teach them. Let him truthfully explain what he finds unacceptable and give reasons for it. The Strasbourg preachers will not deny that he may be inspired by Christ or deny their own weaknesses. They have not denied him practical aid. Capito has been his host for a long time. They have not persecuted him, but kept the peace and given him the benefit of the doubt, while he has brought dissent to their community and endangered the church. The secular authorities may well act against such a man.

The Strasbourgers reiterate that Luther preaches the true gospel of Christ and that they signed an agreement at Marburg. They excepted only the doctrine of the physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist, which hinged on a difference in words. Afterwards Zwingli and Oecolampadius agreed with them and Luther on a wording, and they have never departed from this agreement.

Schwenckfeld has admonished them to be more tolerant, but they have never harmed any opponent. They have received them hospitably, even those who lied about them. Schwenckfeld accused them of being concerned mainly about attracting as many people as possible and offering the sacrament without worrying about their spiritual inclination. Hedio persuaded him to retract the first accusation, but the second was left standing. They are willing to forgive Schwenckfeld, provided he either demonstrates their error or confirms that their teaching is correct. They send this apologia to the brethren in Augsburg [cf. below, Ep. 520], and would have given it to Schwenckfeld, had he still been present.

**Letter 520: [Between 10 and 19 October 1533, Strasbourg], Capito and the  
Strasbourg Preachers to the Augsburg Preachers**

Printed in BDS 14:356–62, no. 6. For the dating and the background see the headnote of Ep. 519, which may have been enclosed with this letter. The co-

signatories of Epp. 519 and 520 are the same, except for the order of the names and the addition here of Johannes Steinlin (Latomus).

[*Summary*]: The Strasbourg preachers proffer their opinion of Schwenckfeld and his teachings. They share his Christocentric approach, but not his views on infant baptism and the role of the preachers. He expects divine power and inspiration, but those miracles were appropriate only for the early church, nor does Schwenckfeld himself manifest the full measure of divine inspiration. There is no reason to delay efforts to improve and advance the church of Christ through preaching and administering the sacraments. The Strasbourg preachers are secure in the knowledge that they 'are producing a much more genuine harvest for Christianity than certain sworn disciples of Schwenckfeld.' They are sorry to see that Schwenckfeld, otherwise a man of good character, is stubbornly clinging to his divisive beliefs. He should direct his objections at the Lutheran party and battle them rather than the Strasbourg preachers. They wish him well in so far as he is a brother in Christ, but they caution the Augsburg preachers not to allow Schwenckfeld to disturb their community. They refer them to their apologia (see above, Ep. 519) for a more detailed account of their views on Schwenckfeld.

#### **Letter 521: [c. 21 October 1533], Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Frosch**

The addressee, Johannes Frosch (Batrachus) of Herxheim near Landau/Pfalz, was a knight and treasurer of Reichenweier (modern-day Riquewihr, Alsace) and chief financial officer of Georg, Duke of Württemberg-Montbéliard (1498–1558). Frosch studied at the University of Heidelberg (BA, 1491; MA, 1593). His *Rerum musicarum opusculum rarum ac insigne* (Strasbourg, 1535) begins with a dedicatory letter to the duke, written on 12 September 1532 from Strasbourg. He also wrote *De origine et principiis naturalibus impressionum in singulis aeris regionibus nascentium* ([Strasbourg], 1532), which begins with a dedicatory letter to Johann Winich (1488–1541), administrator of the Great Hospital of Strasbourg (1520–41), written from Strasbourg on 15 October 1532. Frosch became a citizen of Reichenweier in 1534. On 15 June 1536, he also wrote a letter to the preachers and professors in Zurich (HBBW 6, Ep. 846). He should not be confused with Johannes Frosch (Rana, d. August 1533), the Augsburg reformer and former prior of the Carmelite monastery of St Anna, who eventually accepted a position at St Sebald's in Nürnberg in 1533 (see CWC 2, Ep. 215, note 30). For the frequent conflation of the two men, see Gunther Franz, 'Johannes Frosch – Theologe und Musiker in einer Person?' *Die Musikforschung* 28.1 (1975):71–5.

The autograph original of this letter is in Basel UB, Ki. Ar. 25b, 165. The date is noted on the reverse in an unidentified hand, 'W. F. Capito. 21 Octobris 1533.' The context of this cryptic letter is unknown.

Greetings. Do not worry about the matter of which you wrote to me through Johann.<sup>1</sup> That old man is the only one who knows the whole story. For the rest, no mortal will hear anything from me about what happened. Please live in moderate comfort, as a good man ought to live, lest you ruin your bodily health by excessive parsimony. Yet my need is greater than others realize. I wanted you to know that. May the Lord protect you in future. Farewell. In haste from Strasbourg. Best regards to your family.

Yours, Capito.

**Letter 522: 9 November 1533, Augsburg, Gereon [Sailer] to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 397–9. For Gereon Sailer, city physician of Augsburg, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

Greetings, best of men. I have repeatedly written about our church, which is torn apart and in disarray. But how can we help her, I by writing and you by reading, when [the remedy] for this evil is in the hands of those who alone could and truly ought to help her? But enough of this matter which I have sufficiently deplored. I am sorry for Musculus<sup>1</sup> because the man's talents, which are useful in many matters, are almost overwhelmed by a mass of thorns. Sebastian,<sup>2</sup> who acts with his usual prudence, is very grieved by many things he sees.

In addition to other upheavals amongst us, a Latin book has been brought out by that sceptic Erasmus,<sup>3</sup> who like Euripus<sup>4</sup> tosses everything up and down. He writes such that all parties hiss him off the stage. If the churches

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1 Possibly Johannes Hechtlin (d. 1535), whom Capito earlier described as an old man and whom Capito recommended for a position (see above, Ep. 498, note 1).

1 For Wolfgang Musculus, see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote.

2 For Sebastian Meyer, see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3.

3 Erasmus, *Liber de sarcienda ecclesiae concordia* [...] (Basel, 1533). For Capito's German translation, see above, Ep. 516 headnote.

4 A reference to the Euripus Strait, a narrow channel of water separating the Greek island of Euboea in the Aegean Sea from Boeotia in mainland Greece. It is subject to strong tidal currents which reverse direction several times a day. Plato has Socrates use the Euripus tide as a simile for things that 'go up and down' in describing the thinking of those who hold that nothing is sound or stable (*Phaedo*, 90c). Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.9.62.

adopt Erasmus' plan, many have offered their lives in vain to the murderous authorities and left their paternal homes with the greatest loss of fortune and lives. In my case [it would mean that] I have been far too imprudent until now in my fight against the papists, for according to Erasmus' specious logic, if it is proper for a pious mind to believe that Christ at one time was moved to drive out demons through the living saints, then he might also give us untold things if we looked up to dead saints. Why have we fought so many bloody battles over Christ being the only mediator,<sup>5</sup> for even if there are other advocates, they should still be eliminated – if for no other reason than that they detract from putting our trust in Christ. And why did St Ambrose fight so strenuously to destroy this feeble argument?<sup>6</sup> Erasmus also writes that the souls of the dead are benevolent and care [for our souls].<sup>7</sup> But why has this argument for their benevolence been rejected for some years now? In Maccabees,<sup>8</sup> furthermore, how can that benevolence be praised, which is according to the flesh? Going beyond holy scripture, it teaches of another mansion and for others, beyond the damned and the blessed. For there are passages in scripture, for example, 'You will not leave here until you pay up to the last penny,'<sup>9</sup> and 'He who sins against the Holy Spirit neither here nor in the future,' etc.<sup>10</sup> Why, I say, have the papists been deprived of their swords in this great worldwide commotion, if some private masses are to be abolished, such as the mass for the crown of thorns and for Christ's foreskin, etc.? Why have all [private masses] been abolished in some places? If certain sequences from the mass that are inept must be cut out, as Erasmus prates,<sup>11</sup> and if the noise of organs and symphonic music must be stopped, why do the theologians so savagely fight against the canon [of the mass], a Lerna of impiety?<sup>12</sup> If the mass is not opposed to the Lord's Supper, why abolish it? If the mass is very different from the Supper the Lord instituted, it will have to be abolished, whether it is celebrated publicly or privately.

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5 Cf. 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:15, 12:24.

6 More likely a reference to Ambrosiaster's exposition of 1 Tim 2:5 in his commentary on 1 Timothy (PL 17.466D–467B).

7 Cf. CWE 65:203.

8 Cf. 2 Macc. 12:43–6.

9 Matt. 5:26.

10 Matt. 12:32.

11 Cf. CWE 65:207–8.

12 Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.3.27. According to Erasmus, the adage was 'used of an accumulation of many ills all piled up on one another,' and named after Lerna, a lake 'joining the lands of the Argives and Mycenaean, into which all the refuse from everywhere was pitched.'

Some people say that you have not only translated [Erasmus'] book, which could not be done without giving offence to many, but that you have even recommended it, which would be quite intolerable.<sup>13</sup> Some people say that the book was recently read in the office of the pharmacist Wirsung<sup>14</sup> before a large audience and that some people were almost moved to fury because of the inconstancy shown by the preachers. Such things make many people exclaim, 'By God and by the faith of men! The theologians barter with our souls, and play an atrocious tragedy, and when they grow old without having any enemy, it will come to pass that they gradually relapse into the old errors.' Dearest brethren, I see with certainty that the affair is rife with danger, for if the German version (which I have not yet seen) is commended in this manner, it would be better if it had not been translated. Nor do I recommend that it be sent to our people, especially not to the magistrates, for otherwise they will have enough of the matter and will say, 'Look what we are undertaking at our peril in such an atmosphere of inconstancy,' etc. We would like to have the dialogues of Bucer.<sup>15</sup> Farewell and love me as you do. Augsburg, 9 November 1533.

Please turn the page over!

I have already written to you several times<sup>16</sup> that I have here a very learned commentary on the *Therapeutica* of Galen, and just as the contents of Galen's books is rich and varied and full of erudition, the commentary, too, is adorned with readings from many books.<sup>17</sup> These should be promoted. I know for sure

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13 See above, Ep. 516.

14 Christoph Wirsung (1500–1571), the son of a pharmacist, was born in Augsburg and sent to Italy to study, possibly as early as 1514. In 1520, Wirsung returned to Augsburg, where he published a German translation of the Spanish dialogue, *La Celestina*, which appeared under the title, *Ain Hipsche Tragedia von zwaien liebhabenden menschen* (Augsburg, 1520; repr. 1534). In 1521, he became an apprentice pharmacist. In the 1530s, he was associated with St Anna's Latin School in Augsburg. In 1538, Sixtus Birck, the school's rector, dedicated a Latin school play to Wirsung. By the 1540s, Wirsung had become a respected member of Augsburg's intellectual community. He turned his father's pharmacy over to his brother and opened a new one in 1541, which he ran until 1556, after which time he moved into the city's most prestigious pharmacy, where he acted as manager until 1561. In 1565, he began putting together his *magnum opus*, his *Artzneybuch* (Frankfurt, 1568), while living with his daughter in Heidelberg, where he died in 1571.

15 See above, Ep. 515, note 3.

16 See above, Ep. 517.

17 Johannes Agricola, *Scholia copiosa in therapeuticam methodum ... Galeni... curandi artem* (Augsburg, 1534). See above, Ep. 517, note 12.

that they are saleable, for anyone who has not read Galen's *Therapeutica* cannot be called a physician, even if he has devoured the whole of Avicenna.<sup>18</sup> Since the book is difficult, however, and for this reason not accessible to everyone, and no commentary has been published on the book until now, nor attempted, I ask you to make every effort to have this book printed and published.<sup>19</sup> Perish the *Taqwīm*,<sup>20</sup> and the books of Rhazes<sup>21</sup> and Averroes<sup>22</sup> that

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- 18 Ibn Sīnā (980–1037), who was known in the West as Avicenna, was a Persian polymath. He is most famous as a philosopher and physician, but he also produced works in many other fields: natural history, physics, chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, music, poetry, theology, and Qur'anic exegesis. His most famous work was *Kitāb al-Shifā'* (Book of healing [of ignorance]), a vast philosophical encyclopedia dealing with logic, mathematics, physics, psychology, and metaphysics. The book exercised a great deal of influence on medieval Jewish, Islamic, and Christian philosophy and Scholastic theology. He also wrote *al-Qānūn fi-l-ṭibb* (Canon of medicine), a standard medical text used at many Islamic and European institutions of learning up until the early nineteenth century.
- 19 According to VD-16, there does not appear to have been a Strasbourg printing of Agricola's *Scholia*.
- 20 Ibn Buṭlān (d. 1066) was a Christian physician and theologian of Baghdad, where he taught medicine and philosophy. In 1049, he left for Cairo, where he remained for three or four years, after which time he went to Constantinople, where he arrived in the summer of 1054. He remained in Constantinople for one year and then returned to Syria, alternating between Aleppo and Antioch. In 1063, he supervised the building of a hospital in Antioch and at the same time engaged in literary work. Eventually he became a monk and retired to a monastery in Antioch, where he died on 2 September 1066. He is best known for his treatise, entitled *Taqwīm al-ṣiḥḥa* [Table of health], a synopsis of hygiene and macrobiotics in the form of tables, an arrangement borrowed from works of astronomy. Schott published a Latin translation of the work under the title, *Tacuini sanitatis Elluchasem Elimithar medici de Baldath ...* (Strasbourg, 1531). A German translation appeared under the title, *Schachtafelen der Gesuntheit*, trans. Michael Herr ([Strasbourg], 1533). This may also be a reference to the *Taqwīm al-abdān fi tadbīr al-insān* by Ibn Jazla (d. 1100), which was translated into Latin by the Sicilian Jewish physician, Faraj b. Sālim (Magister Farachi) in 1280, under the title of *Tacuini aegritudinum et morborum*, and printed by Schott under that same title in Strasbourg, 1532. This work consists of forty-four tables describing 352 maladies and indicating the appropriate diets for them. Ibn Jazla was an Arab physician of Baghdad, known in the West under the names of Ben Gesla, Byngezla, Buhahylyha, *inter alia*, and was of Christian origin. He converted to Islam in February 1074. He was secretary to the *qāḍī* (judge) of Baghdad and studied medicine with Ṣā'id b. Ḥibat Allāh, court physician to the caliph Abbasid al-Muqtadī.
- 21 Al-Rāzī, known in the West as Rhazes (c. 854–925/35) was a major physician and philosopher of medieval Islam. He headed the hospital at his home city

have been printed in your city,<sup>23</sup> once they have been compared with this commentary! In sum, there is nothing abstruse that is not explained in this commentary, whether you look at the medical or the literary aspect. Among the preliminary matter in the book is a letter of Erasmus of Rotterdam to the author about some adages in Galen,<sup>24</sup> which do not appear in the Chiliads, followed by a dedicatory letter to Leonhard von Eck von Wolfsegg and Randeck, etc.<sup>25</sup> A copy of the book will follow. There is no charge. Act in this

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of Ray (in modern-day Iran) before assuming a medical post in Baghdad. In the field of medicine, his magnum opus was *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr* (Great medical compendium). Among the most famous of his medical writings were *al-Ḥaṣā fi-l-kulā wa-l-mathāna* (Stones in the kidney and bladder) and *al-Jadarī wa-l-ḥaṣba* (Smallpox and measles). The latter was the first book on smallpox, and was translated over a dozen times into Latin and other European languages. Its lack of dogmatism and its Hippocratic reliance on clinical observation typify Rhazes' medical methods. His independent mind is strikingly revealed in his *al-Shukūk 'alā Jalīnūs* (Doubts concerning Galen). Here Rhazes rejects many of Galen's claims, from his denunciation of the alleged superiority of the Greek language to his cosmological and medical views.

- 22 Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), better known in the West as Averroes, was a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence and the natural sciences (physics, medicine, biology, astronomy). He wrote the most influential medieval commentary on the works of Aristotle. He was born in Córdoba, where he received training in Islamic law and medicine. In 1153 he was in Marrakesh, where he engaged in astronomical observations. In 1169, he was *qāḍī* of Seville and in 1171, he returned to Córdoba as *qāḍī*. In 1182, he became chief physician to Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf (1135–1184), the second Almohad caliph at Marrakesh.
- 23 Sailer is likely referring to a publication by Philip Ulricher, *In hoc volumine continentur: Insignium medicorum Ioan. Serapionis Arabis de simplicibus medicinis opus ... Averrois Arabis de eisdem liber ... Rasis filii Zachariae de eisdem opusculum ...* (Strasbourg, 1531).
- 24 Agricola's *Scholia ... Galeni* (see above, note 17) contains extensive preliminary material: first, a letter from Erasmus to Agricola, dated 2 May 1533, ff. A2r–A3r (Allen Ep. 2803); secondly, two poems by Johannes Alexander Brassicanus and Bartholomeus Amantius (Pelten), ff. A3r–v; third, a poem by Wolfgang Binthäuser (Anemoecius) to Leonhard Eck, f. A3v; fourth, two poems by Marcus Tattius Alpinus and Simon Lemnius, f. A4r; fifth, a dedicatory letter from Johannes Agricola to Leonhard Eck, dated 1 September 1533, ff. A4v–B1r; sixth, a dedicatory letter from Gereon Sailer (Schoenopoeus) to Ambrosius Jung, dated 24 January 1534, ff. B1r–[B]3v; seventh, a *Vita* of Galen by Giovanni Manardo, ff. B3v–B4r; and finally, a preface to the reader, ff. B4v–B6v.
- 25 Leonhard von Eck (1480–1550) of Kelheim, Bavaria, studied at Ingolstadt (MA, 1493), Bologna (1497, doctor of law) and in Siena (1499, doctor of both laws). On his return he was appointed tutor to Wilhelm IV (1493–1550), duke of Bavaria,

matter for the benefit of scholars and for the restoration of a more polished science of medicine and the condemnation of barbarism. Inform me what prospects there are. The Greek which is missing in the text has been added. It is necessary, therefore, to choose a printer who can print in Greek. Farewell once more, and greet Otto,<sup>26</sup> Michael,<sup>27</sup> Hedio,<sup>28</sup> and Willibald.<sup>29</sup>

Yours, Gereon.

**Letter 523: 22 November 1533, [Bern, Berchtold Haller] to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, no. 11, p. 19.

Grace and peace from the Lord.

I know that you, my fathers and brothers, are wondering how matters stand in Solothurn, since it appeared at first glance that a deadly war was threatening, but in the end it turned out that Christ always has the final say. This messenger has served our envoys for some days. If you want, he can tell you about some, indeed most, of the drama, but I shall touch briefly on the gist of it. Three years ago when I was preaching the Word there,<sup>1</sup> the evangelicals<sup>2</sup> started an uprising, just like the one now, but more opportunely. The

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and became counsellor of the duke in 1519 and later in 1525 also of the duke's brother and co-regent Ludwig X (1495–1545; co-reigned 1516–45). In 1520, he married Felicitas von Freyberg, the widow of the humanist Dietrich von Plieningen (1453–1520), whose library he inherited. In 1533, he was granted the castle of Wolfsegg, near Regensburg.

26 For Otto Brunfels, see CWC 1, Ep. 25 headnote.

27 For Michael Herr, see CWC 1, Ep. 25, note 32.

28 For Caspar Hedio, see CWC 1, Ep. 47 headnote.

29 Unidentified. 'Willibald' may be a mistake for Theobald [Nigri] (see CWC 2, Ep. 289, note 15).

1 At the request of the evangelical members of the city council of Solothurn, Haller was called to the city in mid-January 1530 to be its temporary second preacher. He was granted a month-long leave of absence from Bern. Haller worked from 24 January to 15 February in Solothurn.

2 For the rebellion at the beginning of February 1530, see Hans Haefliger, 'Solothurn in der Reformation,' *Jahrbuch für Solothurnische Geschichte* 16 (1943): 1–120 and 17 (1944): 1–92, esp. 16, 49–56. It originated in the refusal of the council to give permission for a public religious debate. The evangelicals, led by Urs Starck (see below, note 16), also complained that a mandate of 22 September 1529 allowing them freedom of worship was not being respected (p. 51).

people of Bern, Fribourg, Basel, and Biel settled it with conditions of peace given in writing.<sup>3</sup> Some of the papists never observed it. They drove not only the preachers but also the people<sup>4</sup> from all the churches in the city, so that they were forced to hear the Word in some hamlet. Induced by these and other tricks and fearing even greater danger, they decided to take up arms and meet at one o'clock in the afternoon on 30 October to occupy the armoury, the cathedral of St Ursus, and the gate<sup>5</sup> (which are all joined together) and to demand nothing more than that the conditions of the peace be observed, as established. They were far from attempting to harm anyone, but were so confused by a traitor's action<sup>6</sup> that between one man and the next, no one knew what was going on. For the mayor<sup>7</sup> had come to know everything and ordered the clock to be stopped, so that they were waiting for the first hour, but no hour was struck. Thus they went one by one from their homes to the ordained place. The other part occupied the said places by force and, taking up position in houses, was prepared to drive them off with arms. The mayor dismissed both parts on the understanding that they could expect a decision concerning their demand from the council on the following day. Our people did not quite trust the business. They crossed the bridge into the suburb,

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- 3 For the treaty negotiated by Bern, Fribourg, Basel, and Biel on 11 February 1530, see Haefliger 16, p. 54. The council agreed to a public disputation on 11 November 1530, but also asked Haller to leave, albeit under honourable conditions. The preacher refused a gift of money offered by the council, accepting only compensation for his expenses (p. 55).
- 4 Perhaps a reference to the evangelical councillors Hans Hugi and Thomas Schmid, who left the city in June 1533, citing the injustice they had suffered from Catholics (Haefliger 17, p. 42).
- 5 The Eichtor (modern-day Baseltor) on the east side of the city of Solothurn (see HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 15).
- 6 Captain Hans Junker, a citizen of Rapperswil, heard about the planned rebellion from his innkeeper and told the mayor, Nikolaus Wengi (see following note). Another informant may have been Ulrich Stampfler, preacher of Kienberg, who converted back to Catholicism in 1533. In a letter to Bullinger, Haller described him as 'a false evangelical priest/ein falscher evangelischer pfaff' (see HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 11).
- 7 Nikolaus Wengi (c. 1485–1549), a vintner and businessman, was considered one of the richest citizens of Solothurn. As of 1525, he represented his hometown at various diets (*Tagsatzungen*) of the Confederacy. In 1530, he became treasurer (*Seckelmeister*); in 1531, standard-bearer (*Venner*); and in 1532, mayor (*Schultheiss*), a position he held until his death. Wengi was a devout Catholic, but pursued a mediating political course.

broke down the bridge and threw up a rampart to avoid being overrun by the others.

As soon as our council found out about this,<sup>8</sup> it sent ten men known to you,<sup>9</sup> among them the mayor von Erlach,<sup>10</sup> a financial officer. Arbiters from all the Swiss cantons arrived, from Valais, Constance, St Gallen, and from the bishop of Basel,<sup>11</sup> etc. Instead of drawing the business out any longer, our people left at dawn for Wangen and Wiedlisbach, two towns that are in our jurisdiction.<sup>12</sup> Some 1,500 men from the territory of Solothurn assembled there, they say, who were constant in their support for the citizens. Therefore, when the state and origin of the tragedy were discussed in connection with the liberty of the Word, certain donkeys<sup>13</sup> were unwilling to negotiate in this matter, and could not be persuaded to do so by any means.<sup>14</sup> Their stub-

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- 8 On 1 November Urs Stark (see below, note 16) reported this incident to the Bern city council (see EA IV/1C, p. 181).
- 9 According to a letter from Haller to Bullinger, dated 7 November 1533, these ten envoys consisted of six city councillors and four citizens (HBBW 3, Ep. 283, l. 3). On 30 December, Haller wrote to Bullinger that 'the senate [of Bern] has now again sent a delegation to Solothurn on account of the exiles and the liberty of the Word' (HBBW 3, Ep. 309, ll. 49–50). Four of the Bernese delegates were city councilmen: Sebastian von Diesbach, Hans Pastor, Jakob Wagner and Leonhard Tremp (*ibidem*, Ep. 309, note 21). The main topic of discussion was the matter of the eight exiles.
- 10 Johann (Hans) von Erlach (1474–1539) was mayor (*Schultheiss*) of Bern since 1519. In 1501, he became a member of the Great Council, and in 1508, of the Small Council. He held several important positions in government and represented Bern in diplomatic missions. In 1528 he was commander in the Oberland military campaign and leader of the second banner in both battles of Kappel.
- 11 Cf. Haller to Bullinger, 12 November 1533 (HBBW 3, Ep. 285, ll. 7–8).
- 12 On the night of 2/3 November 1533, around 800 evangelicals suddenly left the suburb of Solothurn and sought refuge in Wangen and Wiedlisbach, two small towns in the canton of Bern (HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 41). According to Haefliger, there were 900 Catholics and the evangelical camp was variously estimated as 700 or 1,000 strong (Haefliger 17, p. 78).
- 13 In the Latin text, Haller uses the term 'Antronii,' an allusion to the classical phrase 'Antronius asinus,' i.e., 'Antronian ass,' applied to a man of an 'overgrown physical bulk, and at the same time in mind a booby and a blockhead' (see Erasmus, *Adagia* 2.5.68). In the context of the Swiss Reformation the word 'Antronii' was a derogatory term, favoured especially by Haller, who used it as code to describe the Five Catholic Cantons: Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Zug, and Unterwalden (see HBBW 2, Ep. 81, note 3).
- 14 The Solothurn city council made it clear that it was unwilling to negotiate with the eight men or let them negotiate (see HBBW 4, Ep. 283, note 43).

bornness broke the spirit of the others,<sup>15</sup> so that the rebels were to be punished and reduced to the old obedience (with each canton speaking to the other on the strength of the treaty). Once that was done, they conceded only that they themselves would not be assessors if anything else needed to be done in the matter of faith. The Catholics in the city therefore first demanded [the surrender of] eight citizens among the evangelicals (Urs Stark,<sup>16</sup> etc.) and attempted to have capital punishment inflicted on them. Finally they reached an agreement that a rather substantial fine would be imposed on certain people. The lives of the eight would be spared if they went into exile, until they themselves could settle their matters privately, for they were wealthier than the others.<sup>17</sup> Our people consented (by 'our people' I mean the evangelicals of Solothurn); the people who had been fined voluntarily confessed their guilt and promised to pay the fine as long as they had true freedom or a truce would be granted to the said people (once our army was dismissed, of course). In the meantime, those of Bern decreed to pay the fine, if it was the arbiters' opinion that it had to be paid at all, and thus they would preserve the agreements and the cities. For the rest, this dissent and sedition arose on account of religion, and all the Swiss representatives requested that

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- 15 On 12 November, Haller complained to Bullinger that the evangelicals in Solothurn were being vilified as rabble-rousers and perjurers (HBBW 3, Ep. 285). In this dire situation, on 10 November the envoys from the mediating cantons (*Schiedorte*) pleaded for a truce in order to be able to speak with their authorities back home (HBBW 3, Ep. 285, note 2). Hans Hug, the mayor of Lucerne, asked the evangelicals to help protect the Solothurners by casting their votes. An agreement was reached between the evangelicals and Catholics on 16 November (HBBW 3, Ep. 288).
- 16 Urs Stark or Starch (d. end of 1533 or 1534) was a member of the Great Council of Solothurn since 1504. From 1512 to 1515, he was bailiff (*Vogt*) of Bucheggberg, then of Bechburg and Kriegstetten. From 1525 he was treasurer (*Seckelmeister*), and from 1530 to 1533, bailiff of Dorneck.
- 17 The eight men were Hans Hugli, Urs Stark, Hans Heinrich Winkeli, Urs Dürr, Hans and Rudolf Roggenbach, Heinrich von Arx, and Hans Hubler (see HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 42). The first four came to an agreement with the council; the latter four remained staunchly evangelical (HBBW 4, Ep. 357, note 19). They were joined by five others: Konrad Bleuer, Urs Krämer, Georg Linser, Ludwig Tischmacher, and Niklaus Suter (Haefliger 17, p. 79). The banned men, the so-called 'Solothurner bandits,' under the leadership of the Roggenbach brothers, began a reign of terror in the countryside, attacking and robbing Catholics, in particular parish priests (see HBBW 5, Ep. 643, note 13; cf. HBBW 5, Ep. 660, notes 12 and 13). Two of them were executed in 1543, after which reports about their lawless activities cease (Haefliger 17, p. 80).

they come to an agreement on this matter as well.<sup>18</sup> When this could not be achieved and our envoys would have had to go home, leaving things undone and losing out with respect to the Word, they protested at any rate before all the Swiss and the people of Solothurn, saying they would not join either party. They would guard their territory with an armed force, such that they would ward off anyone who attempted to enter and cross their territory against their will. This you must understand to mean that neither the Five Cantons nor the people of Fribourg could give armed aid to the Solothurners, unless they went through our territory. This is the sum total of what happened, I understand, and that was the conclusion of the wretched tragedy.

Since then Solothurn has concluded a new alliance with the Five Cantons and Valais to preserve the Catholic faith and has decreed that those who wish to be citizens of the city and residents in the countryside must swear to observe and obey what had been resolved by means of a vote. Currently, the pope retains a majority vote in the city.<sup>19</sup> Thus our people were not given access to their property unless they swore first, and after they swore, it is said, they were forced to attend a mass in the church. The Five Cantons were able to achieve all that with their threats, before an assembly of 1,500 evangelicals from Solothurn. Yet they had not even begun to force those in the countryside into idolatry. But I have no more hope left.

They say that a meeting has been arranged in Baden on the feast day of St Andrew.<sup>20</sup> They may, if they want, complain about the [lack of] freedom of the Word, but nothing will happen. For there are now seven [Catholic] cantons, whereas before there were five.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, they will defeat us in the voting process. The eight men have still not been received back into favour. Tomorrow they will approach our council.<sup>22</sup> If you want to know everything

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18 See above, note 15.

19 Cf. HBBW 3, Ep. 283, ll. 49–52: ‘The Catholics of Solothurn insisted that all of their citizens, who would like to return to their land, should swear an oath of allegiance to obey whatever is decided by the majority and that all the old mandates and prohibitions be nullified.’ Before the treaty of 16 November, the choice for or against the Reformation was left by the Solothurn city council to individual rural communities, who had to vote on the issue. The minority were not compelled to take part in the church service of the majority, yet were not permitted to appoint any parish priest (HBBW 3, Ep. 283, note 8).

20 I.e., 30 November.

21 I.e., the Five Catholic Cantons (see above, note 13) plus Fribourg and Solothurn; at times either Appenzell or Glarus joined as an eighth partner of an alliance with Valais and Savoy (see HBBW 4, Ep. 386, note 10).

22 Cf. Haller’s letter to Bullinger, also written 22 November: ‘The eight men still have not been pardoned. Today they will appear before our council. In sum:

about their case, I can easily tell you. For in all the pacts that exist *in all places and under all authorities, what is greater prevails, and one town should help and protect the other, and if an evil man rises up, they should help to see him punished and reduced to obedience.*<sup>23</sup>

That is what I wished to write to you, but make sure that no mortal knows that this came from me.<sup>24</sup> As for the rest, since both of you are labouring: one with a commentary on Paul<sup>25</sup> and the other with the cost of printing it,<sup>26</sup> I beg you by God's mercy, to send me the page proofs, if you print any, as I do not doubt you will. I shall serve you in good faith, and will not be in any way an obstacle to the printer. Farewell and pray to the Lord for constancy and the unanimity of our city, for surrounded by the papists, we will be the first in line to be driven from the confession of Christ with violence and war. They are looking for ways of making this happen and are fabricating an opportunity for the sake of the borders we have in common with them. Thirty evangelical preachers will be ousted from the region of Solothurn, once the people of Solothurn have cast their vote.<sup>27</sup> Again, farewell. Otto<sup>28</sup> is still keeping to his corner and maintaining silence, my dear neighbours.

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Christ has been chased out and banished from Solothurn. I have no more hope. For we have made enemies out of friends and we see no other outcome than that we are next to pay the price' (HBBW 3, Ep. 288, ll. 15–19). See also his letter to Bullinger, 3 October 1535, stating that Bern's sympathy for the Solothurn bandits is overestimated, since no one was interested in war (HBBW 5, Ep. 657, ll. 44–5).

23 The italicized portion is in German.

24 This explains why the letter is unsigned.

25 Martin Bucer, *Metaphrases et enarrationes...epistolarum...Pauli* (Strasbourg, March 1536).

26 See above, Ep. 514 headnote.

27 In a letter to Bullinger, 30 December 1533, Haller reported that the Catholics had dismissed twenty-five pastors and preachers from Solothurn and that fifty-seven citizens were forced to relocate (HBBW 3, Ep. 309, ll. 51 and 57). According to a letter from Georg Distel of Zofingen to Bullinger, written 31 December, the evangelical pastors of the countryside around Solothurn were deprived of their offices and benefices on Christmas Day (HBBW 3, Ep. 311, ll. 17–18). The majority of them fled to Bern. One of them was Ambrosius Zehnder, former pastor in Wangen (see HBBW 4, Ep. 465, note 6).

28 For Otto Brunfels, see CWC 1, Ep. 25 headnote, and below, Ep. 534, note 21. In 1533, Brunfels accepted a position as city physician in Bern, where he died in 1534. Brunfels was regarded a Nicodemite, which may explain why he kept to himself in Bern.

Once again, farewell, my dearest fathers and brothers, and prepare a corner for me among you, although I do not contemplate flight at all. However, if I am ousted, I shall flee to you. 22 November '33.

Your friend.

About the other matters I shall write more fully at another time. Take care, in Basel, of the respected and loyal Grynaeus<sup>29</sup> and Myconius,<sup>30</sup> who forwarded your letter to us.

**Letter 524: 23 November 1533, Basel, [Oswald Myconius] to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The manuscript of this letter is in Zurich ZB, F 81, f. 334r-v.

Greetings. I cannot keep to myself any longer what a good man<sup>1</sup> recently told me about your city, lest there will be ill consequences if it is the truth. If it is not, make sure, as far as you can, that the city will not come to the point where we must fear inescapable evil. This is how the man began: 'It appears that the situation of the community in Strasbourg is such that, unless God protects it, it will be without the gospel before the new year begins.' I heard his speech with the greatest horror and asked for his reasons. 'The canons live in such luxury,' he said, 'and are so petulant, and they act with an impunity which I have hardly ever seen before. They live a lascivious and godless life in every way, and give bad advice everywhere, and that on the sly. Wherever they gather, one fills the other man's ears with whispers. The couriers run to them, not just every day, but practically every hour, and you can see that some great enterprise is afoot.' 'But against whom?' I asked. He said, 'Against the council, of course. For once the council is defeated, the people will lose their footing. But there is something else that disturbs me,' he said, 'the great number of foreigners that is suddenly coming and going in the city, whose first step is to visit the canons. In addition, some were given citizenship by the bishop on the basis of some law or other, and who does not know what kind of men they are? A great mass of evil men comes running [to Strasbourg], who are given no room elsewhere. The city is full

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29 For Simon Grynaeus, see CWC 2, Ep. 447 headnote, and below, Ep. 538 headnote.

30 For Oswald Myconius, see CWC 1, Ep. 37 headnote.

1 Not identified.

of Anabaptists.<sup>2</sup> A greater number of dogmatists<sup>3</sup> has hardly ever been seen. All are tolerated. The preachers keep silent. The council is either ignorant or negligent. Nor is there anywhere greater licence to commit crimes. Everyone does as he pleases. You may see drunkenness and fornication. You may hear open blasphemy, without anyone caring in the least. The council does not align itself with the pious, and the greater part of the people follows suit. Hence comes the contempt for that noble sacrament, hence the contempt for the teachers and indeed for the Word of God itself. Can anyone be in doubt what will come of this? The council connives with the sinners and is friendly with men who should suffer the worst punishment, or at least be driven from the city – what do you think will happen but that they will bring God’s wrath on their heads? I consider it the height of blindness not to see what those religious canons are plotting against the council, against pious men, against all justice. They pretend to have business which allows them to stay in the city without arousing suspicion and do in the meantime what they have always done.<sup>4</sup> Add to this the evil talk of many people, especially of a certain nobleman<sup>5</sup> who recently used these words to terrify a good man: ‘I can tolerate anything those men teach,’ he said, ‘as long as they restore the mass, which is a very holy thing indeed.’ Who knows what will happen in future? *I am sure, if it came to a vote on the mass, there would be a thousand men where there is now one.*<sup>6</sup> I am not the only one who knows this. Our man has ferreted it out as well. These matters disturbed both [of us] very much. Therefore, I thought I should warn you, in case what we have talked about (and not everything is

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- 2 For the purported support of the Anabaptists in Strasbourg at around the time of the writing of this letter, see Bucer’s letter to Blaurer, 23 October (Schies 1, Ep. 371), and his letter to Bullinger, 29 October 1533, in which he complained about the laxity of the city council of Strasbourg vis-à-vis the Anabaptists (HBBW 3, Ep. 278; cf. *ibidem*, Ep. 280); see also Bucer’s letter to Myconius, written shortly after this letter from Myconius to Capito and Bucer (QGT 8, no. 458). The increased concern for the sectarian divisions in Strasbourg was the central topic of the Synod of Strasbourg of 1533 (see above, Ep. 511, note 9). Since the city council was reluctant at first to issue an official proclamation against the Anabaptists and other sectarians at the end of the synod, Hedio responded in a sermon before the city council on 14 January 1534: ‘Dear Strasbourg, spare no pains to guard yourself against doctrinal dissension. If not, your doom will be near at hand!’ (qtd. in Greschat, 123).
- 3 I.e., people who question and discuss doctrinal matters.
- 4 It is not clear where the speech of the unidentified informant ends and Myconius’ own ruminations begin.
- 5 Identity unknown.
- 6 The italicized line is in German.

just talk) may be avoided through diligence. You know how to advise other cities, in which point you act correctly and piously, but sometimes you must look after your own house, lest something goes awry there and the common proverb be applied to you: 'He can advise everyone, except himself.'<sup>7</sup> 'The tunic is nearer [to the skin] than the cloak,'<sup>8</sup> and it should be. You cannot ignore this. Therefore you must diligently consider how the better part of your city can be brought to the Lord. Thereafter you will have little trouble with the rest. In the meantime proceed with great diligence, eradicating the root of the evil doctrines and preventing others from being sown, for you must take measures against them in a timely fashion.

I am saying this for no other reason than to remind you like a slave his Roman master<sup>9</sup> in case you have not thought about it because you are overwhelmed with business. Therefore take what I am doing in good stead. Our Dasypodius<sup>10</sup> will inform you about other matters at greater length, speaking the truth. I commend him to you as much as I can, for he is a pious and learned man and very close to my heart. May the grace of God be with you. Basel, 23 November 1533.

**Letter 525: 4 December [1533], Augsburg, Bartolomeo Fonzio to Capito, Martin Bucer and the Strasbourg Preachers**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 156, pp. 805–6, no. 334. For the author, Bartolomeo Fonzio, see above, Ep. 510, note 11. While in Augsburg, Fonzio was a guest of Boniface Wolfhart. According to a letter from Bucer to Blaurer, 3 February 1534, it was under Wolfhart's influence that Fonzio became a sympathizer of Schwenckfeld, even though he had earlier co-signed the critical response of the Strasbourg preachers to Schwenckfeld's *Schutzschrift* (see Schiess 1, Ep. 396, and above, Ep. 520). On 3 March 1534, Bucer wrote to Ambrosius Blaurer: 'As for Fonzio, I'm altogether in the position of a man having the wolf by the ears [i.e., in a dilemma]. On account of my imprudence and untimely concern, our church has now been repeatedly offended in

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7 The proverb is stated first in Latin and then in German.

8 Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.3.89. According to Erasmus, it means that 'among our friends there are some who are more closely linked with us than others, and not all are to be considered on the same footing.'

9 Literally, 'like a nomenclator,' i.e., like the slave who would remind his master of the name of the person approaching (cf. Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 4.1.5; Pliny 33.1).

10 For Petrus Dasypodius, see above, Ep. 515a, note 3.

a wretched manner and has been milked by men whom it would have been better never to have seen' (Schiess 1, Ep. 402).

Grace and peace from our Lord, etc. Respected brothers in Christ, I have finally received a letter from my people in Venice, but without official guarantee. People who genuinely wish me well thought it was better not to insist. Nevertheless, they urge me emphatically to visit them without delay and to make an exceptional effort to accommodate the church there, which belongs to the Lord. They add prayers, and finally tell me not to do or attempt anything rash. They give many reasons which are too difficult to recount in a hurry, but will persuade anyone once they have been heard and understood. I therefore ask that you too will take my departure in good stead. When I was there, I briefly consulted about this with Bucer, my very dear host, and Capito and some other men. They seemed to be prepared to accept with equanimity this visit to my people, as long as I inform you in a letter, lest you wait for my early return in vain. I have in mind to return as soon as I can by God's grace. In the meantime farewell for a short time and pray to the Lord that whatever I decide for the good of the Christian community will turn out well. Our Boniface<sup>1</sup> will report to you at greater length what I cannot write at present. Given at Augsburg, on the day before the Nones of December.

Your lords' insignificant servant,  
Bartolomeo Fonzio of Venice.

**Letter 525a: [After 18 December 1533], Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Strasbourg**

Printed in BDS 5:432–501. This report, co-authored by Capito and Martin Bucer (whose draft is extant in part, Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 38, 20–1), Caspar Steinbach and Melchior Cumanus, is addressed to the city council. Although formally a letter, it is in fact a polemical response to a statement submitted by Anton Engelbrecht concerning the relationship between church and secular government (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 75, 45/1).

[*Summary*]: A summary of their teaching was presented to the pre-synod ['Vorsynode' or 'sonderliche Synode' on 3–6 June 1533] by the four churchwardens, Hans Lindenfels, Michael Rot, Friedrich Ingolt, Hans Chunradt, and four preachers, [Wolfgang] Capito, Martin Bucer, Caspar Steinbach, and

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1 For Boniface Wolfhart, see CWC 1, Ep. 102 headnote.

Melchior [Cumanus]. The last three articles in this presentation, concerning the role of the secular government, were contested by [Bernhard Wacker], Anton Engelbrecht, Wolfgang Schultheiss, and Johannes Sapidus. The opponents were not satisfied with Bucer's and Capito's explanation. After some discussion, Anton Engelbrecht decided to present his views in writing; the present letter is the preachers' response.

To begin with, they deny that Engelbrecht had been authorized to change or emend the articles presented. Indeed, at a meeting in October, the preachers agreed to seek a compromise among themselves, but Engelbrecht reacted to their proposals in a hostile fashion. Angered by the admonitions of Capito, Hedio, Zell, and Bucer, he no longer attended their weekly meetings, stopped preaching in the cathedral, and wrote against them. After a hearing before representatives of the city council (Jacob Sturm, Egenolf Roeder, Daniel Mieg, and Matthis Pfarrer), Engelbrecht handed over his writings and pledged to refrain from such polemics in future. It is vital for the church to preserve unity and defend the gospel truth.

The articles under discussion are:

No. XIV: Secular government must serve God by doing everything in its power to honour the name of God, to increase the heavenly kingdom, and to promote his will among their subjects.

No. XV: The government will do so if it ensures the purity of the gospel and of preaching, maintains public morality, and punishes sectarians.

No. XVI: It is wrong to deny the distinction between the elect and those condemned to eternal punishment.

The preachers offer the following explanation of these articles: Although the authority and the office of the secular government differ from that of the preachers, the government has a duty to ensure that the people are taught correctly and live a life in accord with the gospel. They are therefore entitled to impose punishment, even if they cannot control people's conscience or faith. Engelbrecht likens this to papal tyranny ('das drumb ein erger papstumb uffkommen werde dann hievor,' BDS 5, p. 448). The kingdom of God cannot be defended only by the Word. What Engelbrecht adduces out of Erasmus' and Hilary's writings is either irrelevant or does not contradict their teaching. The preachers quote extensively from the Bible and the writings of Augustine to corroborate their teaching. They decline to discuss Zwingli's teaching (cited by Engelbrecht), leaving him to the judgment of the Lord, and deny that they are at variance with Luther's [*Von weltlicher oberkeit*]. On the contrary, they cite Luther's *Unterricht der Visitatoren ... zu Sachsen* in support of their teaching. They answer Engelbrecht's allegations that Capito is prevaricating ('nit redet, wie es bei im imm hertzen stünde,' BDS 5, p. 474) and that both he and Bucer are inconsistent.

The preachers sum up their beliefs in five points: the secular government is able to serve and promote the kingdom of Christ; the government does so on the command of God and is inspired by the Spirit of Christ; the ruling body is able to make decisions about what is Christian teaching and is entitled to abolish what goes against it; it may inflict punishment on heretics; the preachers must inform and counsel the secular rulers and admonish them if they fail to follow their advice.

**Letter 525b: 22 December 1533, Wismar, Sidracq Hennebert to [Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers]**

The author of the letter, Sydracq Hennebert, was the eldest son of Sire Jehan Hennebert, a provost and member of the city council of Tournai from 1524–35. In his will, dated 18 October 1537 and approved at Tournai on 18 November 1538, the father bequeathed to Sydracq a fief at Morœux (Popuelles, Belgium), recovered from Georges de Cordes, a squire and *seigneur* (Lord) of Popuelles. Sydracq was married to Jehenne de Corbines, with whom he had two children: Jacques and Jehennette. On 17 May 1531, Sydracq, having been accused of holding clandestine meetings with Protestants, was condemned to death in absentia.<sup>1</sup> According to this letter, he must have fled Tournai before his condemnation, and wound up in Wismar, where he came to know the local preachers, Heinrich Never and Heinrich Zimmermann (see below). He may have addressed this letter to the Strasbourg preachers, knowing that they had welcomed into their home a fellow resident of Tournai, Simon Robert (d. 1533; see CWC 2, Ep. 332, note 4).

The autograph original is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 43, no. 68.

Grace and peace in Christ, brothers. Amen.

You will share our elation when you hear why we wanted to write to you. On 22 December 1533, I received in Wismar<sup>2</sup> a letter sent from Lübeck by the servant of my brother and another compatriot who had been driven out of Flanders on account of the gospel. From this letter I know that six men were burned at the stake this summer in a city in Flanders called Lille<sup>3</sup>

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1 G. Moreau, *Histoire de protestantisme à Tournai* (Paris, 1962), 74–5, 262; and P.–A. du Chastel de la Howardries-Neuvireuil, *Notices généalogiques Tournaisiennes* (Tournai, 1884), vol. 2, 243.

2 Wismar, a small port town and member of the Hanseatic League in northern Germany, located 45 km east of Lübeck.

3 For contemporary evidence of this, see Antoine de Lusy, *Le journal d'un bourgeois de Mons, 1505–1536*, ed. A. Louant (Brussels, 1969), p. 316, no. 781. Lusy's

and in Tournai on account of the Word of God. One of them raised his right hand high after the flame died down. Because of his raised hand, great fear overcame the people of that town, and they interpreted it as an indication that God would be angry with them. Therefore, they pardoned the other two and did not hunt down any others. Thus I rejoice writing this letter. May God grant that all such things may be turned into glory for the Truth, but only to the point where it does not deprive the cross of Christ of its power, Amen.<sup>4</sup>

The same letter called on me to return to Lübeck, that I may hear there what my parents write or say in person to me about my return. I do not know whether the servant of my brother will tell me personally, as my compatriot has written, that is, whether I must return with him to my fatherland. Pray for me, for it is my opinion that this will be more of a trial than freedom of the flesh and will mean a cross to bear. I wanted to write to you in a more orderly manner and send you a better report in book form than this, so that you may correct and print it, in Latin or in your tongue.<sup>5</sup> I say this, in case you consider it useful to your church. But I beseech you to correct it and send it to Never<sup>6</sup> if you do not wish to give it to a printer. For I would very much like

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passing remark about executions of Lutherans at Lille in 1533 is confirmed by Marie-Paule Willems-Closset, who lists six Lutherans executed at Lille in the year 1533 by the city magistrates in response to a letter from Mary of Hungary, dated 2 May 1533. These six Lutherans were the first local victims of the Reformation. Three of them have been identified: Georges Saverieux, Guillaume Chivoré, and Martin Recq; see Willems-Closset, 'Le protestantisme à Lille jusqu'à la veille de la révolution des Pays-Bas (1521–1565),' *Revue du Nord* 52.205 (1970): 200, 210.

4 Cf. 1 Cor. 1:17.

5 The manuscript has not been identified. It is unclear whether it was ever printed, either in French, German, or Latin.

6 Little is known about the early years of Heinrich Never or Neuer (c. 1492–1553). At some point before 1519, he entered the Franciscan monastery of the Holy Cross in Wismar, the 'Graues Kloster.' In 1519, he took part in a disputation at Wittenberg between the Franciscans and members of the Faculty of Theology at Wittenberg on the five wounds of Francis of Assisi. Although he seems to have been an accomplished theologian, his name is not found in the matriculation records of the closest universities, i.e., Rostock, Greifswald, Frankfurt/Oder, or Wittenberg. In Easter 1524, he began to preach evangelical sermons in Wismar with the support of his fellow monk, Clemens Timme. On 14 March 1525, he was invested by the city council of Wismar with the guardianship of the Franciscan monastery. Two years later, he abandoned his habit. Beginning in 1528, Never's Eucharistic theology became decidedly Zwinglian, prompting criticism from the Lutherans, especially Johannes Bugenhagen, Dukes Heinrich

to offer to my compatriots this testimony to the scandalous events elsewhere. Indeed, I am obliged to suffer anything for it. Dearest brothers, do not despise my barbaric book. Read it first, and peruse it before you reject it. If you were cognizant of my language, I would have written to you in my native French rather than Latin. Thus if you find a place that should be corrected or emended, you could say this means such and such, or they interpret this badly, and it ought to be interpreted in such a way. I say this in case you give the book to a printer; if not, at least return it corrected, together with your letter. For this purpose I have added a sheet at the end, that you may indicate something is wrong on such and such a folio, at such and such a letter, and it ought to read, etc. Never and Heinrich Zimmermann,<sup>7</sup> his fellow minister, expect this message from you. Write through this messenger what you are planning to do. If you give it to a printer, let me know what merchant will carry it to the Frankfurt Fair on Michaelmas,<sup>8</sup> because I would like to acquire some books and have them forwarded. Thus farewell.

Written by me, Sidracq Hennebert of Tournai. Write to Never, the preacher of God in Wismar.<sup>9</sup>

**Letter 525c: 6 January 1534, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the Preachers of Schaffhausen**

In this letter, the Strasbourg preachers respond to the bitter dispute over the Eucharist between Schaffhausen's two main preachers: the Lutheran Benedikt Burgauer (1498–1576), pastor at St Johann's since the spring of 1528, and the Zwinglian Erasmus Ritter (d. 1546). By the end of 1534, there were four main preachers in Schaffhausen: Burgauer, Ritter, Sebastian Grübel, and Wolfgang Biedermann (see HBBW 4, Ep. 491). Another preacher, Beat Gering (d. 1559),

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V and Albrecht VII von Mecklenburg, and later, Hermann Bonnus, the first superintendent of Lübeck. In December 1541, he lost his position as preacher in Wismar, but remained until the end of his life as *custos* of the Franciscan monastery. Despite efforts from the officials to impose Lutheranism in the city, Wismar continued to attract schismatics, most notably Menno Simons. See Eike Wolgast, "Eyn synryke man": der Wismarer Reformator Heinrich Never,' in *Leder ist Brot*, ed. Eike Wolgast (Schwerin: Helms, 2011), 61–78.

<sup>7</sup> We have no information about Heinrich Zimmermann (Timmerman), other than that he was an evangelical vicar, and later deacon, at St Nicolaus in Wismar.

<sup>8</sup> I.e., 29 September.

<sup>9</sup> No such letter is extant. Never, however, had earlier written Bucer a letter on 16 March 1533 (CorrBucer 9, Ep. 668).

who came to Schaffhausen in 1533 as an assistant upon Bucer's recommendation, moved back to Zurich in 1534 on account of the dispute between Burgauer and Ritter (HBBW 3, Ep. 220, note 15). The conflict was brought to an end only in 1536, when both Burgauer and Ritter were deposed. Burgauer eventually moved to Lindau and then to Isny; Ritter to Bern.

The following letter, though signed by Capito, Caspar Hedio, Matthew Zell, and Bucer, is written in the first-person singular. It is likely that Bucer was the author of the letter, since he himself had already become well acquainted with the nature of the conflict, when he visited Schaffhausen from 18–21 April 1533 (see above, Ep. 507, note 3).

A copy of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 94, no. 19a, ff. 39r–41v. It is followed by a copy of a letter from Bucer to Benedikt Burgauer, 21 January 1534 (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 94, no. 19b, ff. 41v–42r).

Grace and peace! It is now high time, dearest brothers, to write you a letter showing that I am not at all forgetful of the benevolence you showed me and my companions when I was with you.<sup>1</sup> In fact, I have written to you before, but briefly, concerning the copy of the booklet which we earlier sent to Kempten.<sup>2</sup> [I inquired] whether or not you received it from Paul of Basel.<sup>3</sup> So far I have had no reply concerning the booklet, which I would like to be returned to me as soon as possible, either via Schaffhausen or via Basel. I need it urgently, for it seems to offer a neat solution for the disagreement about the Eucharist, so much so that I wish more books of this kind were written to put an end to those bitter contentions. Good men are long tired of them; pious men likewise have been more than sufficiently put to the test by them. At the same time, the very truth of the matter has been revealed, so that modest discussion has some value for discovering the truth – modest, I say, for the truth is lost in excessive discussion, as the proverb says: 'The truth is ruined by [too much] altercation.'<sup>4</sup> Many people already, and rightly so, lament that the truth has almost been lost or neglected. Therefore, we should implore God to impose moderation on them soon. But why do I say 'moderation,' when I wish there was an end to controversies of one or the other kind? These controversies are of no importance whatsoever, and yet

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1 See headnote.

2 This must be a reference to Bucer's lengthy treatise, responding to the Eucharistic controversy that plagued Kempten in 1532 (see above, Ep. 492).

3 For Paulus Phrygio, the first reformed pastor of St Peter's in Basel, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote.

4 Publius Syrus, *Sententiae* 453.

new ones come up every day, the more insignificant (not to say ridiculous in the eyes of a Christian), the more furious and, for that reason, fought with more unrestrained hatred. For Satan knows how to generate the greatest hatred out of small things just as much as out of great things. For he knows how to exaggerate a small matter in the hearts of those, who have not completely denied themselves, so that it appears to be of the greatest moment, especially when our passions make the object of diverse opinions appear as through a coloured glass.

But to speak more frankly: I hear that there is contention among you, my brothers, and a kind of contention that makes us afraid, and over a matter and subject that is unworthy of dividing Christian ministers who are supposed to be most closely linked by love, and not only dividing them in their opinions but also prompting bitter hatred. I thought you had long ago progressed further in the knowledge of Christ than (as is reported) to argue about whether the sacred blood of Christ should be proffered in a wooden or a silver vessel, whether to use round bread or prepare it ahead of the distribution, or whether during the distribution the crust is to be removed from the pieces of bread handed out to individuals. O brothers! Do you have so much leisure in Schaffhausen that you are free to contend over minute matters of this kind? And to contend among yourselves when you have no lack of external enemies, namely, papists? Even if the papists are out of sight, they are still lurking in their hiding places and should for that reason be all the more feared and suspect. Add to this that Satan never keeps peace as long as he can kill the Word of the gospel, which has only now begun to grow, until he can completely extinguish the faith of the Lord's weak flock and stir up the desires of incautious men, turning them to all kinds of vices and scandals. It would be more timely to fight with this enemy who is always troublesome and to fight him with united spiritual forces, and it would be more fortunate to arm your people with the arms of faith that are commended also by the apostle to the Ephesians.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, on hearing of the contentions among you, the people will come to the point where they are divided themselves and create factions; believing moreover that there is some piety in the subject generating this kind of debate, they will meanwhile neglect true piety, which consists in faith and love. Such is the case with the Sacramentarian controversy over the Eucharist, as we know, which occasioned a dispute both among the people and the ministers – indeed, they began to rage, not without great loss to Christianity. I wish, dearest brothers, the church and the people

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5 Cf. Eph. 6:11–19.

were dearer to you than that; that you would not carelessly cause a division between them. Do not allow Satan to make sport of you – I thought you would be more aware of his tricks. But you may say, ‘Why are you criticizing and rebuking us for this controversy? We know ourselves that it is shameful and brings great ruin to the church. Why don’t you rather assist us with your counsel and determine by your judgment which opinion should cede to the other, whose cause is better, even if in your opinion they are humble causes and unworthy to contend over?’ To be brief: I do not approve very much of either party. I disapprove more of the party that is more pertinacious, more stubborn, more furious in its desire to quarrel, and more burning in its desire to be adversarial to others in a matter that admits of various beliefs, whether it is a wooden, or a silver, or even an earthen vessel, whether bread is square or round or torn into pieces, or whether you use pounded bread. Neither party wants to be seen making concessions to the other. All they want is to win the victory and gratify their envy, or to put it in gentler terms, to gratify their ambition at the cost of humiliating their brother. All each man wants is to be held in higher esteem among the people than his colleague, and to be the only one to whom the people look up. I fear, my brothers, that I speak the truth more than I wish. I cannot believe that there is such vying and enmity between you, which prompts you to put your own benefit before that of the church of Christ. For if you each equally and sincerely loved concord in your churches and were intent with all your strength to build up in them what makes for true piety, you would not have time to fight about such irrelevant matters. Rather, if each man likes his own opinion and dislikes that of the other man, let him nevertheless gladly yield to the other and agree with him as long as the church remains undisturbed. Indeed, you can easily be tolerant of each other in the whole matter, for it does not concern the substance of religion at all; conformity with the neighbouring church, that is, of Thurgau, should also be taken into consideration in showing tolerance. In my view, it is all the same whether I use a golden, silver or wooden chalice or one made of glass. You will not please Christ more with a silver chalice than with a wooden one, nor the other way round, for he does not look at such externals at all. Rather he looks at what is internal, that is, a mind gilded with faith and men who are tried and found true like gold. It does not matter from what chalice you drink, but rather into what vessel you pour it.<sup>6</sup> I do not, however, disapprove the attitude you have now, which considers the mysteries of Christ and our salvation worthy of being revered, so that we use

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6 Cf. 2 Tim. 2:21.

for such mysteries the most precious vessels we have, as long as in doing so we show no disdain for another and no carnal arrogance. At the same time I also greatly approve that humility of mind which believes that Christ and his actions in the sacraments, which appear most humble according to the flesh, should be represented through imitation, so that the people themselves are invited to a similar imitation of the humility of Christ.<sup>7</sup> Either reasoning will be pious in pious people, and those people are also pious who seek only God and Christ and the salvation of his flock, and gladly tolerate each other in such things, and even before they are asked to do so by the other party. Far be it that they refuse to do so when they are asked almost in tears for the sake of tranquillity and peace in the church, which they see will be greatly endangered by that inexorable stubbornness. There is really no small danger in changing something in the church that is not at the centre of salvation, and to differ from what has become inured through long tradition. To this I add consideration for conformity with the neighbouring church, for such conformity is of some importance in the eyes of the weak. I will say only, whether you make concessions to the others or establish freedom of choice, whether they prefer to use wooden or silver cups, advise the people to see to it that the minds that receive them are golden. Then there will be no danger. They will have lost nothing in drinking from a wooden vessel, just as they would have gained nothing by drinking from a golden one. For their hearts are truly golden vessels in the great house of the Lord. Christ has nothing to do with material vessels. Christ came into the world for a more arduous task, namely, that they may build on him as on a foundation, an edifice of gold, silver, and precious stones, not of wood and straw.<sup>8</sup>

If there should in the future be a general synod of all the churches in Germany, something may be decided about external matters of this kind for the sake of building up unity among them. Then there would be a fuller explanation why the changes were introduced. Nor could the people take offence at such an innovation, which is initiated by the community rather than by individual churches or their ministers in an [inconsistent] manner: one thing being changed here and another there, and a little later something different being established or changed back again. I would want you to wait for such a synod, and pray to the Lord that it may come about soon. But even if it is never to come, you will lack nothing as long as you preach faithfully and with one mind the sum of our piety, that is, faith and love, and do not fight each other on account of external matters nor allow yourselves to be

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7 Cf. Phil. 2:5–11.

8 Cf. 1 Cor. 3:12.

consumed by them in turn. My advice concerning vessels applies also to the bread, lest what ought to be for you the food of life and peace will lead to your death, for your contention about bread should count for less than that of the Greeks and Latins, one group thinking it should be celebrated with leavened bread, the others with unleavened.<sup>9</sup> For what good is unleavened bread to a heart fermenting and bitter with contention? And what harm is there if it is leavened with the leaven of sincerity and truth?<sup>10</sup> Likewise, what does it matter whether the dough is broken up and divided into portions before being pounded or is broken by the hands of the minister after being pounded, as long as the hearts of those who consume it are completely contrite and broken down by the memory of Christ's death, who gave us his most sacred body to break?

Therefore, dear brethren, let your hearts be broken on account of our Christ being broken, and do not be so unbending and inexorable toward each other. Take pity on the floundering church of Christ in her wretched affliction, and do not, I beg you, thrust her back into the swelling sea through your contentions, as she approaches the shore. I am afraid for you, as I said before. Take care lest you consider it more important for your opinion to be respected and for your belief to prevail, or seem to have made no concessions to the others, and remain stubborn. The afflicted bride of Christ, who has been won through his precious blood, will once be demanded from your hands, as will be those in the church who have been lost through your fault. Then that carnal victory and popular applause will do you no good; indeed, it will condemn you more severely. For you have been appointed for the edification of the people, not their destruction, not to heap up wealth and honours, but to be good parents to your children, that is, to the flock entrusted to you, that it may become richer in faith by your zeal. If you achieve that, you will enjoy eternal honour in heaven, of which you may be proud because the people turned out as they did on account of your zeal, and did so on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.<sup>11</sup> Given at Strasbourg, 6 January 1534.

Wolfgang Capito,  
 Caspar Hedio,  
 Matthew Zell,  
 Martin Bucer, whose complete [writings] they can see.<sup>12</sup>

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9 The Eastern Orthodox Church uses leavened bread, whereas the Catholic Church uses unleavened bread in the Eucharist.

10 Cf. 1 Cor. 5:8.

11 Cf. 1 Cor. 1:8, 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6, 10, 2:26; and 2 Tim. 1:18.

12 The meaning is unclear, but may refer to Bucer's treatise (see above, note 2).

**Letter 525d: [Shortly before 2 February 1534, Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to the Judges of the Marriage Court in Strasbourg]**

A copy of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 80, no. 29. There is a minor insertion by Bucer. On the reverse of the letter is written, 'Supplication der predycanten an die Eerichter. Lectum Lunae 2 Februarii anno 1534/Supplication of the preachers to the Judges of the Marriage Court. Read on Monday, 2 February 1534.' According to a contemporary report, on 2 February 1534, the city council did receive a supplication from the preachers and subsequently made a decision: 'A supplication of the preachers to the Judges of the Marriage court concerning the publication of marriage banns. Decision: that the banns should be published on Sunday, and the church wedding should not take place until the next Sunday thereafter. Furthermore, the ministers of the parish should remind the people every quarter year from the pulpit that young people must not marry or become engaged without the knowledge or consent of their parents or the bailiff (*Vogt*) or acquaintances.'<sup>1</sup>

The marriage court, set up in 1529, was comprised of three senators and two members of the XXI, who ruled on issues pertaining to marriage, divorce and sexual offences.<sup>2</sup> The Strasbourg preachers had an advisory role, but did not function as judges. In December 1534, the city council adopted a new church ordinance which dealt with the policing of morals, the new marriage court, and appointments of churchwardens.<sup>3</sup>

Gracious lords. There is some misunderstanding concerning the regulation about the calling of the banns, which, as it stands, must be done at least once during the daytime sermon, which takes place daily in the cathedral, and in other parishes once a week. But few people attend such sermons, so that calling the banns during those sermons is not very effective. We assume that Your Graces were thinking of the daytime sermon on Sundays, when the people are gathered together. We therefore would like instructions so that we may be in compliance with Your Graces' command. Also, since the law says that the couple to be married must have the banns called at least once, but says nothing about how long one should wait with the wedding after calling the banns, some people, once the banns have been called on a Sunday, want to be married immediately after the sermon or the Supper, in which case calling the banns would be useless. We practically had to marry them

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1 Dacheux, p. 227, no. 5034.

2 For the ordinance, see Wolgast, 218–21.

3 Brady, *Communities*, 135. For the church ordinance of 1534, see Wolgast, 230–45.

all on Monday; some had to be forcibly rejected on Sundays. To allow us to comply with Your Graces' order once more, we beg you for instruction, but not such that it is up to us to evaluate [the couple], for as one knows, the most wayward want to be taken for the most approved and honest people, and apart from that, we don't know the people well enough, and it is best in such a matter to treat everyone equally. To make known Your Graces' instruction to everyone, as ought to be the case with laws, we would regard it as useful if Your Graces instructed us to announce once again to the people from the pulpit the entire regulation concerning marriage as issued by you, our gracious lords. For it is necessary to remind the young people of Your Graces' instruction against marriages promised without the agreement and knowledge of the parents. Thus they will be somewhat more careful than they are now.

Your Graces' humble servants,  
The pastors.

**Letter 526: [Before March 1534, Basel], Simon Grynaeus to Capito**

Printed in BrOek 2:730–6, No. 968. This letter was originally published among the prefatory material to Capito's edition of Oecolampadius' commentary *In prophetam Ezechielem*, which was published posthumously (Strasbourg, March 1534), ff. α2r–β2r. It was later reprinted in *Ioannis Oecolampadii et Huldrichi Zuinglii epistolarum libri quatuor* (Basel, 1536), ff. ζ1v–ζ3r. Cf. below, Ep. 527 for Capito's preface to the Reader in the same work.

[*Summary*]: Grynaeus wishes to counter rumours that Oecolampadius took his own life. He therefore provides this eyewitness report of his friend's death. During the last year of his life, Oecolampadius was in poor health, suffering from scabies, burdened with labour, and distracted by religious conflicts and wars. Nevertheless, he carried on lecturing [together with Phrygiol] on the Old and New Testament and preaching sermons like a 'true bishop of Christ.' He produced translations of works by Theophylactus, Cyril, and Chrysostom, although the hasty publication affected their quality. He also wrote expositions of difficult biblical books (Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Daniel, and Job). He left unfinished commentaries on Jeremiah, Ezechiel, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the gospel of John. The last year of his life saw the war in Switzerland and the death of Zwingli. He fell ill and contracted a fever, which was no doubt an anthrax infection. Oecolampadius' friends rallied around him and prayed for him. The council showed great concern for him. For some days his condition was precarious. Oecolampadius retained his equanimity and admonished the assembled brethren to

remain firm in their faith. On the fifteenth day of his illness, he called for his children (Eusebius, Irene, Alethea) and commended them to the care of his wife and his relatives. He died the following morning [on 24 November 1531] in the presence of ten ministers. His last words were: 'Save me, Christ Jesus.' Grynaeus asks Capito to attest to Oecolampadius' life and work [see Capito's *Vita* of Oecolampadius below, Ep. 527].

### Letter 527: [Before March 1534, Strasbourg], Capito to the Reader

Printed in BrOek 2:742–52, No. 971. This is a short biography of Oecolampadius, which Capito included as a prefatory letter to his edition of Oecolampadius' commentary on Ezechiel (see above, Ep. 526 headnote), ff. β2v–γ3v. It was later reprinted in *Ioannis Oecolampadii et Huldrici Zuinglii epistolarum libri quatuor* (Basel, 1536), ff. ζ3v–η1v. Capito's *Vita* of Oecolampadius appeared in a French translation in a book entitled *Histoire des vies et faits de trois excellens personnages, premiers restaurateurs de l'Evangelie en ces derniers temps* (Geneva, 1555), which includes Melancthon's *Vita* of Luther, Myconius' *Vita* of Zwingli, and Capito's *Vita* of Oecolampadius. The French translation was subsequently reprinted under the title, *Histoire des vies et faits de quatre excellens personnages ...* (N.p., 1564) and contains, in addition to the three biographies in the first edition, Théodore de Bèze's *Discours* on the life of John Calvin. An English translation of the first edition appeared under the title *A famous and godly history contaynyng the Lyves and Actes of three renowned [sic] reformers of the Christian Church, Martine Luther, John Ecolampadius, and Huldericke Zuinglius. The declaration of Martin Luthers faythe before the Emperoure Charles the fyft, and the illustre Estates of the Empyre of Germanye, with an Oration of hys death, all set forth in Latin by Phillip Melancthon, Wolfgangus Faber Capito, Simon Grineus, and Oswald Micon[i]us, newly Englished by Henry Bennet Callesian* (London, 1561), ff. K i recto–L ii verso.

[*Summary*]: Capito is writing this biography on the invitation of Grynaeus [see Ep. 526 above]. Oecolampadius was born in 1482 in the town of Weinsberg. He came from a well-to-do family and received a liberal education, first in [the Latin school of] Heilbronn, then at the University of Heidelberg, where he received his BA and his MA. He pursued legal studies in Bologna, but returned to Germany after a semester, partly for health reasons. He returned to Heidelberg to study theology and languages. Among the Scholastic theologians, he devoted himself to Thomas [Aquinas] and Richard [of Middleton], read Jean Gerson, but kept away from [Duns] Scotus and disliked disputations. Thus he became an 'alumnus of the sacred truth rather than a disciple of foolish teachers.' He came to the attention of Philip,

Elector Palatine, and was engaged as tutor to his children [1506–8]. After obtaining a benefice in Weinsberg, he returned to Heidelberg for further studies. He visited Reuchlin in Stuttgart and learned from him the rudiments of Greek. Proceeding with his studies, he wrote a Greek grammar, *Dragmata* [published 1520]. At the same time he learned Hebrew from the Spaniard [Matthaeus Adrianus], whom Capito also employed as a teacher ('although he was inauspicious and begrudged us the knowledge of the sacred language'). At that time [1512–15] Capito was preacher in Bruchsal and had occasion to visit Heidelberg on episcopal business. His friendship with Oecolampadius dates from that period. Capito then became preacher in Basel, whereas Oecolampadius returned to Weinsberg [Capito's chronology is confused here]. During that time he addressed to Capito a work on preaching, *De risu paschali* [1518; Capito says 'twenty-one years ago,' i.e., 1513; cf. CWC 1, Epp. 14–15]. On Capito's initiative, Christoph von Utenheim, bishop of Basel, appointed Oecolampadius penitentiary at the cathedral [1515]. By that time he had written six tragedies, one of them about St Mary, and poetry in Latin and Greek. Erasmus of Rotterdam, who had come to Basel to publish his annotations on the New Testament solicited Oecolampadius' help, calling him a 'true theologian.' [In 1518] Oecolampadius obtained the doctorate and was made cathedral preacher at Augsburg. Finding the secular clergy corrupt, he entered the order of the Brigittines at Altomünster [1520]. Capito advised him against this step, fearing that he would have neither leisure to study nor freedom to serve Christ. During his stay at the monastery, Oecolampadius wrote sermons and a book about confession [1521]. This provoked criticism from the imperial confessor Jean Glapion, then at the Diet of Worms, and prompted Oecolampadius to leave the monastery [in 1522]. A false rumour reached Capito, who was then in the service of the archbishop of Mainz and resident at Halle, that Oecolampadius had been arrested. Capito asked for leave of absence and rode to Mainz where he found his friend unharmed. The two men had not seen each other in four years. Capito had to support himself during his two months' leave of absence, which he spent in Strasbourg and Basel, until rejoining the archbishop of Mainz at the Diet of Nürnberg. Oecolampadius took up residence with Franz von Sickingen and translated Chrysostom's *Psegmata*. When Sickingen went on a military campaign, however, Oecolampadius left for Basel. There he began to lecture on Isaiah and became preacher at St Martin's, having been without public stipend for three [Capito erroneously says, five] years. During that time he translated Chrysostom's commentary on Genesis and Theophylactus' commentary on the gospels [Capito says, *Theophylactum universum*, 'all the works of Theophylactus']. When the Sacramentarian controversy arose, he argued with moderation, citing patristic writings. His opinion was not accepted, but he wanted nothing more than to avoid conflict in the church. As the Refor-

mation progressed in Switzerland, he confronted Johannes Fabri and Johann Eck [at the Disputation of Baden, 1526]. Since Zwingli was unable to attend, it was up to Oecolampadius to defend the truth. He argued skilfully, contrary to the impression given by the proceedings his opponents published. He also spoke well at the Disputation of Bern [1528], as the published proceedings attest. Shortly thereafter conflict arose in Basel between the reformers and the Catholic party, but Oecolampadius was able to settle it without violence other than the destruction of images. The Reformation was adopted [in Basel in 1529], and Oecolampadius became the author of the church ordinance. Together with Ambrosius Blaurer and Martin Bucer, he went to Ulm to advise the church there. He devoted the remainder of his life to preaching, teaching and to preserving the church. Christ was his focus. He was charitable and a prudent administrator of the church, who brought many people to Christ.

**Letter 527a: 5 March 1534, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Augsburg**

Printed as the dedicatory letter to Bucer's *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534); a modern edition of the letter is available in BDS 5:119–26.

[*Summary*]: The preachers warn of Satan's attempts to create dissension in the church. Unfortunately there are many who disdain God's truth and invite his wrath. They say they cannot discern the truth since there is disagreement even among theologians. It is the task of the government, which derives its authority from God, to maintain order and ensure that God's will be done. God in his mercy will grant his people correct understanding. The pope's harsh yoke has been cast off, but few are willing to shoulder Christ's gentle yoke. It is time to act against those who destroy the unity of the church, and specifically against the Anabaptists. Satan has brought about great upheaval in Münster. Nor has he spared Upper Germany, where he has sown dissension regarding the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The brethren of Münster have asked the Strasbourgers to publish this report, which they commend to the city council of Augsburg since it was one of the first cities where the pure gospel was preached. They pray for God's grace to guide the councillors in their task. Now that they have rid themselves of the pope, they must not fall prey to sects.

**Letter 528: 1 April 1534, Speyer, Leonhard Bodenstein to Capito**

Leonhard Bodenstein (d. 1536), a relative of the famous theologian Andreas Bodenstein of Karlstadt (1486–1541), studied civil and canon law at the University of Heidelberg (BA, 1530; MA, 1531). He was elected dean in 1534. In

March 1534, he requested permission from the university to spend six months in Speyer. In December 1534, he is recorded at the Faculty of Arts at Heidelberg. On 27 January 1535, he matriculated at the University of Ingolstadt, where he was promoted in March 1536 to doctor of both laws.

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 154, pp. 661–2.

Greetings. Although it always tends to be suspect, most upright sir, and usually is, I nevertheless see that I may somehow be acquitted of impudence in this case on account of him;<sup>1</sup> in the meantime, I thought I should follow through. I may obtain my request more easily through your kindness than through any entitlement to a favour, for I am unknown to you. I thought, however, if I ask for your help, I could at least mention the man's name, for you will be pleased to have an opportunity to oblige him. I have no doubt about your readiness to help anyone of your own accord, but it would seem ungrateful to neglect to mention how through one favour one might oblige so many people. The man to whom I refer is Karlstadt, my relative, and you, best of men, may regard any favour done to me as a favour done to him. And he would not have left me without a letter if we were not separated by a long distance. Therefore, kindest sir, please regard this request as his, and commend me to your other friends and your most famous council. I wish to teach the elements of law to your city's youth as diligently and as faithfully as Dr Jakob (I hear) once taught them there.<sup>2</sup> And since I am unknown to you, whereas one always ought to know whom one recommends (as you are aware), I would have you recommend nothing further than that the council give me a chance – if they are minded to take someone on, as many, including myself, do not doubt, since you train your youth for the successful execution of both church and civil functions. If I am informed in time by Bedrot<sup>3</sup> or others that someone is wanted, I shall come to you and give proof of my talent, small as it is. But I hope it will increase through practice. If I can be of any benefit to your youth, I would like to deal with you. Therefore, best of men, I ask you to make an effort, together with your friends, out of affection

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- 1 I.e., Andreas Karlstadt. For Karlstadt see CWC 1, Ep. 15a headnote.
- 2 I.e., Jakob Kirser, chancellor of the margravate of Baden and bailiff of Pforzheim. He was appointed on 27 May 1513 by Margrave Christoph von Baden (see Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe, Archivalieneinheit 36, no. 86). Kirser also served as a chancellor of Margrave Philipp von Baden. In July 1527, he sent his son, Joachim, to study first under Oecolampadius and then in Zurich (see BrOek 2, Ep. 590). He was also employed as an advocate of the city of Strasbourg in 1529.
- 3 For Jakob Bedrot, see CWC 2, Ep. 260, note 1.

for Karlstadt and his pious mind and bring my case before the council or any other suitable venue. I will forever be under obligation to you for this favour. Speyer. 1 April in the year, etc., '34.

Leonhard Bodenstein of Schweinfurt, your zealous supporter.

**Letter 528a: 1 April 1534, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Esslingen**

This letter deals with the financial situation of Martin Fuchs (c. 1495–1542), the preacher at St Dionysius in Esslingen from 1531 to 1533. During that time Fuchs was embroiled in a bitter quarrel with Jakob Otter (1485–1547), who was pastor in Esslingen from April 1532 until his death. Their quarrel seems to have been motivated by a clash of personalities and by Otter's inclination to self-aggrandizement, possibly to compensate for his short stature. To make matters worse, the two men were forced to share a house in Esslingen, although each man had his own kitchen (see *CorrBucer* 8, Ep. 601). Fuchs left Esslingen in September 1533, and died in 1542 in a military campaign against the Turks.

Printed in H. Krabbe and H.-C. Rublack, eds., *Akten zur Esslinger Reformationsgeschichte*, Esslinger Studien, Schriftenreihe, vol. 5 (Esslingen, 1981), 331–3, no. 271.

[*Summary*]: The quarrel between Jakob Otter and Martin Fuchs is regrettable. The preachers have persuaded Fuchs, who has come to Strasbourg, to adopt a more Christian attitude. He has been entrusted with the parish in Müllen near Offenburg by Duke Wilhelm von Fürstenburg. Fuchs is willing to give a written undertaking to keep the peace (two Latin copies enclosed). In turn he asks the council to give him an honourable discharge and a reference. Furthermore, since Fuchs is in financial difficulties, he asks the council to have his wife, children, and household articles conveyed to Müllen at their expense. Thirdly, he asks to be paid his residency fee. The Strasbourg preachers support his request, especially because he moved to Esslingen from Basel at his own expense and served for some time in Esslingen. He would like to have a statement in writing. Otter has conceded that he may have contributed to the quarrel and will not stand in the way of Fuchs' request. The Strasbourgers themselves have found Fuchs blameless in his life and teaching.

**Letter 529: 6 April [1534, Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 4:115–16, Ep. 351.

[*Summary*]: Capito would like Bullinger to read [the enclosed; now lost] letter

of [Philip of Hesse] and act in the public interest. Philip intends to occupy the duchy of Württemberg on behalf of Duke Christoph [son of Ulrich] and may have control over it before Pentecost. [Ferdinand I] is making preparations to oppose him. If the territory were returned to the rightful heir and if Philip gave assurances that he would take no further action, peace would reign. If the king continues to threaten Philip, the war will be prolonged. Wilhelm von Fürstenberg is marshalling his troops. Capito sends his regards to Leo [Jud], Theodor [Bibliander], [Conradus] Pellicanus and the other brethren.

**Letter 530: 24 April 1534, Augsburg, [Gereon Sailer] to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

In this letter, Sailer continues his report on the course the Reformation was taking in Augsburg (see above, Ep. 522). The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 415–20. For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

Greetings. I cannot tell you anything certain about the state of the church in Augsburg, dearest brothers. Things are in such a flux that Euripus<sup>1</sup> could not be more turbulent. Some preachers rightly blame our citizens and our sins, yet neither they nor the magistrates can boast of being pure. As if they were innocent and free from blame in this matter! I wish both the magistrates and the ministers were completely blameless in this badly handled affair. Then I could hope that God Almighty would, on account of their innocence, spare many of us as well. As you know, in a good constitution the health of our bones, flesh, nerves, tendons, stomach, intestines and even hair depends on the principal members, namely, the brain, the heart, and the liver. If their function is impaired, however, how can the members remain intact? They are made weak by nature and by God, for they depend for their functions on the nobler parts, just as they depend on God in the creation.

Our Catholic priests put on a bold face and on 24 March presented to the council a response – of what sort I do not yet know for certain.<sup>2</sup> There is

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<sup>1</sup> See above, Ep. 522, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> A newly constituted council in January 1534 proposed a wide-ranging disputation with adherents of the Catholic Church. The latter, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan, and the evangelicals were reluctant as well. See Karl Wolfhart, *Die Augsburger Reformation in den Jahren 1533/34* (Leipzig, 1901), 91–6. On 29 March 1534, Wolfgang Musculus provided a more detailed account of the dispute with the Catholic canons: ‘On 6 March, some [members]

a vague rumour that they declared they would defend their teaching, as long as worthy judges were selected. Time will tell the truth. This is what I have decided in my deliberations, given our present state, lest our plans, which God Almighty would and ought to further, have no effect, not even a modest effect. I greatly fear that there are among the brothers some who consider manual work sweet and restful, indeed, who would prefer it to the troublesome and tortuous business of Christ. I may be wrong in my views, and I may be blind, but I have never hallucinated in such an obvious matter – yet there are people who would rather tolerate popery than see their authority diminished (if it comes to a disputation) and to see their glory yield to another man's, as they must in this battle for the common weal. I say nothing about piety or that the man who is unarmed must yield to the armed man. There are others, men of dark and tangled minds, too intricately involved in the affairs of the sects to disentangle either themselves or others. They speak without ceasing of the glorified Christ, who is no longer man, and some unprecedented and imaginary building of the house of God. They do not utter a single harsh word, as is necessary in this emergency, to admonish the magistrates or try to remove the images. Perhaps they do not want to change anything, for then they would encounter more trouble, and the teachers of the sects would be driven out. Thus it happens that those who, according to the gift of the Spirit, warn more diligently that the state will perish in this crisis

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of the senate were sent to the Catholic canons to explain that the magistrates wanted them to abolish their preaching for the sake of peace and concord. On 24 March, the canons responded, in writing, I believe, that they were not compelled to justify their religion to anyone, that all things were supported in the [church] councils of old and by the consensus of the entire Catholic church and by custom; yet they they did not want to appear to avoid a disputation because they had a weak case. They willingly offered to participate in a future disputation, but under the condition that legitimate judges be appointed; for they did not want to dispute with laymen from among the common people; if our people agreed, they would meet before the bishop ordinary of Augsburg, or, if he was suspect, then before the bishops of Eichstätt or Freising, or, if they were not pleased with them, then they would be pleased to go before any of the three universities, namely, Freiburg, Tübingen, or Ingolstadt; but if our people did not agree, then they would call upon the dukes of Bavaria or Ferdinand and Charles, the Roman king and emperor, as the highest authorities. They were prepared to appear before those, but nowhere else. I have learned this mostly from the account of people who do not sit on the council rather than from our people who sit on the council. Consider how fair this is, brother, and yet, unless I am mistaken, there are some people among us who think we should have the disputation in Dillingen, before the bishop' (Schiess 1, Ep. 405).

and who reproach and beseech them on every occasion, must patiently suffer being maligned, not only by the Catholic priests but by all who clamour that religious reformation is dangerous. Thus they object to all the brethren, even the poor ones who strictly seek Christ's glory. They howl: 'Behold the sectarians, rabble-rousers, and bloodthirsty disturbers of the peace!' None of this would happen if in the same breath they would address the arguments, as is necessary in the present crisis.

In sum, from all these conjectures I can deduce nothing but that all hope is in vain. If anything should happen against all hope, through some miracle and through the benevolence of the eternal Father, to make your aid and assistance necessary for a worthy outcome, we would want you to send us Bucer, if only for the briefest time.<sup>3</sup> This will not keep him, I hope, from completing the commentary on Paul, which he has begun,<sup>4</sup> since he will have sufficient time to do so later, whereas there will not always be time to save us from ruin or at any rate restore the glory of a pious cause, which has been diminished by inept discussion, and to remove the tarnish it has taken on. Many people have advised me to call on Bucer, for, not to mention his erudition and his experience and talent in disputation, in which he is very involved, I believe that he is excellent in arguing against sectarians, who fear him, and is great also in the eyes of the papists. The teachers of the sectarians have taken advantage of the sweet and meek character of our brother Capito indeed, they have used his friendship as a reason to boast, so that this is now rooted in the minds of almost all Augsburgers and has become an established fact: On account of his natural benevolence, Capito has been more benign to these wandering preachers than is good. Yet it is clear to me and others, who have experience in these things, that Capito is increasingly doubtful about such men and every day believes less in them. Therefore, dearest brothers, if we receive an unexpected gift from God, effect that someone be summoned. If Bucer is called, he will not be hindered in his business at all. Blaurer's counsel harmed us, for he was convinced that it was not in the interest of his people [for Bucer?] to come to us. He could have achieved everything here at that time.

Furthermore, you know the clever arguments of the sophists, beloved brothers. Their counsels do not keep to scriptural analogies, the truth of which I and many others have experienced to the great detriment of the

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3 Bucer did not arrive, however, until 6 November 1534 and remained for only a month (see below, Ep. 541, note 6).

4 Martin Bucer, *Metaphrases et enarrationes ... epistolarum ... Pauli* (Strasbourg, March 1536).

church. In the past assembly,<sup>5</sup> where Philip,<sup>6</sup> Brenz,<sup>7</sup> and Schnepf<sup>8</sup> thought it sufficient to make the case for piety, because piety itself would be a sufficient patron, they found not without embarrassment that Eck<sup>9</sup> forced all sorts of concessions from them, and that even if he was not completely successful, he somehow managed to debase their argument. If we were to dispute in Ingolstadt, we would certainly have Eck as a respondent, together with two of his accomplices who are just like him – Ingolstadt scholars skilled in language and sophistical reasoning.<sup>10</sup> Not only would they not keep to the true meaning of scripture, but in departing from it lead others astray into crooked paths, for, to give the appearance of honesty and pious intent, they frequently derive their point from clear scriptural passages or from sayings that very much conform to scripture. Then, in a misleading manner, they tie this point to a minor premise and draw an inappropriate conclusion, making inferences that do not follow the rules of logical reasoning. Thus they readily succeed in discrediting the major premise taken from scripture, and this is how they have until now imposed on the stupid and credulous masses and made them believe they are pious. For the people did not think that speakers relying on religion would commit so many nefarious crimes, decking them out with a kind of religion, or rather, covering them up. What can be done if someone uses such tricks before people who are inexperienced in such things, yet easily persuaded and, even if they are not easily persuaded, have no timely answers? What do you think will happen? How harmful a small offence will be to the whole cause – for example, if one were to say about the

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5 I.e., the Diet of Augsburg in 1530.

6 For Philip Melanchthon, see CWC 1, Ep. 29, note 7.

7 For Johannes Brenz, see CWC 2, Ep. 259 headnote.

8 Erhard Schnepf (1495–1558) studied theology in Erfurt and Heidelberg. From 1520 to 1522, he was an evangelical preacher in Weinsberg, and from 1523 to 1524, in Wimpfen. In 1526, he introduced the Reformation in Weilburg. From 1527 to 1534, he was professor of theology at Marburg. He accompanied Philip of Nassau to the Diets of Speyer (1529) and Augsburg (1530). In 1534, he was called to the duchy of Württemberg. In 1536, he co-authored with Johannes Brenz the first church order of Württemberg, and in 1537, the first marriage ordinance. In 1544, he became professor of Old Testament and dogmatics at the University of Tübingen, as well as parish priest in the city and superintendent of the duchy. During the Schmalkaldic War, he fled to Ambrosius Blaurer in Constance (January 1547). Banished from Tübingen on account of the Interim, he became professor of Hebrew in Jena, where he increasingly came under the influence of the Gnesio-Lutherans.

9 For Johann Eck, see CWC 1, Ep. 1a headnote.

10 I.e., Johannes Fabri and Johannes Cochlaeus.

chief and central point of the whole religion something like this: Only the work of God can justify; love is a work of God, therefore love justifies. Yet it is certain that our sins are not remitted either through love or on account of it, but because of Christ. And his merits are imparted to us through faith alone. Therefore this syllogism adduced on the spur of the moment is easily dismissed as long as the mind is not distracted and time is given [to consider it]. But if someone is pressured by a sophist, much could be inferred from this and anyone replying incautiously can be forced into debating irrelevant matters. For this reason, I think it is necessary and pertinent to have people at the helm in such risky times, who even when a sudden storm arises know how to deal with it because they are used to the work and are experienced. For all these matters require a quick response, as you know, and there are very few men who can speak up quickly without suffering for it. Yet speaking rashly in matters of the faith can cause irreparable damage.

It seems right to leave it to the brethren to write about the wretched state of religious matters here, the agreements and disagreements among the brethren, the quality of life, the evil and good Schwenckfeld has generated, and whether you were right to support him or whether those were right who used or abused your support. *I can see that things aren't going well. The most pious men are best able to conceal their roguery.*<sup>11</sup> Oh how we live with deceit! Musculus<sup>12</sup> acts according to his integrity and erudition, and Sebastian<sup>13</sup> would easily have stood up against those who strayed from the right path, if they had never lived together,<sup>14</sup> if they had not decreased their authority thereby. Alas, how everything is deplorable! I have completely given up on some things. Tell Hedio that Ambrosius has been in Munich for the past three weeks.<sup>15</sup> When he returns he will thank him. The messenger is on the point of departure. I cannot write more, although I would like to do so. I thank you for the book; it is rightly dedicated to our people.<sup>16</sup> I wish Bucer

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11 The italicized text is in German. The reading is questionable.

12 For Wolfgang Musculus, see CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote.

13 For Sebastian Meyer, see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3.

14 The reference is to Schwenckfeld, who stayed with Wolfhart while in Augsburg, much to the chagrin of his colleagues (see above, Ep. 515, note 2, and Schiess 1, Epp. 396, 399–400, 402).

15 Likely a reference to Ambrosius Jung, city physician of Augsburg (see above, Ep. 475, note 3) as opposed to Ambrosius Blaurer, who was in Constance from the second week of March 1533 until the end of July/beginning of August 1534 (see Schiess 1, Epp. 326, 431–2).

16 Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534). For its dedication to the city council of Augsburg, see above, Ep. 527a.

wrote more frequently in Latin to the new mayor.<sup>17</sup> *Dear God, evil things happen among the poor brothers.*<sup>18</sup> The followers of Schwenckfeld here hate me. They say I have no love either for Bucer or for Capito, and as far as salvation is concerned, I too have strayed from the Truth as they have. *Farewell in God.*<sup>19</sup> Tell Hechtlin<sup>20</sup> to write. Farewell, in haste. Augsburg, 24 April 1534.

**Letter 530a: 30 April 1534, Strasbourg, Capito, Martin Bucer and Jakob Bedrot to the City Council of Constance**

The following letter is a joint response from Capito, Bucer, and Bedrot to two letters from the city council of Constance: one to Capito and Bucer; the other to Bedrot (neither of which appear to be extant). Though co-signed by the three men, the letter alternates between the first-person singular (Bedrot) and plural (Capito and Bucer).

The letter concerns the preparations for the establishment of the preachers' college in Strasbourg, which opened on 5 June 1534 with fifteen students. Previous petitions from the Strasbourg preachers to the city council called for the establishment of Latin schools in the city (see CWC 2, Ep. 236a and 383a), yet the city lacked a school specifically for the training of preachers. In September 1533, Bucer and Ambrosius Blaurer had discussed plans for a college to train clergymen for Strasbourg, Constance, Lindau, Biberach, and Isny (Schuess 1, Ep. 363). In the spring of 1534, proposals were discussed regarding the founding of a full university in Strasbourg. Bucer submitted a proposal to the city council in March, arguing that 'outside of Wittenberg and Marburg, there is no university to which the youth can be sent with benefit both to their learning and to their sanctity' (qtd. in Brady, *Protestant Politics*, 118, based on the text

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17 Sailer must be referring either to Hieronymus Imhof or Wolfgang Rehlinger (see HBBW 4, Ep. 355, note 124), both of whom were chosen in January 1534. Imhof (1468–1539) was originally from Nürnberg. Around 1500 he came to Augsburg and joined the merchant guild in 1501, which he represented first as *Zwölfer* (1501–5) and then as guildmaster (1506–34). He served as mayor in the even years between 1506 and 1534 and as master-builder in the odd years from 1521 to 1533. In 1534, he returned to Nürnberg. Rehlinger (d. 1557) became a member of the Small Council of Augsburg in 1533 and was chosen mayor of Augsburg already in 1534, and again in 1536, 1539, and 1541. He helped usher in the Reformation in Augsburg and have the city join the Schmalkaldic League. In 1544, he left Augsburg and settled in Strasbourg.

18 The italicized text is in German.

19 The italicized text is in German.

20 For Johannes Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.

in BDS 7:522–32, no. 12; cf. Millet, Ep. 691). Claus Kniebs considered Bucer’s proposal too grandiose for the city, since he estimated that a university would cost 3,000 gulden per year, which Strasbourg could not afford (Brady, *Protestant Politics*, 118–19, based on BDS 7:533–5, no. 13). Thus came about the realization of a more modest venture, the establishment of the preachers’ college in 1534. The college’s statutes were drawn up the following year (BDS 7:547–50, no. 15). The college housed an average of thirty students of theology from Strasbourg, southern Germany, and even Zwinglian Bern and Lutheran Esslingen. Two wealthy patricians of Isny, the Bufflers, endowed the college, and Joachim Maler, Constance’s city attorney (see below, notes 1 and 4), brought the first eight Swabian students in June to Strasbourg, where the college was being established in the Dominican convent. Of these eight Swabians, three hailed from Constance, according to the college’s financial records: Mathias Schenck, Johannes Müller, and Michael Maler (Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST 41/1, bundle I, f. 2r). The college appears to have remained open until 1542, when the records stop (Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST42/1, bundle XIV). It may have suffered after its students and faculty were forced in 1541/2 to seek refuge from the plague in Gengenbach, and simply have been absorbed into the Strasbourg Gymnasium, founded by Johannes Sturm, its first rector, in 1538.

A copy of the letter is in the Städtische Archiv Biberach, B1 Bü 373/III.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus increase in you, circumspect, honourable, wise, and gracious lords, to whom we willingly offer our service in every way possible. Your Kind Honours have written to us, jointly to Capito and Bucer and specifically to me, Bedrot. We have all read our own and each other’s letters with exceptional pleasure. We give praise and thanks to the Almighty that he has inspired in you such a salutary enterprise.<sup>1</sup> The Lord demands our effort in addition to his gifts, and he does not immediately make noble apostles of us fishermen,<sup>2</sup> although he has given us sufficient means to come to a right and godly understanding and to increase it in the ordinary way. Thus we see that well-to-do people take care to educate their sons for the church, and it is certainly in the interest of material prosperity to have a government that is right and godly.

Since I, Bedrot, have been hired by our gracious lords here to give public lectures in the Greek language and in rhetoric, it was not my place to reply

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1 This is likely a reference to the so-called Buffler Foundation, which provided funding for young men from Constance, Isny, Biberach, and Lindau to study in Strasbourg (see below, Ep. 549, note 17).

2 Cf. Matt. 4:19.

to Your Provident and Respected Honours, dear sirs, but to defer to our gracious lords, the scholarchs here, that is, Jacob Sturm, Nicolaus Kniebs, and Jakob Meyer.<sup>3</sup> Similarly we, Capito and Bucer, had no dealings with Bedrot but deferred to the scholarchs. They were involved earlier on in negotiations to establish a college for young men to be educated primarily in theology. It was to be located in a dissolved monastery, and this would already have come to pass before your emissary,<sup>4</sup> our dear friend, arrived here, had the scholarchs not been hampered by the ongoing strife and affairs.

Since Your Provident and Respected Honours cannot quite agree with this undertaking, the scholarchs forwarded the letters Your Provident and Respected Honours sent to us together with their own advice to the city council, for they are truly inclined to oblige Your Provident and Respected Honours as best they can. The first consideration of the scholarchs, however, was to send several young men to the Dominicans, which is a very large and capacious monastery in the centre of the city, where in any case public lectures are held every day (except in theology). These young men would have their own tutors and masters, who would run the household and maintain discipline and order among the young men, as is the duty of Christian youths who are to be educated for service in the church. These tutors and masters should promote study, discipline, spiritual exercises through prayer and reading, and whatever may be conducive to Christian discipline. For their instruction, they should attend the daily lectures and exercises held locally, each according to his skill and capacity. In addition, they should have

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- 3 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote; for Nicolaus Kniebs, see CWC 2, Ep. 184 headnote; for Jakob Meyer, see CWC 2, Ep. 240, note 3. Upon the initiative of the Strasbourg preachers, who, on 3 September 1524 (see CWC 1, Ep. 211) and 7/8 February 1525 (see CWC 2, Ep. 236a), had asked the city council to establish schools in Strasbourg, the council formed a school board consisting of Jacob Sturm, Hans Lindenfels, Lamprecht Sebot, and Adam Zorn. At the city council meeting of 9 February 1526, the council appointed Jacob Sturm, Nicolaus Kniebs, and Jakob Meyer as *Schulherren* or *Scholarchen* for life. The three men were to be aided by two preachers, Caspar Hedio and Jakob Bedrot, who, as *visitatores*, were charged with the reform of the schools (see CorrBucer 7:89, Ep. 520, note 4).
- 4 Likely a reference to Joachim Maler, a syndic of Constance (d. 1542). As of 1520 he was active in the court of the bishop of Constance, for whom he served as episcopal secretary from 21 August 1521–15 March 1524. For his services he was granted citizenship in 1531. Later, as syndic of Constance, he represented the city at the Diets of Augsburg (1530) and Regensburg (1532) and at the Colloquies of Haguenau (1540) and Worms (1540/1). Several months before his death, he became city secretary of Lindau.

among them several young men showing some talent for languages and humanities, who can drill the others who are less advanced, explain every day at set times the lectures they have heard, and give special lectures to those who need them. In this they should follow the advice of the scholars, the instructions of the public lecturers, and the discipline of their superiors, the tutor and master. The latter must render a monthly account of his administration to the scholars, who will supervise him and ensure that everything is done and the boys taken care of. They will give orders for the quantity of food and drink and any other physical needs; and if anyone from other Christian cities wishes to enrol youths in this college and they have been found capable of studying, the scholars should have power to accept them in reasonable numbers, since the monastery is very large and capacious.

But when those great difficulties arose, as we said before, and our lords were much disturbed, especially Jacob Sturm, there were delays in the handing over of the Augustinian monastery, which is also used for school purposes. Thus matters are not yet ready for the number of youths envisaged. For this reason, they had in mind to make a beginning and promote the said college, in as much as it pleases Your Provident and Respected Honours; and if Your Provident and Respected Honours intend to send your youths here to the said college, we would start with four, or if you insist, six youths, of whom at least two are fairly experienced in languages and moreover who otherwise are of a good age, around or over twenty years old. Thus we could get this college under way. There should be available a man highly suited as a general tutor as well as a master, a decent, quite learned, steady and pious man, who has a special gift to give young people a godly education, who has looked after young people and given proof of his ability. In addition he should be able to look after the housekeeping, have a most honourable and capable wife and no children. That is the opinion of the scholars. The honourable council approved of it and gave them complete authority. On the instruction of the council, they asked us to write all this to Your Provident and Respected Honours. If they were willing to take on your young men under the circumstances mentioned, they would observe Your Provident and Respected Honours' intentions and see that the young men were looked after as well as possible with regard to instruction and discipline and also concerning costs. The scholars would contribute the furnishings and maintain the accommodations. Since the housekeeping would be done in common and in good faith – and no doubt the intended master would do so – the cost would be modest, so that a young man might be properly supported on 16 or 18 gulden a year.

The lectures have all been established. They are: all three languages – Latin, Greek, and Hebrew – dialectics, rhetoric, mathematics – that is, geom-

etry and arithmetic – music, instruction in both Testaments, and we hope we shall soon have someone to teach philosophy. It only remains to obtain new funds to pay the salary of the general tutor and the master with his domestics, which should not be very high. The man at hand does not demand or require much at any rate.

We ourselves cannot improve on the opinion of the scholarchs, Provident and Respected Honours, nor are we in any doubt that your youths will be looked after in the best manner, if you decide to send them to the said college. They will be able to attend lectures and all the exercises, and in addition will live according to an especially Christian discipline in a fine, ample, and very quiet place, as your emissary has seen, and where all lectures, except in theology, will be held. Nor is there any way in which this could be achieved at lower cost. Any special instructions regarding your youngsters, which you wish to give to the general tutor mentioned or to any assistant tutors that may be at the college can all be arranged in the course of things.

Thus – not to withhold from Your Provident and Respected Honours our insignificant advice – we regard it as good and most useful to promote this business, and if this opinion is to your liking, you should send a representative together with your youths as soon as possible. He could act on your behalf and come to an understanding with our scholarchs in all things concerning the teachers and all else and see to everything that is necessary. We have high hopes that everything can be arranged in a satisfactory and pleasing manner, so as to be off to a good start. Everything else is ready. We only need to prepare quarters for the young men and start with the house-keeping, all of which can be done within three or four days. In this sense all of us and especially I, Bedrot – one of the public lecturers – will spare no effort to serve your interest in spiritual discipline and instruction. In any case, however, I, Bedrot, am unable to have your boys stay with me and look after them by myself because I am under order to give public lectures. I say before God that the plan outlined above will be much more in the interest and to the advantage of the boys. This is what we wanted to write to Your Provident and Respected Honours, on your request and also on the command of our gracious lords, the scholarchs and the council, and we genuinely intend to serve at your pleasure. May the Almighty bestow his grace on you, so that everything will serve to advance the Christian spirit in your city. We commend ourselves to you in the Lord. Given at Strasbourg, on the last day of April in the year 1534.

Your kind lords' willing servants,  
 Wolf[gang] Capito,  
 Martin Bucer,  
 Jacob Bedrot.

**Letter 531: [9] May [1534], Strasbourg, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

The autograph original of this letter is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 32/198. It is partially printed in Schiess 1:495–6, Ep. 419. This date has been assigned because Bucer, too, wrote a letter to Blaurer, dated 9 May 1534 (Schiess 1, Ep. 418). A note on the reverse of the manuscript states that Blaurer received the letter on 18 May 1534, and responded to it (with a letter no longer extant) on 30 May.

Grace and peace. Your sister Margaret,<sup>1</sup> the most prudent virgin of Christ, sent me syrup<sup>2</sup> (as they call it) and other things, which I enjoyed more eagerly because they were prepared by such a chosen vessel of Christ.<sup>3</sup> I have nothing to send in return except a mind that is much obliged. I have only a light fever, but I've had it for a long time now.<sup>4</sup> I hope that all trouble will be over after the third paroxysm.<sup>5</sup> Once I am well, I think I will take a few days off, then return to my usual work. May the Lord temper my hope for the sake of his glory, Amen.

I have heard something about the odium Schwenckfeld has aroused and the calamity he has caused in the churches. I will read all the letters addressed to Bucer to learn the whole of the affair in detail and to fight the troops of the enemy together with you.<sup>6</sup> But let me be rather frank with you: Bucer has much success in acting against this plague. Where we fall short is in our failure to make the labours undertaken by this most holy man, my brother, known among the churches. They [i.e., the followers of Schwenckfeld] commend their putrid books at great length in private gatherings, among the nobler families, even in the cities in person and in detailed letters. We have neglected to bring out our defences and to protect our interests. You will say, 'We must carry on through words. We have done enough sowing.' But there is no way to leave an impression on the audience, to have them remember what they have heard by putting it in writing. What you

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1 For Margaret Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 194, note 21. On 20 April 1534, Blaurer wrote to Bucer that Margaret had sent apples to Capito (Schiess 1, Ep. 412).

2 Cf. Ambrosius Blaurer's letter to his brother Thomas, dated 30 April 1535, in which he asked his brother for syrup, since he was suffering from 'scabies' as well as diarrhea (Schiess 1, Ep. 579).

3 Cf. Acts 9:15.

4 Capito was sick with the fever in April 1534, but had recovered by the end of the month (see Schiess 1, Epp. 411–12 and 417).

5 I.e., a recurring period of increased severity of his disease.

6 See Schiess 1, Epp. 406, 409–10, 412, 414.

hear is scattered, like seed on the road.<sup>7</sup> By God the Redeemer, how skillfully Bucer destroyed most of Schwenckfeld's foundation before the people of Münster!<sup>8</sup> But his work is not appreciated enough by us. The booksellers hope for profit. They look out for it and get it from Schwenckfeld's followers. There is no profit for them in our responses, which barely one or two fellow ministers care to peruse. I swear to God by all that is holy, we have no ambitions except for the cause of the churches. For the troops of the enemy range freely over the field, while we waste away, confined to a narrow circle. So many good books are written, which are never praised in our churches. Once I am myself again, I shall hand books of this kind to our churches with the most authoritative recommendation possible and ask them to read them. The printers no longer want to publish our works because they cannot be sold, nor do the booksellers attempt to distribute them in various places, for they see that they are not appreciated at all in the churches. Such is the desire for profit, that they would find a reason to convey it here, if they thought there were buyers. The deceit of Schwenckfeld must be made known, and I would take on that task if I thought I was up to giving a fair reply and 'pierce the eyes of crows,' as they say.<sup>9</sup> But who will print the book and bring it to the churches, and who will buy it when it is brought? For we, the leaders, fear to commend such books to the churches, as if we were in doubt about the case. How bold will the inexperienced crowd be? Those monkeys, on the other hand, are most confident about their offspring, adorn it, brag about it, hand it around aggressively. Nothing of this sort<sup>10</sup> will be printed this year, unless we add to the printers' profit and hire their services. Is this not ignominious and shameful? Who among us, given our domestic situations, will be able to assume this expense? This awkward situation would be taken care of, and indeed our cause very much helped, if we make books of this sort known among the churches, devised arguments, and gave them repeated honourable mention. We should note the title, and urge those who wish to know the complete truth about such controversies to peruse such-and-such a passage in it, and in addition refute the calumnies that they set in motion in their hiding places. The authority of every one of us will certainly come to grief. Alternatively, we must support one another in our need with mutual aid. We will be of no help to you there with facile writings, which no one in any of

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7 Matt. 13:1–23; Mark 4:1–20; and Luke 8:1–15.

8 Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534).

9 Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.3.75.

10 I.e., books supporting the reformers.

the churches will import. For this reason Rihel<sup>11</sup> made an effort to urge your bookseller to take on very cheap books of this kind;<sup>12</sup> but I believe he has no great hopes of finding buyers. He blames it on the transport, which he could easily have effected through Basel. It would turn out differently if the common expectation were different there, and if there were a stronger desire for our works.

I have spoken rather freely, and at the same time I feel some relief from the trouble and disturbance of the fever. For I feel so well that I dare to admit such thoughts. Tell Zwick,<sup>13</sup> if you think it is right, and do not pursue my warning only there, but in all churches that are subject to the evil and where heresies are feared to be widespread. It is important that the churches be confirmed in their judgment. Farewell in the Lord and pray to God. May what you do for me [...] also benefit you,<sup>14</sup> and I never cease to pray the Lord to favour your most fortunate undertaking. Farewell, from Strasbourg, in the month of May.

Yours, Wolfgang Capito, etc.

### **Letter 532: 18 May 1534, Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to Philip of Hesse and Ulrich of Württemberg**

The following letter is the first response of the Strasbourg preachers to the Württemberg preachers' request to recommend candidates to help introduce the Reformation in their territory. The duchy had just been recovered by Ulrich (1487–1550), third duke of Württemberg. He had been driven from his lands by

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- 11 For Wendelin Rihel, see above, Ep. 514 headnote.
- 12 Gregor Mangolt (1498–1577/8) was the son of Wolfgang, a jurist and secretary of Zurich. In 1513, he entered the Premonstratensian monastery in Weissenau, near Ravensburg. He studied at Freiburg (MA, 1520), was ordained in 1522, but then converted to the evangelical cause. A partisan of Zwingli, he was a proofreader for Froschauer in Zurich. In 1524 he moved to Constance, where he was a bookseller and editor as of 1526. After his expulsion from the city in 1548, he became a bookseller in Zurich. He wrote a book on the fish in Lake Constance and several editions of a chronicle of Constance. He rejected the re-Catholicization of Constance as well as the city's suzerainty to the Habsburgs. He delivered a letter from Blaurer to Bucer, dated 22 April 1534, in which Blaurer warmly recommended him (Schiess 1, Ep. 414). Bucer returned greetings on 30 April, which Mangolt delivered to Blaurer on 4 May (Schiess 1, Ep. 417).
- 13 More likely a reference to Blaurer's fellow reformer in Constance, Johannes Zwick (see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1) than to his brother Konrad Zwick, Jr, a member of the city council of Constance (see above, Ep. 469, note 4).
- 14 The text is illegible.

the Swabian League in 1519; on 13 May 1534 he defeated the imperial troops of Ferdinand I at Lauffen on the Neckar River. Ulrich had the support of Landgrave Philip of Hesse (1504–1567), the Schmalkaldic League, and the consent of a remarkable coalition of enemies of the Habsburg dynasty, most notably Francis I, a fierce enemy of Charles V.<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand I was busy repelling incursions of the Turks in Hungary at the time, and therefore had to agree quickly to the Peace of Kaaden, signed on 29 June. The main points of the treaty were as follows: first, Duke Ulrich would hold his territory as an Austrian intermediate fief, i.e., should he die without heir, Württemberg would revert to the Austrians; second, the legal processes before the Imperial Chamber Court (*Reichskammergericht*) against the Protestants for violations of existing legislation were to be suspended; third, the parties to the treaty agreed to ban ‘sacramentarians,’ i.e., Zwinglians, from the territory.

A few weeks after the reconquest of the duchy of Württemberg, Duke Ulrich set about introducing the Reformation in his territory, inviting both Lutheran and Swiss reformed Protestants to come to his duchy. Erhard Schnepf, an adamant Lutheran, was entrusted with the reform of the northern half of the duchy, operating out of Stuttgart; whereas Ambrosius Blaurer, a firm theological ally of the Swiss and Strasbourg theologians, was active in the southern half, with Tübingen as his base of operation. Johannes Knoder, the chancellor of Württemberg, purposely delayed Blaurer’s call so that he might arrive in Stuttgart on 30 July, a day after Schnepf’s arrival, where the two men could discuss their theological differences.<sup>2</sup> Efforts were also made to call Philip Melancthon to the University of Tübingen, his alma mater. Melancthon was keen to leave his position at Wittenberg in ‘barbarous’ Saxony (MBW T6, Ep. 1505), but attempts to lure him to Tübingen were opposed by Johann Friedrich, duke of Saxony, who denied him leave.<sup>3</sup> Since Melancthon was unable to come, the focus shifted to calling the Basel professor of Greek, Simon Grynaeus, to Tübingen.

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- 1 For Strasbourg’s role in the reconquest and Reformation of the duchy of Württemberg, see Brady, *Communities*, chap. 3, 81–107.
- 2 HBBW 4, Ep. 424, notes 12 and 52.
- 3 See Richard L. Harrison, Jr., ‘Melancthon’s Role in the Reformation of the University of Tübingen,’ *Church History* 47.3 (1978): 270–8. See also the explanation given by Frecht to Blaurer, 14 November, based on a report from Johannes Kneller, counsellor to Ferdinand: ‘He revealed this in obscure rather than clear words: the elector of Saxony found much lacking in the efforts to institute a religious reform there among you, as if individual churches in the Duchy of Württemberg were to be reformed in the Zwinglian manner, as the more noted counsellors of the Saxon Elector suspect’ (Schiess 1, Ep. 495).

gen (see below, Ep. 538 headnote). Grynaeus arrived in the fall of 1534, and on 11 November, both Grynaeus and Blaurer were given official ducal support to reform and reorganize the university. On 30 January 1535, new statutes for the university, originally drafted by Blaurer and Grynaeus, were issued, despite fierce opposition from stalwart Catholic members of the Faculty of Theology, who were forced either to submit to the reforms or be relieved of their teaching duties.<sup>4</sup>

The original draft of the letter, which was written by Bucer, is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 151, pp. 498–510. Its contents are summarized in Lenz 1:36–37, Ep. 10. On 29 May 1534, Bucer reported to Ambrosius Blaurer about this letter: ‘We have written to both princes and proposed to put you and Grynaeus in charge of church-related affairs there, to the extent possible’ (Schliess 1, Ep. 423).

Congratulations to the Landgrave [Philip of Hesse] and [Duke Ulrich] of Württemberg on their conquest of the territory!<sup>5</sup>

To the most illustrious, most noble, Christian princes: Eternal praise and thanks be to the most powerful King of all kings and Lord of all lords<sup>6</sup> through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom the Father has given all power in heaven and on earth, for granting Your Princely Graces such a good, bloodless, and gentle victory, which we must truly and most thankfully admire as worthy of our Germans. May the same God grant that his kingdom prosper under Your Princely Graces in the future, through his undeserved mercy and the precious merit of our Lord Jesus, and may he ordain that it come to pass without causing human bloodshed or destruction, not only in the duchy of Württemberg but also in our common German Nation, for the glory of Christ and for the increase of his kingdom. To this end we offer Your Princely Graces our insignificant service with all humility and meekness. We ask that Your Princely Graces give thought to our concerns, which truly stem from Christian simplicity and our care for the community of God. We ask Your Princely Graces to allow this to be read out. May you and your people,

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4 See K. Gauss, ‘Die Berufung des Simon Grynäus nach Tübingen, 1534/35,’ *Basler Jahrbuch* (1911): 88–130; Friedrich Held, ‘Die Tätigkeit des Ambrosius Blarer im Herzogtum Württemberg in den Jahren 1534–1538. Dargestellt nach seinem Briefwechsel,’ *Blätter für württembergische Kirchengeschichte* 65 (1965): 150–206; Norbert Hofmann, *Die Artistenfakultät an der Universität Tübingen, 1534–1601* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1982), 4–15; Bernd Moeller, ‘Neue Nachträge zum Blarer-Briefwechsel. Zur Reformation der Universität Tübingen, 1534–1535,’ *Blätter für württembergische Kirchengeschichte* 68/69 (1968/1969): 60–80.

5 See above, headnote.

6 Cf. 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14, 19:16.

who understand the kingdom of God and Christian peace, consider whether perhaps the Lord has given us some good qualities, which may serve his praise and further the holy gospel. We especially hope that the conquest of this duchy may advance the salutary progress of the evangelical church in Germany and other lands. No doubt, this conquest will contribute much to the worldly peace and happiness of our common German Nation. Our thoughts on this are as follows:

First, our dear Lord wishes his people to be like members of one body, in which each has his own powers and tasks.<sup>7</sup> The goal is to do what will benefit and bring advantage to the whole body. For this reason, God has distributed his gifts in a manner that enables each person to contribute to the common welfare of the church. Therefore, it would serve the advancement and advantage of the Christian church to gather in the name of the Lord many gentle and peaceful people who have knowledge of God, that each may use the gifts granted to him by God loyally to serve and build up the Lord as best he can. Thus we may, in a suitable way, counter the many thousand wiles of Satan,<sup>8</sup> against which we cannot sufficiently be on guard. This would promote and effect true improvement in the whole community and in every Christian individually, a task that can never be given enough consideration, even by us poor and weak people.

One must not hesitate even one moment in the business of God, and the affairs of our Lord Jesus Christ demand immediate attention from anyone to whom God has granted knowledge and ability. In all things a great deal depends on a good start, and the beginning is even more critical in this matter, which is important and consequential. Thus in our humble consideration Your Princely Graces should quickly commence measures that will allow a beginning to be made in such a way that it can be of great service in every way to Your Princely Graces' Christian enterprise, would cause no difficulties anywhere, and fit in very well with the enterprise of all God-fearing and Christian communities. This will ensure that those who out of the goodness of their hearts are intent on preaching the holy gospel in the community are not only unobstructed, but may also find the way more open and build a solid edifice.

Indeed, Your Princely Graces have heard over the years with heavy hearts of ineffable troubles caused by the strife over the holy sacraments, which in turn was followed by so much other horrible confusion, error, and

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7 Cf. 1 Cor. 12:12–26.

8 Cf. Eph. 6:11.

schism. Your Princely Graces have unfortunately had much experience of the extent of gentleness and clemency among many ministers of the gospel.<sup>9</sup> It will take a great deal, therefore, to begin with God's edifice in such manifold strife and confusion and to arrange the business of the holy gospel in order to bring about a truly Christian, broad, and strong advantage for all parties, promote Christian action in a consistent and godly manner, and provide friendly instruction to the weak, while bearing all hardships to allow them to grow in Christ and give no opportunity to the opponents to obstruct or malign the work of God. To do that, we must be earnest and God-fearing, pray often for the true and good Spirit of God, and be zealous in contemplating the will of God and scripture.

Unfortunately, some rebellious people keep renewing the strife over the holy sacrament, although that quarrel should be put away and laid to rest now that our merciful God has fully brought to light the fact that the quarrel is not about the substance, but about words. In order to introduce this business of Christ in this principality and to serve as a better example to other nations, who are truly intent on this business of God, it is necessary to begin, as much as possible, by providing to all God-fearing people in both parties an opportunity to arrive at a Christian compromise and agreement.

Both sides teach the true and eternal gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, our sole salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and strive in all their actions to love and serve their neighbours. There is no article of Christian teaching anywhere on which the two parties do not agree, as we have seen in Marburg, where the articles were signed and witnessed by both parties.<sup>10</sup> The only contested point is the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Supper, and that hinges on the wording. With God's help we shall explain this to all reasonable people and make it as clear as day. Unfortunately, there are people who would like to introduce disagreement in other aspects. Some leaders on both sides wish to put a different construction and meaning on some things, but we are able to demonstrate satisfactorily that there is true agreement on the essence of all matters.

Thus, all Christian minds must continue to hope that the omnipotent and merciful God will grant mutual understanding and agreement to those who truly seek it. Many courageous men have already done so – praise be to God. More than a year ago, Master Philip Melancthon, who has considerable standing among other nations, wrote a friendly letter to us firmly

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<sup>9</sup> Unless there is an error in the text, this comment must be ironical.

<sup>10</sup> I.e., the Colloquy of Marburg in 1529.

attesting to his good will and his intentions toward us.<sup>11</sup> He also indicated his high hope for a solid and complete agreement among the churches at the next meeting, provided we earnestly attempt and search for the truth in all Christian matters. At Marburg the time was too short and, as he was sorry to say, both parties too intent on victory.

For these and many other reasons, gracious princes and lords, we put our hope and trust in God, since Your Gracious Princes will have with them and will be employing Master Ambrosius Blaurer,<sup>12</sup> preacher in Constance, and Master Simon Grynaeus, lecturer in Basel, who will take the initiative in this Christian enterprise and make a start in this principality.<sup>13</sup> No one today could undertake it in a more felicitous manner. Among the active servants of the Word in the German Nation, we are well aware of all who have a reputation as good negotiators in the business of God. Master Ambrosius Blaurer is one of them, a truly learned, friendly, clement, courageous, and insightful man, who lives an honest and spiritually blessed life. Thus God has granted him special grace to organize Christian churches, as he has done in Constance, Ulm, Esslingen, Memmingen, Isny, and Lindau, where he notably improved Christian discipline. He accomplished this in an admirable fashion, and if Your Princely Graces would hear him out and deal with him, we are certain that you yourselves would admit that you could not obtain a more skilful man for your purpose at this time.

Similarly, Master Simon Grynaeus is a man, skilled in languages and other good disciplines that equip him for leadership and all kinds of things, and also for governing the affairs of God. There is no greater scholar than he among the scholars in our religious community (no one will deny that). He is, moreover, a man of the greatest piety and the most pleasant manners, a gracious and experienced man. We are certain, once Your Princely Graces come to know him, that you will recognize him as a great and valuable treasure of the German Nation. All leading scholars grant him that, among them, Erasmus, Philip, and others. True, he has not distinguished himself through publishing and other things, but all scholars understand that he is so skilled in Latin that he has no match today among Germans, especially when one considers his skill in conjunction with his understanding of God, his life, and his knowledge in other disciplines, such as philosophy, mathematics, and all the other good and fundamental subjects. But the more God has elevated

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11 I.e., CWC 2, Ep. 416.

12 Blaurer arrived in Stuttgart probably on 30 July 1534 (HBBW 4, Ep. 424, notes 12 and 52).

13 See above, headnote.

him, the more he humbles himself. At Basel he has the task of teaching Greek and philosophy, subjects which he taught earlier in Heidelberg, where they regretted his departure. He did not wish to remain there, however, on account of their religion and moved to Basel because the reformation had been introduced there and because the late Oecolampadius urged and persuaded him to come.<sup>14</sup>

These two men, then, are most devoted to peace in the church and to a correct, true, and serious Christian life. They are, moreover, gentle, mild, and modest, and are seen as impartial in many areas of Christian teaching, especially Grynaeus, who has left nothing untried in the matters under dispute, even publicly, applying reason, skill, and experience. On account of all these efforts he is well liked among all the lovers of God's Truth and of scholarship. Grynaeus is so highly respected by Philip Melanchthon that we have no doubt, if he is asked to give his advice as to who might [best] promote the University of Tübingen, he will suggest no one but Grynaeus,<sup>15</sup> who would be most suited to that task, especially because the programme of studies in Basel is not going well. The noble and upright Jakob Truchsess<sup>16</sup> would also be able to report on Grynaeus to Your Princely Graces.

In our opinion, these [two] men would be most serviceable to you, gracious princes, in making a blessed beginning of the churches, of teaching, of other matters and of the administration of the parishes, for it is so important that no one is ordained lightly and that experienced men are appointed to serve the gospel. They would gently prepare the way to a Christian peace between all parties and undertake the business of God in a manner that would very well please all God-fearing people. Thus things would be arranged for the improvement of the people in your region and provide a wonderful example for people in other nations who are searching for God.

Together with others who are involved in this enterprise on both sides we counsel those who praise Luther's business so highly and deprecate other people and attempt all sorts of talk and action, to do so in accordance with scripture and in a more Christian manner. Those in the other party react

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14 On 8 May 1529, Oecolampadius and his political counterpart, Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, who had met Grynaeus a year earlier, persuaded the city council of Basel to offer him a chair of Greek at the university.

15 There are no extant letters from Melanchthon written in 1534 in praise of Grynaeus, except for a prefatory letter to Grynaeus from Melanchthon in Georg Peurbach, *Theoricae novae planetarum* (Wittenberg, 1535), printed in MBW T6, Ep. 1509.

16 For Jakob Truchsess von Rheinfelden, see CWC 1, Ep. 41, note 1.

to such harshness and vehemence by condemning what they have not yet clearly understood, and they are so upset that they are very suspicious and wonder whether Luther was considering only God in all these things and could give them a better interpretation of the words and deeds contained in scripture. In sum, we see that neither party shows the right attitude toward the other party, such as God no doubt would have them adopt, and indeed all pious Christians ought to adopt. One must fear, therefore, that either party may introduce a schism through their initial actions. Such a schism cannot easily be overcome in the principality, for no doubt there are many people, who are too much inclined toward one or the other party. In truth, very few want to see and hear how extensive and capacious the kingdom of our Lord Jesus is and consider that we must act with fear and trembling, patience and modesty in this matter if we expect our actions to bear fruit.

There are many people willing to undertake this task with confidence and courage, to pasture the church, wherever they are, and truly and seriously engage in this task for a time. There are many good and dear brothers who have led a wretched life as exiles for the sake of God's Word, who will now come here and certainly need people to whom they may look up and whom they may obey after such manifold schisms and sectarianism which they experienced in their persecution. There are also neighbours that must be respected in God's business even if they do not agree on every point, so that it will take considerable care to begin with Christian peace and improvement. Nor will the Anabaptists be afraid to cause trouble, as they unfortunately do everywhere, from which God may protect us, as always.

[It may be that a man by the name of Caspar Schwenckfeld of Ossig,<sup>17</sup> who is from Silesia and is the brother-in-law of the noble Junkers Thumb,<sup>18</sup> will boldly interfere. On the outside, he gives the impression of a man of fine manners, who speaks in an elevated and spiritual tone, yet he presents a

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17 For Schwenckfeld of Ossig, Silesia (modern-day Osiek, Poland), see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote.

18 Hans Konrad Thumb von Neuburg (d. 1555) and his brother Hans Friedrich Thumb von Neuburg (d. 1551). The former was the most influential man at the court of Duke Ulrich of Württemberg. From 1519 to 1521, he stayed on with the duke in Montbéliard, but then switched sides and served in the chancellery of the Austrian governor in Stuttgart. In 1527, he became hereditary marshal (*Erbmarschall*), and in 1530 court judge (*Hofgerichtsassessor*) in Tübingen. In 1532, he had the Reformation introduced in his territory of Stetten im Remstal (Baden-Württemberg). In Stetten, he frequently let Schwenckfeld stay with him, and in 1539, he, along with Pastor Burkhard Schilling, invited a follower of Schwenckfeld to preach there. After the reconquest of Württemberg by Duke

great challenge to the public ministry of the Word of God].<sup>19</sup> Thus people do not want to be called Anabaptists, yet condemn the baptism of children as an abominable practice, although it has been practised in the church from the beginning according to the command of God as depicted in all of scripture, and although it has never been challenged by anyone and remains a Christian custom. They do not want to come to an agreement with any community or share with them the use of the sacraments. They attract others through their preaching to a new and different interpretation, and give it a notably grand appearance with fine words and actions. Truly there is a very strong temptation to create a schism. Furthermore, they are opposed to any compromise and unification of the church. It is to be feared that some of these people will undertake to enter this principality. On this account we have also written to Jacob Truchsess.<sup>20</sup>

These matters concern eternal life. We must serve God with all our heart, soul, and strength,<sup>21</sup> and that is why the Lord makes us work and toil, if we want to be his loyal servants. God has now given this victory to Your Princely Graces and it has come about with Your Princely Graces' diligence and effort; if it had not been for him, we would not have gained a victory, although God could have achieved it without the help of human beings. How much more diligence and effort must we show in these matters by which the Lord will give us victory over Satan and grant us eternal life? Indeed, we must be very serious about it, be on our guard, watch, and pray, and leave out nothing which might serve the purpose and which was also the choice of the apostles, so that in such a splendid principality the business of Christ will be done most correctly and most assuredly.

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Ulrich, Hans Konrad was entrusted with numerous important missions regarding the introduction of church ordinances, the administration of church goods and cloisters. Eventually he had a falling-out with the duke and lost his positions. Thereafter, he returned in 1545 to his sister Ursula in the territory of Neuburg am Untersee (Canton Thurgau). His brother, Hans Friedrich Thumb von Neuburg (d. 1551), introduced the Reformation in Köngen am Neckar, a town subordinate to his family's ancestral territory. Like his brother, he assisted in organizing the Reformation of the Duchy of Württemberg after the return of Duke Ulrich in 1534. Later he, too, fell out of favour with the duke.

19 In the original draft by Bucer, the two sentences enclosed in square brackets are deleted and followed instead by the more covert passage directed against Schwenckfeld.

20 The verb is definitely in the past tense, but the extant letter to Truchsess is dated 21 May 1533 (see below, Ep. 533).

21 Cf. Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; and Luke 10:37.

My gracious Christian princes and lords, we wished to write down our thoughts for Your Princely Graces, out of true and simple Christian concern for the congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, because we have experienced the astonishing and manifold opposition which Satan practises every day against the kingdom of Christ, and we humbly ask Your Princely Graces to accept this graciously and consider it according to your noble and Christian understanding. We firmly hope that the execution of the plans we have indicated here will ensure the glorious and blessed advance of Christ's kingdom, not only in this principality, but in the whole German Nation, indeed, that it will also greatly benefit other nations and, in addition, since the Lord gives everything to those who earnestly seek his kingdom and his justice, that he will bring about peace, calm, and felicity for everyone. God has lifted up the meek and uses them for great things. It is the miracle he commonly works, if only we will recognize it and allow ourselves to be employed in his service with the greatest diligence and earnestness.

May the almighty, merciful [and] heavenly Father grant Your Princely Graces, after this gracious beginning, to bring the matter to completion and execute your plan for his glory and the salvation of all people. We commend ourselves and our service to you with the most humble modesty. Given on 18 May.

Your Princely Graces' obedient servants of the Strasbourg Church, devoted to you in the Lord,  
 W. Capito,  
 C. Hedio,  
 M. Bucer, and the others.

**Letter 533: 21 May 1534, [Strasbourg], Capito to Jakob Truchsess von Rheinfelden**

There is a copy of this letter in the Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, A 63 Bü 4a/10. It is printed in C.F. Sattler, *Geschichte des Herzogthums Württemberg*, 3. Theil (Ulm, 1771), pp. 107–12, Beilage 12. Excerpts are also printed in QGWT 1:990–93. The letter was likely sent together with Bucer's letter to Johann Knoder, chancellor of the duke of Württemberg, dated 22 May 1534 (printed in Sattler, pp. 112–14, Beilage 13). For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 532 headnote.

For the addressee, Capito's former amanuensis, Jakob Truchsess von Rheinfelden, see CWC 1, Ep. 41, note 1.

First, I offer you my willing service and whatever honour and advantage I may be able to bring to this matter. Noble, valid Junker and most loyal friend, I pray to God from my heart that he may increase his grace in you

and that he may sustain you for the sake of his honour in all your worldly sorrows and dangers, as you stand by your faith and show due zeal. Amen.

During your several visits here I was labouring under a grave fever,<sup>1</sup> otherwise I would have preferred to indicate these thoughts to you in person and be more detailed than I can be in writing. For this reason I ask you to give a closer reading to this letter. We hope by God that the two princes, my gracious lord of Württemberg and the landgrave, who love sound teaching, are wise enough to consider by themselves that the present victory is due to the Almighty.<sup>2</sup> He alone can grant victory and maintain it in future, and he demands from us nothing in return but gratitude. Now, there is no better way for my gracious lords to declare their pious minds and prove their gratitude to the Almighty than to introduce together with the natural and rightful prince the true divine service and the pure gospel and to bring it into the hearts of the believers. All things are in flux now, and great things are to be hoped from men's minds, as long as the enemy does not gain a foothold and practise his tricks against the Truth. Christian princes cannot establish a sound government without a religion that holds fast to God in their conscience and through which the prince and his subjects may recognize their God and Father in heaven and fear and adore him. Thus, the common man acknowledges the established government, obeys it as he obeys God, loves it as a member of Christ's body, and shows all patience, moderation, discipline, and virtue. The people regard all who share these sentiments as friends of God. For the evil man they feel pity rather than indignation and ill will. Such sentiments in the common people would be most commendable in the realm, and merit the highest praise to be obtained on earth. This our two lords may achieve without much effort through the establishment of evangelical preaching and through good ordinances. Our only concern is that the people may go astray, departing from the first Christian rule of love, and that strife may arise and heated speeches be made on behalf of the gospel preached in another community. In this point it is necessary that you and the other princely counsellors show good sense and consider every possibility before proceeding to action. In matters of the faith one must act according to the understanding of Christ, who is the eternal Truth, and one must keep a calm mind so that one does not disdain the words of others but always aims to win people for the Lord with kindness. In that respect, certain

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1 See above, Ep. 531, note 4.

2 For the reconquest of the duchy of Württemberg by Duke Ulrich, thanks to the help of Landgrave Philip of Hesse, in the spring of 1534, see above, Ep. 532 headnote.

people who claim to be Lutherans have gone astray in my opinion and have hurt with their bitter reproaches and abusive talk the citizens, who still obey the pope and are too intent on ceremonies. Our gospel should be preached in the whole world and should announce justification through faith with genuine love and kindness, to preserve unity in teaching and in the sacraments.

For this purpose, it is necessary first to preach and to listen to an account of the main articles of Christian teaching and to warn against other teachings. The first foundation and teaching of faith to have a lasting effect. May God grant our teaching to flow from him and be established in the right and Christian manner in the realm of Württemberg. It may be expressed in a few words: Everything rests on trust in God and on inner piety, which is achieved through faith in Christ. Certain people who call themselves Lutherans always act in a quarrelsome and partisan way, as if they did not want to advance God's business. Perhaps they are driven by factions. In that case it does not seem wise to act in any way against the Elector of Saxony, that is, against Luther's opinion. Therefore, we ask you to consider how such people may make a beginning of the gospel in the realm of Württemberg in liberty and according to their belief, and may in the spirit of benevolence avoid hurting either Lutherans or Zwinglians, either on purpose or even out of ignorance, especially in points that allow a positive interpretation. There are truly valuable servants of God on both sides, who preach in a pious spirit – which is our practice here and represents our attitude. A fair and friendly attitude promotes a sound government; in this wretched schism, however, one should not be too close to any party and leave pious papists, Lutherans, and Zwinglians (unfortunately, we now have sectarian names) to their opinions. One should immediately educate the community in the simple truth, rejecting any elements that go against faith and love. Rather, let us retain what may somehow be good and let it remain unchanged. God wants one government for his people. Thus it is right to pay attention to good government in the business of God, while obeying the dictates of our faith.

We, however, who are the ministers of the gospel, consider furthermore (as we owe such consideration to God on account of our office) how we may act in all friendliness and not burden anyone's conscience without reason, and how we may observe the law of charity, as our Lord Christ has commanded us. Nevertheless, it is fair for you, the Christian princes and council, to consider at the same time the public welfare, which means not to obstruct the right preaching of the gospel among honourable people. One must ignore evil men. They are known to God, who parted the Red Sea so that the true Israelites might pass through. My advice is to set about the above-mentioned enterprise by giving it the right foundation through skilful people, such as Simon Grynaeus of Basel or Ambrosius Blaurer of Constance, who have a good

relationship with Philip [Melancthon] of Wittenberg, and who are steady, learned, peaceful, true, and experienced men. Grynaeus may be helpful in reorganizing the University of Tübingen, to introduce piety and good morals together with the right kind of academic disciplines in the realm and in Upper Germany.<sup>3</sup> Blaurer should be mainly in charge of preaching, administering the sacraments, and other sacred matters in the community of God.<sup>4</sup> But both should for a while take counsel together and act jointly. I have no doubt that in this manner the matter would proceed without burdening any evangelical estate and would please and satisfy everyone. It is our considered opinion that Dr Martin Luther must not be deserted under any circumstances, but must be kept before our eyes as an important organ of God, although his gifts, significant as they may be, are not without crass blemishes and shortcomings. Conversely other men, whom he rejects, are likewise valuable organs of God. They have a strong following and God's helping grace, so that we cannot desert them either. The lasting truth lies midway between these parties. The wise thing to do is to speak with moderation, so that neither party has a reason to be suspicious and think that there is a desire to break off relations. For if one promotes the simple truth, many quarrelsome speeches, which have produced nothing but division, will stop of themselves.

Yet, dear Junker, one must not listen to the Anabaptists and other troublemakers, who fight against the unity of the church desired by God until they have neither God nor Christianity left in their home-made zeal. I therefore send you two books, which we would like to be conveyed to both princes.<sup>5</sup> If one reads a passage in them every day with a healthy mind, one has the sum of Christian teaching and life and a caution against the dangers of the demagogues, as we have both experienced. There is a man who will try to ingratiate himself through Junker Hans Konrad and Friedrich Thumb.<sup>6</sup> He is a nobleman from Silesia by the name of Caspar Schwenckfeld,<sup>7</sup> an eloquent

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3 See above, Ep. 532 headnote.

4 See above, Ep. 532 headnote.

5 Possibly a reference to Bucer's *Fürbereitung zum Concilio* (Strasbourg, 1533) and *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, 3 March 1534). For an analysis of both works, see Nicholas Thompson, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and Patristic Tradition in the Theology of Martin Bucer, 1534–1546* (Leiden, 2005), 131–9.

6 For Hans Konrad and Hans Friedrich Thumb von Neuburg, see Ep. 532, note 18.

7 For Caspar Schwenckfeld, see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote. In a marginal comment to his letter to Blaurer, written on 29 May 1534, Bucer wrote: 'Capito has described the man [i.e., Schwenckfeld] at length and carefully to a certain nobleman [i.e., Truchsess]' (see Schiess 1, Ep. 423, note 3).

and amiable man, who knows how to speak about penance, good conscience, and other spiritual business. We would have been pleased to treat him as a friend and attract him to our circle, and that is how I treated him some two years ago in my house.<sup>8</sup> He leads a blameless life, as far as outward appearances go, and for this reason his persuasive speech was more readily accepted. But I will not conceal from you the damage he may do. His intention is to put down our divine service, that is, our preaching and administration of the sacraments and wait with two or three men who share his interpretation for the Holy Spirit to appear, as it did on Pentecost in Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> He does not regard anyone as a Christian except those who accept his teaching. He wants to be seen as the man who alone knows the truth, whereas everyone else is in error (he says), shows no regard for God, flees from the cross – in sum, he alone can govern the affairs of God. He will not be satisfied even when we say the same thing as he. Everything we do is worldly and must be rejected. He is completely against Luther, and his whole intention is to ruin him together with others, whom God mainly employs today to spread his gospel. And he will not accept the friendly excuses we offer for Luther's shortcomings, although we do so without detriment to the Truth.

You must consider how wretched it would be if Christ were not offered to everyone through the office of the preachers and through the sacraments, as he himself commanded us when he said, 'Go and preach to all creation.'<sup>10</sup> If anyone were to disdain the Lord Christ at will and publicly spread all kinds of error among the people at will, as Schwenckfeld means to do even if he makes an effort to conceal it, blasphemy would increase and there would be unrest among the poor common people. I trust by God that the pious princes wish to further God's honour among their subjects and will not allow anything to happen that takes all religion out of people's hearts. One can see it among the Turks, where there has been no public teaching, and in their faith itself, that many people do not respect God and know nothing of the divine service. I will not cite examples closer to home.

Furthermore, Schwenckfeld regards baptism of infants a great horror, although it is not against scripture, but rests on an analogy of passages in the Old and New Testament. In addition, he is in the habit of complaining vigorously against the preachers, although they have never harmed him and want to treat him with good will. Thus, his complaints are spurious. In my opinion, the frequent complaints get him used to the idea until he thinks that

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8 See above, Ep. 519.

9 Cf. Acts 2.

10 Mark 16:15.

what he says is true. But he should know that the contrary is the case. He is wrong when he complains that we invited him to come to the synod<sup>11</sup> and there compared him with others who are in error. The purpose of the synod was to allow anyone who saw anything wrong with our teaching or life to indicate his disagreement. Schwenckfeld went to Junker Hans Sturm,<sup>12</sup> one of the XV, and asked that he be allowed to debate with us and, if necessary, to petition the honourable council as well. Junker Hans indicated this to Jacob Sturm<sup>13</sup> and the presiding magistrate, and as a result we asked that he be informed of the planned synod and notified that he would be given an opportunity to criticize our teaching and life. He was repeatedly informed of this by Jacob Sturm.

[Schwenckfeld] also draws conclusions from printed books that are counter to the writer's meaning. Indeed, we were obliged to indicate as much in print. He is a very suspicious man. He is inclined to believe the worst and is completely intent on attacking and destroying the gifts of others, contrary to the command of Paul: Quarrelsome speech does not edify the spirit, but ruins it.<sup>14</sup> That is his whole purpose. I fear the whole trouble has its origin in his reading polemics and imagining a glorious church, for which Christ is preparing us now in the service of the church, and does not find us ready. In addition, Schwenckfeld has not studied academic disciplines and therefore proffers unsound arguments, which he maintains stubbornly until he finally gives them up himself. He is too fond of his own thought, and he regards as divine revelation the material he is reading now or dreaming up himself. He thinks no human being has ever thought of it, although even the meanest of our helpers knows of it. This is the result of him being a melancholy type.

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11 I.e., the Synod of Strasbourg (see above, Ep. 511, note 9).

12 Johannes Sturm (1507–1589) studied in Liège and Leuven and from 1529 taught in Paris. There he became influenced by Bucer's Reformation writings. In 1537, he accepted a call to Strasbourg, where he was instrumental in establishing the Strasbourg Gymnasium in 1538 and was its rector for many years. Thanks to his efforts and his commitment to the humanities, the Gymnasium became a university (*academia*) in 1566. Sturm mediated between the confessions as a diplomat and humanist and supported the Huguenots. Since he cultivated an epistolary friendship with Calvin and remained theologically loyal to Bucer, Sturm became involved in a decades-long clash with Bucer's successors at Strasbourg, Johannes Marbach and Johannes Pappus, both Lutherans, which led to his dismissal in 1581. He retired to Northeim (Lower Saxony), where he lived until his death.

13 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

14 Cf. 1 Tim. 1:4, 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:13–14, 24; and Titus 3:2.

This makes him insist on an opinion he has conceived and fills him with fear and suspicion, even when there is nothing to fear. He suffers from *serodiscencia*, learning late in life. Such people believe that no one knows what they are now finally learning, and therefore make a great fuss about it. Furthermore, being a nobleman, he is given preferential treatment, has his flatterers, and is used to everyone yielding to him and respecting his opinion. The duke of Liegnitz,<sup>15</sup> his lord, has summoned him often, but he does not want to go because he knows that he will not be allowed to teach anything opposing the public church. That is why he comes here to the preachers, to confound them, and put down the business through them. Being aware of this, we had to get rid of him. He will not accept us as Christian and evangelical brethren. He disagrees with us on the main articles, quite apart from the sacramental question, and disdains our divine service. He regards his fantastic ideas as divine revelation, although, if one wanted to give them a negative interpretation, they serve the destruction and betrayal of God. For example, he makes the people of the Old Testament only a people in the historical sense, who have had nothing but worldly prophecies. How then are we grafted on to Him, like wild branches?<sup>16</sup> If the root is not holy, how are we holy, who have entered into the revelation of the Fathers through Christ? If they were given only worldly prophecies, why do we hope for heavenly revelation? After all, the whole of scripture is based on the prophecy given to Abraham, which is everywhere revived for the people of the law and also for us Christians through the apostles. There is only one God, one way, one method, and anyone who stands with him has and always has had the Word of revelation, as it was given to the Fathers and is true in Christ. Otherwise, the business of Christ our Lord would be new in the world and run counter to the old business of God – something Schwenckfeld has no scruples to state. He may well palm off this terrible error on inexperienced people and insist on using it as a basis to argue against our lasting Truth.

This I wanted to write to you in confidence, for Schwenckfeld promotes the idea that government should keep out of matters of the faith, an idea that causes upheaval in government (which now grips the whole world). The city of Münster is an example.<sup>17</sup> I beg you to make an effort and see to it that the two princes, my gracious lords, take time out from their grave obligations and wars to consider God's honour and the gospel, as I have written, so that

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15 Friedrich II (1480–1547) was Duke von [Brieg]-Liegnitz (1516–26). He was Schwenckfeld's early patron (see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote).

16 Cf. Rom. 11:16–19.

17 I.e., the seizure of the city of Münster by the Anabaptists in February 1534.

after a good beginning the Almighty may give them further grace. It is his will, and he commands us to look first to the kingdom of God. May he protect you from all harm to your body and soul. Bucer and Hedio send their greetings. Thus I commend myself to you. Given on 21 May 1534.

Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 534: 23 May 1534, [Bern], Berchtold Haller to [Capito] and Martin Bucer**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, no. 12. Even though this letter is directed specifically to Bucer, the address itself on the verso of the manuscript is addressed to both Capito and Bucer.

Greetings. The Strasbourgers did a most welcome thing when they took the initiative and our dearest and also most learned brothers wrote to our people about the state of things there and about the enterprise of the pious princes.<sup>1</sup> For we were kept in suspense by empty talk and had no certain information. Yet the church was praying for the successful outcome of their enterprise, as far as it could promote the glory and justice of God and propagate it further through them. We hope for better things as long as we are God-fearing in our prayers – lest grief follow our great joy. Among us everything is fairly peaceful. *There was a downpour. The bad fellows sought shelter.*<sup>2</sup> As for the rest, we are sorry to hear of Capito's ill health.<sup>3</sup> We wish to see him restored not only for your sake but for the sake of the universal holy church. We are praying for him and hope without ceasing that his health will improve – I wanted to write all that.

I have already received your book addressed to the people of Münster and will read it in the next days.<sup>4</sup> The first glimpses moved me so much that I want to get ready and read it as soon as possible. Ezechiel is for sale here.<sup>5</sup> I

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- 1 I.e., the attempts of Philip of Hesse and especially Duke Ulrich von Württemberg to reform their respective realms.
- 2 The italicized text is in German.
- 3 See above, Ep. 531, note 4.
- 4 Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyligen geschriff* (Strasbourg, 3 March 1534). On 8 June, Haller wrote to Bucer that he had received a copy of Bucer's work, together with a letter from Bucer written on 14 April (see Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, no. 13).
- 5 Johannes Oecolampadius, *In prophetam Ezechielem ...*, ed. Capito (Strasbourg, March 1534). See above, Epp. 526–7.

have received from you [only] 18 gatherings, your preface to Paul, and nothing more.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, if possible, send me the rest through your merchants at the fair. I write frequently to you, but I cannot find out from your reply whether any of the letters have been intercepted, for your replies are very brief. We had a general synod in Bern on 22 April.<sup>7</sup> It differed from previous synods in discipline, and was conducted in a greater spirit of concord. In the morning we were encouraged to hear each man explain how he taught in his sermons about the law, the abrogation of the law, the works of faith, and especially the sacraments in our religion. We tested them, asking about their studies, their reading, their diligence and experience. The divisions have ceased, which unfortunately prevailed among us for some time and had caused enmity. In the afternoon we made critical observations about the preachers' life and character, and we did so for four days. All promised to show greater diligence, *for we have been like unbaked bread so far. May the Lord improve us.*<sup>8</sup> We heard from a Frenchman,<sup>9</sup> who debated with us in colloquies instituted by Capito, and completely denied that Christ was God eternally and in reality. He wished to communicate his error to everyone and was

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6 Martin Bucer, *Metaphrases et enarrationes ... Pauli* (Strasbourg, March 1536). Bucer's preface is found on pp. 1–40. See Haller's letter to Bucer, written on 10 June: 'I have received from Dr Capito the beginning of Ezechiel – only 18 gatherings [*quaterniones*], nothing more. I readily accept as an excuse his poor health. Nevertheless, since you are of both one heart and mind, I would like, if possible, to have the beginning and end of the prophet, and whatever part of [the commentary] on Paul has been printed thus far' (see Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, no. 13).

7 See Haller to Bullinger, 3 May 1534 (HBBW 4, Ep. 370, note 25).

8 The italicized text is in German.

9 Claude d'Aliod of Moutiers in Savoy was an antitrinitarian preacher. He championed the absolute unity of God and rejected the divinity of the Holy Spirit and Christ. He spread his teachings, reminiscent of Servetus, in many places. For that reason he was expelled in the spring of 1534 from Basel, then from Bern and Zurich; in August 1534 from Constance, Memmingen, and Ulm; in September 1534 from Strasbourg; in January 1535 from Augsburg; and in April 1535 from Wittenberg. D'Aliod returned to his hometown, where he worked as a preacher in Thonon-les-Bains, along Lake Geneva, from 1536 to 1539. At the Synod of Lausanne in May 1537, he falsely claimed to have recanted his teachings. In 1543/4, he is attested as a citizen of Constance. In 1540 and from 1545 to 1547, Schwenckfeld warned his loyal followers about d'Aliod's 'Arian poison.' In January 1547, d'Aliod recanted his errors regarding the Trinity in order to be freed from imprisonment in Augsburg. From 1550 onward, he declared he was a prophet and taught in and around Memmingen. His subsequent activities are unknown.

ousted by the city because he was a disciple of Servetus<sup>10</sup> of Spain. Today we debated before the council with a man from Lucerne<sup>11</sup> about the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the flesh. In the meantime the Anabaptists have not been idle. Thus Satan rises up if we rest our arms.

My dear Bucer, advise me whom I should read among the writers of old. For I often think of the admonitions you gave me last year regarding the reading of ancients. I have seen Cyril's *Thesaurus* against the heretics;<sup>12</sup> I have doubts about reading Tertullian, Irenaeus and Hilary, but I shall follow your counsel. We are all otherwise doing well. *Two provosts were elected to the Great Council:*<sup>13</sup> Wattenwyl,<sup>14</sup> Nægeli,<sup>15</sup> and also a canon.<sup>16</sup> The mayor was removed by the magistrates for [accepting] gifts.<sup>17</sup> He left for good and went

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10 For Michael Servetus, see above, Ep. 469, note 25.

11 Identity unknown.

12 Presumably a reference to Saint Cyril's *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate* (PG 75, cols. 9–656). The only printed copy of the collected works of Cyril at the time were the three volumes edited by Oecolampadius, which appeared under the title, *Cyriti ... opera in tres partita tomos*, ed. Johannes Oecolampadius, Tomus 2: *Opus insigne quod Thesaurus inscribitur ...* (Basel: Cratander, 1528).

13 The italicized text is in German.

14 Millet identifies him as Nikolaus von Wattenwyl (d. 1551), who matriculated at the University of Basel in the spring of 1505 and studied from 1509 to 1510 at Paris. In 1509 he became a canon of the cathedral in Bern, and from 1520 he acted on behalf of the sick provost of that chapter, whom he succeeded on 5 March 1523. Meanwhile he was also provost of the cathedral chapter of Lausanne from 1514 to 1520, and as of 1517, a canon of Basel. In 1522, a rumour circulated that he was to succeed Matthaues Schiner as bishop of Sion, but by that time he had already established a connection with Zwingli. From the time of his appointment as provost of St Vincent's in Bern he worked energetically toward the reform of Bern, preventing a visitation by the bishop of Lausanne and instructing the clergy to preach according to the gospel. On 5 December 1525 he resigned all his benefices and officially joined the reformers. On the other hand, Haller might also be referring to Nikolaus von Wattenwyl's brother, Hans Jakob von Wattenwyl (1506–1560), who was elected mayor of Bern in 1533. He was a member of the Great Council of Bern from 1525, and of the Small Council in 1526 (see HBBW 3, Ep. 211).

15 Hans Franz Nægeli (c. 1500–1579) belonged to a Bernese noble family. He attended the *Tagsatzung* in Zurich (19–21 November 1532) as a delegate of Bern. He was the chief captain when the French Swiss canton of Vaud was conquered in 1536. From 1540 to 1568, he was *Schultheiss* of Bern.

16 The italicized text is in German.

17 Sebastian von Diesbach (1480–1538) came from an old Bernese family. He was a member of both councils in Bern, colonel (*Oberst*) of the Bernese troops in

to Fribourg. Studies are flourishing. Simon Sulzer is well behaved.<sup>18</sup> Bedrot's boy is also doing very well – Jonas,<sup>19</sup> I mean – to whose father I send greetings. But I beseech you, dearest Bucer, send me as soon as possible what has been printed of your commentary on Paul, and also Capito's commentary on Ezechiel,<sup>20</sup> and if you have anything else which you know I would like. Brunfels is well.<sup>21</sup> But he does not get involved in the church and in the business of the ministers. Regarding our friend Jérôme, that unfortunate man,<sup>22</sup> write to him once in a while. Pierre Viret of Orbe, a most learned young man from Bern, preaches the Word of the Lord publicly in Geneva.<sup>23</sup> I am writ-

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the Battle of Bicocca, and *Schultheiss* in 1529. In both battles of Kappel, he was High Commander (*Oberkommando*) of the Bernese. He became a moderate but loyal supporter of the Reformation. In 1534, he was arrested for accepting a monetary gift, fined, and removed from all his offices. He left Bern and settled in Fribourg, where he returned to the Catholic faith.

- 18 Simon Sulzer (1508–1580) studied in Bern, Lucerne, and Strasbourg. In 1531, he became a student of Simon Grynaeus in Basel and worked as a proofreader in the print shop of Johannes Herwagen. In addition, he taught at the Lower College as well as the Schalerhof am Rheinsprung in Basel, and in 1532, was named professor of logic. In 1533, he moved to Bern, where he worked as a lecturer at the Latin School as well as a preacher (see above, Ep. 518). From 1538 to 1548, he held the offices of teacher, pastor at the cathedral, and dean. In 1548, he was discharged for his Lutheran sympathies, and the following year became minister at St Peter's in Basel. In 1552, he was appointed professor of Hebrew, and as of 1554, professor of the Old and New Testaments at the University of Basel.
- 19 Jonas Bedrot (d. 1541/2 of the plague).
- 20 See above, note 5.
- 21 For Otto Brunfels, see CWC 1, Ep. 25 headnote, and above, Ep. 523, note 28.
- 22 Jérôme Bolsec (c. 1524–1584) was born in Paris and became a Carmelite friar. He turned Protestant and went to Geneva, where he practised medicine. In 1550/1 he settled with his wife in Chablais, near Geneva. In October 1551, he was imprisoned in Geneva for having spoken out against the doctrine of predestination. At the advocacy of Basel and Bern, he was released and banned from Geneva on 18 December 1551. He lived near Bern until 1555. Later, he returned to the Catholic faith and lived as a physician in Autun and Lyon. He wrote biographies of Calvin and Théodore de Bèze.
- 23 Pierre Viret (1511–1571) was the distinguished reformer of the French part of Switzerland. Born in Orbe (Canton Vaud), he was educated in Paris, where he became acquainted with evangelical teachings. Suspected of heresy, he was forced to leave the city. After his return to Orbe, Guillaume Farel obtained a preaching position for him. He worked in Orbe, Grandson, Avenches, Payerne, and Neuchâtel, until called to Geneva on 4 January 1534 at the request of the city council of Bern and with the support of Farel. After the conquest of Vaud by Bern in 1536 and the successful Disputation of Lausanne, in which Viret took

ing everything in this disorderly fashion because I have just learned that the Basel messenger has brought your letter to us. Please greet Capito, Zell,<sup>24</sup> my dearest brother and his wife, Hedio, Theobald,<sup>25</sup> and the others. On the eve of Pentecost, '34. I received your last letter through Johannes Lening of Hesse.<sup>26</sup>

Your B. H., worth no more than a penny.<sup>27</sup>

### Letter 535: [After 22 May 1534], Strasbourg, Capito to the Reader

In this open letter, Capito relates the circumstances surrounding the death of the Spiritualist Claus Frey, who was executed by drowning in Strasbourg on 22 May 1534. Frey, a radical leader during the Peasants' War at Rothenburg ob der Tauber (Franconia), joined the Anabaptists at Windsheim in 1531, where he was re-baptized by Julius Lober. In late 1531 or early 1532, the town council of Windsheim had him arrested, but released him on the promise of a public recantation. Instead of recanting, however, Frey fled to Nürnberg, leaving behind his wife Katharine and his children, who refused to follow him (QGT 8:20, no. 369). At Nürnberg he made friends with an influential Anabaptist, Georg Pfersfelder alias Gross, a captain in the service of the city (see below, note 5). Frey stayed in Pfersfelder's house and later accompanied him and his sister

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part, the Reformation was introduced in that canton. He worked as pastor and soon also as professor at the Theological Academy in Lausanne. In terms of theology, he sided with John Calvin, whose return to Geneva in 1541 he helped bring about. On account of his Calvinist views of church discipline, he was banned from Bern by the city council in 1559. From there he travelled to Geneva, and soon thereafter to Nîmes and Montpellier. In 1563, he presided over the French national synod of Lyon. Threatened with expulsion, he was called to the duchy of Navarre and lived from 1567 until his death in Pau in the foothills of the Pyrenees.

- 24 For Matthew Zell, preacher at the Strasbourg cathedral, see CWC 1, Ep. 167 headnote.
- 25 For Theobald Nigri, see CWC 2, Ep. 289, note 13.
- 26 Johannes Lening (Neobolus) of Butzbach, Hesse (1491–1565) studied at Erfurt (BA, 1509). After a few years of teaching in Butzbach, he became a monk (1514). In 1524 he was prior in the Carthusian house in Eppenberg. From 1525/6 on he was chaplain, and from 1528 until his death, parish priest in Melsungen, Hesse-Nassau.
- 27 A pun on his name, based on the similarity between Haller and Heller, a small German coin. Cf. Haller's letter to Heinrich Bullinger (HBBW 3, Ep. 217, note 16).

Elisabeth to their castle at Weilersbach in Upper Franconia. Frey soon began a sexual relationship with Elisabeth, using religious pretences. In the fall of 1532, the pair left for Strasbourg. In May 1533, Frey was arrested and thrown into prison by the Strasbourg authorities for his categorical refusal to give up his adulterous relationship with Elisabeth. In the second half of May 1533, the pair was interrogated at several hearings before the city council of Strasbourg (QGT 8:11–14, nos. 361–2, 369, 384, 388, and 400) and again at the Synod of Strasbourg in June 1533 (QGT 8, nos. 384, 388, 400, and 405). On 26 May 1533, the city council of Strasbourg wrote to the town council of Windsheim, asking for more detailed information on Frey. They responded on 5 June, providing proof of his citizenship there and his rebaptism (QGT 5/2:185–8). To add to the drama, his legal wife, Katharine Frey, showed up in Strasbourg with her children in tow, presenting herself as a model of loyalty and obedience (QGT 8:121, no. 409). Frey in turn declared that she was ‘of the devil’ (QGT 8, no. 410, 22 July 1533). He was given two more hearings on 18 November 1533 (QGT 8, no. 456) and 5 May 1534, but persisted in his refusal to recant (QGT 8, no. 552). On 12 June, Matthew Zell reported to Ambrosius Blaurer on Frey’s execution by drowning and the reaction of Elisabeth Pfersfelder to his death (Schiess 1:503–4, no. 425).

Capito’s letter is formally addressed to the ‘Christian Reader’ and therefore included in Millet’s list of Capito’s correspondence. The title of the pamphlet is *Ein wunderbar geschicht und ernstlich warning Gottes, so sich an eim Widertäufer, genant Claus Frey, zûtragen, der mit unerhörtem trutz und bochen sich hat ertrencken lassen, ehe dann er hat wöllen seine fromme ehewraw, bey der er XV. jar fridsam gelebt, und VIII. kind gezeüget, wider annemen, unnd ein andere fraw begeben, so er im schein eins geistlichen Ehestands an sich gehenckt hatt* (An amazing story and earnest warning from God of what happened to an Anabaptist named Claus Frey, who suffered being drowned with great and loudly proclaimed stubbornness rather than taking back his pious wife, with whom he had lived in peace for fifteen years and sired eight children before taking another wife and joining her to himself under the pretence of a spiritual marriage) (Strasbourg: Apiarius, 1534). The text is printed with minor orthographic changes in QGT 8:321–42, no. 564.

I wish you, Christian reader, the grace of God and the simple knowledge of Jesus Christ’s sacraments.

Since our faith has been revealed to us by the Son of God, our Saviour, and attested by Moses and all the prophets – a faith that brings us true peace, enduring patience, disdain of the present and desire for eternal life – Satan lays claim to revelation heard from the mouth of God, scripture and the true word of faith, and he makes much of his great zeal, earnestness, patience and suffering. He gives the appearance of piety with prominent works and he

effects that his followers suffer much and die in patience, counterfeiting the virtue of faith in the children of disobedience, sin, and rebellion against the faith, so that he may through them as his tools turn decent people away from faith and the teaching of faith and thus maintain his kingdom of darkness and seduction.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit teaches us to distinguish true knowledge and true godly teaching from its false form, and the correct understanding of scripture from error, and warns us through the holy apostles not to build our faith on human works and lives and deaths, but to make an effort to bring the sum of our belief in Christ and the course of grace truly to life in our hearts. Thus we shall increase in the things that God has given us through Christ, for our gospel 'consists not of words but of the power of God.'<sup>1</sup> Yet vulgar minds have no regard for the sound teaching of faith and have always shown more respect for works than for the Christian truth, for tricks and pretence in life and vainglorious endurance than true piety and a meek spirit. Therefore, the Almighty in his mercy puts before our eyes exemplary tales, from which we may deduce and recognize the counsel of the devil, who fills simple people, who should be most suited to the kingdom of God, with spiritual pride, proffering various things to various men to demonstrate his artifice. He does it all to make us abandon our simplicity in Christ.

Our merciful God warns us against the devil in a fatherly manner, not only through holy writ, experience of faith and ancient history, but, as I said, he allows us to learn in our daily experience, for example, through the recent horrible actions of Claus Frey,<sup>2</sup> a furrier in Windsheim and an Anabaptist. This I shall briefly relate, pious reader, for your benefit. It is a true story, as can be seen from the foolish writings and the confession of the man himself and of Elisabeth,<sup>3</sup> and is known here in Strasbourg to the honourable council

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1 1 Cor. 4:20.

2 For Claus Frey, see above, headnote.

3 Elisabeth Pfersfelder, sister of Georg Pfersfelder (see below, note 5) was 'a prominent widow of Wibersbach in the diocese of Bamberg' (see CS 4:99). She became acquainted with Claus Frey in the home of her brother, who sympathized with the Anabaptists. She believed his claims of being a prophet and became his wife without being aware of the fact that he was already married. She followed Frey to Strasbourg, where he was arrested by the city council, tried, and executed by drowning in 1534. Distraught by his death, Elisabeth begged the council to take her life as well, but being innocent, was left at liberty and remained in Strasbourg. She came under the pastoral care of Valentin Crautwald, who addressed a letter to her on 14 November 1540. She also corresponded with Schwenckfeld on the Incarnation of Christ (for his response, written probably in the summer of 1540, see CS 7:99–104, no. 320).

and to honest people. I shall encompass and describe it in four sections: how Frey came to be an Anabaptist; how he deserted his wife and associated with his lover under the pretence of a spiritual marriage; what awful errors he taught; and the terrible death he suffered.

### The Baptism of Claus Frey

First, when the gospel began to be preached in Windsheim, Claus Frey accepted it earlier than others and quite zealously, but more out of passion and idiosyncrasy, than to please God, as his deeds and his inconsistency show. For when the wandering Anabaptists slipped into Windsheim, and the council there gave its citizens a fatherly warning and forbade anyone to lodge them to prevent them from causing unrest, and furthermore when the Windsheim preachers took care to disseminate the true doctrine, Frey became even more eager and passionate about taking up the cause of the Anabaptists and professing his belief in their baptism, whereupon he was imprisoned.

On the ninth day, however, when the *Altbürgermeister* himself<sup>4</sup> came to him, he fell on his knees and confessed that he had wronged God and the honourable council, and begged to be received in a fatherly manner like a lost son. If they granted him his life, he would do everything the council imposed on him. Thereupon, they let him go on the strength of an oath to keep the peace and on condition that he acknowledge his error, abstain from it, give neither aid to nor participate in it, nor associate with the Anabaptists. But when they imposed on him a stiff penalty, more as a public confession of his error and warning to other people than as a punishment, he left the city, his wife, and his children without the council's knowledge, and stayed away from the city. Yet he wrote three arrogant letters, the contents of which were quite at variance with his oath and inconsistent with his own words, on which we shall comment later.

Soon he joined the Anabaptists and showed his manly virtue and his victory over the people in Windsheim quite aggressively and righteously, so that they immediately made him a leader, for they like to glory in such strong heroes. It is hardly a question of correct knowledge and understanding of God among them – only a question of opposing infant baptism and public preaching. His office as leader prompted Frey to initiate something

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4 Possibly Sebastian Hagelstein, mayor of Windsheim in the 1520s who represented the city at the Diet of Speyer in 1529. See Lawrence P. Buck, 'Civil Insurrection in a Reformation City: The Versicherungsbrief of Windsheim, March 1525,' *ARG* 67 (1976): 100–16.

new, as almost every leader does, as far as we have heard. They teach that this new belief is necessary for salvation, of which all those people are ignorant who want to teach the one and only gospel of Christ and call themselves Lutherans or Zwinglians.

#### The Beginnings of His Spiritual Marriage and Its Establishment

So much about his baptism, which was the beginning of his ruin. Next he progressed to a new marriage. After he had become a leader and had the power to teach and live off other people's work, he went to the house of a pious citizen in Nürnberg,<sup>5</sup> who was pleased at the time with the apparent earnestness of the Anabaptists. There, as is their practice, he spoke grandly about his belief and his vocation, and of the great revelation, and vehemently and hotly declared that we, the common preachers, did not have the right gospel.

The fruit of his preaching soon became apparent, for the above-mentioned master's sister kindly asked Frey to pray to God for her. He then asked her whether she felt carnal temptations. But when she was too embarrassed to reveal anything further, he began to speak softly of baptism, as she wrote later on: 'From this I recognized that he was born of the Holy Spirit of God, and I wanted nothing more than to be his handmaid,' etc., and she served him to the best of her ability, and he in turn gave her spiritual instruction. After fourteen days (she said), the master of the house left the city to stay at his estate, and Frey accompanied him. On a Saturday night, when she went to bed, the holy seed in her heart sprouted fully, as she writes, 'I felt such an urge, which spoke to me endlessly, telling me to go and subject myself to this man, with my body, my honour, and my possessions, and to let him do with me as he pleased. This urge was in me all night, although it was not a carnal

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5 Georg Pfersfelder alias Gross, a nobleman from Weilersbach, Bavaria, in the service of the city of Nürnberg. He held property at Weilersburg in the district of Bamberg. Pfersfelder was in close contact with Schwenckfeld from 1530 on, and seems to have had earlier connections with the local Anabaptists. He was also associated with the so-called dreamers (also called *Puschenhamer*), a group of Anabaptists, mainly illiterate peasants from the region around Erlangen, with unusual marital practices, who were suspected of revolutionary plans. In June 1531, Andreas Osiander, the leading theologian in Nürnberg, was commissioned to dispute with Pfersfelder concerning his Anabaptist beliefs, but Pfersfelder did not appear, presenting, instead, a statement of his beliefs. A colloquy between Osiander and Pfersfelder in 1532 was also fruitless. After the bloody suppression of the Anabaptists in Franconia, Pfersfelder became a Schwenckfeldian.

temptation. In the morning the urge got the better of me, and so I went to him in great fear and trembling, and declared myself subject to him in the above words; and he took me on, and we came to an agreement.'

Both of them write of this carnal business, saying that the Almighty God, dwelling in their hearts, united them in the Trinity through his Word, Christ Jesus, to whom they had pledged themselves earlier. You can see, dear Christian, how they were horribly led astray and how necessary it is for us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation.'<sup>6</sup> To make it appear more important, Frey wrote a letter divorcing his wife. Yet his conscience did not let him rest in peace, on account of a special judgment of God, for his new wife was immediately troubled. 'Alas,' she said, 'what have we done? If anyone had offered me 200 gulden, I would not have wanted to enter into such an affair.' He too felt badly about it and said to her, 'True, we won't do it again.' After fourteen days the man who had baptized her came to them. They told him of the affair and how they had done wrong. Yet he remained with her a few days longer. And although her brother was suspicious, they denied everything, until another Anabaptist informed him of it.

Both boast that they prayed to God in all humility, so that God could not possibly have allowed them to err. But the nature of their prayer is evident from the fact that they acted against the clear Word of God, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,'<sup>7</sup> that they yielded to their desires and did not obey anyone who criticized their evildoing. Indeed, before simple-minded Anabaptists he boasted of a great insight God had given him on account of this so-called marriage; furthermore, he kept suppressing the woman's bad conscience and admonishing her that she should be content with him because they were married.

At one point he decided to keep away from her for a year and promised as much to other Anabaptists. But soon, pretending great things, he aroused the poor woman's passion again, as she herself indicates with the words: 'Then he asked me why I had sent for him, and I said only because I would like to hear once more the Word of God from him. Then he asked me: 'But do you know that our marriage is in abeyance?' And I said, 'Yes, we ought to pray to God for salutary means.' And he said, 'Do you realize that God has granted us such salutary means?' Then I could hold back no longer and confessed that God himself was the means and had led me by the hand,' and further on she writes, 'The urge seized me again, and I went to him with fear

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6 Matt. 6:13.

7 Ex. 20:14.

and trembling, and subjected myself to him, and said to myself in my heart: "Oh Lord, behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be with me according to your divine word."<sup>8</sup> What a pity that her impure heart covered her shameless crime, that she pronounced the words of the chaste virgin and mother of Jesus Christ and her willing acceptance of the supernatural work of God! But that is the result of Frey's teaching.

Here is where their suffering begins, as the spiritual bride anticipated, and as often happens to rascals, male and female, for the devil's servants also have their share of suffering. Within eight days Claus Frey's wife came to Nürnberg, where they were at that time, aggrieved by their 'marriage' and having been robbed of her husband, with whom she had six little children, then still alive. After many angry accusations and countercharges, she struck the spiritual bride. But to fulfil scripture completely, Claus Frey saw in the divine Trinity that he should strike his old wife's head,<sup>9</sup> and so he did. To make the spiritual significance [of his violence] clear, he confirmed it with scriptural passages and figures, writing as follows to his [spiritual wife] Elisabeth, when she had written to him and asked him to refrain from it.

First, after a wonderful beginning taken from the first epistle of John, mixed with great and vehement boasts, he wrote thus: 'What we saw in the divine Trinity, I announce to you, my dearest sister in Christ Jesus, that you may join me in this communion with God our heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ. I write to you to make your joy complete. And now, my dearest sister in Christ Jesus, since God, our heavenly Father, has called us in his grace and mercy, to be an example to all the faithful that his power and glory be shown in us and through us, you must make a decided effort and listen to every word, that we may not waver in anything, but freely hold still in all humility, accepting whatever he wishes to do with us or command us, so that his will, and our will as well, may be felt. Although you think I have done too much for him because I struck my erstwhile wife's head, you must take note that all that had to happen and was fated to happen, so that all scripture – the Old and the New Testament – be fulfilled; for everything must be fulfilled in us, as I have always told you, before the right and true spiritual kingdom can begin with us. To be an apostle of Christ, I must first hate my wife, child, house, estate, and also my own body and life.<sup>10</sup> What I am supposed to hate, I cannot love, for it would be a kinship against God's will; well then, you may understand that I have to be dead to my old and former life to take on

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8 Luke 1:38.

9 Cf. Gen. 3:15.

10 Cf. Luke 14:26–7.

the other, spiritual and blessed life.<sup>11</sup> All that ought and must be shown in my erstwhile wife, who represents my former life, and thus I must hate her.' Thus far the words of Claus Frey.

You may think it is mockery, pious reader, when he pretends that both Testaments and all of scripture point to his striking his wife's head, his hatred for her, and the need for being dead to her if he should begin a different spiritual and blessed life. But all of this is the reason for his boasts and the way in which he led on his spiritual wife Elisabeth, as she herself wrote to the honourable city council. Furthermore, he wrote: 'Pay heed to these words and accept them that you may recognize the power of God. My wife is the old snake of Satan and you are the woman whose seed will crush her head.'<sup>12</sup> Thus I must be the seed. And so take note of the Word of God that comes from belief and must crush the head of unbelief, which is my wife. All this had to come to pass. It was not I who acted, but God who dwells in me and I who dwell in God.' To such nonsense he attests in many of his writings, which I shall omit here for brevity's sake.

#### His Errors and False Teaching

The temptations he experienced with this woman are the main reason for his odd teaching, for God usually punishes the sinner for his past and present evil-doing with subsequent sins, until he is finally ruined. These are Frey's principal articles:

1. The general practice of the sacraments and the rites of the church come from the devil – so he says, although he allowed himself to be baptized a second time.
2. All scripture foretold of him, his old wife and his new love, so that Els[beth]'s seed came from scripture, whereas his wife's seed was anchored in earthly things, and although he was a man, he also was the spiritual seed, and must trample underfoot what is carnal, that is, his wife.
3. In Saul we see that his wife was the head of the empire of unbelief, whereas his new sister Elisabeth was David, and taking the place

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Rom. 6:6-9; Gal. 2:20, 5:24; and 1 Pet. 2:24.

<sup>12</sup> Gen. 3:15. Cf. Clemens Ziegler's autograph coloured drawing of a woman as the serpent from which the angels of death go forth (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 76, plate 7). The drawing has been reproduced in black and white in Klaus Deppermann, *Melchior Hoffman: Social Unrest and Apocalyptic Visions in the Age of Reformation*, trans. Malcolm Wren and ed. Benjamin Drewery (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987).

of David she was anointed by God and the Holy Spirit for the eternal kingdom of the faith, 1 Samuel 22.<sup>13</sup> According to the spiritual meaning, he, Claus Frey, was Jonathan and made an eternal pact with David (that is, Elisabeth) according to the Spirit. This bothered Saul (his rightful wife), and she hurled the spear of evil words, calling him a scoundrel and Elisabeth a whore.<sup>14</sup>

4. The right and perfect work was for him, as a faithful man, to leave his former wife and take another.
5. The belief in justification and Christian love of one's neighbour consisted in Elisabeth's persistent love for him. That was the work of God, to improve the good, pious man, and thus faith was a very different thing from that taught by the above-named preachers.
6. His Elisabeth could rightly be called the mother of all believers, for she was the beginning of correct Christian faith.
7. His Elisabeth had, like Mary, given birth to Christ, thus she must reveal the image of Christ, and if Christ was the head of the church, there must be a maker, and she calls herself that and may say the Magnificat with the Virgin Mary: 'My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my salvation.'<sup>15</sup> And everyone should put his faith in him, and he will become apparent in his fruit and from what happened to her.
8. He alone was the head of the church, in whom Christ had perfected everything, and there would be no other to perfect it.
9. He was Christ according to the Word, and his flesh the brother of Christ.
10. He was sent by God to bear the image of Christ, and in these last days all secrets of God would be revealed, for just as Moses had borne the image of God, he must bear the image of Christ, and be a forerunner to the faithful.<sup>16</sup>
11. Through him all things must be corrected that have been corrupted since the birth of Christ; he was the tool to give God his glory.
12. Elisabeth states that God revealed this to her in his august school and indicated it to her in her heart through the Holy Spirit, that is, at the foot of Christ's cross, where she had betaken herself.

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13 Actually 2 Sam. 22:51.

14 Cf. 1 Sam. 18:10–11, 19:9–10.

15 Luke 1:46–7.

16 Cf. Exod. 34:29–30.

13. The common preachers were only workers in the rough, who gave the stone a rough outline and cleared the area, but were unable to build anything, etc.
14. The preachers of God were thieves of honour and seducers; they must not be believed when they say we are all sinners and when they teach that we must not do what is perfect, that is, that he must not leave his wife and children.

#### His Death and the Manner of His Death

After Elisabeth was driven from Nürnberg and came to Strasbourg where Claus had arrived earlier so that they could meet, other demagogues began to fear that this might be of disadvantage to their own plans, and criticized the two. Frey cast suspicion on one of them, although he was perhaps the most moderate in his attitude toward Elisabeth. Frey was so full of zeal that his affairs became even more notorious, and pious people no longer wanted to lodge them. The result was that at last the authorities incarcerated them and punished them, according to the law governing marriage – a punishment they both willingly accepted.<sup>17</sup>

Whereas Claus Frey demanded a hearing and emphatically offered to show that all teachings and rites in the church, as practised by us here, are not right but devilish, false, and a disturbance of the peace, she called his attention to the disadvantages that might result if they were not careful and that might lead to great suffering. But he wanted to appear in person before the authorities and the pious nobility. At the hearing, however, he proffered nothing more than to say that the church of Christ consisted of all who subjected themselves to authority, and without any reasons and very quietly he wanted to move the matter toward a defence of his new marriage. But no one wanted to respond to him on that point, for although he had been taken prisoner on that account, they did not want to aggravate his case, and those who treated with him, did not think that he would undertake to continue to defend such an abhorrent practice. They worried on his behalf, for the more he touched on the matter, the more he turned people against him, and indeed several people were greatly displeased with him at the hearing. He was most vehement in talking of Melchior Hoffman,<sup>18</sup> saying that he had seen

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<sup>17</sup> See QGT 8:13–14, no. 362.

<sup>18</sup> Melchior Hoffman (c. 1495–c. 1544) came from a family of artisans in Schwäbisch-Hall. Nothing is known about his early years or education. As of 1521 he lived in Livonia (in general, modern-day Latvia), where he became involved in iconoclastic disturbances and preached anticlerical sermons, which

and heard in the Holy Trinity that Melchior Hoffman, who had great support among the Anabaptists, was of the devil and would prompt upheaval with his revelations. Melchior, conversely, said that Claus Frey was a thief of God's honour, a satanic whoremonger, who seduced people under the aegis of the divine name. He swore by the splendid majesty of God and the spirit of his own prophecy that he had a vision of Claus Frey having lost a finger, that is, had broken a commandment of God.<sup>19</sup> Thus between the two of them, Claus Frey is the tool of God, and Melchior Hoffman the servant of the Almighty, as they call themselves, yet they oppose each other, and each man wishes to maintain his position against the other through the power of God, and to testify with his blood. But this offer was made in Strasbourg, where they did not have to fear anything dire or else many people would have shown more reserve.<sup>20</sup>

The understanding and support of the common people is fickle. Therefore, such men always want to deal with ignorant people and before the masses. Thus Claus Frey, too, demanded a public hearing, hoping, as the affair shows, that others would also complain about their marriages, and he would gladly have dealt with people who were more inclined to his view. That is why he also demanded in another letter to the [council of] Windsheim to have his affairs made known beyond the council, so that anyone who

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ultimately led to his expulsion in 1526. He then moved to Stockholm, where he was active as a radical preacher from 1526 to 1527 and wrote three treatises. Expelled from Stockholm, he relocated briefly to Lübeck. From 1527 to 1529, he was in Schleswig-Holstein, where he became embroiled in a lengthy controversy with Nikolaus von Amsdorf over the Lutheran interpretation of the Lord's Supper and was once again expelled. In 1529, he lived for some months in East Friesland, then moved to Strasbourg. At first he was warmly received by the local reformers for his Zwinglian views on the Lord's Supper, but soon joined the Strasbourg Prophets, who hailed him as the second Elijah. In 1530, he formally joined the Anabaptist movement, which prompted an order-of-arrest from the city council of Strasbourg. He therefore left the city on 23 April 1530, and after several sojourns in Friesland, Amsterdam, and Hesse, returned to Strasbourg in the spring of 1533. His teachings had a significant influence on the Münster Rebellion. He was arrested and interrogated during the Synod of Strasbourg in 1533. His beliefs were condemned, and he was treated with severity. He was subjected to another interrogation at the second synod of Strasbourg, 26–28 May 1539, and imprisoned until his death.

19 I.e., one of the Ten Commandments, namely, 'You shall not commit adultery' (Exod. 20:14 and Deut. 5:18).

20 Strasbourg had a reputation for tolerating dissenters (see above, Ep. 524, note 2).

thought he had a reason to complain would complain; and he furthermore demanded that the authorities of Nürnberg be called in. The poor, misled woman also kept asking for a public hearing before the whole community and the whole world, and furthermore wrote to the honourable council and greatly lamented the fact that the council had not heard her ideas from her own mouth. Thus we poor human beings hope that everything we like will please others as well. Here in Strasbourg, Claus Frey's affairs were well known, yet at no time did anyone publicly take his side.

Afterwards Katharine, Claus Frey's wife, came here and begged the council for help to regain her husband, whom she had lost through this affair.<sup>21</sup> She said she had used every friendly appeal to get him back, which resulted in his longer stay in prison. The honourable council made considerable effort to persuade him, both kindly and gravely, to reconcile with his pious wife. But the more time went by, the more he steeled his heart against the truth and the natural love for his children. So powerful was the grip of carnal desire on him. His wife repeatedly and in a friendly manner approached him through his brother and other supporters, and several times visited him and embraced him with tears in her eyes. She beseeched and admonished him to agree to go home with her, and emphatically promised never to hold this affair against him. She also brought along their two children to persuade him, but to him she was the devil personified and the mother of unbelief, who wanted to turn him away from his pact with God, as if all his hope for salvation was vested in the other woman, whom he called the mother of all the faithful.

But while the honourable council felt compassion for such crass blindness, they could not tolerate that public adultery and whoring, which go against scripture, should be presented in their city as a work of God. They did not want it said that God himself had commanded Frey to act thus, and therefore kept him in jail, while always noting that his past misdeeds would be pardoned if he were to rejoin his wife. Feeling great compassion, they acted mildly with him and in a friendly manner and were willing completely to overlook his past blasphemies, but he only became more recalcitrant and bitter, as if he had the council in his power. For a while he was kept in the dungeon, then for several days he was taken out to cleanse his head, and they allowed him to stay a few days in the tower, which is a tolerable prison. But he said to the emissaries that the council was divided in its judgment. They had condemned him to the dungeon until he changed his mind, but

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21 See QGT 8:121–2, nos. 409–12.

they did not persevere with this demand and let him out of the dungeon, although he maintained his opinion. All that was overlooked by the honourable council in the hope that he would reform.

When he was confronted with scripture, 1 Cor. 7 – ‘If there is strife between married people, they should reconcile, and the husband should not divorce his wife’; also, ‘If any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.’<sup>22</sup> – Frey replied that this was merely counsel. Then they said that even if it was only counsel, it was nevertheless good counsel and from God. Since he said he was devoted to God, he should live according to his counsel. Then he reasoned as follows: ‘From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die. Allow no outlet to water, and no boldness of speech in an evil wife. If she does not go as you direct, separate her from yourself’ (Eccl. 25).<sup>23</sup> At other times he used to say the scriptural passages advanced against him were a dead letter and devoid of the Spirit, made up by theologians, by whom the whole gospel and Christian liberty were cancelled and obstructed; that obedience to the faith would never develop unless one left evil behind and accepted what was better. And he boasted of his revelation, which ran counter to scripture, and insisted his wife was bad and must therefore be avoided, being Satan himself.

His wife, by contrast, has excellent references from Windsheim, attesting to her pious, chaste life, and from Claus Frey’s brother,<sup>24</sup> who is praised as a strong and upright man, and also from Elisabeth’s brother, who was very sorry that she had to rear her children under such difficult conditions. She was nevertheless so quiet and patient, and did not manifest any ill will on account of her husband’s evil actions, but sought out all ways and means to have him back. Elisabeth’s brother wrote to his sister and to Claus that he had found his wife [Katharine] to have a patient spirit, which he had never seen in his sister and Claus. Thus we preachers gave her [Katharine] a hearing and could come to no other conclusion than that she was a pious, reasonable, and honourable woman, and had gladly submitted to her husband’s will and was obedient to Claus Frey. For she made such heartfelt and loyal excuses for him, even concerning his terrible plan, saying that he was peaceable and with his hard work had helped to feed the children, until the Anabaptists had seriously entangled him, and this woman inveigled him.

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<sup>22</sup> 1 Cor. 7:11–13.

<sup>23</sup> Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 25:24–6.

<sup>24</sup> Bartholomeus Frey was a member of the privy council and mayor of Rothenburg ob der Tauber.

Furthermore, Frey himself admitted that she had always been obedient to him before, that she willingly subjected herself to him, and lived with him in all love and unity. Yet fewer than three months went by [after his departure from Windsheim] before this woman, Elisabeth, got a hold of him, and only because his pious wife refused to follow him into manifest error.

Since one could not help him, and he became increasingly more stubborn, the honourable council passed judgment on 19 May (the Tuesday before Pentecost),<sup>25</sup> that he should be drowned; and on that same day they had a public servant announce the sentence to him. He replied that he was prepared for it and raised his hands in praise of God, grateful that things had turned out this way. He spoke loudly and grandly and dismissed the public servant in a friendly manner. Soon afterwards, when the daughter of the guardian of the tower brought him a meal, he said to her, 'Dear child, take note that everyone must have his Judas. My Judas is the one with the red beard, who has announced the end of my life.' On Thursday evening he said, 'Tomorrow the servants of the devil will come, the hangman and his company, and they will have a good time.' On Friday the public servants had dinner with him, among them also the one who had announced the death sentence to him. He called them his brothers and spoke much with them in a friendly tone. That is how inconsistent he was. But he was consistent in his rejection to listen to anyone who kindly reminded him of his sins, admonished him to repent, and reproached him for his whoring and adultery; indeed, he blasphemed against them and called them thieves of God's honour and traitors. That is how vehemently he addressed the three pastors, his assistant, and the three citizens, who visited him in prison on three consecutive days after the announcement of his death sentence. One after the other wanted privately to move him to recognize his sins and to desire grace. He was especially hostile to the one who had been ordered to visit him officially. He acted in this manner also when he was led from the tower to the city hall, and from the city hall to the bridge. At the bridge many admonished him loyally to pray, but he refused to say the Lord's Prayer with anyone, and did not wish to read any other formal prayer.

Furthermore, at the place of execution he rejected having a public prayer said for him, as the pastor in charge would gladly have encouraged the people with Frey's agreement. But he rejected it and said: 'Let everyone pray in his need; I can pray for myself.' As usual, the *Stettmeister*<sup>26</sup> had the

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25 I.e., 19 May 1534.

26 The *Stettmeister* of Strasbourg in 1534 was Ulman Böcklin von Böcklinsau (d. c. 1565). He renounced his Strasbourg citizenship on 28 August 1548. He was

judgment read to him in the tower, and among other things mentioned the love affair he began with Elisabeth in Nürnberg and his representation of it here in Strasbourg as a marriage. Frey said that the Holy Spirit had committed to him in Strasbourg a pure spouse.

Furthermore, he said that his previous marriage had come from the devil, and that his union with Elisabeth was a marriage that came from God. This was his reply: 'I confess it, and aver moreover that all your marriages here and elsewhere, your baptism, sacrament [of the Lord's Supper], church, and everything else comes from the devil – put that in writing!' And in the company of the executor he said very boastfully, 'I am the true cornerstone whom the builders have rejected,'<sup>27</sup> and that he would presently become the capstone who would unite the Gentiles and the Jews and make marriage right.

When he was brought to the city hall and there waited for the verdict, he brought out much useless nonsense. 'Well,' he said, 'what a nice day to go swimming,' and more of the same. And yet he had broadly declared that he was there to suffer for the truth and justice of God's will, to bear witness to it, and to further God's glory and the well-being of all the world; likewise, that he was a cornerstone, etc.; that the preachers were an accursed, damned horde of the devil, teaching sin, namely, that a man must not leave his wife on account of her unbelief; that the preachers had deceived and seduced the world for fifteen hundred years, and were still doing so today; and that no one had the right marriage, sacrament, etc. The pastor in charge rejected his statements, whereupon he became quite incensed and pummelled his chest with his hands, tied as they were, and added abuse. At the same time he averred that he did not want to keep company with papists, Lutherans, or Anabaptists. They were the devil's people, all of them; but he was on the side of the authorities and the praiseworthy nobility. Then he turned to the pastor and said, 'Oh you rascals, you want to suppress the authorities and keep the sword for yourselves,' etc. When they took him from the city hall to the river where he abused those who admonished him to admit his evil deeds and to repent, a papist consoled him and admonished him to act like a man. He tolerated that man, because he did not refer to his so-called marriage and

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a member of the Senate in 1529/30. He was Stettmeister in 1532, 1534, 1537/8, 1540/1, 1543/4, and 1546/7; a member of the XV from 1532 to 1539 and of the XIII from 1539 to 1548. After his emigration from Strasbourg in 1548, he was active among the Lower Alsatian imperial knights (*Reichsritterschaft*).

27 Cf. Ps. 118:22. The metaphor is used of Christ in the New Testament, see Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; and 1 Pet. 2:4–8.

did not accuse him of sins. To a furrier, who had served him at some time, he said, 'Today I like to praise the furrier's craft.' When the man admonished him to repent, he turned away from him. He shouted many other things, some of them incomprehensible, others not necessary to relate. In sum, he remained stubborn, but he lost heart when he stood on the bridge and it was time to have him thrown down into the water. But soon he recovered his composure and resumed his desperate gestures, but there was terror in his heart. He shouted but could not get out whole speeches as before. They say that he called out to Jesus as he fell off the bridge.

Alas, such a wrongheaded spirit! Our Lord Jesus patiently suffered the mocking words of the men who crucified him and prayed for them. This man, who wanted to be Christ himself according to the Word, snapped at people like a mad dog, even at friends who would have liked to console him and some of whom had helped him. Perhaps what several people wrote to him in prison came to pass. They said he would at last despair of God if he did not repent in time. The devil may fortify the heart against death with despair, as we have seen among desperate people, who kill themselves to escape the trouble they have in life. In the same way, this wretched man wanted to die rather than confess the error of which he was aware, rather than leave his concubine and be with his true wife and his children, and no longer be regarded as the head of the community of God, as he pretended to be.

It is clear that his heart was always restless and never sure, even if he boasted of his life in God and his knowledge through the Trinity. That can be seen from his clamour and agitation, in which he sought courage, for in such cases heated words fire up the spirit in its temptation, make it angry and bold enough to continue, for clamour increases the temptation which completely deceives the spirit. A peaceful heart in God is quiet and sweet, even to enemies. This spirit of a biting dog comes from another source.<sup>28</sup> He cannot be Christ. These are the counsels of a wrong pseudo-spirit, not of the orderly Spirit of God. In prison, too, Frey sufficiently showed how afflicted his spirit was, when several loyal brothers pursued him with scriptural passages, and he said repeatedly, 'You are supposed to console me; instead you drive me to despair.' Oh unruly spirit, who evaporates and despairs as soon as he is confronted with scripture! Before [Frey] was imprisoned, how often did he reconsider his evil actions,<sup>29</sup> even though they were supposedly done

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28 Cf. Phil. 3:2.

29 The German reads: 'Wie offt hat er vor der gefenchnus sein bösen handel wider inn bedenckens genommen.'

on God's own command, as he claimed both before and after his imprisonment! In prison, when people wanted to reconcile him with his pious wife, he mostly insisted stubbornly on Elisabeth's written agreement, to which he would keep until she herself asked and admonished him, her beautiful creator of Christ, not to anger the lords and others.

Therefore, do not be intimidated by or fear the blustering, boasting words of such unruly spirits, and even less by the angry and bitter boldness that make them want to die; rather, pay attention, pious reader, to the proofs of the true Spirit of Christ, which is patient, friendly, and mild, and which has given true martyrs to our church in ancient times and in the present. In their troubles, they appealed for their sins only to the merit of Christ and attested with their lives to the justification and glory of God through faith in Christ. They were patient and did not shout, make noise, or blaspheme against anyone. But Frey's spirit had to be noisy and abusive, claiming a fictitious zeal and wrath, to ambush his own conscience and obstruct it, to show his courage in his trouble with blasphemy, whereas he should have felt nothing but trepidation and fear of the severe judgment of God, who exercises his judgment in trouble even against the remaining sins of those he loves. One should not admire the martyrs' death, as St Augustine writes, but rather the character and life they showed earlier on.<sup>30</sup>

What terrible blasphemy it is to vest all faith of Christ, all love for his neighbour, all beginning of salvation in his lover – and want to convince the world of it! The devil knows well that no one would accept such mad shenanigans, but he tries to make them no longer care for the true spirit and zeal for Christ, for [Frey] claimed that everything that aids faith in justification – love of Christ, true patience, and everything that prefigures Christ's kingdom in all of scripture – applied to his adulterous union and unchaste love for the befuddled woman, and predicted his reign in the community of God. Thus all scripture would become suspect as smacking of carnality, but praise be to God, who convinces the inner consciences of all the elect of their sins and of the work of salvation, so that they are not misled by such fantastic ideas.

So you say he died bravely? I reply: But that does not make him a Christian. How many Jews and Turks have died for their faith? How many accounts have been written by pagans, which recommend constancy in death, in glory as well as in troubles? Indeed, it is the nature of heretics, especially when they have no scriptural proof, to confirm their error with stubborn-

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30 See Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 20.21 (PL 42.384–6).

ness in death. St Augustine writes to Boniface about the Donatists, chapter 9, that they were great heretics, who regarded everyone as impure, cursed them and claimed to be the only real and true Christians.<sup>31</sup> Until the emperors recognized Christ, they ran among the idolaters and challenged them to kill them. Some of them stubbornly attacked armed people on the battlefield and said: 'Kill me, or I will kill you!' Thus they forced their armed enemies to act against their will. Others pressed the judges, whom they approached without having committed a crime, to deliver them to the hangman for torture. Therefore, it was said in St Augustine's time that someone had them tied up before releasing them, so that they might be killed, if that was their wish, without harming anyone else<sup>32</sup> – this was done perhaps to mock them, yet it is not pointless, as the honourable council here in Strasbourg keeps imprisoned certain dangerous men to prevent them from depriving common people of their lives and possessions, and causing more disturbance than ever.

Do not allow yourselves to be moved by their senseless and desperate wish to die, but acquire the Spirit of Christ from our ancient and recent martyrs, who suffered death in a rational and meek manner for the sake of the clear and undoubted truth of Christ, whereas Frey died for his evil-doing and his crass adultery and because he mocked and knowingly disturbed public authority. The churches of old similarly refused to be moved by the many heretics in their time who showed much courage and constancy in death, who jumped off rocks or into deep waters, or threw themselves into fire to attest to the error to which they clung, as St Augustine also reports.<sup>33</sup> Enlightened Christians thought in time of the devil's ruses, for he always comes up with something special and persuades people to undertake great ventures through him and to desert God's order. His aim is to drive people from simple obedience in faith to follow their own will and pleasure, which constitutes a desertion of God and salvation, as they move to the side of the devil and damnation. The devil said to the Lord himself, 'If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down.'<sup>34</sup> In the same way he acts in the hearts of sinful people and says to them: 'If you are a brave Christian, why are you afraid to die like a man? After your death you will be regarded a great man. Everyone will admire your constancy and many will regard you after your death as a man sent by God.' With these reins he ties up and entangles foolish people and ruins them in this world and the next.

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31 Augustine, *De correctione Donatistarum ad Bonifacium epistola* 185, 9.38.

32 Augustine, *De correctione Donatistarum ad Bonifacium epistola* 185, 3.12.

33 Augustine, *De correctione Donatistarum ad Bonifacium epistola* 185, 3.12.

34 Matt. 4:6.

Some people think that because Frey encountered clemency when he was before the authorities, he did not realize how serious the situation was and thought the severity of the law was no more than menacing words, until he was led out [to be drowned]. They think it was for this reason that he was proud and full of boasts and stubbornly tried to rouse the community, just as he supposedly deterred the authorities elsewhere with his arrogant boasts and threats to his enemies. This is in accordance with his letter to the people in Windsheim, in which he says: 'I am the cornerstone,' etc., as reported earlier. They know from experience that [harsh treatment by the authorities] appears cruel to people who have no understanding, when they see such wonderful boasts in matters of faith. Thus, the emissaries of the council often yielded to him to avoid getting into further arguments with Frey – perhaps Satan was behind this, to hint that Frey would achieve his plan if he persevered. The devil also filled Frey's mind with pride and the hope that the honourable council would change its verdict and take no serious action against him.

For several days, Melchior Hoffman refused to believe that the council had passed such judgment against Claus Frey, for these people think that if they have fooled the authorities and gotten away this far, then everyone is safe who uses his belief and conscience as a pretext, whether he is a rebel or an adulterer, or involved in other vices, as if the [excuse of an] evangelical conscience would cover all sins. It is true that Frey pretended to be a sacrifice like Isaac and that another victim would be offered in his stead<sup>35</sup> – I don't know whether he believed it, but his [lover], Elisabeth, said so, for on Tuesday, when he was sentenced to death, an order was given to keep a closer watch on her, from which she concluded that sentence had been passed on him, or else it was announced to her in another form. At that point she showed confidence and said that the righteous could not come to grief,<sup>36</sup> and hoped that her lover would not die, but that God would work a miracle and show in Christ that Frey should reform the world and restore everything.

Then, when she heard that he had been drowned, she suffered great affliction on the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday that followed, so that people were worried she might lose her mind. She tore up many letters and pamphlets that Claus Frey and she had written concerning that evil affair and threw them into the privy. She realized that her above-mentioned words had brought shame on her and that all her hopes were lost. Until then she had adamantly insisted that she had been assured by God through his living Word

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35 Cf. Gen. 22:1–19.

36 Cf. Prov. 10:30.

that dwelt in her, and insisted that all the world, all torture and death could not turn her away from it, for she was the mother of all believers, and Claus Frey was Christ himself; [after his death], however, she confessed that she was a poor, deceived sinner and wished to be reconciled with the community of God, and this is still her opinion today. God only knows how this will turn out. May he help her to a true understanding and console her with his power and grant her to live hereafter according to his will and in patience, and to keep from proud and arrogant words and thoughts. For if she begins to play that game again, it will be the end of repentance and improvement. Indeed, one must fear new trouble from her. The tree of knowledge of good and evil is pleasant to see and [its fruit] good to eat, but the tree of life is found only by passing through fire with a persistent and passionate repentance, which rejects all clever people and high-minded, proud disputers, who care more for appearance than for true piety.

What disease drives them to oppose us and blaspheme against our efforts, our public sermons and religious teachings? Yet they do not recognize their own shortcomings [and believe] that being able to attack common sense is in itself a sign of great and higher knowledge. Every one of them wants to be the sole master, even as he pretends to deny himself and says so in glib words. The evil spirit drives them to obstruct godliness by pretending to be godly. How greatly was Christian discipline promoted among the people when the public preachers and their religious teachings were respected and their authority intact – the authority which these people attack doggedly and deliberately! They want to give the impression that they are presenting something new. Even if they have learned something good from our writings or sermons, they pretend that their teaching is very different from the interpretation of biblical scholars. And if we speak of repentance, living the faith, becoming a new man, if we speak of a good and secure conscience, of the inner and external consequences of faith and spiritual action and Christian discipline, if we consistently teach exactly what they would like to preach themselves and make their own, they insist that in us it is the dead letter and only natural conscience; in their case, however, it is a pure spirit and life. They do this even if we and they use the same words in the same sense, for they maintain a certain scriptural truth side by side with their errors. That is, pious reader, what disturbs simple minds, and thereby those acute, sharp fellows obtain material for discussion and for calling our words and sacraments into question, all the better to shirk true godliness, which might be furthered by us in good-hearted people.

Up to this point, we have described the beliefs, life, death, and crimes of Claus Frey, from which you, Christian reader, may derive some benefit. It may prevent you from being separated from us by glittering make-believe and from becoming a sectarian, and it may prevent his boast of great con-

stancy from winning you over, even after his death. For, as we have indicated earlier, citing St Augustine, you must not judge him by his death, but instead ask whether he died for the simple truth and on account of Christian zeal. For the devil has more martyrs in this world than our Lord Christ. Indeed, many banned people travel far, but few find the way to salvation. They turn away and mock the community of God. That is the beginning of all wretchedness, for Claus Frey was a productive citizen after the peasant revolt (although he was always a little odd and behaved strangely), until the Anabaptists embittered him against the gospel and in a special manner won him over. But to give his inner thought external expression and console himself beyond merely laying claim to faith – a faith that (as his actions show) rested solely on words in his case – he left his wife and children and refused to support them as before. To leave them was difficult for him, and so he thought it was the most perfect work. He overcame his natural decency, causing his own ruin, for he severed his connection with the Christian community and wanted to be someone special. Thus he reasoned with himself and with his love, Elisabeth: ‘How can God desert us? We have committed ourselves, our bodies and our possessions. I have abandoned my wife and children, and you your honour and good name. We pray to the Father with all patience, free, etc.’ But this is wrong: he roused in his heart unwarranted hatred against his wife and children, whom he should have supported by the sweat of his brow, and instead took from them the greater part of her sustenance, namely, 140 gulden, which Elisabeth’s brother restored to the poor woman. Conversely, he burdened himself with another lover, neglecting his gentle, soft-hearted wife – not that this was his intent in the beginning, not entirely, for he adopted some good and noble words, partly from German books, partly from his seducers, and testified with earnest gestures, but he wanted to make the public preaching of the gospel hateful and thus neatly to establish his own leadership. At the same time, however, he also touched women’s hearts and moved them to God in a way that also roused their carnal desire for him, the preacher.

To make you and others understand that true patience never occurred to him, God’s grace commanded the woman herself to write to the honourable city council, explaining how the so-called marriage between herself and Claus Frey came about, how he engaged in carnal talk with her under the guise of spiritual intentions, although she was not aware of his deceit [at the time]. And as soon as he caused her, through his perverted ‘Word of God,’ to yield to his will and pleasure, he used the opportunity to make love to her, in fulfilment of scripture, ‘You have begun in the Spirit, and are perfected in the flesh.’<sup>37</sup> He took away her fear and sense of shame by making a pre-

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37 Gal. 3:3.

tence of noble spirituality, even though his own heart contradicted him. Thus one thing led to another, until their whoring turned into 'God's work' and 'an example to the faithful, and he became Christ according to the flesh, and she the mother of all believers and Mary's equal.' After the devil had set this dunce cap<sup>38</sup> on them and led them into such blasphemous arrogance, there was no more shame and no more turning back, and his evil undertaking was depicted as a restoration of the fallen state of marriage; he became all daring and declared he would correct everything that had been corrupted since our Lord's time. He insisted on this stubbornly and fortified his heart against natural love for his wife and children, contrary to all decency, contrary to fear of death, intent only to maintain his desire, his error and his hope for a great name. That was more important to him than his physical life, and he died at last in the deepest despair, that is, in all his stubbornness, full of poison and gall against humanity, because no reasonable person would join him in his awful ideas. Therefore, take this properly to heart and avoid all schism, for God sends such incidents for your warning and has made allowances to the enemy that you may stay in the flock of Christ and be protected thus by the true shepherd, Christ Jesus. Straightaway reject boastful teaching and revelation that lead you away from Christ, or you will end up in the vast sea and in all danger.

The teaching of Christ is simple and accessible to all. Let disputatious people go away to Paris, where they will find enough debating in the university! As for you, take what is better and serves the building up of your conscience, and make an effort to increase your faith in Christ. Do not heed pretensions to gravity and fictitious patience, nor stubbornness in death. You have received sufficient warning from the horrible stories of our times, for there are still serious, pious people, who put no value on their life. Among those horrible stories is that of the man who decapitated his brother in the presence of his father and mother and said, 'Now the will of God is done';<sup>39</sup> or the man who trampled his wife to death;<sup>40</sup> or the many men who keep

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38 Literally, 'ostrich plume.'

39 On 7 February 1526, Thomas Schugger in St Gallen cut off his brother Leonhard's head, claiming that God had ordered him to do so; in other words, it was not he who had cut off his brother's head, but God who had done it through him. The story is related in Kessler, pp. 159–62, and in Franz, pp. 76–81; see also QGT 8, no. 368, note 2 and no. 472, note 2. For more details, see Claus-Peter Clasen, 'Medieval Heresies in the Reformation,' *Church History* 32.4 (1963): 392–414. Cf. Capito's opinion of the Anabaptist Oswald Glait's *Vom Sabbath* (CWC 2, Ep. 457 headnote).

40 For the man who trampled his wife to death in Esslingen, see QGT 8, no. 368, note 3, and no. 472, note 1.

concubines, and have started up again to drink and eat in excess, yet pretend that they can no longer commit sins because they are dead to themselves; or the woman who claimed to be Christ and gathered apostles;<sup>41</sup> and those that burned both New and Old Testaments and taught others to turn their minds to a revelation, that is, their own dreams and fantasies. These stories contain many indications of the final days, for all these deeds were done with cruel trespasses, not only against brotherly love, but all human relations, for they do away with obedience to the authorities and condemn everything that God has shown to be good and right in holy writ. Among the stories an unruly man has disseminated is the one about a horde, 144,000 strong, pure and bearing the apostolic seal, coming from the spiritual Jerusalem,<sup>42</sup> that is, the city of N,<sup>43</sup> a horde that will kill all clerics, monks, princes, noblemen, citizens, and peasants, be they papists, Lutherans, or Zwinglians. Countless terrible plans like these are hidden under the sour looks and high-minded spiritual talk held outside the community of God.

Thus God punishes the impertinence of schismatics, who cause dissension in our time, but are curiously united in their opposition to the preachers of the gospel and to the magistrates. Moreover, they all reject infant baptism, for they all desire to deprive the community of God of its honour. May God preserve all good-hearted people from error and wilful actions, especially in matters of faith, so that they may grow with and in the church of Christ, and come to a true understanding. Amen.

**Letter 536: 28 July 1534, Augsburg, Gereon Sailer to Martin Bucer, [Capito and Johannes Hechtlin]**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 157, pp. 429–30. The letter is addressed specifically to Bucer, but, as Sailer explains at the

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- 41 Verena Bumenin or Baumann. Her story is related in Kessler, pp. 154–7 and in Franz, 55–63; see also QGT 8, no. 472, note 3.
- 42 Likely a reference to Melchior Hoffman, who believed that Strasbourg was called to be the spiritual Jerusalem, the centre of a world-wide renewal, from which 144,000 apostolic heralds, whose coming had been prophesied in Rev. 14:1, would prepare the earth to receive the second coming of Jesus by means of adult baptism. After a bloody, but unsuccessful, siege of the elect city by the Holy Roman Emperor, the dragon of the Apocalypse, the royal priesthood, the priestly kingdom of the persevering saints, would rally under their chosen, righteous pastors. The Strasbourg prophet, Lienhard Jost, had a similar prophecy (see above, Ep. 488a, note 8).
- 43 I.e., Strasbourg. Capito deliberately avoids naming Strasbourg in order to safeguard the city's reputation.

beginning of the letter, it was meant for Capito and Johannes Hechtlin as well. For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

Greetings, my dear Bucer. I would like to address this letter jointly to you, Capito, and Hechtlin.<sup>1</sup> Ambrosius<sup>2</sup> thinks it best for Bernhard<sup>3</sup> to be taken into the company of the other young people. It should be sufficient if your Simon<sup>4</sup> helps him manage the boys,<sup>5</sup> mainly for this reason: if the boys must be sent elsewhere after a year, Simon will have enough authority with them on account of his age and his gravity. He will be more useful than Bernhard, who is not much feared by them. On your and my counsel, Bernhard will be compensated by the parents for his labours, and Simon will be treated as you yourself wish and command. Act in your usual manner in this business. I would very much like Simon to take charge, for I see that he excels in many gifts. I asked for the boy to be sent to me for that very reason: that he may aid the young boy I have, von Emershofen,<sup>6</sup> in his literary studies through his presence and companionship. I shall not use him for anything else. I shall send the boy, von Emershofen, to you after this winter and will subsequently provide another position for Simon, and use him in my own household until a position of significant advantage is offered him.

Never has your presence been more necessary, my dear Bucer. We pray that you may come, with God's will and grace. Our need is this: we have no one who encourages higher aims, who imposes order on the method, who advises us to avoid what is unworthy and obtain what is worthier. Sebastian, a good old man,<sup>7</sup> could achieve something together with Musculus, but there are people who greatly hinder them. Each man fears for his authority. In sum, the wagon is not drawn well because the team is unevenly matched.<sup>8</sup> We hope to obtain your advice, and we shall obtain it if we all urge you with equal effort. This becomes necessary when the parish of the Holy Virgin will finally need a parish priest. Please think about whom you may send, not just

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1 For Johannes Hechtlin, see above, Ep. 498, note 1.

2 For Ambrosius Jung, see above, Ep. 475, note 3.

3 For Bernhard N, see above, Ep. 475, note 4.

4 Simon Steiner (Lithonius, d. 1545) studied under Thomas Platter in Grächen and followed him to Zurich, where he attended school under Oswald Myconius. In 1530 or 1531, he went to Strasbourg, where he was a servant-pupil of Bucer for a while. He distinguished himself in Greek and soon received a teaching position at the Strasbourg Gymnasium.

5 For Timotheus and Ambrosius Jung, Jr., see above, Ep. 475, note 2.

6 See above, Ep. 517, note 3.

7 For Sebastian Meyer (1465–1545), see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3.

8 Cf. Wander 3, col. 1103, no. 233.

anybody, but a learned man, who will earn the respect of the others through his erudition and gravity. Musculus and Sebastian will have no complaints in this matter but will give their full support to any candidate. It harms us a great deal that everyone thinks he is on the same level as everyone else among us and does not recognize anyone as his superior. If you want our affairs to be taken care of, consider this in good time. I would want you to be with us for at least a day, for I would say much to you in person that I cannot entrust to the pen. You may deal with that hypocrite Schwenckfeld later. Our people appear to be divided in their opinion about the rumour concerning Schwenckfeld, for he was splendidly received among you. Farewell. Augsburg, 28 July, in the year '34.

Yours, Gereon.

I thank Capito for his letter to me.<sup>9</sup> Tell Hechtlin that I shall shortly write to the boys.

**Letter 537: 16 August 1534, Strasbourg, Capito, Martin Bucer, Caspar Hedio, and Matthew Zell to Philip of Hesse**

This letter is printed F.C. Schmincke, *Monimenta Hassiaca* (Kassel, 1750), vol. 3, 291–302, no. 3; it is also printed in modernized German, minus the salutation and ending, in Lenz 1:38–42, no. 11.

Illustrious, most noble prince, gracious lord! We wish Your Princely Grace an increase in spiritual gifts from God and most humbly offer our services. We beg and beseech Your Princely Grace graciously to accept and peruse our letter, for we have sought and are seeking only God's honour and Your Princely Grace's welfare in these and other letters written to Your Princely Grace earlier, even if certain people put a different construction on them.

Ever since Dr François Lambert died,<sup>1</sup> Master Adam<sup>2</sup> has been second lecturer of theology, as we understand. Yet he is much burdened with the business of the church in Your Princely Grace's realm. Furthermore, Master Erhard<sup>3</sup> is now in Württemberg and perhaps wishes to remain there, as

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<sup>9</sup> This letter is no longer extant.

<sup>1</sup> For François Lambert (d. 18 April 1530), see CWC 1, Ep. 25, note 33.

<sup>2</sup> For Adam Kraft, see CWC 2, Ep. 305 headnote. From 1527 to 1558, he was professor in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Marburg; rector at the university in the years 1529, 1540, and 1553; and dean of the Faculty of Theology in 1536. In 1540, he was superintendent of the churches in Hesse; in 1553, inspector of the churches in Hesse; in 1558, bishop or chief 'visitor' of Hesse.

<sup>3</sup> For Erhard Schnepf, see above, Ep. 530, note 8.

far as it is his decision. We notice that Your Princely Grace's counsellor and servant, the most learned Dr Walther,<sup>4</sup> is likewise worried about this and therefore expressed his concern to us, saying that Your Princely Grace has need of scholars in theology. We know of one man, who has in fact lectured for some time at Marburg, in Your Princely Grace's university,<sup>5</sup> but then had to go to Worms on account of some necessary business concerning his wife.<sup>6</sup> His name is Master Gerard Geldenhouwer,<sup>7</sup> a very pious and learned man, who has for a long time devoted himself to theology. As we have come to know today, he could now extricate himself from the business in Worms, and in any case the position of lecturer which he assumed there does not attract many students. This man has a good reputation in Marburg, on account of his skill in literature as well as his vigour and his piety. He has good judgment in religious matters, as local scholars will confirm to Your Princely Grace. He is free of schismatic tendencies and a man in the prime of his life. We believe that he would be capable of taking care of lectures in theology at Marburg. We wished to indicate this to Your Princely Grace, since we heard from Dr Walther that there is need of a lecturer in theology and heard today about the man's circumstances, that he may extricate himself from the business in Worms. For we greatly desire Your Princely Grace's honour and advantage in everything, but especially in what concerns Christian teaching. We therefore humbly beg Your Princely Grace, if so inclined, to continue looking after the local lecturers in theology and accept our message on behalf of this man in the spirit given by men, who before God and the truth wish nothing more than the advantage of the kingdom of Christ among the subjects of Your Princely Grace and wish to further it hereby. For this purpose we have also written to Your Princely Grace's chancellor,<sup>8</sup> our gracious lord, who already (we believe) knows of Geldenhouwer.

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4 Johann Fischer alias Walther (d. 1554) studied at the University of Erfurt (BA, 1508; MA, 1510). Around 1511, he became a civil servant in Lauterbach. From 1517 to 1527, he was a canon at St Martin's in Kassel, during which time he also studied at the University of Orléans (1520, licence in canon law; 1525–7, doctor of both laws). In 1523, he was a counsellor of Philip, duke of Hesse, a position he seems to have relinquished to continue his studies at Orléans. On 28 February 1527, he was newly appointed to the council of Hesse. He participated in several imperial diets and religious colloquies. In 1547, he was chief counsellor in Kassel.

5 The University of Marburg was founded by Philip of Hesse in 1527.

6 Nothing is known about Geldenhouwer's wife.

7 For Gerard Geldenhouwer (Noviomagus), see CWC 2, Ep. 336, note 1, and above, Ep. 475, note 11.

8 Johann Feige (Ficinus, 1482–1543) of Lichtenau, Hesse, studied at the University of Erfurt (1501–3). After a few years in the service of the landgrave of Hesse, he

We do not at all begrudge Master Erhard his wish to reside in the realm of Württemberg,<sup>9</sup> if it pleases God that he should leave Your Princely Grace's employ and promote Christian peace in the realm of Württemberg and if he prevented people living in Christian unity in the cities on the Upper Rhine from regarding us as sacramentarians.<sup>10</sup> Thus he would act in accordance with Your Princely Grace's Christian and constant opinion, of which neither we nor anyone else who knows of Your Princely Grace's actions have the least doubt. Yet some people who are ignorant of the state of things are scandalized that the man<sup>11</sup> whom Your Princely Grace ordered to go to [Württemberg] – for which they have as much consideration as for their own realm – and whom you have made the superior of the church in that realm, considers us all sacramentarians and *Schwärmer*.<sup>12</sup> It was not good enough for him that Master Ambrosius Blaurer teaches about the sacraments in accordance with the Saxon Confession,<sup>13</sup> which we were willing to do at the time in an effort to avoid the impression that we are in agreement with the sacramentarians. Blaurer did not want to cause serious trouble and be labelled a man who denies the Sacrament, since then we would have all been condemned and labelled destroyers of the Sacrament; and [he did not want] thus to cut ties with Stuttgart, since they had brought him from Constance on the written request of our gracious duke Ulrich,<sup>14</sup> with a splendid message from the council. He came to Schnepf<sup>15</sup> and cited the words on which the Concord<sup>16</sup> is

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became secretary to the bishop of Würzburg, Lorenz von Bibra, but returned to Hesse to serve during the difficult final years of the minority of Philip of Hesse (1508–18). Feige was named chancellor in 1519 and remained Philip's leading adviser for a quarter of a century. Feige shared Philip's interest in Luther and promoted the landgrave's growing commitment to the Lutheran Reformation. In 1526, he organized the Synod of Homberg, which opened the way for the creation of a Lutheran church in Hesse. When the University of Marburg was founded in 1527, Feige was asked to take charge of its organization, and eventually obtained Charles V's approval of it in 1541.

- 9 See above, Ep. 532 headnote.  
 10 The Treaty of Kaaden stipulated that no sacramentarians were permitted in the duchy of Württemberg (see above, Ep. 532 headnote).  
 11 I.e., Erhard Schnepf (see above, note 3).  
 12 See above, Ep. 477, note 1.  
 13 I.e., the Augsburg Confession of 1530.  
 14 See above, Ep. 532 headnote.  
 15 See above, Ep. 532 headnote.  
 16 I.e., the Stuttgart Concord. Schnepf and his colleague Ambrosius Blaurer had been engaged to reform the duchy of Württemberg. Although both men accepted the Augsburg Confession, Blaurer espoused a Zwinglian interpretation

based, the words which Dr Luther and his followers proffered in Marburg<sup>17</sup> and which were not accepted at that time by Magister Ulrich [Zwingli] and Oecolampadius, for they considered them sophistical;<sup>18</sup> otherwise they acknowledged them as tolerable in themselves and not against scripture. These words are: 'We confess that the body and the blood of the Lord are present and given truly, that is, substantively and essentially, but not quantitatively, qualitatively, and locally.'<sup>19</sup> How many scholars know the meaning of the phrase 'the body of the Lord is present and is given substantively and essentially, but not quantitatively, qualitatively and locally'?<sup>20</sup> Is it surprising that people are amazed and simple men offended when we pride ourselves on being enemies of sophistry and human inventions and say we wish to keep

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while Schnepf insisted on a Lutheran understanding. The two men worked out a basic formula for the Lord's Supper, the so-called Stuttgart Concord, which freed Blaurer from the taint of being a sacramentarian. In it they agreed on a formulation (the so-called *Unionsformel*) that the Lutherans had suggested at the Marburg colloquy of 1529. Blaurer's impression that Luther agreed with Oecolampadius that Christ's body was not locally present in the Lord's Supper led him to believe that the agreement at Marburg was proof of Luther's concession to the Zwinglians, and therefore a basis for concord. The Stuttgart Concord was signed by Schnepf and Blaurer on 2 August 1534. This moved Württemberg nearer to the Lutheran camp and loosened the bonds between Duke Ulrich and the German Swiss. On 5 August, Bucer called to Blaurer's attention that Zwingli and Oecolampadius had rejected the strict Lutheran formulation of 1529, i.e., the affirmation of the corporeal presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, that was affirmed in the Stuttgart Concord (see Schiess 1, Ep. 518, and HBBW 4, Ep. 424, note 42). The Catholics and Lutherans judged the Stuttgart Concord as proof of Blaurer's recantation from his earlier views on the Lord's Supper (HBBW 4, Ep. 452, note 21).

- 17 The Colloquy of Marburg was called by Philip of Hesse in 1529 to reach an agreement on the Sacramentarian controversy. Bucer and Hedio rather than Capito attended the colloquy on behalf of the Strasbourg preachers.
- 18 Blaurer's arrival in Stuttgart from Constance was forestalled in order to coincide with that of Schnepf's at the end of July 1534, so that the two men could discuss how their differing views on the Lord's Supper squared with the resolution at the Marburg Colloquy (see above, Ep. 532).
- 19 Capito is citing from the *Unionsformel* agreed upon on 3 October 1529 at the Marburg Colloquy by Luther, Zwingli and Oecolampadius concerning the Lord's Supper. The two proposed formulations of Luther and Oecolampadius are printed in BDS 4:358-9.
- 20 The terms are technical, i.e., used by scholastic theologians. The reformers were generally inimical to scholastic theologians and to the citadel of scholastic learning, the (Catholic) University of Paris.

to the simple Word of God, and yet could not find in the whole of scripture, in all the holy Fathers, and in the usage of the church any suitable word to use in our confession of the presence of the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus in the Last Supper? Instead, we had to borrow such words from the sophists, whose meaning neither the people nor the sophists themselves properly understand. Would it not have been satisfactory to confess, 'We believe and hold that the true body and also the true blood of our Lord are truly present and given at the Last Supper'? That is what we all teach and confess in the cities of the Upper Rhine that are united in Christ. This is the confession the princes proffered in Augsburg to the emperor, and nothing else.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, we have written a report on Christian discipline to the people of Münster,<sup>22</sup> a copy of which we sent to Your Princely Grace when you were still in the region of Württemberg (it was handed to Knoder<sup>23</sup>). In that report we described the business of the holy Sacrament in a manner that pleased many devotees of Dr Luther. We drew up articles in Augsburg, moreover, which Master Erhard should freely accept before Your Princely Grace's counsellors. If nothing else, he should conclude peace with us on the basis of these articles. Yet he engages in unfriendly actions, although he comes here on the request of Your Princely Grace, who has always sought peace in the church, and we are all in agreement and have certainly reached agreement with Dr Luther. He is not content with anything said about us and raises much ado in Stuttgart, which worries many good-hearted people; and he says he wishes to declare that anyone who is a sacramentarian will be excluded from the peace. This has terrified the people, for he is regarded as Your Princely Grace's emissary. Yet he retreated when Master Ambrosius proffered the above-mentioned sophistical wording and volunteered that these words did not bother him. Now, we are worried about others who

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21 I.e., the Augsburg Confession.

22 I.e., Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534). For its dedication to the city council of Augsburg, see above, Ep. 527a.

23 Johannes Knoder (c. 1492–1565), was the chancellor of the duchy of Württemberg. He matriculated at Leipzig in the winter of 1508/09, then transferred to Tübingen (BA, 1510; MA, 1513; 1523/4, doctor of both laws). In the winter semester 1523/4, he was dean of the Faculty of Philosophy at Tübingen. In 1529, he became chancellor of Georg von Württemberg-Montbéliard; from 1534 to 1550, he was chancellor of Ulrich von Württemberg in Stuttgart. In 1550, he was a member of the privy council of Christoph von Württemberg. He was married three times: first in 1522, to Helene Achtsynit (d. 1523); then in 1524, to Beatrix Kaiß (d. 1542); finally in 1543, to Katharina Eisengrein (1518–1588).

know that these words, because they are pure sophistry, were not accepted at Marburg. We wish to omit nothing, as we have done so far with the help of God, that may be serviceable to preserving the peace of the church, but truly in that case we must keep to what has been put in writing. Soon after the conquest of the duchy of Württemberg, we wrote to Your Princely Grace and to Duke Ulrich our thoughts on the method by which the business of the gospel could best be carried out there,<sup>24</sup> and we thought it would be good to act in a way that did not allow anyone to accuse us of disagreeing with Dr Luther. Therefore, we advised you to use men in this transaction, whom Dr Luther acknowledges as his followers, but to choose the most efficient and amiable men, who would accept some direction. Master Erhard, however, is one of the most stubborn men, as we believe Your Princely Grace himself knows. Konrad,<sup>25</sup> whom Your Princely Grace had along on his campaign, is another. He is reported to have spoken without reserve or scruple in Esslingen, telling respectable people that they must not listen to the preachers any more than they must listen to the papists. And yet the preacher (whose name is Jakob Otter)<sup>26</sup> is a trustworthy, pious, learned, and dear man, who has always loyally supported peace in this affair. If Your Princely Grace knew him, he would not be pleased with Konrad's speech. Now it is reported that Konrad, too, is to come into the region. Truly, he has no reason to switch his position, certainly not on account of his skill. If, however, these boorish people are regarded before Your Princely Grace as the noblest teachers of the Christian doctrine, those who do not know the attitude and actions of Your Princely Grace might lose courage, and our opponents will brag that this is proof of Your Princely Grace and the gracious Duke Ulrich holding the same opinion of us as their preachers, especially since these preachers are supposed to be the best and are delegated to look after the affairs of the church and to appoint preachers. Jacob Sturm is once again in Stuttgart.<sup>27</sup> We

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24 See above, Ep. 532 and headnote.

25 Konrad Öttinger (d. 1540) was the court preacher and army chaplain of Philip of Hesse. Immediately after Philip's victory at Lauffen over the Austrians on 16 and 17 May 1534, Öttinger preached in the *Stiftskirche* in Stuttgart. He then worked as a preacher in Württemberg, and from time to time at the court of Duke Ulrich of Württemberg. He was one of the co-signatories of the Schmal-kald Articles.

26 For Jakob Otter, see CWC 2, Ep. 205, note 2.

27 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote. Due to the pressure of Sturm, who was staying in Stuttgart in the middle of August (HBBW 4, Ep. 436, note 9), Duke Ulrich insisted that the ministers in Württemberg submit to the Augsburg Confession and not to the Stuttgart Concord in order to prevent further turmoil (HBBW 4, Ep. 424, note 15, and Ep. 435, note 31).

hope he will assist in directing matters to the point that they will uphold the confession of Your Princely Grace and his followers, and not burden anyone with sophisticated words. Indeed, no one can say that we are not in agreement with the teachings of Dr Luther and his followers concerning the sacrament, if we teach the article as they themselves confessed it before the Imperial Majesty.

This is our humble and Christian opinion, which we wished to indicate to Your Princely Grace, so that you may assist, if there is an opportunity, in maintaining the right, decent, and Christian peace in this matter. Even without our writing, you have always made every effort to seek peace and have always recognized us in the Upper Rhine as undoubtedly teaching and believing what is correct about the holy Sacrament. It would be good if Master Philip Melanchthon were as pleasing to Duke Ulrich and had been used by Duke Ulrich instead of Schnepf. Melanchthon would never pressure anyone with such sophisticated words, for he always writes to us in a friendly tone, and himself expressed hopes that we might meet this year, if there is a local opportunity, and treat of religion among ourselves.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, he hopes that we will achieve a fully satisfactory peace in the church.

Now we wish faithfully to pray to the Almighty to give us his grace and faithfully do our share with his help, being of high hopes that he will improve everything. We know very well that Your Princely Grace can always help us to benefit the cause, for His Grace understands the matter and will leave no effort undone. May God grant Master Erhard to recognize that he can be of no better service to God than in Marburg and that he not prolong his leave beyond the time granted him by Your Princely Grace. Then we would have high hopes that all will turn out well. But if one does not act correctly and in accordance with what has been put in writing and does not allow pious people to keep to it, the loyal servants of the Word would be shut out of this duchy, and it would be opened to those who care for nothing except for having a full belly. God grant that Your Princely Grace recognize how valuable and how cognizant of God Ambrosius Blaurer is.

May Your Princely Grace deign graciously to accept this long letter of ours, which concerns matters that are truly important and great, for His Grace has until now been inclined and has faithfully considered how to maintain and promote the peace of the church. May the Almighty preserve Your Princely Grace always and make him happy for the benefit of your

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<sup>28</sup> See below, Ep. 545 headnote and note 5.

subjects and the whole German nation. We commend ourselves to you most humbly. Given at Strasbourg, 16 August 1534.

Your Princely Grace's humble preachers at Strasbourg:

Wolfgang Capito,

C. Hedio,

M. Bucer,

M. Zell.

**Letter 537a: 31 August 1534, Immenhausen, Philip of Hesse to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

The letter does not appear to be extant. A summary of the letter is provided in PC 2/2:223, where the editors state that a draft is in Marburg, but we have not been able to locate it.

[*Summary*]: This is a response to the preachers' letter of 16 August [see above, Ep. 537]. It is true that Philip 'was unable to reject' the request of Duke Ulrich to send Erhard Schnepf to carry out the reformation of Württemberg and to give him one year's leave; he did not, however, 'know of the quarrel between him [i.e., Schnepf] and [Ambrosius] Blaurer; nor was he pleased with such arguing and quarrelling.' He encloses a copy of his letters to Schnepf and Duke Ulrich. He asks them to work for peace and concord and refrain from causing error and discord through quarrelsome words. 'If you give your hearts to one another, you will find the appropriate language.'

**Letter 538: 12 September 1534, [Wildbad?], Capito to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen**

The following letter represents one of the many letters exchanged between the court of Württemberg, the Strasbourg preachers, and the city council of Basel, to convince the authorities in Basel to grant a temporary leave of absence to their professor of Greek, Simon Grynaeus, so that he might accept a call to the University of Tübingen. Duke Ulrich von Württemberg had hoped to reform and reorganize the university after his reconquest of the duchy in the spring of 1534 (see above, Ep. 532 headnote). Grynaeus, however, evinced little enthusiasm for the position in Tübingen, aware of the Herculean task of reforming the university amid fierce opposition from the stalwart Catholic members of the faculty of theology. He was also reluctant to exchange his position at Basel, which afforded him time for his own research, for an administrative position at Tübingen. On 30 September 1534, Grynaeus asked Blaurer for more details about the appointment, given the size of his family, and his concerns over his

mandate (Schiess 1, Ep. 464). Blaurer had little hope that Grynaeus could be lured from the University of Basel. Therefore, he approached the Strasbourg preachers to use all means at their disposal to convince the city council in Basel to release Grynaeus to the duke (see below, Ep. 540). Given the opposition of the city council to a leave of absence, Bucer pressed for his own appointment in Tübingen, in order to forestall the appointment of Johannes Brenz, a Lutheran, which would have tipped the balance of the reform of the university in favour of the Lutherans. By 5 September, Bucer admitted to Blaurer the hopelessness of his quest (Schiess 1, Ep. 630). The city council of Basel wrote to Blaurer on 15 September, explaining that they were not willing to release Grynaeus from his contract, but prepared to lend him to Tübingen for a short time period.<sup>1</sup> After weeks of wrangling and a flurry of letters, Grynaeus finally arrived in Stuttgart on 28 October 1534, accompanied by Johannes Herwagen, Andreas Cratander and others (Schiess 1, Ep. 487a), having travelled from Basel via Strasbourg. He remained in Stuttgart until at least 6 November, before settling in Tübingen. While in Stuttgart he quarrelled with Schnepf over the Lord's Supper. Seven months later, toward the end of June 1535, the Basel council recalled him, despite intensive efforts by the Strasbourg reformers and Blaurer to extend his leave (see below, Ep. 556; cf. Epp. 571 and 578). Grynaeus returned to Basel only after Paulus Phrygio arrived in Tübingen to replace him. The horse Phrygio rode carried Grynaeus back to Basel, where he arrived on 13 July 1535 and was welcomed with a banquet (AK 4, Ep. 1927).

The autograph original of this letter is in Basel UB, Ki.Ar. 25a, 112. For Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, see above, Ep. 501, note 5.

The grace of God together with my willing service. Dear friend, I recently wrote to Your Honour alone,<sup>2</sup> in the hope that you might forward the letter to the magistrate, for it would require more effort to write publicly. Messengers from Rome were riding about, intriguing [in preparation for the] council. It is necessary for the confederate party and us to meet in a council prior to this. So far we have been prevented from doing so by the troublesome quarrel concerning the sacrament. Our lords, in an effort to leave nothing undone, have on my and Bucer's initiative charged Jacob Sturm with riding to the duke and dealing with him in a solicitous manner.<sup>3</sup> He was to ask him

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- 1 Printed in Bernd Moeller, 'Neue Nachträge zum Blarer-Briefwechsel. Zur Reformation der Universität Tübingen, 1534–1535,' *Blätter für württembergische Kirchengeschichte* 68/69 (1968/69): 68, no. 1.
- 2 This letter is no longer extant.
- 3 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote; for Duke Ulrich von Württemberg, see above, Ep. 532 headnote.

not to provide disruptive people with an opportunity to revive the conflict and faithfully to indicate to the duke how he could prevent this. On Tuesday he will depart.<sup>4</sup> The duke arrived in Stuttgart last Tuesday.<sup>5</sup> Bucer was not mentioned to the duke by our lords, but he hopes that Blaurer will not omit to mention him, and I have asked him to do so in another pressing letter.<sup>6</sup> If Grynaeus were to stay, the need would have been less urgent. We would gladly have done without our Bucer. Conversely I am aware how necessary Grynaeus is to the church and of the desire to keep him in Tübingen permanently, whereas he is not inclined to leave you. Thus it was God's will that Grynaeus should go, and so it is best. We have never stood in his way, and will not be in his way now. God has summoned him to that task. He does not want me or Bucer. It is not important how experienced a man is – if it is God's will to employ him, it is advisable to do so.

I am taking two things into consideration in thinking that it would be good for Grynaeus to live for a while in Tübingen. First, the duke and Blaurer understood he would stay only five weeks, and now he wants to extend the period to half a year; secondly, the fact that the affairs of the University of Tübingen are not progressing, and there are complaints that matters were not fully and rightly thought through. On both counts Grynaeus' reputation would suffer, especially in the eyes of the princes. Public business requires effort, which we shall muster on behalf of good people and according to our power, that they may not suffer disadvantage in the business of God. But as I said in the presence of Grynaeus, he should go to Basel, the place where God wishes to employ him. And that is my opinion still; you can guess the reason. Other people may think otherwise, as I said when we deliberated about this business and I saw what the outcome would be: that Grynaeus would be asked to stay. Jacob Sturm said, among other things, they might attempt to keep Bucer as well. But that did not matter, for he belonged to us nevertheless and would be at hand. I reject that argument, for our church is largely directed by Bucer. One cannot deprive a church of its foremost minister except for very urgent reasons. Grynaeus will consider how God has employed him so splendidly among you, and I expect the scholars themselves will accept that he is nowhere better off than among them. If the duke writes again, however, you must consider whether to deny his request for a while, with God's will. Even if it is decided to give Bucer leave to go there, I think it is unnecessary. I insisted on this view, speaking to Jacob Sturm and explaining

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4 I.e., 15 September 1534.

5 I.e., 8 September 1534.

6 This letter is no longer extant.

that the council also valued Bucer. I said furthermore that this was perhaps Grynaeus' opportunity to live among you in Basel. God will unite us through our common enemy, the papists, unless he wants to ruin us completely. Give my friendly greetings to my dear Heinrich,<sup>7</sup> his mother,<sup>8</sup> and all his friends. As for the business of the church, I hope it will improve, and we loyally commend it to God. Given on 12 September.

Wolfgang Capito.

I am working harder on your behalf than I can indicate in writing. Trust me. But I did not want to interfere in the Lord's affairs, and if you cannot find another way to prevent trouble, I beg you to take our common affairs to heart, but I hope there will be no need for it.

### Letter 539: 30 September 1534, Ulm, Martin Frecht to Capito

Martin Frecht (1494–1556) studied at the University of Heidelberg (BA, 1515; MA, 1517; license in theology, 1529; ThD 1531) and was dean of the Faculty of Philosophy (1523–6) and rector of the university (December 1530–August 1531). He arrived in Ulm during the second half of September 1531 and began lecturing on 21 October; in 1533, he succeeded Konrad Sam as preacher. Because Frecht opposed the Augsburg Interim, he was incarcerated on 16 August 1548 in Kirchheim/Teck. When he accepted the Interim on 24 October 1548, he was set free, but was banned from Ulm. Thereafter, he stayed in Nürnberg and Blaubeuren (1549/50). As of 1551, he worked in Tübingen as a lecturer in biblical studies, as of 1553 as professor of theology, and finally as rector in the winter semester of 1555/6.

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 156, p. 857.

Greetings in the Lord. First of all, I sincerely congratulate you, respected

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- 7 Heinrich Billing (d. 1541) was the stepson of Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, the mayor of Basel. He was canon of St Leonhard in Basel for a while, and in 1526 journeyed to Zurich as a house-guest of Conradus Pellicanus. In 1532/3, he matriculated at the University of Basel. In 1533, he went to France with Conrad Gesner and Johannes Fries, and in 1538/9, he studied in Strasbourg. Billing was friends with Thomas Platter, with whom he undertook a trip through Switzerland. Gesner dedicated his *Historia plantarum* (Venice, 1541) to him (ff. A2r–A4r, dated 9 August [1541]). Billing died of the plague in 1541.
- 8 After the death of Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen's first wife, Anna von Dachsfeldein, in 1518, he married Verena Husmann (d. 1543), the widow of Lienhard Billing, in 1521.

Capito, on your recent and safe return from Wildbad<sup>1</sup> and for doing everything to console the brethren who have so far been burdened with the prerogatives of the Lutherans. For that is what our friend Otter wrote to me these days, advising me wisely to stay away from Stuttgart and send my greetings to friends in writing. Yet you have done everything you could to console and encourage the brethren to strive sincerely for peace and concord. For you rightly warn us that pious people can never achieve internal peace unless abusive talk, quarrels, outbursts and the confusion<sup>2</sup> associated with them are rejected on both sides. For this reason I make every effort to encourage, as far as I can, the desire for concord and keep the zeal from cooling. By the grace of God I know of no one among the brethren who does not burn with love and desire for peace, which is very necessary to the churches that are torn apart by so many great and long-standing schisms. I dismiss those frivolous minds, who, as you write, take away your and Luther's authority and indeed the authority of the whole gospel and think nothing fair but what is their own. They hate that holy concord that has been concluded in the Lord 'more than a dog hates snakes.'<sup>3</sup> I hear that they have sworn to tear it apart most horribly together with its authors.

That is what Schwenckfeld recently did in his impudence at a banquet of procurators of the Imperial privy chamber, in the presence of a Strasbourg citizen<sup>4</sup> who contradicted him. May the Lord repay him according to his deeds. Indeed I sincerely and deeply thank you and our friend Bucer for sending the *Apologia contra Abrincensem personatum episcopum*,<sup>5</sup> a book more

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- 1 According to Millet, this should be 'Wildbad' as opposed to 'Baden.' Capito may have met with Duke Ulrich and Jakob Truchsess, who went to Wildbad in the fall of 1534 (see below, Ep. 540, notes 9 and 10).
- 2 Frecht uses the Greek word ἀκαταστασίας. Cf. Luke 21:9 and 1 Cor. 14:33.
- 3 Erasmus, *Adagia* 2.9.63.
- 4 Identity unknown.
- 5 Martin Bucer, *Defensio adversus axioma Catholicum, id est, criminationem R.P. Roberti Episcopi Abrincensis* (Strasbourg, 1534). Often referred to as *Contra Abrincensem*, Bucer's work was a response to a piece written earlier that summer by Robert Céneau, bishop of Avranches, *Axioma Catholicum, seu institutio Christiana, qua asseritur et probatur praesentia corporis Christi in eucharistia, adversus Bucerum Berengarianae haeresis instauratorem ...* (Paris, 1534). Frecht reported to Blaurer on 27 September 1534 that he had received a copy of Bucer's work from Capito (Schiess 1, Ep. 461). The bishop's treatise against Bucer came to the attention of Erasmus when Bucer replied with his *Contra Abrincensem*. Erasmus expressed his criticism of Bucer's work in letters to Melancthon (MBW T7, Ep. 1750; cf. Allen Epp. 2972 and 3127).

highly recommended by our friend Blaurer than anything before,<sup>6</sup> and which I especially recommended to all brethren. They must use it as a handbook. It provides a solid and concise defence, while others are in the habit of using more esoteric and lengthy arguments. Yesterday I sent a fascicle together with mine to Musculus in Augsburg, as you requested of me. There is nothing else here that is worth writing about to you other than a decree of the council that the gospel should be preached in Heidenheim.<sup>7</sup> But it is uncertain when this is to be undertaken. Bär<sup>8</sup> strongly exhorts us to embrace concord. I don't know what tricks he fears are threatening the Zwinglian church, for that man is always circumspect and keeps his eyes open. Sometimes, however, he has become accustomed to fear where there is nothing to fear. I have not yet had any certain information from Blaurer about the arrival of our Grynaeus.<sup>9</sup> I do not know whether or not he went to Tübingen. Certainly nothing can be more conducive to concord than that man's presence. I am pleased that the leading Lutherans are becoming milder every day. May God conclude what he has begun. Farewell in happiness and may God preserve you. I wish Bucer well. May Christ keep him sound together with you, for the edification of his church. Hurriedly, from Ulm, on the day after Michaelmas, 1534.

Yours, Martin Frecht.

**Letter 540: [c. 10 October 1534, Tübingen], Ambrosius Blaurer to Capito**

Printed in Schiess 1:581–2, Ep. 475.

Greetings. That good man conveyed your letter to me,<sup>1</sup> most famous and respected Capito, and I hope you have received my letter in turn through

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- 6 On 22 September 1534, Bucer wrote to Blaurer that he was sending him a copy of the *Contra Abrincensem* (Schiess 1, Ep. 459). Two days later, Blaurer responded: 'Your defence against the pseudo-bishop pleases me more than almost anything else' (Schiess 1, Ep. 460).
- 7 On 10 September 1534, the city council of Ulm decreed that the gospel be preached in Heidenheim (see Frecht to Blaurer, 27 September 1534, Schiess 1, Ep. 461). Ulm had acquired control (*Herrschaft*) of Heidenheim from Charles V for a loan of 45,000 gulden, on the condition that it could be redeemed; Duke Ulrich redeemed it in 1536.
- 8 Oswald Bär (1482–1567) is first mentioned in 1507 as a pharmacist in Basel. In 1509, he was a schoolmaster for a year in Sélestat before becoming a medical doctor in Basel in 1512 or 1513. In 1523, he became professor of medicine at the University of Basel and in 1528, city physician. He was several times rector of the university, but after 1552, he stopped lecturing.
- 9 For Grynaeus' call to Tübingen, see above, Epp. 532 and 538 headnotes.

1 This letter is no longer extant.

the venerable old Zell.<sup>2</sup> I wrote briefly to Bucer<sup>3</sup> telling him where I am now and what I am doing. The sophists are giving me continuous trouble. They surround me after the sermon and always find something to slander me, although they do it in a discreet manner. The parish priest Gallus<sup>4</sup> always dissimulates everything. He has never protested to my face, but among his friends, I hear, he finds much fault with me and my teaching. He is not allowed to preach. He has settled his affairs with his creditors and debtors to the last penny, so that people believe he is thinking of leaving. The other preacher, who labours for the Word on feast days, is the theologian Balthasar of Wildberg,<sup>5</sup> with whom I get along satisfactorily. Although he still seems rather superstitious in many things, I believe he can gradually be brought to the solid freedom of the children of God.<sup>6</sup> I met with all the parish priests in the region of Tübingen on 28 September and found very few who are suited to preach the Word, although there are some who wish to do so.<sup>7</sup>

When you congratulate me on ending the Sacramentarian quarrel with Schnepf<sup>8</sup> to my advantage, I wish it were as true as you make it out in your

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- 2 For Matthew Zell (1477–1548), cathedral preacher in Strasbourg, see CWC 1, Ep. 167 headnote.
- 3 See Blaurer to Bucer, 3 October 1534 (Schliess 1, Ep. 466).
- 4 Gallus Müller (c. 1490–1546) studied at Freiburg in 1507, then at Cologne and finally Tübingen (MA, 1510; ThD, 1519; shortly thereafter *ordinarius*). In 1522, he became *Stiftpfarrer* and *Stadtpfarrer* in Tübingen. He was six times rector. On 27 September 1534, Frecht wrote to Blaurer, ‘You will easily silence Gallus and show that Balthasar [Käufelin] is a Nicodemite’ (Schliess 1, Ep. 461).
- 5 Balthasar Käufelin of Wildberg (c. 1490–1559) studied with Blaurer at Tübingen (MA, 1513; ThD, 1521) and in 1521 became professor of theology there. In 1526 he took part in the Disputation of Basel as a representative of the bishop of Basel. In 1534 he fell in line with the Reformation and thanks to Blaurer’s support remained professor and preacher in Tübingen, even though he continued to attend mass, reacted against reforms of the university, and was regarded as ‘superstitious and insignificant’ (Schliess 1, Ep. 475). Since he remained close to Catholicism, he acquiesced in the Interim in 1548.
- 6 On 5 October 1534, Blaurer wrote to Bullinger, ‘The people here embrace the gospel of Christ in quite large numbers. Among the theologians, there is only one, Balthasar of Wildberg, with whom I get along. The rest are united in opposing the Truth and overcome it as far as they can’ (HBBW 4, Ep. 452).
- 7 See Blaurer’s letter to Duke Ulrich, dated 29 September 1534, reporting on the meeting and signed by a number of evangelical preachers in the region (Schliess 1, Ep. 462).
- 8 For the theological confrontation between Schnepf and Blaurer over the Eucharist, and the resolution, see above, Ep. 537, note 16.

pious heart! Perhaps what is still lacking will be settled in the meeting. The duke is in Wildbad;<sup>9</sup> Truchsess<sup>10</sup> is with him. I shall send him as soon as possible your letter and Bucer's defence,<sup>11</sup> which altogether please me a great deal. He deserves to be very much loved and respected. The court cannot be badly off as long as it retains him. Osiander arrived recently in Stuttgart,<sup>12</sup> and will perhaps remain there until the duke returns.<sup>13</sup> A decision has already been made about the bishop of Tübingen.<sup>14</sup> The duke regretted the summons after he found out the man's view on private absolution. But he hastened his arrival. There is yet hope that he will change or mitigate his views on this dogma. The duke wants Grynaeus to come as quickly as possible, but I see that it will be very difficult to extract him from Basel. The city council of Basel has written to me, saying they would not allow him to be summoned elsewhere at this time; they will only give permission for a month or two.<sup>15</sup> Grynaeus has freely offered his services, as long as the council per-

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- 9 Duke Ulrich's stay in Wildbad in the fall of 1534 is mentioned elsewhere in Blaurer's correspondence (see HBBW 4, Ep. 452, and Schiess 1, Epp. 475 and 506).
- 10 See Capito's letter to Jakob Truchsess above, Ep. 533.
- 11 See above, Ep. 539, note 5.
- 12 Blaurer and Bucer knew of the attempt to call Andreas Osiander (for him, see CWC 2, Ep. 229, note 5) to Tübingen, which was endorsed by Erhard Schnepf and Jacob Sturm. By mid-August 1534, however, they began to express disapproval of the call. On 27 September 1534, Martin Frecht wrote to Ambrosius Blaurer: 'I would not have considered Osiander of Nürnberg to be a fortunate choice for our city' if it had not been for Capito's testimonial (Schiess 1, Ep. 461). In the first half of October, the attempt to call Osiander to Tübingen was abandoned. During that time he was in Stuttgart, and by 18 October, back in Nürnberg.
- 13 See above, note 9.
- 14 The identity of this 'bishop' is unknown, since Tübingen was never the seat of a bishopric; indeed, there was no episcopal see in the duchy of Württemberg at all (it was carved up among several bishoprics). The highest ecclesiastical rank in the duchy was the provostship of the Stuttgarter Stiftskirche. If Blaurer is using 'bishop' with an evangelical meaning, that is, the chief reformer, then he himself would have been the 'bishop of Tübingen.' Blaurer, on the other hand, may be referring to Adam Kraft, who was the 'bishop' of Hesse (see above, Ep. 537, note 2).
- 15 For the letter from the city council of Basel to Blaurer, dated 15 September 1534, see Bernd Moeller, 'Neue Nachträge zum Blaurer-Briefwechsel. Zur Reformation der Universität Tübingen, 1534-1535,' *Blätter für württembergische Kirchengeschichte* 68/69 (1968/69): 68, no. 1.

mits him to go.<sup>16</sup> If you can do anything, effect by all means that Basel will completely relinquish him to the duke, for if that does not come to pass, the people will prevail whose kingdom is burdensome. [...]’<sup>17</sup> Commend me most diligently to that great and best of men, Jacob Sturm.<sup>18</sup> A pox on all obstacles that delay his timely return to the duke. I would have written to the man, but I hardly had time to write this. May he forgive my negligence.

**Letter 541: 15 November 1534, [Strasbourg], Capito to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen**

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 40, no. 46.

Dear friend, I wish you an increase in God’s grace, an understanding of his miraculous work, and constant faith to the end. I have written a long report about all matters, as my brethren have asked me to report to your preachers.<sup>1</sup> But then I thought that we are all thoroughly weak and I was worried whether this medicine will suffice for such a great illness. I was willing to come to you, mainly to discuss with you, my dear brother, these dangerous developments and speak at length about the Lutheran quarrel, for I was worried that there would be much unrest. Then Bernhard Meyer<sup>2</sup> gave me

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16 Cf. Schiess 1, Ep. 464.

17 About a quarter of the page has been cut off.

18 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

- 1 Capito’s report to the Basel preachers is no longer extant. The report may, however, be referenced in a letter from Myconius to Bullinger, dated 9 November 1534: ‘I shall be brief concerning the Strasbourgers. It was reported to them that there is disagreement among us about the business of the Eucharist. For this reason Capito wrote to me at length, asking me to use my authority to keep the disagreement in check. He reasoned that there would be some concord among the German churches and that King Ferdinand would incite a war against the so-called sacramentarians. He wants that disagreement to be eliminated lest it obstruct peace and prompt Ferdinand to act rashly against us’ (HBBW 4, Ep. 473).
- 2 Bernhard Meyer zum Pfeil (1488–1558) was the brother of Adelberg Meyer, the mayor of Basel. Since 1521, he was affiliated with the Great Council and a follower of the Reformation. After the Reformation was introduced in Basel in 1529, he was elected city councillor. Meyer represented Basel at numerous Swiss diets (*Tagsatzungen*) as well as in various diplomatic missions. After the death of his brother in 1549, Meyer became his successor and remained mayor until his death.

a friendly report that nothing had been done about this matter in public, although he engaged in questions, putting [the opinions] in another person's mouth. Since I understand that Daniel Mieg<sup>3</sup> spoke with him and must assume that they talked about Karlstadt,<sup>4</sup> I did the decent thing and indicated that there was some talk here, which Daniel may well have mentioned to you. But this discussion has now completely ceased and things have improved. Please ponder the reason for my words.<sup>5</sup>

As I recently wrote, Martin Bucer was urgently summoned by the city of Augsburg, and the members of the XIII have given him permission [to go there].<sup>6</sup> They [i.e., the city of Augsburg] have announced that they would like to institute a reform according to the Word of God. Perhaps they are under pressure because of the Sacramentarian controversy as well as the current tricky situation. They are convinced that they will be the first to be attacked. The affairs are going in that direction. I hope that they want to form an al-

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3 For Daniel Mieg, see CWC 2, Ep. 429.

4 For Andreas Karlstadt, see CWC 1, Ep. 15a headnote.

5 Capito seems to be deliberately vague, perhaps wishing to avoid the subject of Karlstadt and hoping that Meyer would understand his meaning.

6 Bucer ministered in Augsburg from 6 November–9 December 1534, shortly after Augsburg's July 1534 introduction of limited religious reform (see Schiess 1, Epp. 489, 492, 496–7 and HBBW 4, Ep. 468, note 32). During Bucer's stay in Augsburg, he produced an initial compromise among Augsburg's preachers by persuading them to agree on ten articles of faith (see below, Epp. 545 and 554 headnotes). After his departure, the city council of Augsburg wrote to its counterpart in Strasbourg in that hope that [Strasbourg would] 'kindly allow its citizen Martin Bucer to preach here for an additional half-year for our good and the good of the community, so that from this initial godly work he might create a complete system (*wesen*)' (qtd. in Christopher W. Close, *The Negotiated Reformation: Imperial Duties and the Politics of Urban Reform, 1525–1550* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009], 96). On 15 December 1534, the city council of Augsburg thanked the city council of Strasbourg for having given Bucer permission to preach in Augsburg, and asked that they consider sending him again within six months (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 30). Bucer ministered again in Augsburg from 26 February to 22 April 1535, during which time he secured another temporary compromise among the city's preachers. This new agreement laid the groundwork for Augsburg's truce with Luther a few months later, which enabled the city to enter the Schmalkaldic League in 1536. On 8 April 1535, the city council of Augsburg asked the city council of Strasbourg to extend Bucer's stay in Augsburg until 25 July (see Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 31). On 18 May 1535, they wrote to thank the Strasbourgers for having sent Bucer, adding that they might require his services again to quell future religious discord (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 32).

liance, but it would not be necessary if the gospel were preached without poisonous additions. I am offering to say to you in person what I must not put in writing, but you will understand my meaning very well from my last letter, which is surely sufficiently clear.

The enclosed news report has been sent to the Duke of Hesse from the chapter at Münster.<sup>7</sup> Sturm<sup>8</sup> wrote a short letter from Stuttgart to his brother<sup>9</sup> and sent along the report, for it would not be useful to bring it from Hesse to Duke Ulrich.<sup>10</sup> It is written in the spirit of Hoffman and others here.<sup>11</sup> May God grant that the truth be different from the gestures and words they proffer now, etc.

I cannot believe that the emperor will come, but he wishes to marry his daughter to the prince of France,<sup>12</sup> which you no doubt know.<sup>13</sup> There is much falsehood mixed in, as is usual in the world.

Hieronymus Curio is childish and melancholic.<sup>14</sup> For this reason I am particularly kind to him in my speech. He would need someone who can provide him with discipline and experience. You were right to move him from your household to people who are capable of that. Commit the rest to God. Give my greetings to everyone and their family and friends. When the meeting of Esslingen is over, I shall write again. Or ask Matthis<sup>15</sup> to write

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7 This enclosure is no longer extant.

8 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

9 Either Friedrich Sturm (d. 1562) or Peter Sturm (d. 1563), both of whom were brothers of Jacob Sturm and members of the city council of Strasbourg (see Brady, *Ruling Class*, pp. 350–3).

10 I.e., Duke Ulrich von Württemberg (see above, Ep. 532 headnote).

11 For Melchior Hoffman, see above, Ep. 535, note 18.

12 See HBBW 4, Ep. 481, note 7.

13 Since 1530, efforts were made to marry off one of the daughters of Charles V with a son of Francis I in order to bring about an end to the conflict between the two monarchs in Milan and Burgundy, but such a marriage never materialized (see HBBW 4, Ep. 481, note 7). Charles V had two legitimate daughters: Maria of Spain (1535–1603), who married her first cousin, Maximilian II, the Holy Roman Emperor, on 15 September 1548, and Joanna of Spain (1535–1573), who married her first cousin, John of Portugal, heir to the Portuguese throne, in 1552.

14 Hieronymus Curio (d. 1564) was the son of Valentin Curio, the Basel printer, and Anna Meyer, daughter of Jakob Meyer, mayor of Basel. In 1536/7, he matriculated at the University of Basel. From c. 1540 to 1564, he ran a print shop in Basel. On 28 November 1534, Meyer reported to Bullinger that he had sent his grandson, along with Johann Jakob Lompart, son of a Basel city councillor, to Strasbourg (see HBBW 4, Ep. 481, note 2).

15 For Matthis Pfarrer, see CWC 2, Ep. 456, note 9.

to you about all affairs, for it is more appropriate for him [to comment].  
15 November 1534.

W. Capito.

**Letter 542: 28 November 1534, Strasbourg, Capito to Boniface Amerbach**

Boniface Amerbach (1494–1562) of Basel received his education at the humanist school of Hieronymus Gebwiler in Sélestat from 1507 to 1509. He matriculated at the University of Basel, receiving his BA in 1511 and his MA in 1512. He followed up with four and a half years of legal studies under Udalricus Zasius at Freiburg. In 1520, Amerbach moved to Avignon, where for three years he studied law under Giovanni Francesco de Ripa and Andrea Alciati, obtaining a doctorate in 1525. He then taught the *Institutiones* at the University of Basel until 1530. For the next six years he held the chair in Roman law; in later years, until his retirement in the 1550s, he shared the teaching load with colleagues. In 1535, the city council of Basel appointed him to the post of legal consultant for the city.

The letter is printed in AK 4:310, Ep. 1887.

[*Summary*]: Capito asks Amerbach to lend him the Aldine edition of the philosophical and rhetorical works of Cicero or, if he does not possess them, to obtain them for him. [Christian] Herlin wishes to compose an index for all printed works of Cicero. Amerbach will receive a copy of the index. Capito expresses the hope that Amerbach will one day move to Strasbourg.

**Letter 543: [December 1534, Basel], Boniface Amerbach to Capito**

A copy of this letter is in Basel UB, C VIa 73, 444. There is a summary in AK 4:312, Ep. 1891. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*.:] Amerbach does not have the Aldine edition that Capito had asked for [see above, Ep. 542] and cannot obtain it for him.

**Letter 544: 10 December 1534, Basel, [Oswald Myconius] to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, ms. F 81, p. 340. For the author, see CWC 1, Ep. 37 headnote.

Greetings. We have not yet heard anything about war threatening us from our neighbouring enemies. The rumours coming from Swabia must not be discarded altogether. Certain military leaders among the nobility, who are

influential in the empire, are on the march.<sup>1</sup> An effort has been made to appoint people to hire soldiers for a campaign, which is to happen right after Christmas. Some noblemen even say that an expedition into Italy is being prepared. The subsidy will be put to a vote. Then we shall find out what the decision is. One thing is certain, they say: someone (a doctor) has been sent by the emperor.<sup>2</sup> He is now in Lucerne, seeking the city's opinion as to what their reaction would be if the imperial army were to attack Milan. We do not know their answer.

I am very worried about the affairs in Geneva.<sup>3</sup> The man<sup>4</sup> who brings this letter to you will tell you about it. I am worried because I fear we shall once again be called deserters, not to speak of suffering embarrassment. I wish God would grant them the strength becoming to those who profess the Truth. The rumours of war do not yet disquiet me, but I am disturbed by what you write about the leaders and the rest.<sup>5</sup> I have seen what it means to tolerate those who blaspheme against God and Christ Jesus, and it saddened

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- 1 Since November 1534, there had been rumours of imperial soldiers being recruited in Upper Germany for an Italian campaign (see PC 2:228–9, no. 249; 234–5, no. 256; 253, no. 273; VadBr 5, Ep. 809; HBBW 5, Ep. 501, note 7, Ep. 520, notes 5–6, and Ep. 538, note 13). In the spring of 1535, there was a rumour of an imperial army near Merano (Tyrol) and of Charles V planning an attack against Milan. After the death of the last member of the ruling dynastic family member of Milan, Francesco II Sforza, in October 1535, both Francis I and Charles V invaded Italy, thereby launching the Italian wars of 1536–8. The duchy was annexed by the Habsburg monarchy in 1535, and was held by the Spanish crown until 1706. Charles V, however, was also preparing for the campaign against Tunis in the summer of 1535.
- 2 Identity unknown.
- 3 Before the Reformation, Geneva had been the capital of an ecclesiastical state ruled by a prince-bishop allied closely with the neighbouring duchy of Savoy. In the 1520s, however, the elected council and syndics of Geneva established an alliance, a *combourgeoisie*, with the neighbouring cities of Fribourg and Bern. They gradually assumed control of the broader governmental powers of the bishop and duke, with the ultimate goal of making Geneva a free city-state. In the 1520s, Bern helped introduce in Geneva evangelical preachers who attacked local Catholic rites and urged Genevans to embrace Protestantism. On 14 December 1534, Berchtold Haller reported to Bullinger that Charles III, duke of Savoy, was putting pressure on Geneva. He would not recognize the decisions of the Swiss Diet of Payerne (canton Vaud) in 1530 ratified by Bern, Fribourg, and Geneva, although Bern repeatedly warned Charles III in 1534 to respect them (HBBW 4, Ep. 486).
- 4 Identity unknown.
- 5 This letter is no longer extant.

me, but I could do nothing else. We have exchanged letters about this matter before and have had some discussion about it. No doubt you still remember it. We must be gentle toward good men and those who seek what is good, and be more severe against sinners, but we must be hostile to blasphemers after one or two admonitions, unless we want to wait for what you are already lamenting. For that is what charity commands us to do with respect to God and men.<sup>6</sup>

But I do not understand what you write about our confession,<sup>7</sup> that 'you have not sent and will not send what you have written in more detail.'<sup>8</sup> I do not know whether you lack something, or are upset about something else. I wish you had said nothing at all rather than leaving us hanging. Whatever it is, I hope that our confession will be approved by God. Therefore, we do not wait for the judgment of men. I say this, compelled by your silence. My sentiments about you are the same as ever. In my judgment you have always been learned, pious, and full of grace, and that is why you are dearer to me than many other people, why I have loved and respected you, and still do, and why I shall love and respect you as long as I live. As for Bucer's efforts to achieve concord, they are suspect to some people,<sup>9</sup> for [they believe] he is too favourably inclined toward Luther's cause and therefore has deserted ours (and indeed his own). That is especially so because no one has ever heard Luther being concerned about concord. Even if a solid consensus were achieved concerning the Eucharist, there are still many questions peripheral to that matter which, we fear, Bucer will abandon. If I had enough time I would tell you the reason, namely, Bucer's letter which he recently sent from Tübingen to the brethren in Zurich.<sup>10</sup> From it you can easily see why people have become suspicious: not that the people of Zurich think ill of Bucer or of

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6 Cf. Titus 3:10.

7 I.e., the First Confession of Basel, which Myconius wrote in German on the basis of a shorter confession promulgated by Oecolampadius. It was issued on 21 January 1534 on behalf of the city council of Basel and presented to the city's citizens and subsequently printed. Although the First Confession of Basel was an attempt to bring those who inclined to Catholicism or Anabaptism in line with the reformers, its publication provoked a good deal of controversy, especially on account of its statements concerning the Eucharist. There is a modern critical edition in Dürr/Roth 6:403–10, no. 400.

8 A citation from a letter from Capito to Myconius that is no longer extant.

9 For Bucer's efforts to achieve concord in the Sacramentarian issue in December 1534, see below, Ep. 545 headnote.

10 I.e., Bucer's letter to Bullinger, written from Tübingen on 1 November 1534 (HBBW 4, Ep. 470).

concord, or that we here think ill of either. Yet one can see the ardour with which he desires concord at any price, and we know that the times are such that we must come to an agreement. But [...] <sup>11</sup> if the truth is not built on a solid foundation, I have no doubt that everything will come out worse than it was before. We must pray to God, therefore, as your letter admonishes us, to protect his people. Amen. I am obliged to end the letter. Farewell through the Lord. Basel. 10 December 1534.

**Letter 545: 18 December 1534, Constance, Martin Bucer to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

This letter sheds light on the ongoing efforts of Bucer to achieve concord between Luther and the Zurich reformers, both of whom had refused to accept the so-called Stuttgart Concord of 2 August 1534 (see above, Ep. 537, note 16). From October 1534 to 6 January 1535, Bucer travelled throughout southern Germany on horseback in an effort to reconcile the various factions.

Already in mid-October 1534, Bucer had expressed his desire to meet secretly with several Swiss and south German theologians ‘in some remote spot’ near Schaffhausen (see Schiess 1, Epp. 478, 480, and Schiess 2:811–12, Ep. 38) before a scheduled meeting with Melanchthon in December. On 1 and 22 November, Bucer repeated his wish, suggesting Neunkirch (just west of Schaffhausen), or Tuttlingen (Baden-Württemberg), but finally settled on Constance (see HBBW 4, Epp. 470 and 478; cf. *ibidem*, Ep. 488).

Bucer travelled from Augsburg to Constance, bringing with him Sebastian Meyer of Augsburg. When the conference opened on 15 December, there were representatives from numerous south German cities: Sebastian Meyer (Augsburg); Martin Frecht (Ulm); Gervasius Schuler and Eberhard Zangmeister (Memmingen); Konrad Frick and Paul Fagius (Isny); Thomas Gassner (Lindau); Jakob Haistung (Kempten); and Johannes Zwick, Johannes Jung, and Thomas Blaurer (Constance). No one from Biberach was present. Its preachers submitted instead a supportive letter to the delegates in Constance (see HBBW 4, Ep. 496, note 17). Both Ambrosius Blaurer and Simon Grynaeus (Tübingen) were invited, but due to their pressing obligations to reform the duchy of Württemberg and the University of Tübingen, Duke Ulrich refused to grant them leave (see Schiess 1, Epp. 496–7, 500, 502–4). The preachers of Zurich, whom Bucer had invited repeatedly to the meeting in Constance (see HBBW 4, Epp. 478, 484, and 488), refused to participate, citing bad health and bad weather as an

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11 The word is cancelled in the manuscript.

excuse (see HBBW 4, Ep. 482). They did not trust the cautious consent Bucer had given to the Eucharistic settlement reached in Württemberg between Blaurer and the Lutheran Erhard Schnepf (i.e., the Stuttgart Concord of 2 August 1534). Accordingly, they sent a written statement to Bucer and the delegates in Constance, expressing their skepticism and reservations, and spelling out their beliefs regarding the Lord's Supper (see HBBW 4, Ep. 482). Their written statement, which was endorsed by St Gallen, Basel, and Schaffhausen, was well received by the delegates (see HBBW 4, Ep. 496). Bucer was satisfied with the Swiss confession, but reproached them for their failure to attend the meeting in person (HBBW 4, Ep. 494). Bucer's reproach offended Bullinger, who explained that the preachers of Zurich had not wished to attend a hastily organized and secretive meeting in Constance without the preachers of Bern and Basel. Bucer consequently apologized for the misunderstanding (see HBBW 5, Epp. 511, 517, 528, and 531).

The participants at the meeting in Constance, which took place from 16–22 December, endorsed the statement from the Zurich preachers along with their own statement. They claimed that the disagreement among the evangelicals was merely in the wording. They were ready to make a concord with Luther 'if he would concede that the body of Christ is not eaten except by faith; that Christ, according to his human nature, lives in some definite place in heaven; and that he is present in the Eucharist by faith, in a manner appropriate to the sacrament,' not carnally or sensuously, but spiritually so that he is only perceived through faith.<sup>1</sup> Bucer also composed ten articles for the participants at Constance (BDS 6/1, no. 2). Bucer furthermore gained the assurance that the participants would not agree to any plan of concord that went beyond the position taken in his *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534; see above, Ep. 527a). According to Bucer's letter here, the meeting at Constance was conducted in a spirit of cooperation and went well. Johannes Jung, one of the delegates from Constance, also gave a glowing report of the meeting in a letter to Ambrosius Blaurer (Schiess 1, Ep. 507; cf. the letter from the delegates in Constance to the Zurich preachers, 21 December 1534 [HBBW 4, Ep. 496]).

In Millet, Letter 545 is dated 23 December 1534, but that cannot be correct, since Bucer left Constance on 18 December (PC 2/2: p. 245, note 3), preached on Sunday, 20 December in Tübingen (Schiess 1, Ep. 506), and arrived in Kassel on 27 December (Köhler 2:375). On the manuscript, Bucer himself corrected the date from 'XXIII Decembris' to 'XVIII Decembris.' This letter was therefore written on the day of Bucer's hasty departure from Constance, which accords

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1 Eells, 175.

with the timeline he mentions below: 'for I have only nine days left between now and going to Kassel,' that is, his arrival in Kassel on 27 December. At Bucer's suggestion, the other representatives remained in Constance to discuss baptism, liturgy, divorce, tithes, and similar questions until they finally dispersed on 22 December (Schiess 1, Ep. 507).

The autograph original of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 151, no. 181.

Grace and peace, dearest brothers. I have written through the brother of Hertzung's wife.<sup>2</sup> I am amazed that the letter has not yet been conveyed to you.<sup>3</sup> The overall goal is concord. The affairs here are going quite well. We have met with representatives from Augsburg, Ulm, Memmingen, Isny, Lindau, Kempten; the people of Zurich could not be persuaded to come.<sup>4</sup> Pray for me. I must hurry (which almost exceeds my strength), for I have only nine days left between now and going to Kassel.<sup>5</sup> Farewell and look after my

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2 For Peter Hertzung, see above, Ep. 510, note 12. Nothing is known about his wife or her brother.

3 This letter is no longer extant.

4 See above, headnote.

5 On 17 December 1534, Bucer received a letter from Philip of Hesse and Melanchthon instructing him to be in Kassel on 26 December (see BDS 6/1, p. 69 and VadBr 5, Ep. 803). For that reason, he was forced to leave the meeting in Constance in haste on 18 December (see headnote). Melanchthon had left Wittenberg on 17 December and arrived in Kassel on Christmas Eve (see Köhler 2, p. 375). The meeting in Kassel between Bucer and Melanchthon, which lasted from 27–29 December 1534, came about only after Philip of Hesse succeeded in getting Johann Friedrich I, the Elector of Saxony, and the Wittenberg theologians to agree to renewed negotiations about the Lord's Supper. The meeting between the two men was relatively successful, as they came to a general agreement on issues that had been controversial up to that point. Yet, for all their efforts, both knew that Luther's support would be crucial. Prior to the meeting, Luther had given Melanchthon a written instruction rigidly expressing his own uncompromising views (see MBW T6, Ep. 1511). In a personal letter to Justus Jonas, Luther expressed his lack of confidence in a positive outcome for the meeting at Kassel (WABr 7, Ep. 213). Melanchthon and Bucer managed to agree that Christ is present in the Lord's Supper inasmuch as he is united to the bread and the wine 'in a sacramental way.' Bucer wrote a report about his meeting with Melanchthon in Kassel (see BDS 6/1, no. 4). He also drafted a friendly response to Luther's uncompromising instruction, in which he suggested that there was a misunderstanding. The Strasbourg reformers agreed with Luther in their interpretation of the Lord's Supper (see BDS 6/1, no. 3). For an overview of the meeting at Kassel, see Köhler 2, pp. 358–80, esp. 375–80;

family. See to it that Matthew remains in office.<sup>6</sup> If you think it will be useful, show him this page:

To Zell:<sup>7</sup> Grace and peace, I beg you, my respected Matthew, since I make efforts everywhere for peace in the church in the name of all of you, I beseech you by the blood of Jesus Christ, do not cross me in the matter of godparents, about which no church has ever made concessions.<sup>8</sup> You are free to reject any abuse. Why, for heaven's sake, do you want to upset us? If it were up to us, we would make every concession to you. If only we had removed other abuses in our church! In this matter we cause only upset and impede the cause of Christ while such great dangers are threatening us! Let us renew life, and the ceremonies will be alright! Farewell, and love me and do not disdain Christ in the ministers of so many churches that you would stand apart from them on account of such a small matter. Constance, 23 December 1534.

Yours, Bucer.

Greetings to your wife,<sup>9</sup> my dearest sister, pray with her for me. I am taking a route that is certainly difficult, for the sake of concord.

#### Letter 545a: 1534, [Strasbourg, The Strasbourg Preachers to the Reader]

This is the preface to *Kurtze schriftliche erklärang für die kinder und anghonden* [=A brief written explanation for children and dependents] (Strasbourg, 1534), ff. [a1v]–a3v. A modern edition is available in BDS 6/3:53–5.

[*Summary*]: Thirteen years ago, they began to preach the gospel in Strasbourg. The first preachers were Matthew Zell, Capito, [Caspar] Hedio, [Martin] Bucer, [Anton] Firn, Symphorian [Pollio], Theobald [Nigri], and Johannes Latomus. In the beginning they encountered opposition, but they always offered to debate and defended their teaching. To corroborate the people

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for Bucer's report on the meeting in Kassel, see Ernst Bizer, 'Martin Butzer und der Abendmahlsstreit,' *ARG* 35 (1938): 217–29; see also Greschat, 134–5 and A.J. Dueck, 'An Unpublished Letter Pertaining to Developments Prior to the Colloquy between Bucer and Melancthon, December 1534,' *ARG* 66 (1975): 141–51.

6 The point of reference is unclear.

7 For Matthew Zell, preacher at the cathedral in Strasbourg, see CWC 1, Ep. 167 headnote.

8 The nature of Matthew Zell's objections to *compaternitas* (the responsibilities of godparents) is unclear.

9 Either a reference to Capito's wife, Wibrandis Rosenblatt (see above, Ep. 469, note 30), or to Zell's wife, Katharine Schütz Zell (c. 1498–1562).

in their beliefs, they have drawn up this brief explanation of doctrine, and of the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. The present publication does not supersede previously issued catechisms – it merely explains and further develops them and will be useful in teaching the young. They ask readers to reflect on the content and hope that their teaching will guard them against Satan's temptations.

### Letter 546: [Beginning of 1535], Strasbourg, Capito to John Calvin

This is the first extant letter between Capito and John Calvin (1509–1564), the well-known reformer of Geneva and a native of Noyons, France. From 1523, Calvin studied first at the Collège de la Marche in Paris; he then devoted himself to the liberal arts at the Collège de Montaigu. In 1525/6, his father urged him to give up his study of theology, and so in 1528, Calvin enrolled at the University of Orléans to study law; thereafter he studied at the University of Bourges. In 1531, he studied the humanities at the Collège Royal in Paris, where he came under the influence of evangelical teachings through his friend, Nicholas Cop (c. 1501–1540). Because of his association with Cop, who was suspected of Lutheranism, Calvin fled Paris for Basel. In 1536, Guillaume Farel called Calvin to Geneva to help reform the churches in the city. There he worked as a preacher and published the first edition of his influential *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536). In 1538, Calvin and Farel were expelled from Geneva by the city council. At the invitation of Martin Bucer, Calvin proceeded to Strasbourg, where he became the minister of a congregation of French refugees. He continued to support the reform movement in Geneva, and in 1540 was invited back to the city, where he remained its leading reformer until his death.

Printed in *Ioanni Calvini epistolae*, eds. C. Augustijn and F. P. van Stam (Geneva, 2005), vol. 1, 101–4, Ep. 19.

[*Summary*]: Capito likes what he has read so far of Calvin's [manuscript of *Vivere apud Christum*],<sup>1</sup> although some of the handwriting was difficult to decipher. He urges Calvin to postpone publication because of the unrest that is gripping Germany. He would prefer that people based their argument on

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1 Better known as the *Psychopannychia* [Sleep of souls], the original French manuscript, written at Orléans in 1534, was first published under the Latin title, *Vivere apud Christum non dormire animis [sic] sanctos, qui in fide Christi decedent, assertio* (Strasbourg, 1542). The second edition was entitled, *Psychopannychia, qua refellitur quorundam imperitorum error qui animas post mortem usque ad ultimum iudicium dormire putant* (Strasbourg, 1545).

the Bible. He hopes Calvin will find a more propitious subject and refrain from polemics. His labour will not be lost. Time will give everyone a better understanding of scripture. Capito himself is reluctant to publish anything, but friends in France had urged him to publish his *Commentary on Hosea* [cf. CWC 2, Epp. 350–1].

**Letter 547: 20 January 1535, [Basel, Oswald] Myconius to Capito**

The following two letters continue the narrative of Myconius' refusal to obtain a doctorate (see above, Ep. 501 headnote). The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, ms. F 81, p. 343.

Greetings. What I said to you yesterday<sup>1</sup> relieved my somewhat troubled mind, but at night, thinking about what you said at the end, I became so depressed that I saw your presence (in light of the gist of our discussion) as nothing but leading to my destruction – whether you encourage me to obtain a doctorate or take me away from the pastorate. The title of doctor is vile in the eyes of the godly, and for that reason I will not accept it. I must abandon the pastorate since the senate, persuaded by you, thinks that the title is not harmful. When I reflect on Christ in my conscience and in my spirit, when I reflect on his teaching, his words and deeds, my faith in God through Christ, the power of charity, and that word which is like lightning – ‘You cannot believe as long as you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from God alone’<sup>2</sup> – when I reflect on that I am so distraught that I can only grieve. You should not have said what you said, ‘Where the Spirit of God is present, the doctoral title does no harm and you would not seek a doctorate unless the Spirit was present.’ You don’t seem to consider or feel (the title making you insensitive) that the doctorate demands and means a spiritual ministry, not a proud title. Have I not satisfied the church so far by teaching, correcting, encouraging, and consoling according to the power of grace God has granted me? Believe me, I have so satisfied the church, that the most pious men said they would not listen to me if I accepted that title, voluntarily or under pressure, and thus disdained the Spirit. Satan has prevailed in our church when the vain delight in this

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1 Capito made a special trip to Basel in January to discuss the issue of the doctorate with Haller (see HBBW 5, Ep. 507). He was in Basel from around 19 to 28 January 1535 (see HBBW 5, Ep. 517).

2 John 5:44.

glory took hold. I would not want you to be the principal reason behind this.<sup>3</sup> Let the university have its doctors as long as the ministry of the Word is not infected with vanity. Paul says he is a ‘minister of Jesus Christ to the gentiles,’ and elsewhere, that he is a ‘doctor of the gentiles in faith and in truth.’<sup>4</sup> The same Paul, therefore, has the ministry and the doctorate of the Spirit. The church together with the ministers bestows on us the ministry, and they are ‘doctors,’ [that is,] learned.<sup>5</sup> Thus the Pauline doctorate is bestowed on us. Is it not sufficient to have a title equal to that held by Paul? Do the Strasbourgers not have doctors of the church? And those in Zurich or Bern or the rest of the evangelical cities? Where are we headed in our rush? What are we thinking, fighting Satan’s persuasive arguments in that fine fashion? Would our church become inactive, if there were no human doctorate? Oecolampadius of blessed memory put aside his doctorate as denoting the papistical priest and disdained it while he was alive.<sup>6</sup> You, too, would have done so if you had given it some thought. You are not a doctor unless you are a doctor of the church with Paul; there is no need to be freshly minted by a university. If you do that, how will you avoid charges of vanity and ambition? Have you erased the indelible mark of the priesthood?<sup>7</sup> Is the mark of the doctorate more indelible? Have my wife<sup>8</sup> and children obliterated either, not to speak of the rest? Think while there is time about what you are attempting to do in our church, lest when you return to your home, your conscience show you that you have attempted what is wrong and convict you of wrongdoing. Take in good stead what I write, most holy of men, and do not disdain your foolish advisor. Farewell in the Lord. From my temporary home, etc. 20 January 1535.

Yours sincerely, Myconius.

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3 The Latin has: ‘Cuius tu causa potissima, quod nolim.’

4 Rom. 15:16 and 1 Tim. 2:7.

5 The meaning of the Latin adjective ‘doctus’ (from which ‘doctor’ and ‘doctorate’ are derived) is ‘learned.’

6 The basis of Myconius’ claim is unknown. He may simply mean that Oecolampadius stopped referring to himself as ‘Doctor.’

7 According to Catholic theology, the sacrament of holy orders marks a priest with an indelible mark, known as ‘sacred character.’ This character is a spiritual mark placed within the very soul of the priest at his ordination – somewhat analogous to the indelible mark placed upon the souls of all the baptized at their baptism.

8 For Myconius’ wife and children, see above, Ep. 485, note 10.

**Letter 548: 3 February 1535, Basel, [Oswald] Myconius to Capito**

The autograph original of this letter is in Zurich ZB, ms. F 81, f. 344r-v.

Greetings. I thank you very much for writing.<sup>1</sup> Your words are obscure, which is why I reply so quickly. I want to know what you mean when you say, 'Accept the order of God in his church.' Am I disturbing that order? Do we not both confirm the order of God? Have we not both placed the Parisian doctorate outside the order of God?<sup>2</sup> You add, 'Take care, lest you offend strangers by your personal preferences.' I do not know at all what you mean. I do not know to what 'strangers' and 'personal preferences' you refer. I understand that you are admonishing me in a brotherly spirit, and accept it in that sense, but let me know what you mean. Forgive my simplicity. Understand, however, that I have never suffered greater afflictions. They come from my friends, not from strangers. But I shall be quiet and content to possess my soul in patience.<sup>3</sup> Farewell in the Lord with your family and Bucer – I am surprised that he has not written anything through Conrad<sup>4</sup> of Zurich. Farewell again. Basel, 3 February 1535.

Yours, Myconius.

**Letter 549: 19 February 1535, [Strasbourg, Capito to Gereon Sailer]**

There is a copy of this letter in Zurich, ZB ms F. 43, f. 467r. For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote.

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- 1 This letter is no longer extant.
- 2 The University of Paris, with its pre-eminent Faculty of Theology and corresponding degrees, was much maligned by humanists and reformers alike. Myconius may be suggesting that the effort to force all preachers and faculty members in Basel to obtain a doctorate degree was essentially an act of kowtowing to the Parisian Faculty of Theology. Cf. his letter to Bullinger, 10 January 1535: 'The university and the council are raging against me. Here, briefly, is what started it: Annoyed by the tyranny of the University of Paris I said a few sharp words against those theologians in my Sunday sermon on 3 January, since the council had made a decision about mandatory degrees on 31 December' (HBBW 5, Ep. 507).
- 3 Cf. Luke 21:19.
- 4 For Conrad Gesner, see above, Ep. 482, note 7. Gesner may have made a stop-over in Strasbourg on his way back to Zurich from Paris in 1535.

Grace and peace. Lorenz<sup>1</sup> has been removed from the community of students. He will go to Blaurer,<sup>2</sup> whom he designates as his teacher. He seriously threatened revenge on Konrad<sup>3</sup> of Isny and Timotheus,<sup>4</sup> and when I reproached him he said he was irritated. He asks me for a letter. The scholars<sup>5</sup> thought I should write the following until they have been informed by himself or know from another source that he has been ordered to leave: that he requests through us either to be allowed to retain the stipend or be freed from his obligations. He has most earnestly pledged himself to the city of Memmingen. He argues that his Lutheranism is an obstacle.<sup>6</sup> Sturm<sup>7</sup> said today that he would talk with Bernhard Theobald,<sup>8</sup> for I complained that the best students are leaving, driven away by poverty, and indeed hunger.

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- 1 Lorenz Bausch (or Basch) of Memmingen is listed as a student at the preachers' college in Strasbourg as of June 1534 (see Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST 41/1, bundle I, f. 2v). While in Strasbourg, Bausch, along with a fellow student from Memmingen, Hans Hummel, boarded with Konrad Hubert (see Schiess 1, Ep. 423). On 26 April, Blaurer wrote a letter to Eberhard Zangmeister and Hans Keller, the former mayors of Memmingen, urging them to recommend that the city council grant a scholarship to Bausch. They expressed a high opinion of his abilities (Schiess 1, Ep. 577; cf. Schiess 1, Ep. 590).
- 2 That is, Ambrosius Blaurer, then in Tübingen (see above, Ep. 532 headnote).
- 3 Konrad Päggel (or Beckel or Bögel) of Isny matriculated at the University of Basel in the academic year 1533/4. He is listed as a resident student at the preachers' college in Strasbourg, beginning June 1534 through to 7 November 1536, when he departed (see Strasbourg AVCU, 2AST 41/1, bundle I, f. 2v; 2AST 41/1, bundle Ia, f. 16v; 2AST 41/1, bundle II, f. 19v; and 2AST 41/1, bundle IV, f. 111r). His name is also mentioned in a list of students who owed Wendelin Rihel money for books in 1534–5. See Johannes Ficker, *Erste Lehr- und Lernbücher des höheren Unterrichts in Strassburg (1534–1542)* (Strasbourg, 1912), 29–30.
- 4 For Timotheus Jung, see above, Ep. 475, note 2.
- 5 The Latin has 'scholasticis'; Capito may be referring here to the scholars, the three members of the School Board established on 9 February 1526. These three men were called variously 'Schulherren,' 'Scholarchs,' or 'praefecti scholarum,' and were privy councillors serving for life. The board was made up of one nobleman and two commoners (see Brady, *Sturm*, 117).
- 6 It seems, however, that it was his conduct rather than his Lutheranism that stood in his way. On 3 June, Bucer wrote to Blaurer that Bausch had fallen in love with his teacher's wife and would not leave her alone in spite of repeated warnings (Schiess 1, Ep. 590).
- 7 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.
- 8 I can find no biographical information for Bernhard Theobald.

My assistant<sup>9</sup> was appointed before I received your letter on [...].<sup>10</sup> It is an attractive post on account of the comfortable income. Blaurer wants Lenglin,<sup>11</sup> but I advised him against this plan, for the prefects will call him with flattering words, asking him to prepare for the journey. He must be attracted to our church in every way. In this context Sturm told Hedio and myself that he would not tolerate and could no longer support [the residence of] Ambrosius' children in the college,<sup>12</sup> for he said, 'How can I, with a straight face, reject the mayor's request on behalf of his family and that of the other councillors and citizens, while we quite readily grant residence to foreigners?' I shall assign them to Dasypodius<sup>13</sup> or Valentin<sup>14</sup> until you write back from your place. Therefore I would like to persuade him in person to hire a teacher for them and pay him a good salary so that he may completely devote himself to their education. My preference is for the relative<sup>15</sup> of Rhellica-

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- 9 Martin Schalling, Sr., (d. 1552) was a deacon at Young St Peter's from 1537 to 1541, when he became a pastor in Wolfach im Kinzigtal. In 1546, Duke Wilhelm von Fürstenberg then called him to be a superintendent in Donau-eschingen (Baden-Württemberg). Each year he visited the congregations of the duchy with Caspar Hedio. Even though he held a lifelong appointment, he could not remain there after the Augsburg Interim. He therefore moved back to Strasbourg in 1549, where he became a deacon at St Nicolaus. The following year, he moved to Weitersweiler (Rhineland-Palatinate), where he oversaw the Reformation.
- 10 The Latin word is illegible.
- 11 Johann Lenglin (d. 1561) matriculated at Tübingen in 1521 and thereafter served as a preacher in Ravensburg. From 1528 to 1537, he gave weekly sermons to the nuns of the convent of St Nicolaus-in-Undis in Strasbourg. From 1536 to 1539, he was a deacon at the Strasbourg cathedral, then from 1539 to 1541 at St William's, where he served as pastor from 1541 until his death. In 1539, he also became canon of the abbey of St Stephen's and championed the Reformation in Wangen, a fief that belonged to the abbey. While in Strasbourg, he was greatly admired by Bucer and frequently served as his secretary, even translating into Latin Bucer's *Von der wahren Seelsorge*. He also served in a number of churches in Strasbourg and also worked elsewhere for the Reformation (Constance, 1534; Ravensburg, 1546). In 1543, Lenglin appeared with Zell before the Strasbourg city council to support Calvin's plea for the persecuted Protestants of Metz. From 1547 to 1551, he was actively involved in Bucer's efforts to institute Christian communities or cell groups (*Christliche Gemeinschaften*) in the parishes of Strasbourg.
- 12 For Ambrosius Jung, Sr., and his two sons, Ambrosius, Jr., and Timotheus, both students at the preachers' college, see above, Ep. 475, notes 2-3.
- 13 For Petrus Dasypodius, see above, Ep. 515a, note 3.
- 14 Not identified.
- 15 Not identified. The Latin word 'sororius' is not precise. It indicates a relative on the sister's side.

nus.<sup>16</sup> You can approach people in your city. Let him get a recommendation from Dasypodius. Or see to it that the boys are sent to Tübingen. As for the 500 gulden of Buffler<sup>17</sup> – that seems to be an entirely different business. Let him cede the greater part to Melchior;<sup>18</sup> the remainder must be allocated to Simon<sup>19</sup> by all means.

Yesterday Hedio was very keen on going to Frankfurt;<sup>20</sup> I suggested a course of action, for we must act sincerely, lest the offence to the public be disguised for Bromius<sup>21</sup> sake. Then Hedio began asking questions and said

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- 16 Johannes Rhellicanus (Müller, c. 1478–1542), a gifted Hebrew and Greek scholar, studied at Cracow (1517–22) and Wittenberg (1522–5). In 1525, he reluctantly took up a teaching position in a cloister in Stein am Rhein. By 1527, he had relocated to Zurich, where he taught Greek. From March 1528 to 1538, he worked as a schoolmaster in Bern. In 1538, he returned to Zurich and taught at the Fraumünster school. In 1541, he became a pastor in Biel, where he died soon after his arrival.
- 17 On 14 April 1534, Peter and Jost Buffler, two patrician brothers from Isny, established a foundation so that each year two students from the cities of Constance, Lindau, Biberach, and Isny could be sent to study in Strasbourg. The Buffler foundation provided an annual endowment of 30 gulden for each student, with the understanding that the four cities would match the funds. Joachim Maler, Constance's city attorney, brought the first eight Swabian boys on 10 June 1534 to Strasbourg, where the preachers' college had just opened in the former Dominican convent. For the foundation's endowment charter of 14 April 1534, see BDS 7:539–46; for the college's statutes of 1535, see *ibidem*, 547–50; cf. Dacheux, p. 234, no. 5050. See also the unpublished letter from the cities of Constance, Lindau, Biberach, and Isny to Jacob Sturm and the *Schulherren* of Strasbourg about educating their children, dated 14 October 1538 (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 324, no. 11) and Bucer's letter to Blaurer, written at the beginning of October 1535, in which he discusses the costs of the students supported by the Buffler foundation (Schuess 1, Ep. 640).
- 18 Melchior Cumanus (Kunmann) of Molsheim (d. 1543) became a citizen of Strasbourg in 1527 (Wittmer/Meyer 3, no. 8356); he was a vicar at St Aurelia's in Strasbourg. In 1535, he became the principal of the Preachers' College and in 1536, canon at St Thomas.
- 19 For Simon Steiner (Lithonius), see above, Ep. 536, note 4.
- 20 Cf. Hedio's letter to an unnamed Frankfurt official, dated 19 January 1535 (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 158, pp. 79–80).
- 21 Nikolaus Bromm (Bromius, 1517–1587) of Frankfurt matriculated at Basel in 1532/3 and at Wittenberg in 1536/7, before completing his studies at Padua in 1539. While at Basel, he developed a close relationship with Grynaeus, with whom he visited Tübingen for a month in 1535. After his marriage in 1540, he became a member of the city council of Frankfurt in 1546 and in 1554 served as the city's mayor. On account of bad investments in a copper company, he lost his financial support and caused Frankfurt financial difficulties. Therefore, in 1566 he was removed from the city council.

I wanted someone who was not up to the task and too inexperienced – that is what we shall obviously hear. The business will be transacted before the XIII, but we have been too soft in our proposal to the mayor. There was some division among the preachers, and we thought it was worth our while to buttress the indecisive council by pointing out the danger which threatens us. Perhaps I will go down [to Frankfurt] with Hedio – if he so wishes.<sup>22</sup> You have convinced Sturm to advise the people in Constance to authorize the hiring of Blaurer at least for four years until we have stabilized the religious situation in the region. Do your best in turn. For you know how important he is for this duchy. As for the sons of Ambrosius and for our boys, Tübingen is the best place. The university has recently begun to burn with zeal. Blaurer will readily take on the search for a suitable teacher. Farewell, 29 February 1535.

My family is very well. This messenger had no time to deliver a note, I believe. I have begun disputations and would want Hedio to sit in, for he is too naive, when one considers the skill required of a man of his reputation – but I do not dare to suggest it to him. Farewell again.

**Letter 550: [Beginning of March 1535, Frankfurt or Strasbourg], Capito to the City Council of Frankfurt**

On 13 February 1535, Dionysius Melander, Sr., (see CWC 2, Ep. 346 headnote) resigned his position as preacher in Frankfurt. His resignation may have come as a relief to the city council because the Catholics and Lutherans in the city magistracy were concerned that Melander, who leaned toward Zwinglian views, would steer the city theologically, and hence politically, in the direction of Zurich. This fear had already delayed Frankfurt's entry into the Schmalkaldic League. In addition, there had been allegations of impropriety in Melander's private life. After the death of his wife in 1527, he had hired a housekeeper and given her a promise of marriage. He then gave a promise of marriage to another woman without dismissing the jilted housekeeper. His behaviour scandalized people and caused difficulties with his three colleagues, Johann Bernhard alias Algesheimer, Peter Pfeiffer alias Chomberg, and Matthias Limperger, all three of whom had supported him for years, but now accused him of concubinage.<sup>1</sup>

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22 See below, Ep. 550, note 2.

1 For the accusations, see G.E. Seitz, 'Luther's Warnungsschrift an Rath und Gemeinde zu Frankfurt 1533 und Dionysius Melander's Abschied von seinem Amte 1535,' *Archiv für Frankfurts Geschichte und Kunst* n.s. 5 (1872): 257–81, esp. 269–73.

The city council initially attempted to mediate between Melander and his three colleagues, but their efforts were in vain. To avoid further animosity, Melander tendered his resignation. The city council accepted it, but requested that Strasbourg send either Capito or Caspar Hedio to deal with the consequences. Capito was chosen (see below and HBBW 5, Ep. 550, ll. 13–15) and arrived in Frankfurt on 25 February 1535. He returned to Strasbourg on 7 March (Schliess 1, Ep. 553).

The following letter is Capito's assessment of the situation in Frankfurt and his recommendation as to how the city should proceed. In the interest of concord, Capito highlighted the ten years of service Melander had provided to the city, and urged the council either to reinstate him, or force him to leave the city altogether. Capito's own preference was for Melander to depart Frankfurt. At the same time, he recommended a more thorough reorganization of the church. In his opinion, the council had been far too lax. His proposals outline a church order for Frankfurt, including the appointment of church elders and preachers, the convening of a church council, the exercise of church discipline, and the establishment of schools – in effect, transplanting Strasbourg's church order to Frankfurt. Capito's letter may have prompted the council to make peace with Melander. He departed from the city in March on friendly terms and accepted a position as court preacher for Philip of Hesse in Kassel.

Capito's letter is printed in Johann Balthasar Ritter, *Evangelisches Denckmahl der Stadt Franckfurth am Mayn ...* (Frankfurt, 1726), 329–45. The letter is analyzed in Karl Bauer, 'Der Bekenntnisstand der Reichsstadt Frankfurt am Main im Zeitalter der Reformation,' *ARG* 19 (1922): 244–51.

Pious, honourable, wise ruling lords and friends,

On 18 February I received letters from Ambrosius Blaurer, Simon Grynaeus, and Martin Bucer in Tübingen, which indicated the great trouble and unpleasantness that had arisen between the preachers and your church in Frankfurt.<sup>2</sup> They suggested it would be helpful if Dr Hedio or myself would come down to settle this trouble according to God's Word. Soon afterwards we therefore inquired into the views of my lords, the XIII, here in Strasbourg.

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<sup>2</sup> On 8 February 1535, Bucer, Ambrosius Blaurer, and Simon Grynaeus, who were in Tübingen, wrote a letter to Capito in which they urged him or Hedio to go to Frankfurt and restore order in the church there (Kittelson, p. 197). Bucer left Strasbourg at the beginning of February for another journey to visit the churches in Upper Germany. From 26 February–22 April, he was in Augsburg, negotiating a deal with the local preachers over the Lord's Supper (see BDS 6/1, no. 5, and above, Ep. 541, note 6).

They decided that I myself should go to [Frankfurt] and make every effort to establish due order among the preachers and ensure that such unrest (which arose from childish causes) not arise again in the future. I would do them a great favour [they said], for they were sincerely sorry for you and would supply me with horses, servants, and food in this mission. Thus I arrived on 25 [February] and was immediately asked by several lords and the preachers themselves to proceed, and heard that things were much worse than I had been told in writing in Strasbourg by my colleagues mentioned above. It is lamentable that God the Father gave Satan the power to stir up such bitterness among men who preach that we must die to ourselves and make a new life in Christ.<sup>3</sup> For I have never encountered more ill will and trouble among preachers of the gospel in a dispute about doctrine. Yet there are on both sides, as far as I understand, dear and pious men. But it is God's will, I hope, to lead them through such afflictions to increased knowledge and obedience to Christ. The fact that Dionysius [Melander] stubbornly refuses to preach in spite of the friendly admonition of my lords and has abruptly renounced his office is of no help to the church and the community. Rather I am concerned that this will make things worse, unless diligent and useful consideration is brought to bear and the church is put in lasting order.

I hope this will come about through the articles below, or will at least lead to a partial improvement: first, to end the unrest and complaints of the preachers; secondly, to reveal their origin, so that the honourable council may prevent such factions among the citizens, even though the misunderstanding concerns religion; thirdly, to appoint elders of the church and devise other ordinances concerning the administration of the church; and fourthly, to institute good schools and teach and instruct capable youths in Frankfurt, primarily in Holy Writ.

First, there are two ways of putting an end to the ill will and grudge of the preachers. The first is to return Dionysius to his post, wise lords, which appears to be very useful for the kingdom of God, for the pious and for the welfare of the city of Frankfurt, especially since changing the status quo may not be possible without much trouble. How can [Dionysius] be faulted when he has preached here for ten years and introduced many changes and made this church reputable as a result, and now must resign on account of such a matter and immediately leave his church? This is a terrible thing for all kind-hearted people and many ordinary people are offended by it; furthermore, some better-placed people who are favourably disposed toward the gospel are being driven away by this matter. I know this from experience. We need

3 Cf. Rom. 6:1–23; Gal. 2:20, 5:24.

to be good stewards and further God's glory through our service to him. But this good man did not look at it in this light; rather, he thought he should no longer preach here since he had given rise to such evil report, and his whole office was troublesome therefore. Thus he persuaded himself that this was the end of his mission, and he would unburden himself in this manner. Yet fleeing and leaving his post do not solve the problem – rather they cause problems. Determined patience and calmness would be more beneficial and indeed necessary. But unfortunately he did not see that, and therefore his actions should not be received and interpreted in the worst sense. If he were to resume his post with your permission, my wise lords, one can only hope that this clamour would soon cease, and less damage would ensue, especially because the congregation of the church listens to him willingly. One must worry that the church will disperse and come to naught [without Melander]. If Your Reverences consider this opinion acceptable, you should address Dionysius in the presence of all the preachers and revisit the matter with words to this effect: 'The gentlemen of the honourable council are not about to change their response, but they have considered the matter well and have come to the following conclusion. They will leave the marital affairs of Dionysius to scholars and ask them to draw up a report. If the honourable council finds that he meant well and acted in accordance with Holy Writ and his actions would cause no trouble or ill repute, and if the council finds furthermore that his actions are in accordance with imperial law and defensible before the Roman Imperial Majesty and the estates of the Holy Empire, they are willing to reply to him accordingly. Otherwise, they would allow him to depart under friendly terms and with their permission, to avoid causing him scruples.'

The alternative is this: The honourable council has more knowledge than I can ever have. If they consider [Melander's] return more troublesome than beneficial, let them also consider that his diminished stature on account of his actions will not be permanent in the eyes of the community, as I cannot help thinking. The desires of people are variable and, as the Lord says, 'Are there not twelve hours in a day?'<sup>4</sup>

If then it is regarded as useful, he should be given an honourable discharge from the city and depart with the good will of my lords, so that he does not end up permanently settling elsewhere. After a while, if it pleased the honourable council, he might return to Frankfurt and serve the church in a fruitful manner. The longer he remains here now, the more talk and clamour will arise and cause bitterness. And as long as the preachers on both

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4 John 11:9.

sides are bitter, it is likely that they will continue slandering each other and pour out unpleasant words. Indeed some gentlemen on the council have been heard to say that if a formal agreement were drawn up it would not be observed. Both sides would break it. I find this hard to accept, but the trouble is deep-seated.

Indeed, if I were wretched enough to believe, as Dionysius does, that my calling has come to an end in one place and had decided to end my work, I would not want to remain in that place. I would avoid giving many people a reason to become angry and furthermore feel deep hatred for one another, for it is unavoidable that there will be much disputing between him and his enemies as long as he remains on the scene. May Your Honours take this into consideration and everything else that may prevent evil. Furthermore, my gracious dear lords, you must pray for a godly, experienced, and prudent man to replace [Melander], a man who turns his effort only toward improvement and edification, who is zealous and earnest, which is necessary, but also gentle and amiable when the time calls for it. Indeed the nature of a Christian preacher requires more Christian desire than carnal zeal and must not be equally zealous in everything. A lion only unsheathes his claws when he attacks his prey – otherwise he pads along. Similarly, a preacher is most earnest when the danger to the soul is greatest; in lesser matters, he acts with lesser determination.

#### Concerning the Second Point

God casts fire and sword into the world and wills it to burn, and he turns the daughter against the mother.<sup>5</sup> This is said of the cross of godly people, who are opposed by evil men, but it is especially dreadful, my circumspect, honourable, and wise lords, that pious Christians should oppose pious Christians, when both parts believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. In other cities there are papists in government who are content [to tolerate] the evangelicals as far as faith is concerned, for they know that salvation does not lie in ceremonies and ecclesiastical pomp, that listening to a sermon is a greater service to God than singing, reading, and hearing mass, indeed that no external rites are of benefit in themselves but only in pointing to Christ. Listening to a sermon is necessary, whereas other ceremonies are added for people's benefit. Why would they turn against their pious fellow citizens who oppose ceremonies but otherwise lack nothing that leads to salvation? The so-called Lutherans must take into consideration that no one in the world will say publicly that there is nothing but bread and wine in the Supper, that they are

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5 Cf. Matt. 10:34–5; Luke 12:53.

empty signs; rather, wherever the church is, there is Christ who is received through the Word and sacrament or as a sign to the conscience of the faithful in the service of the church. The only thing that is in dispute is the *localis presenciam*, the local presence and the natural union of the body of Christ with the material bread. This is something our opponents are unwilling to say, admitting there is no rationale behind it. The essence and the sacramental rite are the same, but people are confused about the exact wording the four cities used in the confession submitted to His Majesty, the Roman Emperor, in Augsburg.<sup>6</sup> This confession was signed or agreed on and is taught accordingly by the Confederates and the Swabian churches.

The third party, called Zwinglians, who believe they have achieved special knowledge, should not, according to Romans, chapter 14,<sup>7</sup> despise the others who wish to cling to some extent to the ceremonies and their elements. I would like Your Honours to consider this in sincerity. Indeed one finds citizens who do not care a great deal about doctrinal quarrels and loyally keep the world's peace. They govern for the common good in complete accord with the faithful. The faithful should be all the more modest and tolerant of each other. For even if there were disagreement among Your Honours in this matter, you would still consider one another pious citizens of Frankfurt, even if you do not consider one another pious Christians and knowledgeable in God's truth – and that is necessary indeed.

You should show the same attitude in the matter of Dionysius, dear lords and friends. Thus if you make a decision on these two points, let each party consider for itself the truth in God. They must also consider the improvement of Christian society and, secondly, the glory and good of the state, but the will of the Father in heaven must always be placed ahead of the grace of human beings on earth. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.'<sup>8</sup> And even if they are of a different and divided opinion, the minority party ought to believe that God, who is the judge, favoured the majority opinion and wanted it to be conclusive.

He holds the hearts of all human beings in his hand. Anyone who believes this of the heavenly Father cannot regard it as burdensome when his own counsel does not prevail. May Your Honours consider this for the sake of God and ponder everything industriously, lest Satan come and factions arise among you on account of disputed articles of faith, for factions have

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6 I.e., the Tetrapolitan Confession of 1530 (see above, Ep. 464, note 2).

7 Rom. 14:1–12.

8 Matt. 6:33.

almost destroyed Welschland with quarrelling and politicking.<sup>9</sup> May all people accustom themselves to tolerating their fellow beings in their perfection and calmly allow whatever it is to happen and come to pass, for nothing happens against God's will. 'Who can resist his will?'<sup>10</sup>

#### Concerning the Third Point, Elders in the Church and Church Ordinances

Judgment, that is, governance, belongs to God, as the saintly Abraham says: 'The Lord is the righteous judge of the world.'<sup>11</sup> He rules in a secular and in a spiritual manner; that is, he has two governances, one temporal, the other spiritual. Temporal governance concerns bodies and possessions and external things, and in the case of a religious people, the external governance of the church. Spiritual governance rests only on conscience and edifies us through the Word, sacrament, brotherly discipline, and such things. Secular governance belongs to Your Honours; spiritual governance belongs to the church, and not only to the ministers of the churches, and even less to the secular rulers. Thus Matt. 18 on the church, 'Tell it to the church'<sup>12</sup> must also obtain among us, for it is the command of the Lord. In the time of Christ, there was an ecclesiastical and a spiritual rule, and thus it must remain, for his Word is eternal.

#### Concerning the Manner of Establishing Spiritual Government in the Church

God commanded Moses in Lev. 18, Deut. 1, and Num. 11 to elect elders from each tribe to take up the burden of governance with him<sup>13</sup> until in the eleventh year in the land of Moab, as it says in Deuteronomy, chapter 17,<sup>14</sup> the office of the high priest and his staff was established. Thereafter scripture

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9 For the problems in Welschland or Suisse romande, i.e., French Switzerland, see above, Ep. 544, note 3.

10 Rom. 9:19.

11 Cf. Gen. 18:25.

12 Matt. 18:15.

13 For God's instructions to Moses for the appointment of seventy elders to share the burden of leadership with him, see Num. 16:16–30; for the appointment of tribal leaders, see Deut. 1:9–18. Cf. Lev. 18:1.

14 The point of reference is unclear. Cf. Deut. 1:3 and 5, where it is written, 'And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them; On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law.'

distinguished that office from secular government, for Moses governed in both senses. Afterwards Joshua had only the secular governance, and Eleazar and Phinehas, the high priests, had the spiritual.<sup>15</sup> This distinction continued and remained in well-governed churches to the present day. Furthermore, we also read in the New Testament about church elders, bishops, pastors, and other offices.<sup>16</sup> That is the foundation of the church. For what is brought before the bishops and elders of the church is being brought before the church. Thus in our time the church must be governed as it was under Moses, when elders were elected from all tribes. In the same manner today elders (elsewhere called *Kirchenpfleger*) should be elected from all ranks of the people, lest for lack of a divine order a great and dangerous division come about. Satan will not leave us without temptation, for that is his nature, whatever order we have and whatever effort we make, but we can offer him vigorous resistance through order and strength and the Word of God, as well as other spiritual weapons. Thus all Satan's temptations will be turned into something good.

It is not sufficient to have almoners (*Kastenherrn*) who, I understand, look after the poor, a concern that is the special office of certain members of the church, as we see in the example of Stephen and other ministers under the apostles,<sup>17</sup> and Lawrence under his bishop Sixtus.<sup>18</sup> There is so much action taken if the church is properly administrated that counsel and planning are very worthwhile, if one wishes to have a church pleasing to God and to stand up before God on the last day.

#### Concerning the Elders of the Church

The church is comprised of the elders and the ministers of the gospel and the

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15 According to the biblical narrative, Aaron, the brother of Moses, was the first high priest, and was succeeded by his son Eleazar (Numbers 20:26), and grandson, Phinehas. For Joshua as the secular successor to Moses, see Numbers 27:18–23.

16 Cf. Acts 20:17–30; 1 Tim. 3:1–2; Titus 1:5–7; 1 Peter 5:1–4.

17 The disciples chose seven men, including Stephen, to oversee the daily distribution of food (see Acts 6:1–6).

18 St Lawrence was the last of the seven deacons of ancient Rome serving under Pope Sixtus II to be martyred during the persecution under Emperor Valerian in 258. According to tradition, Sixtus entrusted him with the papal treasury in anticipation of his own imminent arrest and execution. St Lawrence promptly distributed the money to the poor. When the Romans demanded that he turn over the riches of the church, he presented the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the outcasts. This act of defiance led directly to his own martyrdom a few days after that of Sixtus II.

deacons, that is, the collectors and distributors of alms, and other offices. For Moses speaks to such elders and leaders of the Levites, when he speaks to all of Israel, as the ancient Hebrews concluded on the basis of the histories of Mount Sinai, and as was actually practised. Thus I wish briefly to outline and depict such a church. This may serve as a model to Your Honours in building the temple of God, so that we may attain proper administration and due knowledge of Christ and may progress in it. For where the work of God does not progress, it regresses. First, let three among you, my lords, and at least six members of the community (perhaps in two sections) be elected as elders of the people and administrators of the church in such a manner that none holds office for more than three years. Thus the business and experience will be spread further throughout the community, lest the business be treated negligently and become a matter of name and authority alone. For God wants the men in his ministry to apply themselves. These men should be like Jethro, as described in Exodus 18, and in God's words, Deut. 1: earnest, industrious, modest.<sup>19</sup> It is a spiritual rule, which is gentle and kind, and characterizes both elders and bishops; otherwise there will be scandal in the church.

#### The Office of the Elders

It is their responsibility to look after the affairs of the church along with the ministers, and if any shortcomings are found in the ministers, or if the community has a concern and the ministers do not act on it, the elders must inquire into it and, if necessary, censure the preachers. For it is the preachers' task to discipline the community, and they in turn must accept earnest and kind discipline from the elders, whether it concerns their teaching or their life, their own or that of their wives and children. Otherwise the ministers of the church – preachers and pastors – would have to discipline everyone in spiritual matters, but be under no one's discipline themselves. This is a situation which some of you have lamented even now in the present case, in which no one was free to indicate anything to the leaders of the Word. This was the result of preachers believing that they are set above and in opposition to all worldly powers, although they are servants of the church and its administrators in all spiritual matters. And it is proper that one spirit governs both [secular and ecclesiastical rules], which does not contradict itself. The spirit of the prophets is subjected to the prophets, does not rage and rave with carnal zeal, and takes it as an imposition on his command and out of order if something is prohibited by a power other than the church. Thus lords

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<sup>19</sup> Exodus 18; Deut. 1:9–18.

and preachers must converge. Therefore, an order should be established in your church for the ministers and preachers in the city and the surrounding villages. Let them come together every fourteen days or if there is an earlier opportunity, and let three elders join the meeting, such that every fourth meeting each man has been replaced by a new member, and matters are arranged such that two members will always be on hand who have been at the previous meeting. Alternatively, the rotation of persons may be done over a longer period of time, perhaps every quarter year, or as your experience dictates.

#### The Agenda of the Church Meeting

This meeting is called church council or church meeting. In many churches it is called 'Meeting of the Brethren'; in others, 'parish meeting' (*Pfarr-Convent*). The meeting must have a chairman, or there will be disagreement and disorder. [The lack of a chairman] was not the least reason for the troubles Your Honours had with the disagreement about marriage. Each man worried that the other wanted to take the reins, and each man wanted matters to be dealt with according to his own views. This meeting would deal with all administrative matters of the church: ceremonies, brotherly discipline, punishment of vices, order of preachers, and contents of sermons. In a word, it should look after everything without exception, or you will constantly be delayed by divisions, as one person does one thing, another does another, and each man sings a different psalm. That is how it happened in the Sacramentarian controversy and in other matters. In this manner the evil Satan seeks to find followers. Little by little the matter is plucked apart by the ministers, and the conscience of pious men looks to the ministers instead of Christ. We must have a leader, as Aristotle envisaged for an orderly state. The Spirit of Christ is also a spirit of order. Why, therefore, do the ministers not want to have order and make one of their number the leader?

#### The Method of Proceeding at the Meeting

Should such a meeting take place, the chairman should begin with a prayer and read a very short, comforting passage from scripture. Next, he should ask each man what he has to say for the admonition and improvement of the church and take note of the proffered points. Afterwards he should go through them in order. Anything meant only as an admonition, he may repeat himself and give orders to those concerned. If anyone wants to comment further, he should be at liberty to do so, according to the passage, 'If something is revealed to one seated, let the first man be silent.'<sup>20</sup> Any point

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<sup>20</sup> 1 Cor. 14:30.

on which they need to take counsel should be discussed in order and in a forthright manner. Thus each person will become accustomed to yield to the other without becoming enraged and to speak courteously, so that in future matters will not proceed in such a boorish and carnal fashion.

It will often happen that a preacher is censured for a past sermon, its subject or form or character, for example, if he did not correctly interpret the text, did not speak correctly according to the full meaning of faith, such as using the word 'faith' without emphasizing the power and consequences of faith, as one ought to, or if he did not sufficiently explain a matter, did not speak truthfully, consistently, zealously, and other such things which should be brought up in a gentle manner. The person concerned should consider how he may improve rather than how he may exonerate himself, for that would be a certain sign of God's Spirit. Our flesh wants to portray itself as beautiful and pure and wants to blacken other people. Let them patiently accept punishment, even undue and unseasonable punishment.

In cases where the life of a preacher must be improved, or that of an elder of the church or his family, he should not be censured publicly. Rather this should be indicated according to the evangelical rule (Matt. 18),<sup>21</sup> and if it is a concern of the church, prayers should be said for the stubborn sinner rather than rough measures taken. One must also take into consideration the rule of St Paul (Gal. 6), that discipline should be administered incrementally and in a gentle spirit, 'lest you too be tempted, and things turn out worse.'<sup>22</sup>

If however the guilty brother, who has given offence, stubbornly resists church discipline and if he is subject to grave and offensive vices, one ought not to make a mountain out of a molehill,<sup>23</sup> but confront him sincerely and charitably, and not criticize his behaviour as strictly vicious but often look for a virtuous [aspect].<sup>24</sup> If the vices are great and offensive, however, and where there is stubborn disdain for all admonition and discipline, the sinner should first be brought before the elders and the entire assembly, so that he may show more respect. And if all that is of no avail, the matter should be brought to the attention of the government, which may thereafter decree secular punishment, while the church may keep him from the Supper of the Lord. Thus the matter should be properly taken care of. No one,

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21 Matt. 18:15–17.

22 Gal. 6:1.

23 Literally, 'to turn small things into great.'

24 This may be a reference to the Anabaptists, whose vices Capito attributed to their zeal and unworldliness.

however, should pronounce the ban [of excommunication] on a person from the pulpit without authorization from the honourable council, which must not give such authorization lightly, since it rarely leads to improvement. The honourable council has its traditions and usages. They punish a person with imprisonment or capital punishment, or exile him from the city and the area, depending on the crime. The preacher must act loyally toward the community, but must leave the conscience of individuals to the judgment of God and always hope for the best. In the case of a secular crime he must faithfully advise the government not to be indolent or negligent in punishing it.

The preachers and elders are obliged to keep watch on individuals, admonish them in a brotherly manner, and act in the best possible way, according to their experience, before they take the final step of bringing the matter before the entire assembly and keeping the sinner from receiving the sacraments. There should be deliberation as to how to reconcile the sinner with the church once he has been prohibited from the sacraments because he created a public scandal and showed disobedience.

As far as the ordinances of the church, public law, and commands are concerned, the assembly must deliberate in the fear of God and inform the honourable council in the usual manner and, mainly, never introduce anything that the honourable council has not authorized in advance, even if it concerns the administration of the church, or else there would soon arise a government independent of the honourable council in external things. And that must not happen because it was from this that the harmful power of the [Catholic] ecclesiastics arose. This follows the practice of the church's prophets, for the prophets and the Sanhedrin, the most powerful council in Jerusalem, chaired by the king, jointly set up public legislation – not the prophets by themselves or together with private persons – as we read in the histories of the Hebrews. Since, however, in the other temple the Pharisees and scholars of scripture in the schools and synagogues made decisions about usage and law, the matter reached the point where they left God's laws behind to look after their own advantage and thus deserted the covenant with God, as the gospels note.

Matters are often raised in the church council which concern the government directly. These should be brought before the honourable council by the financial officers, as the ordinance says – not all of it, but only as far as the advice of that assembly ought to be sought. Thus, according to God's order, the government of the citizens remains intact and works alongside the power of the church. It is a task that requires much effort, especially once one starts dealing with matters of conscience and spiritual wisdom, and once one wants to produce prudent and skilful preachers.

## The Appointment of Ministers and Preachers of the Church:

It may be regarded as being in conformity and according to scripture for the assembly to consider [candidates] for the ministry and the pastorship and furthermore to present them to the honourable council after they have preached before the people – provided the people are pleased with them and their teaching has been examined. More members of the community should be used to elect pastors and shepherds for the parish in the name of their congregation, who as I said before will be presented and thereafter confirmed by the honourable council. Then another pastor may commend the new shepherd to the congregation with a special prayer during the sermon, that he may zealously perform the shepherd's office there. This is appropriate and brings the hearts and desires of the people closer to that of their pastor. If this is transacted in a different manner, it usually remains an empty human affair and will hardly be of service to conscience. A practice has been introduced that is very wrong, although without risk and ill intention, and is still being maintained, namely, the practice of Your Honours rehiring the pastors and preachers annually. Thus the affairs of God are brought on both sides to such a pass that the council and the preacher and the whole community say, 'Well, then, the year is almost over, and we are released from our obligations.'

That is not at all the case, my dear sirs. If they are sent by God, no human being can set terms for them or remove them. If they run of their own accord, for the sake of filling their bellies, and if they are looking for a good and comfortable position, they are not sent by God and cannot preach the gospel in future. They are like Caiaphas,<sup>25</sup> that is, their gospel may attack scandal and external crimes, but strictly speaking, if they are not sent by God they cannot help anyone find salvation. Yet, as in Caiaphas' case, God may use them in a special way. They are like mercenaries or day labourers, who abandon their sheep in difficulties, as the Lord says at John 10.<sup>26</sup> In the same way your practice is ludicrous, honourable lords, indeed almost shameful in the eyes of prudent men. It appears you are not sheep, and they are not shepherds but day labourers; the sheep do not belong to them, and when their year ends, they are no longer tied to the church, as they publicly state: 'I do not have to stay here. My year and my salary have almost run out.' When

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25 Caiaphas was the Roman-appointed Jewish high priest who is said to have organized the plot to kill Jesus and to have been involved in the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin (see Matt. 26:57–67, John 11 and 18).

26 John 10:12–13.

you hear such words, it appears somehow that you are not sheep, for you follow the voice of strangers and day labourers, who have no concern for the sheep, according to their own words. I say 'it appears,' for if it is God's will, Your Honours and the honourable community will hear the voice of Christ in them, whatever their sentiments. I also hope that they will be loyal ministers and steadfast in their attitude toward the community of God here in Frankfurt, whatever they say – 'For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.'<sup>27</sup> Thus I faithfully remind them of their vocation. It should come from God, not from man, although it should come through men. But that vocation is purely human if the minister is not rooted here and steadfast in his commitment to his ministry, as if it were just a matter of taking care of his belly, and for the rest he wanted to be rid of his ministry and have his peace in time. The Spirit of God drives us and urges us, and has nothing to do with the belly. According to 1 Cor. 9, the labourer is worthy of his hire and must be materially supported so that he may be able to serve as a minister in spiritual matters.<sup>28</sup>

I further beg and admonish you in the Lord not to change pastors rashly, even if you see problems and shortcomings in other matters. Rather undertake to improve things and accept them under the condition that they will perform their ministry faithfully, or without condition tell them to pasture their congregation, as all the other churches do, as far as I know. And so it follows naturally that those would be removed in orderly fashion, who were judged in orderly fashion to be wolves and useless workers and slaves to the belly.

Now that it will be your responsibility to establish ordinances, it is my advice not to accept too many ecclesiastical practices or introduce more than are necessary until it has been discussed and decided by general agreement of the nation. For it is difficult to change customs once they are established. Let us hope with God that things will soon improve and there will be great concord in the spirit of the gospel, and we shall soon arrive at a common administration.

#### Concerning the Fourth Item, Schools

If there is no ordinance it looks as if one had taken no thought for maintaining the gospel, for 'order maintains all things,' as they say.<sup>29</sup> Thus, if the youth are not reared in the church and young shoots are not pointed to the

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27 Matt. 12:34 and Luke 6:45.

28 1 Cor. 9.

29 Cf. Wander 3, col. 1148, no. 14.

spiritual paradise, then everything must come to naught. There are two concerns about youth. First, some are not properly directed to doctrine, for they must be earnestly catechized and disciplined by the elders; they must hear sermons and be aided with good example and daily discipline. The church council must deal with this matter zealously and concern itself with it as their main business. Secondly, schools must be instituted for teaching doctrine, as has often been planned and never been executed. Therefore, I think it will be good for you to elect three zealous and knowledgeable men as scholars, as they are still called in the collegiate churches, and direct them to aid our dear youth with schools, teachers and other things. These scholars should first consider where the means for schools are to come from. In my opinion this should not be difficult here. The collegiate churches have paid teachers so far. They will not refuse to do so in the future if the honourable council appeals to them. And since the welfare of the church depends on knowledge of God and experience in Holy Writ and since we have sufficient physicians and jurists, and since suitable young people are deterred from becoming preachers because of the effort, work, ill will and unpopularity connected with the office, you must decree a more substantial support for certain young people who are of a pious disposition and upright mind, who might be trained to become theologians and future ministers to the parishes, who speak and write well. And unless they later turn out to be incapable, unwilling, or malicious, they might be taught dialectic and other disciplines, which give them skill in all kinds of affairs.

Scripture says (1 Tim. 3) that the parish priest should be known to his community and recommended by external witnesses.<sup>30</sup> The children from Frankfurt would be more benevolently inclined toward their own country than foreigners, who are usually motivated by their own advantage. Nor will there always be a great number of such people. Already we feel a dearth of them. Collegiate churches and monasteries have so far always yielded people, but that has come to an end, and so it is necessary for the free imperial cities which have adopted the pure teaching of the faith to show ambition for their schools. They must see to it first and foremost that capable people be trained for the office of the preacher, as Constance, Lindau, Memmingen, Isny, and other cities have begun to do and is done more amply among the Swiss Confederates – Bern, Basel, and Zurich. The opponents are watching us and are all the more encouraged when they see that we have acted so far as if the business would not last long and as if we took no thought for maintaining, keeping, and sustaining future generations. Order in our church is

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. 3:7.

like a preacher – it takes on the savour of his anointed head, and at present the church is driven this way and that by anger and evil passions. And what is the reason? There is no order.

Another point: we cannot hand down the gospel to our children if none of them has been properly trained to carry on the business. Other people can hardly obtain sufficient [preachers] for themselves. Our opponents are aware of that. May the Almighty God maintain his name among us and prevent pagan sentiments from taking hold, for indeed error and imprisonment of our conscience would be preferable to living without God and Christ in this world – and that is what we can expect if we fail to train people. Indeed, God distributes his gifts also through human effort and orderly processes, and will not always work miracles, as he did in the beginning with the apostles. It would be preferable to fear God and remain in error, as pious Catholics do, than not to know God at all, as does the world when there is no preaching of the Word. That will be the fate of our progeny if we make no effort and are unwilling to provide training. Pious learned men must be trained. They do not grow by themselves, like rats and weeds.

It would also be good to take in training the children of people of high standing. Cicero<sup>31</sup> commends religion to people of the highest nobility, so that on account of the respect they command the community is maintained on the right path. Today we are ashamed of Christ, and he will be ashamed of us on the last day. May God improve things among us poor people. Amen.

Finally, if Your Honours, my pious dear lords, will bear with the tempest that may still be raging between the preachers and Dionysius or resolve it in a friendly manner, and furthermore will not allow love between citizens to be suppressed by continued partisanship, and if you govern your city in all kindness, and if you appoint elders or church wardens and institute a reformed church, as the third article explains, and like fathers look after pupils and the youth, it is impossible that the Almighty will refuse his grace and assistance to such an enterprise. Thus both the leaders and the subjects can stand up to the scrutiny of the judge, before whom we are all brought. And if we are found loyal to our office in faith and love, we shall hear the joyful voice: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'<sup>32</sup> To this end Jesus Christ will help us, who has become our mediator and saviour. Amen.

As for me, Your Honour and dear lords, I sincerely thank our Father in Heaven and your Wisdoms, that he gave you patience to hear me. To-

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31 Cf. Cicero, *Pro domo sua* 1; *De natura Deorum* 2.3.9.

32 Matt. 25:34.

gether with my brethren, I shall confidently beg him to begin this work and promote it among you, for my mind foretells that in this initiative the gates of his Word have not yet been fully opened, for otherwise he would have given me a different opportunity, heart, knowledge, and success. But I also know that it will not be completely in vain, and his mission will not remain without fruit. I appreciate it very much that you have given me such an unprecedented friendly hearing in this special business of God, and I offer to requite it with my ineffective prayer to the Almighty and with any other service in my power. For we are members of one body, and your welfare is no less important to me than that of my church in Strasbourg. In secular matters we know it is shameful to meddle in other people's business, but this is my designated task and a practice in which God uses me as his tool. Take my words in good stead and progress in the Lord, and if possible, I ask you once again to read, consider, and ponder what I have written.

May the Almighty give you ample gifts through Jesus Christ and his Spirit, and maintain you for a long time in this Christian government.

Your wise lords' willing servant,

Wolfgang Capito, minister of the Word in the church of Strasbourg.

**Letter 551: 9 March 1535, [Basel], Boniface Amerbach to Capito**

Printed in AK 4:338, Ep. 1925. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The council has entered into negotiations with Amerbach concerning his position at the university and his beliefs concerning the Eucharist. He prefers to remain in Basel rather than taking up the positions offered him elsewhere. By swearing an oath of loyalty to the city council, he has ceased to be his own man, however. He inquires about the health of Franz Frosch and sends his greetings.

**Letter 551a: [Between 16 and 30 March 1535, Strasbourg],  
Capito to Oswald Myconius**

In a letter to Bullinger, dated 30 March 1535 (HBBW 5, Ep. 566, ll. 10–12 and 16–21), Myconius mentions that he has received two letters from Capito and quotes from them. Neither of the letters is extant. The *terminus post quem* for them is 16 March 1535, when Myconius complained that he had not yet received a letter from Capito (HBBW 5, Ep. 556, l. 24).

[*Summary*]: Myconius quotes from Capito's first letter: 'I hear that you are going to meet in Zofingen to discuss the article concerning the Eucharist. I

would like to see the matter buried in silence.' He expresses his surprise that Capito, living in Strasbourg, knows more about what is happening in Basel than Myconius who lives there. He was unaware of the meeting until he was informed of it by Berchtold Haller. He then quotes from Capito's second letter: 'The French ambassador,<sup>1</sup> was sent here and intended to go from here to Wittenberg and then to address the imperial estates. He promised he would soften the attitude of the French king so that he would introduce restrictions to judgments condemning pious people to being burned at the stake. He will promise the Germans a [general] council in the name of the king, even if the emperor does not favour it. He asked for Philip and Bucer. Who does not recognize his ruses? In the meantime he has with him the bishop of Faenza,<sup>2</sup> the papal legate. Thus Capito.'

**Letter 551b: [Between 16 and 19 April 1535, Strasbourg], Capito and Caspar Hedio to [the City Council of Frankfurt]**

The following letter signed by Capito and Hedio was written on behalf of the city council of Strasbourg. It offers counsel to Frankfurt on how to proceed at the forthcoming regional meeting in Heidelberg. Initially scheduled for 25 April 1535, but later rescheduled for 10 May, the meeting had been arranged to settle the ongoing dispute between Protestants and Catholics in the city. Frankfurt lay within the Catholic diocese of the archbishop of Mainz, Albert of Brandenburg, but also within the territory of Ludwig V, Elector Palatine, who favoured the Reformation. The mass had been abolished in Frankfurt on 23 April 1533, but Catholics continued to clamour for its restoration, at least in the imperial collegiate church of St Bartholomew, the Frankfurt cathedral (cf. below, Ep. 579). Albert of Brandenburg had taken the city to court, moreover, and obtained a judgment from the imperial chamber court (*Kammergericht*), directing the council to restore the mass, compensate the three collegiate churches for loss of income, and impose a fine in case of non-compliance.<sup>1</sup>

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- 1 Barnabas de Voré, seigneur de la Fosse, was sent several times in 1535 to Germany as an ambassador of Francis I. On his way to Wittenberg, he stopped in Strasbourg (see MBW T6, Ep. 1550).
- 2 Rodolfo Pio di Carpi (1500–1564) studied at the University of Padua and at Rome. Pope Clement VII made him bishop of Faenza in 1528. From 1535 to 1536, he was the papal nuncio in France and presided over the peace between Francis I and Charles V. Pope Paul III made him cardinal of Carpi on 22 December 1536, and in that role he was a member of the Roman Inquisition and a defender of the Capuchin and Jesuit orders.

1 See Jahns, 254, 259, 262, and 268–9; Schiess 1, Ep. 510, note 2; and PC 2, no. 268.

On 18 March 1535, Frankfurt received permission from Ferdinand I in Vienna to arrange for a meeting between secular and clerical representatives of the Catholic and Protestant factions. Ludwig V, Elector Palatine, called for a meeting in Heidelberg on 25 April. On 6 April, the city council of Frankfurt wrote to Justinian von Holzhausen and Jörg Weiß, its emissaries at the regional Diet in Worms, asking them to seek opinions from other evangelical cities, especially from the emissaries of Strasbourg and Nürnberg, as to how Frankfurt ought to proceed. On 10 April, the city council of Frankfurt also wrote directly to the councils of Strasbourg, Nürnberg, and Ulm, explaining the situation and inviting them to send representatives to Heidelberg. The Strasbourg representatives at Worms, Jakob Sturm and Matthis Pfarrer, assured Frankfurt of their support but refused to be party to any compromise with the Catholics and the archbishop of Mainz.

In the letter below, Capito and Hedio outline the theological arguments Frankfurt might use to justify its opposition to the archbishop and its suspension of traditional Catholic rites and ceremonies. They argued that it was the duty of Christian authorities to abolish ceremonies that contradicted the divine order and were not supported by scripture. The privileges of the collegiate churches in Frankfurt had no legal force, and the emperor had no right to enforce ceremonies that were not consistent with God and faith. Capito and Hedio strongly advised the city council not to yield to the demands of the archbishop of Mainz to restore the mass in the city of Frankfurt.

On 20 April 1535, the council received formal commitments from Nürnberg and Ulm to send representatives to Heidelberg in support of Frankfurt. Two days later, however, the council had to cancel all plans because Ludwig V had moved the date for the negotiations from 25 April to 10 May 1535. On that date, the meetings finally got under way and concluded on 13 May. The city council of Frankfurt sent six representatives. Martin Betscholt represented the city of Strasbourg. The Catholic party was represented by counsellors of Albert of Brandenburg and members of the cathedral chapter of Mainz, the provost of the foundation of the St Bartholomew Church in Frankfurt, Valentin von Tetleben, as well as representatives of the archbishops of Cologne and Trier. The meeting was chaired by counsellors of Ludwig V. It was decided that the privileges and Catholic rites should be restored to St Bartholomew's, but not to the other collegiate churches or monasteries (Jahns, 316). All other disputes between the city council and the Catholic party in Frankfurt would be dealt with at a future council or at an upcoming Diet. The city council of Frankfurt and the Electorate of Mainz had until mid-August 1535 to decide whether to accept the terms of the meeting at Heidelberg.

Frankfurt was ready to yield to the demands of Albert of Brandenburg and restore Catholic rites at St Bartholomew's (see Ep. 579), in order to safeguard

the evangelical services in the other churches in the city. On 19 October, the city council explained its position in three separate letters to the free imperial cities of Nürnberg, Ulm, and Strasbourg, and within a few weeks received a response from all three (PC 2: 300–1, no. 325 and BDS 16, introduction to nos. 5–6). In its sharply critical response, dated 7 November (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 94, no. 40, ff. 119–25 and PC 2:302–4, no. 327), the city council of Strasbourg advised the city council of Frankfurt not to restore the Catholic rites in the cathedral. Strasbourg stressed that any possible application of the imperial ban would not jeopardize Frankfurt and its economy. Moreover, the city council of Strasbourg promised to use all means at its disposal to bring Frankfurt into the Schmal-kaldic League. Strasbourg's response differed strikingly from that of Melancthon. Responding to a letter from the city, dated 27 October, he advocated the restoration of the mass and other Catholic rites at St Bartholomew's in light of the city's lack of authority (*ius patronatus*) over the cathedral (see MBW T6, Epp. 1653, 1657, and 1658).

The response from the city council of Strasbourg was sent along with two recommendations (*Gutachten*): one from the Strasbourg preachers (see below, Ep. 577b); the other from Bucer (BDS 16, no. 6). The city council sent its letter and the two recommendations along with a brief instruction to Matthis Pfarrer, who represented Strasbourg as an emissary at a meeting in Worms. There he forwarded them to the Frankfurt emissaries, Jörg Weiß and Justinian von Holzhausen, who, in turn, passed them on 13 November to the mayor of Frankfurt, Claus Stalburger.<sup>2</sup>

The draft of the present letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 94, no. 26, fols. 76r–83v. According to Jahns (311, note 34), it was likely written between 16 and 19 April 1535, that is, after the city council of Frankfurt's request for help reached Strasbourg and before the Strasbourg city council gave instructions to its representative to attend the meeting at Heidelberg on 25 April 1535.

Strict, earnest, circumspect, honourable, and wise lords, since the honourable council of Frankfurt will appear before the illustrious and noble Ludwig, Count Palatine, Elector, etc.,<sup>3</sup> on Monday<sup>4</sup> to counsel him through your

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2 For a detailed account of the negotiations regarding the course of the Reformation in Frankfurt in 1535, see Jahns, 339–53; Gustav Bossert, 'Die Wiedereinführung der Messe in Frankfurt 1535,' *ARG* 13.2 (1916): 147–53; and BDS 16:147–52. For a contemporary account, see Matthias Limberger's letter to Blaurer, 10 November 1535 (Schiess 1, Ep. 658).

3 Ludwig V (1478–1544), Count Palatine of the Rhine (1508–44).

4 I.e., 19 April or 10 May 1535 (see above, headnote).

emissaries in the Spirit of God, the following points are at issue, as far as we understand:

The *Statthalter* of Mainz<sup>5</sup> will demand the restoration of the mass and ceremonies in the city of Frankfurt, for [according to him] their abolition goes against God Almighty, who is being venerated through such church rites, against the holy Fathers and all public institutions and practices of the Christian church, against His Papal Holiness<sup>6</sup> and the Most Eminent, etc., Cardinal and Archbishop of Mainz,<sup>7</sup> and would lead to the condemnation of many poor souls.

It is also supposedly against written law, both spiritual and secular, the privileges of the collegiate church of St Bartholomew, which have been confirmed by all emperors and kings, as well as our most gracious lord, His Roman Imperial and Royal Majesty, Electors, nobles, and estates of the Holy Roman Empire and their edicts, which the city of Frankfurt accepted before others. These and other reasons will no doubt be ardently advanced to denigrate the honourable city and to justify the *Statthalter* of Mainz's intention and request. Thus we consider it best to reply in a friendly and humble manner without anywhere departing from the professed truth or godly action. Such an answer should take roughly this form:

Firstly, the honourable council of Frankfurt hopes not to have acted against God, but on behalf of God and his commandments. Indeed, the council and citizens of Frankfurt know that salvation comes solely through the grace of Christ, who has died for us once and delivered us for eternity (Heb. 9).<sup>8</sup> Divine service is an internal matter and has nothing to do with the external practices of the church, except for preaching the faith and administering the sacraments, through which knowledge of the faith is offered as well as grace and community with Christ Jesus. For this the believers give thanks – and that is called and is indeed the new divine service. Among the old [Catholic] people it was an external service and the worldly performance of a sacred rite; among us everything points to heaven and eternity. Thus true worshippers pray in Spirit and in truth.<sup>9</sup> Christians acknowledge no other

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5 After 1532, the *Statthalter* of Albert of Brandenburg, archbishop of Mainz, was his nephew, Johann Albrecht von Brandenburg (1499–1550). He was the (non-reigning) margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Bayreuth, archbishop of Magdeburg (1545–50), and bishop of Halberstadt (1545–50).

6 Pope Paul III (r. 1534–49).

7 I.e., Albert of Brandenburg, Elector and archbishop of Mainz from 1514 to 1545.

8 Cf. Heb. 9:12.

9 Cf. John 4:23–4.

divine service than one that has heaven's blessing and look only to Christ. How, then, can one suffer the mass side by side with such teaching? For the mass wants to sacrifice Christ daily, as if his sacrifice, which happened once on the cross, was not enough.

Furthermore, [in the opinion of Catholics] the mass is supposed to be a work of merit for the forgiveness of sins committed by the dead and the living, *virtute operis operati*, that is, through the strength of the mass itself, regardless of the character of the minister.<sup>10</sup> The mass, moreover, goes against the interest of the church community, for the priest performs the sacrament alone without the assembled congregation. And it is superstitious, since the priest claims to do this in memory of Christ on behalf of others, etc. What could be more contrary to the doctrine of faith, in which Christ is offered and given to us through grace, and with him all other things?

Singing and other ceremonies cannot be defended in any service. For the divine service of the New Testament consists in calling on God in need, thanking him for his favour and our salvation. The principal aim, however, is to beg him for the forgiveness of our sins and for divine justice, which the poor sinner obtains purely through grace. For we are chosen in Christ to praise the glory of God, which is our service and duty to God. Thus God is not honoured but dishonoured, and his dignity offended, through the mass and such church ceremonies, which have been originated by human beings and are done without, indeed are contrary to, God's splendid Word. They consist of external things, whereas the children of the kingdom deal with new and eternal things and should praise the pure mercy of God. They must not kiss hands, nor build up their own work, for they are in a covenant of grace, redeemed by Christ, without any merits, etc.

Secondly, the city of Frankfurt has been informed by its scholars that such masses and ceremonies are not only against scripture but are also contrary to the opinion of the pristine, ancient churches. For one can find in Chrysostom and other Fathers mention of the Supper and communion being celebrated, but there is no evidence in any ancient writer of special masses or of anyone celebrating the Supper by himself, and enjoying the body and blood of the Lord privately; rather, the church has always celebrated the mass together with the minister. Nor did they come up with meritorious

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10 Normally rendered as 'ex opere operato,' on account of the act performed, i.e., grace is conferred through the action of the priest saying mass, rather than through the faith of the believer.

ceremonies;<sup>11</sup> rather, they believed in God and showed true piety, discipline, mercy toward the poor, patience under trial, and other such attitudes, and devised a liturgy that was not a [meritorious] work or cult of God, but designed for the promotion of doctrine and discipline. Old collegiate churches testify to this, for they were founded not to celebrate mass but for spiritual exercises, such as teaching, singing, and reading. For collegiate churches and monasteries were primarily Christian schools.

That is the reason why the honourable council is prepared even today to be instructed on the basis of divine scripture and of old and pure church ceremonies plausibly attested by scripture, and on that basis accept that mass and singing, as traditionally done, should be preserved rather than abolished. They would again accept the mass and all ceremonies, and appoint and defend other preachers who praise the mass and ceremonies – but so far no one has offered to instruct them or has undertaken to correct them in that sense.

The honourable council of Frankfurt hopes, moreover, that the abolition of such abuses, which have slipped in contrary to faith in Christ, was not against the intentions of His Holiness. Mainly, they are certain that the Most Worthy, etc., Cardinal and Archbishop of Mainz, etc., according to His Grace's, the Elector's excellent and Christian understanding, would himself never punish that action, which the city of Frankfurt did not undertake unadvisedly. May His Grace the Elector ponder it according to scripture and experience. That would be the appropriate action for a God-fearing man when he receives a report saying that what he has until now accepted and regarded as good and correct goes against God and the salvation of the soul. Anything done without belief is sin – Rom. 11<sup>12</sup> – and even more so what is done against one's belief. A common proverb says, 'Anyone who acts against conscience, builds a road to hell.'<sup>13</sup> Is there any God-fearing person whom his conscience does not require to remove any blasphemy and temptation from simple people? The city of Frankfurt is convinced, as are other Electors, nobles, free and imperial cities, that the salvation of Christians is built

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11 'Meritorious' in the sense of the rites being regarded as meritorious in themselves, independent of the spirit in which they were performed. The celebration or participation in these rites did not merit justification before God.

12 Cf. Rom. 11:20.

13 Cf. 'Ein böß Gewissen ist die Hölle auf Erden' (Karl Simrock, *Die deutschen Sprichwörter* [Frankfurt, 1846], 167, no. 3628) and 'Ein böß Gewissen ist der Vorschmack der Hölle' (K.F.W. Wander, ed., *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon* [Leipzig, 1867], vol. 1, col. 1668, no. 62).

solely on Christ, through whom and in whom all believers thank the heavenly Father for his grace and redemption, and through whom they must seek God's help in earthly needs. That, as we said, is the true divine service of Christians. All church practices should promote this, and if anyone thought that such an understanding is wrong or flawed, it is incumbent upon him to correct the error and turn us away from our wrong path, which has not yet happened in the empire in spite of many urgent requests. But if someone refuses to listen or is not satisfied with full scriptural references and plausible proofs of belief, this bitter root must be torn out, according to the command of the law.<sup>14</sup> But such stubbornness has, thank God, not been found so far among the estates.

Once it is proved that the honourable council of Frankfurt has acted according to holy scripture and the essential faith in Christ, neither ecclesiastical nor secular law would object. On the contrary, they would support it, for they place holy scripture above all councils and episcopal decrees and wish to have no doubt cast upon it. All of holy scripture, however, points to the belief in our justification through Christ and our consequent salvation – in other words, points to our salvation coming through grace and to our divine service pertaining to our redemption and gratitude for such grace. It means, moreover, that in all spiritual and physical needs we must turn to the heavenly Father through Christ alone, and call on him alone. Therefore the meritorious work of the mass and the adoration of God through the traditional ceremonies go against scripture and faith, against the pure grace of God and the new divine service which depends on the Spirit. All bishops and popes are servants of Christ. He wants to be and remain our only Saviour. Therefore, they would not institute or incorporate in their laws what goes against this.

As for secular laws, it is in their nature to be concerned with secular things and to have no dealings with faith except to suppress unrest and heresy. The task of teaching is left to the bishops and ministers of the church, which they endowed with privileges and amply supplied with earthly resources, so that they may fulfil their obligations in an honest and free fashion. And even if there was something in the secular laws that should prevent Frankfurt's undertaking, the emperors have invalidated it themselves when they subjected themselves to bishops in matters of religion. Our religion principally depends on holy scripture and further on justification through our faith in Christ, which constitutes the work of the New Testament.

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14 Cf. Heb. 12:15.

Furthermore, the popes have accepted imperial law, but with the qualification that it must not run counter to the decisions of the evangelists and apostles, for the laws rank lower and have no power over them. Thus Pope Nicholas writes to the council *in convicinio*<sup>15</sup> and Pope Symmachus to the sixth synod, 'It is not seemly in an emperor (he says) or any man who wants to be God-fearing to do anything against the divine command, and generally anything against the writings of the prophets and the apostles,' etc.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it is certain that secular law cannot go against scripture, which the city of Frankfurt obeyed, and least of all can it declare invalid and cancel what many have endorsed, for that is what the emperor concedes in his laws and that is what popes and councils command, as indicated. Anyone who wants to regard matters of faith as going against written law and insists on his opinion, must first prove that it is against divine scripture and its essential meaning. If other Christian estates are prepared to prove this in the case of Frankfurt, the council of Frankfurt offers them thanks and will obey in order to approach the confessed truth.

Concerning the privilege of the collegiate church of St Bartholomew, it is their opinion that His Roman Imperial and Royal Majesty has no power to act to the detriment of public welfare, and even less to grant privileges that go against God and pious conscience. This is commanded by the laws themselves, namely, that one must understand the rescript of the nobles and interpret it in the interest of the state and according to divine will. The regulation *C. Licet, de regulis iuris* says that no privilege that goes against divine order can have force, and furthermore that a privilege once useful but afterwards beginning to be harmful, should be revoked and abolished.<sup>17</sup> All privileges are given to collegiate churches and cloisters so that they may execute their spiritual obligations honestly and without encumbrance, and if they took a different route, it was not the will of the nobles that [their privileges] should remain in force.

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- 15 Presumably a reference to Pope Nicholas I (r. 858–67), who is remembered as a consolidator of papal authority and power, exerting decisive influence upon the historical development of the papacy and its position among the Christian nations of Western Europe. Nicholas I asserted that the pope should have suzerain authority over all Christians, even royalty, in matters of faith and morals. The reference to 'in convicinio' remains unclear. It may refer to a palace on the Vatican grounds.
- 16 Presumably a reference to Pope Symmachus (r. 498–19 July 514), but I have not been able to identify the quotation or the synod.
- 17 Cf. *Liber sextus decretalium*, lib. V, tit. 12, *De regulis iuris*, in CICan 2, cols. 1122–24.

We know that the old foundations were meant for the glory of God, so that parish priests and bishops may be chosen from its ranks and its schools. No one wishes to drive them from their collegiate churches. They refreshed their spirit with spiritual singing, in remembrance and in praise of God and in preparation for God's Word, then listened to an exposition of scripture, and ended the service with a song of praise and by giving thanks.

As for the verdict, which the honourable council of Frankfurt has accepted, you may reply that the honourable council accepted it willingly out of special obedience to the Roman Imperial and Royal Majesty, Electors, nobles and estates, and will maintain that obedience and dutiful subjection.<sup>18</sup> They have no intention of abandoning it, [but will stand by it] with the help of God, as is incumbent on pious subjects. But in time their preachers have given proper instruction to the community and advanced the council to a larger understanding and convinced them in their conscience that the mass and singing in church were counter to the pure teaching of the faith and brought scandal to the simple people. It was then that they looked further to God and acted faithfully and dutifully according to his Word and made the changes mentioned. They would keep them until someone taught them differently. They never intended to act against authority or government, but were willing subjects, as far as their body and possessions are concerned, as they were ready to demonstrate in all humility according to God's will to the Most Gracious, highly gracious, and gracious Roman Emperor, king, Electors, nobles and other estates. They will show their ready good will at all times, in the comforting certainty that His Roman Imperial and Royal Majesty will graciously take to heart the great and urgent power of the faith, which according to holy scripture, must remain free and unrestricted, when it rests on the sole belief in Christ and does no harm to the worldly possessions of anyone. The ancient imperial laws encourage faith and forbid abandoning it. The actions of the honourable council demonstrate the power of God to change hearts. No mortal can speak against the Almighty, for he moves and drives us however and whenever he wants, according to his will and pleasure.

Furthermore, both His Roman Imperial and Royal Majesty have graciously announced that they will not place anyone under the ban on account of his belief until the next council or diet, when the religious schism is to be

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18 In its verdict of 23 December 1534, the imperial chamber court (*Reichskammergericht*) demanded that the Catholic ceremonies be restored in the Frankfurt churches. This pronouncement was accepted by the city council of Frankfurt on 8 January 1535 (Jahns, 287).

settled. The honourable city, together with all Christian estates, very much hopes for peace and sincerely prays to God that it will happen soon, for it is to take place in Milan, etc. They loyally expect from the Most Reverend, etc., Cardinal and Archbishop of Mainz, that the gracious Elector will not act against anyone ungraciously, as long as the emperor and king promise favour and all good will, even if the actions at this time appear to be otherwise; for the gracious Elector has a friendly, peaceful, and Christian disposition and has so far promoted more than anyone else peace and unity in the empire. So much for the response to the challenge.

Note here that in this business the city of Frankfurt should and will always do what would make its ecclesiastical practices conform to God's Word and lead to improvement, that they will gladly support such measures and accept them. Yet singing in church must never be regarded as divine service or meritorious, but only as a spiritual exercise. No doubt, the opponents will not give in one hair's breadth and will say it is not appropriate to yield in matters of church practices.

Therefore it would appear good policy for Your Honours consistently to advise the honourable council of Frankfurt not to do anything contrary to the Word. For the opponents will put up much resistance and will not let down their defences,<sup>19</sup> but in whatever point they diverge, they diverge from God. What greater duty can a Christian government have, which wants to act according to God's will and entrust to his protection their city, country, people, wives, and estates – if it wants to be seen as Christian? It is terrible to lead the poor community from light to darkness, to the work of ceremonies and merit, to lead them away from the grace and merit of Christ! This would happen if the mass and singing in church were to be restored and the old usage brought back. One must show concern for the consciences of the poor people.

Furthermore it is shameful to think that you wanted to abolish the old usage on behalf of God and on the basis of God, and then take it back again so quickly and out of fear of human beings. For it is inappropriate to say that the government did not do so out of its own will, but out of fear of the community. Therefore, the free imperial city of Frankfurt should also consider what burden it would put on the backs of other free and imperial cities, for they might be attacked in the same way as Frankfurt, and Frankfurt would become an example in the eyes of many of the harm and disadvantage arising from such action for the holy gospel.

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19 Literally, 'will not open up the weir to lower the water level.'

Indeed we cannot understand how yielding in such an honest and upright business can benefit the standing of the city or contribute to its pacification; rather, we worry, and it is very plausible, that such an action will give a handle to the city's enemies to attack it, and indeed open Frankfurt to bad practices that will corrupt and ruin the whole city, for not everyone in the council and among the common people will like such pusillanimity and lack of trust in God. We fear there will be factions, which God may forefend.

Nor is it possible to adopt measures on the command of those in Nürnberg, for the opponents do not profess our gospel. They want the mass, not the Supper of the Lord; they want the church and the community, but maintain the spurious mass. Furthermore it is not possible for a Christian government to negotiate concerning the sacrament of the church with people who are against the church and the gospel. Nor are we certain that it is appropriate to discuss it, for it would certainly indicate pusillanimity and ignorance of God's actions and make the opponents more confident.

In affairs negotiated in good will, one may (and it is not uncommon to) refer the parties to an arbiter and a go-between, but that cannot be done in matters of faith, which need to be settled on the basis of good understanding and exposition of one's belief, and each person must act in a manner that does not gravely offend God, etc. And one must worry, should anything be conceded to the opponent, that the matter would nevertheless remain unsettled, and even greater resentment would ensue. For if ceremonies are introduced to maintain worldly agreement, it would be necessary for the honourable council to prevent its citizens from going to their priest in the church, which would make the [Catholic] clergy hated and despised, and would promote greater resentment in Mainz than ever before.

If one were to introduce the ban, it is usual to do so with a sealed brief, which would be greatly to the disadvantage of the honourable council, for they would thus offer clear proof and corroboration of having been previously incorrect in what they abolished. That would considerably reduce their prestige and would cause great dissension, so that the opponents could say after a while that Frankfurt had violated sealed briefs, especially since we cannot assume that, after long-standing abuses concerning the gospel were abolished and reintroduced, they would not be abolished again for the sake of conscience or otherwise. Then one would have to take into consideration the damage to God's cause and could hope for little support from Christian estates, and furthermore suffer coming under brief and seal.

How, then, must we act to avoid the imperial ban? The answer: God will grant us that much. If we sincerely call on the almighty Father in this need and pray with true faith, we may be confident and furthermore come to an understanding with others who are concerned about the same danger.

The reason is this: one must first trust in God, who leads us into difficulties, so that he may help us, and that we may thank him for the improvement. The false divine service in Frankfurt is supposed to teach the citizens, according to God's will, what is the correct divine service fit for the new people, and whereas the delivery from their sins may not be truly recognized and God is given no more thanks for it, he nevertheless wants to teach his children to feel their way and help them out of worldly difficulties so that they may in future also recognize eternal redemption. That is the way of grace, as indicated in Holy Writ.

Furthermore, the honourable council should demand a written report on their [supposed] error and the reason why the abolition of the mass and ceremonies was wrong, with a request, etc., and thus aptly delay the matter and insist on the excuse that they are waiting for the arrival of the Imperial Majesty, in the certainty that a future council or soon-to-be-called diet would settle the schism in short order. At that time, they would truly wish to enforce any decision. The council of Frankfurt would loyally accept such a decision, as long as it was transacted according to Holy Writ and a joint interpretation of religion, on which the city of Frankfurt was in any case keen, and which it regarded as highly necessary.

The honourable council of Frankfurt may also take comfort in the fact that neither His Roman Imperial nor His Royal Majesty would at this time want any commotion among the Germans, for they are aware of the French trickery and of the events at Münster and the actions of other Anabaptists, and also the situation of His Royal Majesty in Hungary. Taking into consideration the human element, we have no doubt that our opponents will not insist on doing anything unpleasant. It is merely a scare. But everything is in the hands of God.

Yet, circumspect, honourable, wise lords, you must give serious consideration to everything, for it is in your interest as well not to see Frankfurt put under pressure. It would give evil spirits a handle to cause unrest among you and among others; it would cause you all much trouble and work and would endanger you. Therefore, look to God first, then to the peril of the community, and make of Frankfurt's affairs a common concern for you and all Christian estates. The Achaeans in Greece were ruined when the cities were in disagreement until Philip of Macedon defeated the greater part.<sup>20</sup> May God reveal his will and grant you and the others to act in his honour

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20 Philip of Macedon (382–336 BC) took advantage of their disunity to establish control, and then united the Greek states in the League of Corinth (337 BC) under his leadership.

and to comfort and look after each other in need, for the people of Frankfurt, too, are pious people who listen to God. They manifested in my, Wolfgang Capito's, presence a favourable and neighbourly good will toward you, my good lords, as I have reported to Jacob Sturm.

I have written at somewhat greater length to explain the matter more clearly. Your Graces may sum it up in short articles and give it the form of an instruction, wise lords, or think of other means, as the occasion demands.

Your Graces' willing servants,  
Wolfgang Capito,  
Dr Caspar Hedio.

**Letter 552: [Before 28 April 1535, Strasbourg], Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Strasbourg**

The draft of this letter, which is in Capito's hand, is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 151, pp. 674–7, no. 186; printed in QGT 8:416–21, no. 634. The letter is undated, but the requested ordinance (see below) was passed 28 April, which furnishes the *terminus ante quem*.

Strict, noble, valid, circumspect, honourable, wise, and beloved lords! Last Thursday, in the presence of the noble and valid Bernhard Ottfriedrich,<sup>1</sup> *Altstettmeister*, who attended as an elder, the assembly acted on the following points, which concern Your Honours as the governing body proper. First, we have for a long time now asked for the institution of an order of the church and the reformation of morals, as well as due and timely action by the government against sects. These sects go counter to the foundation of our salvation, and are against the pure faith and Christian charity, as well as all order and good practice. We negotiated with you and urged you to punish vices promptly and to promote discipline and honourable conduct in the community, for that is our duty in ministering to the gospel, which opposes all injustice and evil. Through the grace of the Almighty, the synod has finally decided to set up and partly renew suitable ordinances and to ratify them, followed by earnest action against the sect of the Anabaptists. Apart

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<sup>1</sup> Bernhard Ottfriedrich (d. 1539) was a zealous evangelical member of the Strasbourg city council. On 28 May 1513, he purchased citizenship in Strasbourg. He was a member of the Strasbourg Senate (*Grosser Rat*) in 1519/20, 1522/3, 1526/7, 1529/30, and 1535/6. He was *Stettmeister* in 1532. From 1521 to 1533, he was a member of the XV and from 1533 to 1539, a member of the XIII. He held fiefs at Furdenheim, Molsheim, and Quatzenheim.

from that, it was decided that the other dissenters<sup>2</sup> should be tolerated and allowed to say mass in some places, namely, at the Carthusian monastery and that people from the city might go there.<sup>3</sup> As a result, there was all sorts of talk among the citizens that this went against our faith and was no less disgusting than the actions of the Anabaptists, especially since the priest's work is regarded as meritorious, whereas every benefit must be earned through Christ and offered through sermons and sacraments, although the sacrament is received in the spirit of faith alone, without regard to our merit.

Furthermore, there are people in the vicinity and even in the city, who foretell the future, such as one called Brother Batt von Haguenu.<sup>4</sup> He is openly visited by people and dares to indicate theft, adultery, and other misdeeds. In consequence, citizens harbour grave suspicions against each other, as happened recently among the carters, which is against the first and foremost commandment of God.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, a painter<sup>6</sup> offered for sale shameful idols, causing a great scandal, for it is against scripture and public decrees. People who want to create idolatry, as this man does, must not be suffered after the Word of God has been preached in the community of God, such as we want to happen here in Strasbourg. If the government were to prohibit it, he would not resist and would cease to make his living through blasphemy, contrary to the decree of our common city.

Furthermore, you had intentions, my lords, of setting up an ordinance for the punishment of vices, which may have been set aside on account of other business. Consequently vices have seriously gained ground, such as excessive drinking and drinking to someone's health, especially in Ruprechtsau<sup>7</sup> and other villages in the vicinity, which causes much scandal; for citizens and journeymen go out there and effect that the young people, who have shown some improvement through the help of God and the order that has been set up, are now disobedient to their elders and masters on account of such incitements. The poor fathers of families in Ruprechtsau complain bitterly about it, for they themselves obtained the ordinance and initiated appropriate steps, as is reported.

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2 I.e., the Catholics.

3 The Carthusian monastery was, until 1591, located southwest of the city towers.

4 I cannot find any biographical information on Batt von Haguenu.

5 I.e., in the city quarter near Weißsturmstraße and Steinstraße, the latter of which belonged to Capito's parish.

6 Identity unknown.

7 I.e., modern-day Robertsau, Alsace.

It would also be most appropriate to send my lords' ordinance to magistrates elsewhere,<sup>8</sup> lest Anabaptists who flee from here find refuge there and cause even greater unrest; for, as usual, men in error show greater zeal than the orderly Spirit of God. Also, visitations should be undertaken, for it is truly necessary to look after the common people, for whom you are responsible before God, and that order be established. Where there is no order, evil overtakes all else.

What is even more bothersome: vices are increasing daily in the city and remain unpunished, so that indecent women brag that no one can do anything to them, etc. One cannot use ignorance as an excuse, for this is going on in public, and everyone knows about these persons. Their vice is manifest, yet no serious action is taken against it. The magistrates may take steps and easily discover through ordinary sources how much is true of the general rumour. You are obliged to make such efforts, my lords, on behalf of God Almighty, in whose stead you govern. We are truly concerned that God will punish us all for such and similar neglect and injustice. In this manner we become suspect together with the others, as if we were more intent on preserving temporal peace than the honour of God, especially since action is taken only against the Anabaptists, and others are not hindered, although they cause as much public scandal as the Anabaptists, as the rumour goes. The old establishment would not have allowed pious women to be offended, and would not have allowed sinful women to walk around in satin and velvet or other fine clothes. And now that the gospel is being preached, which is to bring about complete honour, such wanton women and shameful people want honour and glory, and arrogantly declare that no one can prevent them from what they are doing, as if they had a sealed brief from the magistrate. I fear grievous results. Leaving this unattended will lead to trouble, for when such wicked women are free to indulge in all pleasure, pomp, and luxury, and remain safe and unhindered, they give wrong ideas to pious women who are young and good-looking, and tempt them.

In addition, when the magistrates shamefully neglect their office, it very much reduces their authority. What does not serve the designated purpose will be overthrown, as in the Lord's parable of the salt.<sup>9</sup> The government must deter evil deeds. That is their office, and that is why they are honoured. If evil remains undisturbed in their jurisdiction, the only result will be dis-

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8 This is possibly a reference to the ordinance of discipline of 7 February 1535 (printed in Wolgast, pp. 248–53). On the order of the council, the ordinance was sent on 28 April 1535 to the rural communities of Strasbourg (QGT 8, no. 657).

9 Matt. 5:13; Mark 9:50; and Luke 14:34.

dain, disobedience, and unrest. We know this from old and sacred historical accounts: where there was no appropriate punishment, the government fell, and rightly so, for they dishonoured themselves and the Almighty, from whom they received their grave mission – to punish evil, and not just in one or two common people, but in everyone, and to punish all vices. They must have no respect of persons, as far as possible, for otherwise the sinner will be punished by God and thus be lost, but the blood of those lost will be demanded from the negligent authorities (Ezech. 3).<sup>10</sup> That [threat] should rightly increase the efforts of the authorities and make them proceed with vigour.

Thus we beg of you: for God's sake, consider our common city, which has been commended to you, and administer equitable punishment for all vices, to protect the city from the grave wrath of God and, mainly, to be truly zealous in averting evil in this dangerous time. Thus you will keep your pious citizens obedient and earn their favour and good will, and you will also prevent other places from saying with apparent justification that in Strasbourg the gospel was used only against the Anabaptists and a few old ceremonies, but did not have the power to make people pious before God and to preserve discipline and decency in the community. We beg you in the name of our Lord Christ Jesus to ponder this. We act on his command. May he lend his grace and assistance to you in this task.

Your Honours' servants in the Word,  
The pastors and assistants.

**Letter 553: [c. Mid-April 1535, Stetten?], Hans Konrad Thumb to Capito, Matthew Zell, Martin Bucer, and Ambrosius Blaurer**

Printed in Gottfried Arnold, *Unparteyische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorien*, rev. ed. (Schaffhausen, 1740), vol. 1, 1264, and in CS 5, p. 314. Blaurer responded shortly with two letters to Thumb, explaining why he considered Schwenckfeld 'a harmful man' (*ein schädlicher mann*; see Schiess 1, Epp. 574–5, both of which are printed in Arnold, pp. 1264–6). For the author, Hans Konrad Thumb, see above, Ep. 532, note 18.

First, let me offer you my friendly service and good will, dear lords and friends. I have heard from a reliable source that you are against Caspar Schwenckfeld, and decidedly against him. Many have uttered warnings against him, saying he is a harmful man and should not be tolerated, as if he could be accused of something untoward. I am very sorry to hear that.

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<sup>10</sup> Ezechiel 3:18.

Yet Schwenckfeld is my brother-in-law and friend,<sup>1</sup> and in his writings and elsewhere, he comes across as a Christian and an upright man, and nothing else. Therefore, it is my friendly request to you, in Christian love and unity to indicate to me clearly and directly the how and wherefore of the matter, and especially whether Schwenckfeld has erred in the Christian faith and in his understanding of God, and whether any heterodox articles have been found in his books. I am certain that you will hold nothing back in this matter, so that I may know how to act. I am willing to do for you any favour or kindness, and would also like to guide my dear friend, as far as I can. Therefore, I am confident you will hold nothing back in this matter, for I am inclined most diligently to promote all Christian truth, love, and unity, and show every token of friendship to those who seek God. I ask for a positive and immediate reply, and am always willing to earn your favour.

**Letter 554: [Between 7 May and 16 May 1535, Augsburg], Martin Bucer to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

The date and city of origin of this letter are unclear, in part, because the autograph original is no longer extant. A contemporary copy of the manuscript, which is the basis of this translation, places the letter in the year 1534, but an archivist has written the year 1539 in the margin (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 151, no. 153, fols. 578–9). Indeed, the year 1534 is not possible, because Bucer did not visit Augsburg until the fall of that year (see above, Ep. 541, note 6). Another copy in Zurich ZB (Simmler 38, 103) places the letter first in 1539, but also includes a correction ‘after Pentecost 1535’; the two copies in Baum similarly provide conflicting dates: 12–14 May 1535 (TB 8, 152) and 1539 (TB 12, 31). In the Strasbourg copy of the letter, the city of origin has moreover been changed from ‘Frankfurt’ to ‘Augsburg.’ An extract is published in QGT 8:450–1, no. 663, where the date is given, as in Millet, ‘circa 9 May 1535.’

It is certain that Bucer ministered in Augsburg from 26 February to 30 April 1535, when he managed to convince the local pastors to endorse the Ten Articles he had drafted on the Lord’s Supper as being in full agreement with the Augsburg Confession (see above, Ep. 541, note 6). The Ten Articles were published along with a reprint of the section on the Eucharist from Bucer’s *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534, see above, Ep. 527a) as a small pamphlet entitled *Ain kurtzer einfeltiger bericht, vom hailigen Sacrament deß leibs und bluts unsers Herren Jesu Christi* (Augsburg, 1535). The adoption of the Ten

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1 The German reads ‘Schwager,’ which means ‘brother-in-law,’ but it is uncertain whether Thumb was Schwenckfeld’s brother-in-law. The actual meaning may be vaguer and intended as a term of respect.

Articles permitted the city of Augsburg to join the Schmalkaldic League, into whose alliance it was admitted on 20 January 1536 (Greschat, 113). On 1 May, Bucer wrote to Ambrosius Blaurer from Memmingen about the ten weeks he had just spent in Augsburg and mentioned that he had been given Pentecost, which fell on 16 May in 1535, as a deadline to reach an agreement among the Augsburg preachers. He added that he had left Augsburg on 30 April, and was planning on spending a few days in Isny with Gervasius Schuler (Schiess 1, Ep. 580; cf. *ibidem*, Ep. 573). He then visited Constance on 5 or 6 May. On 7 May, he sent the preachers in Constance a letter from Lindau thanking them for their hospitality (see HBBW 5, Ep. 585, note 1). Because the letter below mentions the fact that he had visited Memmingen, Isny, Lindau, and Constance, the *terminus post quem* is 7 May; the *terminus ante quem* is Pentecost, 16 May. Evidently Bucer went back briefly to Augsburg after having visited Memmingen, Isny, Lindau, and Constance, before returning to Strasbourg (see HBBW 5, Ep. 585, note 10, and Greschat, 113).

Other internal evidence confirms the year-date of 1535 – in particular, the cryptic reference at the end of this letter to Melanchthon and Bucer's letters to Johannes Sturm in Paris. Bucer's letter to Sturm was written in mid-April 1535 (see HBBW 5, Ep. 585, note 5); Melanchthon's on 23 April (MBW T6, Ep. 1564). In the summer of 1534, Francis I entrusted Jean du Bellay, bishop of Paris since 1532 and cardinal in 1535, and his brother Guillaume, with the task of exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement between Protestant and French reform-theologians. Inspired by the king's attempts to bring about a reconciliation, Melanchthon, Bucer, and Caspar Hedio each submitted a recommendation about how this might be achieved. These were sent to Paris in the hope that they might contribute to the restoration of unity within the church. The *Affaire des placards* in October 1534, however, put an end to any expectations of a reconciliation (see Schiess 1, Ep. 546). The planned meeting with Francis I for which Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio had drafted their recommendations never took place. On 18 October, Capito wrote to Bullinger that the opinions of Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio had not yet been officially endorsed by the churches (see below, Ep. 577a). For an analysis of the recommendations by Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio, see Willem van 't Spijker, 'Vera ecclesiae concordia: Martin Bucer's blueprint for the Reformation in France,' in *Adaptations of Calvinism in Reformation Europe: Essays in Honour of Brian G. Armstrong*, ed. Mack P. Holt (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 111–26.

The grace of the Lord! I hope to come straight home after Pentecost.<sup>1</sup> I have

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1 Pentecost fell on 16 May in 1535.

spent the last week visiting Memmingen, Isny, Lindau, and Constance. I had to bypass Kempten, which had the greatest need and had asked me to come – such was the tumult Satan caused here [in Augsburg].<sup>2</sup> How unfortunate was the counsel given by Boniface<sup>3</sup> and Heinrich<sup>4</sup> who had been sent here, and concerning Michael<sup>5</sup> who came back here.<sup>6</sup> They completely disturbed all reasonable thought in the church built up in Augsburg. They are devils, not human beings, and have transacted everything deceitfully and in bad faith. If Paul Fagius<sup>7</sup> is there, retain him by all means. It was very bad that he deserted his church. The letter Schwenckfeld wrote to us is at my house, as is our letter to him.<sup>8</sup> If there is a messenger going to Blaurer, send them as soon as possible. What I feared, has come to pass: Schwenckfeld has tried to establish himself in his duchy.<sup>9</sup> I may be delayed a little in my journey. Farewell and commend me to all good people. Read what Philip<sup>10</sup> and I

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- 2 Cf. Schiess 1, Epp. 580 and 588.
- 3 For Boniface Wolfhart, see CWC 1, Ep. 102 headnote.
- 4 For Johann Heinrich Held of Tiefenau, see Ep. 478, note 17.
- 5 For Michael Cellarius (Keller), see CWC 2, Ep. 405, note 1.
- 6 Berchtold Haller explained in a letter to Bullinger, 9 March 1535, that Augsburg was split into religious factions and that Bucer was called to the city in order to reconcile the dispute. He mentions that Boniface Wolfhart was ‘Schwenckfeldizing’ in Augsburg (HBBW 5, Ep. 550).
- 7 Paul Fagius (Büchlein, 1504–1549) was born in Rheinzabern, the son of a schoolmaster and city scribe. In 1515, he matriculated at the University of Heidelberg. In 1522, he moved to Strasbourg and studied Hebrew under Capito. In 1527, he became a schoolteacher in Isny (Allgäu), but returned to Strasbourg in 1535 in order to study theology. From 1537 to 1543, Fagius was a preacher in Isny, where he also pursued further Hebrew studies under Elias Levita, who lived in Isny from 1540 to 1543. With the help of his friends and patron, the councillor Peter Buffler, Fagius established the first Hebrew printing press in Isny, where the works of Elias Levita and the writings of Fagius were printed. After the death of Johannes Zwick on 23 October 1542, Fagius organized the church in Constance. In the fall of 1544, he became Capito’s successor in Strasbourg as preacher and professor of Old Testament. In 1546, Friedrich II, Elector Palatine, called him as advisor for the reform of the University of Heidelberg. The Augsburg Interim put an end to Fagius’ activity in Strasbourg. In April 1549, Bucer and he left Strasbourg and accepted a call to England, where Fagius became professor of Hebrew at the University of Cambridge.
- 8 For Caspar Schwenckfeld, see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote. Neither letter is extant. There is, however, a letter from Schwenckfeld to Bucer, dated 8 June 1535 (CS 5:344–7, no. 196).
- 9 I.e., the duchy of Württemberg. After being expelled from Strasbourg in 1534, Schwenckfeld settled in Ulm, which was in the duchy.
- 10 I.e., Philip Melanchthon (see CWC 1, Ep. 29, note 7).

have written to Sturm<sup>11</sup> and add anything you consider good.<sup>12</sup> Augsburg 153[5].

Yours, M. Bucer.

**Letter 554a: [End of May/Beginning of June 1535, Strasbourg], Capito to Oswald Myconius**

The letter is no longer extant, but a portion of it is cited by Myconius in a letter to Bullinger, dated 7 June 1535. Printed in HBBW 5, Ep. 589, ll. 16–21.

‘Capito also writes the following: “There are strange rumours about a new external kingdom among the Hollanders.<sup>1</sup> We have heard it is certain that the people of Münster are still fiercely fighting among each other. For the rest, whatever is reported of the Anabaptists, they use God as an excuse for their actions. I see that evangelical authorities are so terrified that they do not dare to lay hands on them, lest they be stained with the blood of saints. I see that devout and faithful prayers are our only refuge.”’

**Letter 555: 3 June 1535, Strasbourg, Capito and Martin Bucer to Ambrosius Blaurer**

The autograph original of this letter, written by Capito, is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 32/334. There is a summary in Schiess 1: 699, Ep. 591. The letter is addressed to Blaurer in Tübingen, but the salutation to a city council and postscript to Zangmeister (see below, note 2) imply that it was ultimately meant for the city council of Memmingen. Perhaps Capito wished for Blaurer to read through the letter before passing it on to Zangmeister to forward to the council. It concerns the efforts by the Strasbourg preachers to have the council of Memmingen grant a leave of absence to Simprecht Schenk, who was then embroiled in a scandal (see below, note 1).

Our willing, earnest service first of all, circumspect, honourable, wise lords and friends! We have often discussed how we may further the church of Christ among you and others through our service. It therefore seemed good

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<sup>11</sup> For Johannes Sturm, see above, Ep. 533, note 12.

<sup>12</sup> For Melancthon and Bucer’s letters to Sturm, see above, headnote.

<sup>1</sup> Probably a reference to the rumour of the storming of Amsterdam’s city hall by the Anabaptists on 10 May 1535.

to us for Simprecht to live here with us for some months, to read our sermons on holy writ and to hear and see how we handle the affairs of the church, as he himself requested earlier on.<sup>1</sup> This may help him considerably in his ministry of the gospel. For in our mission, as in other secular matters, experience is necessary if matters are to be transacted in a steady and beneficial manner. It is therefore our urgent request that Your Honours allow us two or three months and that you look to the glory of Christ in this matter. We have no doubt that this would please God and benefit his church, that is, would contribute to your good reputation, wise lords, and to Simprecht's useful understanding of Christ as well as to his progress. We therefore ask you to regard our advice as given with loyal feelings and good will, for we are especially inclined to serve you according to our vocation, since we have found in you constant friendship and true zeal for the kingdom of Christ. May the Almighty preserve you in peace and good government for a long time, for his own glory. Given at Strasbourg, 3 June 1535.

Your willing,  
Wolfgang Capito,  
Martin Bucer.

To Zangmeister:<sup>2</sup> Please send this copy to the council that they may decide themselves whether or not to present our letter.

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- 1 For Simprecht Schenk, see Ep. 465, note 2. Schenk had an affair with a married woman in Memmingen (see CorrBucer 8, Ep. 586). On 10 June [1535], Ambrosius Blaurer wrote to his brother Thomas that Simprecht Schenk had committed a shameless deed, of which only three men and one woman knew. Blaurer and his colleagues were trying to summon him to Strasbourg in an appropriate fashion. Blaurer mentioned that he believed that Schenk deserved the severest punishment, but that one must show regard for the honour of the Word of God (Schiess 1, Ep. 594). On 3 July, Johannes Zwick wrote to Bullinger, 'I add only one thing: Simprecht [Schenk] of Memmingen has been called to Strasbourg by Capito and Bucer ... He does not know the reason for the summons, but I smell something unless my nose misleads me' (HBBW 5, Ep. 608).
- 2 Eberhard Zangmeister (1476–1539) was a businessman from Memmingen. In 1505, he took over his late uncle's business. From 1509 onward, he became increasingly politically involved. In 1516, he was elected to the city council. In 1520/1 and 1524/5, he was guildmaster of the shopkeepers' guild (*Kramerzunft*). From 1526 to 1536, he and Hans Keller took annual turns as mayor. Zangmeister grew to become a leader of the Zwinglian party in Memmingen and represented the town at numerous imperial and city diets, as well as at meetings of the Swabian and Schmalkaldic Leagues: Speyer (1526), Schmalkalden (1529), Constance (1534), and Worms (1535).

**Letter 555a: [Before 4 June 1535, Strasbourg, Capito] to the Jews**

Printed as one of the prefatory letters to Robert Olivétan, trans., *La Bible* (Neuchâtel: Pierre de Vingle alias Pirot Picard, 4 June 1535), ff. ([vi]r–[vii]r). The prolegomena begin with an undated open letter by John Calvin (in Latin) to ‘emperors, kings, princes, and nations,’ defending the publication of the translation with a royal warrant (f. [i]v); a letter by Olivétan (in French) to the church of Christ, dated 12 February 1535 (ff. ii r–v); an *apologia* from Olivétan, addressed to three men under pseudonyms: Hilerme Cusemeth [Guillaume Farel], Cephaz Chlorotes [Pierre Viret], and Antoine Almeutes [Antoine Saunier] (ff. iii r–[v] v); the following letter (in French) attributed to Capito; and a poem by Bonaventure Des Périers alias Eutychius Deperius (f. [vii] v).

The letter attributed to Capito begins with the enigmatic initials ‘V.F.C.’ in its salutation. Traditionally scholars have interpreted these initials as either ‘V[iret], F[arel], and C[alvin]’ or ‘V[ostre] F[rère] C[alvin].’ Bernard Roussel and Robert White, however, have independently made convincing cases for reading ‘V[olfgangus] F[abritius] C[apito]’ instead.<sup>1</sup> More recently, Achim Detmers has expressed agreement with this conjecture.<sup>2</sup> Finally, Martin Heimbucher strongly endorses Capito’s authorship on the basis of similarities in theological thought between the preface and commentaries by Capito.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, most of the biblical quotations in this letter are not from Olivétan’s own biblical translation (an exception is the final quotation from Rom. 2:10).

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- 1 See Bernard Roussel, ‘Le ‘privilège’ rédigé par Calvin,’ in *Olivétan: Celui qui fit passer la Bible d’hébreu en français*, ed. Dominique Barthélemy, Henri Meylan, and Bernard Roussel (Bienne: Société biblique suisse, 1986), 8; *ibidem*, ‘François Lambert, Pierre Caroli, Guillaume Farel ... et Jean Calvin (1530–1536),’ in *Calvinus Servus Christi: Die Referate des Congrès International des Recherches Calviniennes ... vom 25. bis 28. August 1986 in Debrecen*, ed. W.H. Neuser (Budapest: Pressabteilung des Raday-Kollegiums, 1988), 40–1; *ibidem*, ‘Conférence de M. Bernard Roussel,’ in *École pratique des hautes études. Section des sciences religieuses, Annuaire* 99 (1990–1): 375–6; and Robert White, ‘An early Reformed Document on the Mission to the Jews,’ *Westminster Theological Journal* 53 (1991): 93–108.
- 2 Achim Detmers, *Reformation und Judentum. Israel-Lehren und Einstellungen zum Judentum von Luther bis zum frühen Calvin* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2001), 268–76.
- 3 Martin Heimbucher, *Prophetische Auslegung. Das reformatorische Profil des Wolfgang Fabricius Capito ausgehend von seinen Kommentaren zu Habakuk und Hosea* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008), 410–16.

W.F.C. to our ally and confederate, the people of the covenant of Sinai, greetings.

We pray that you may have the true knowledge of the Lord God and of his Word, gracious and dear reader, whoever you are who sincerely fear the Lord, for in God, you are near and somewhat conjoined to us, because you have the fear of the Lord. Truly 'the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.'<sup>4</sup> What is wisdom save for the sure revelation of the benevolence of the Father toward us, known through his works, which the foolish nature of the flesh will never comprehend? Why will you not call a man happy who has wisdom?<sup>5</sup> That is why we may say with the Psalmist, 'You singers, praise the Lord,' (I too certainly dare to confess as much!) 'that it may go well for him that fears the Lord and takes great delight in his commandments' (Ps. 112).<sup>6</sup> Such a man, then, has acquired a high degree of blessedness, for he who fears the Lord does good, as commanded;<sup>7</sup> he shrinks in horror from the evil which the Lord forbids, and he is moved not by fear of man, but by reverence for God. What truly prudent man would ever think that he could live without God and Christ in this world?<sup>8</sup> Who has such a fear, although he has not yet received the clear light of the world,<sup>9</sup> that is to say, the knowledge of Christ, the Messiah of the Lord? His soul is indeed full of the secret seed of God, which is the Word of God in the flesh<sup>10</sup> – unless someone cares to argue that as men our whole desire is to fulfil God's law by our own works, and to flee evil and do good.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, who does not know that man cannot rely on human judgment, especially where the work of the Lord is concerned, since the flesh never stops seeking its own advantage?<sup>12</sup> Only the spirit considers what is useful to others and occupies itself with divine matters, certainly not to acquire fame, as is the custom of hypocrites, who do their good works in order to be seen by men – they too have received their reward.<sup>13</sup> But he is our neighbour, who fears God and does nothing out of vainglory, and thus possesses in himself the will to accomplish the commandments before the

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4 Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10.

5 Cf. Prov. 3:13.

6 Ps. 112:1.

7 Cf. Deut. 6:24.

8 Cf. Eph. 2:12.

9 Cf. John 1:4–9, 8:12.

10 Cf. Isaiah 6:9–10; Mark 4:3–20.

11 Cf. Ps. 34:14.

12 Cf. Prov. 27:20; 1 Cor. 4:3.

13 Cf. Matt. 6:1–8.

Lord.<sup>14</sup> This will, which the Hebrews call *הפץ* (*hēpeš*), comes from the love of God, the foundation of which is the recognition of his benefits and grace, and not just those that pertain to the body, but also those that pertain to the soul, for the most noble part of mortal man is his immortal soul whose will does not allow itself to be moved by love of anything except what it knows is profitable, delectable, and certain. That is why scripture makes frequent mention of the deliverance of the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt in order that the vivid memory of the very great benefits might inflame them to a greater love toward God.

But since man is always accompanied by evil thoughts and an evil inclination (which the Hebrews call, *יצר הרע*, *yēšer hāra'*),<sup>15</sup> it is not possible for a man, who is wholly disposed to receive God's favour, to avoid seeking his own advantage or to avoid looking after his own interests. From the same fount springs this verse: 'All the inclinations of the thoughts of the human heart are wicked throughout his entire life.'<sup>16</sup> Once more, 'For the inclination of man's heart is evil from his youth.'<sup>17</sup> Seeing that we are evil by nature, the good that is done through us is a gift from God, not the result of man's might or strength.<sup>18</sup> Now the basic goodness or evil of a man must be reckoned from his actions, of which there are two types: judgment and feeling. Judgment comes from reason; feeling from the will. With respect to reason, it is blinded by the will and most often embraces wicked things instead of good things on account of the attractive image they present. This clearly reveals that 'by nature we are children of wrath'<sup>19</sup> because we are displeasing to God, our very good and grand creator, as both the unbelievers as well as the saints know in their hearts. For evil lies in the fact that a man may fail to do his duty even though he wills to do it.<sup>20</sup>

We must put the blame for this stain on our first father, Adam. With respect to his body, he was made first of all of earth, similar to the beasts. The other part of him was made immortal, since the Lord God breathed into him a soul, or spirit of life.<sup>21</sup> This soul alone is immortal, since it is divinely inspired and above the creation and state of corruptible things, for which rea-

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14 Cf. Phil. 2:3, 13.

15 The Hebrew phrase appears only in Gen. 6:5 and 8:21, both quoted below.

16 Gen. 6:5.

17 Gen. 8:21.

18 Cf. Eph. 2:8–9.

19 Eph. 2:3.

20 Cf. Rom. 7:19.

21 Cf. Gen. 2:7.

son the pagan poets called it 'the particle of divine breath.'<sup>22</sup> And the apostle St Peter says, 'We are participants in the divine nature.'<sup>23</sup> This last saying, however, applies more directly to those who have been regenerated and who have received the Spirit of Christ.

Therefore, man is made up of three things: an earthly flesh; an immortal soul that rises above the things that perish and by its nature is inclined toward the things of the flesh; and the Spirit of God, who is the guide and leader of the children of God. Since this spirit is present, the soul is called a lamp – 'The lamp of the Lord is the soul of man'<sup>24</sup> – otherwise the soul would be nothing but darkness and ignorance, for which reason certain sacrifices were ordained in the law to make up for man's ignorance and defects.<sup>25</sup> Adam forfeited this very soul in paradise, in the Garden of Eden, when he transgressed by eating the forbidden fruit.<sup>26</sup> The result is that the captive soul follows evil thoughts, יצר הרע,<sup>27</sup> as if 'sold under sin'<sup>28</sup> and condemned to eternal torment.<sup>29</sup> We have an example of this in Adam when he fell. He recognized his nakedness,<sup>30</sup> in other words, the depravity of sin ruling in his body through lust, השגל (*haššegel*),<sup>31</sup> awakened by the taste of the fruit of the tree, as some are led to believe. He fled in horror, when he heard the voice of God, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise, and reluctantly showed himself only when he was called by the voice of God.<sup>32</sup> What soul could bear to hear the Lord calling him to judgment? His only recourse is fear, trembling, fleeing, and hiding. Access to the Lord with assurance<sup>33</sup> is cut off and impeded because of sin.<sup>34</sup> I ask you, in whom else will you seek

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22 A direct citation of 'divinae particula aerae' from Horace, *Satires* 2.2.79. As a description of the soul, the Greek phrase ἀπόσπασμα τοῦ θεοῦ (fragment of God) derives from the Stoics.

23 2 Pet. 1:4.

24 Prov. 20:27.

25 Cf. Lev. 4:1–35; Num. 15:22–9.

26 Cf. Gen. 3:6.

27 See above, note 15.

28 Rom. 7:14.

29 Cf. 2 Thess. 1:9.

30 Cf. Gen. 3:7.

31 This word, either in biblical or rabbinic Hebrew, occurs in Ps. 45:10 and Neh. 2:6, and does not mean 'concupiscence' or 'lust,' but rather 'queen' or 'concubine.' Moreover, it would not be transliterated *haššegel*, but *haššēgal*. Cf. Sebastian Münster, *Dictionarium Hebraicum* ([Basel], 1523), 468.

32 Cf. Gen. 6:8.

33 Cf. Eph. 3:12.

34 Cf. Isaiah 59:2–3.

refuge, or in what place will you find relief or exemption from punishment? God, the avenger of sin, (before whom we can hide nothing) is encountered everywhere and terrifies the guilty conscience.

The corruption of sin is manifest in the relentless war, which is within man.<sup>35</sup> For throughout a man's life, the flesh excludes the spirit and obstructs its path, lest it obtain access to the heart, for it seeks assurance and retreats, in order to flee from the Spirit reproaching it for sin, and from judgment and righteousness.<sup>36</sup> The flesh hungers for fleeting pleasure, pursues vanity, and carefully strives to satisfy the desires of the body by eating, drinking, sleeping, idleness, and sinful pastimes, and similar things, in which it is entirely immersed. Reason, illuminated by the Spirit, endeavours to do good things, battles against the flesh, and refutes the idea that man was created immortal for the sake of corruptible flesh, but rather that food was created for the sake of man.<sup>37</sup> The Spirit demonstrates this by the order of creation, for the other animals appeared before man was formed. It is in their nature to drink, eat, sleep, and follow their appetite in a disorderly fashion. Man, who serves his stomach and lust, is very similar to them. Whether or not he is greater or more excellent than the beasts, he does not display this superiority in practice. He is entirely brutish; he is nothing but a beast; he is altogether involved in the things that are not at all natural to man, but are the principal traits of beasts. Much different, however, are the aims of those, who by drinking and eating sustain just enough natural strength to attend to the law of God, to pray to the Father in heaven, and to apply and devote themselves to the work of the Lord's vineyard.<sup>38</sup> Such are the good: they eat in order to live; they do not live in order to eat.<sup>39</sup> Who could always observe such moderation and temperance diligently? What man does not sometimes regret that he is a wretched human being? In this way, the corrupted body not only burdens the soul, but also ruins it. Only after death is sin separated from the flesh. Then it is abolished and the soul is delivered from its prison.

Now let us pretend that we are someone, who wholeheartedly strives to correct the wickedness of his plans and works. What else could such a person achieve than the pretence and semblance of a better life, and to hide

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35 Cf. Rom. 17:23.

36 Cf. John 16:8.

37 Cf. 1 Tim. 4:3.

38 Cf. Isa. 5:7.

39 The quotation 'Eat to live; not live to eat' is attributed to Socrates – see *The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs*, ed. John Simpson and Jennifer Speake, 5th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 60.

his heart beneath the mask and false disguise of works? For he acts out of self-love. As he uses his mind to plan and purpose what is expedient to him, he does not have his eyes on God, but on himself – that is so say, not on good, but on evil.

You claim that the man who loves the law and who studies it intently will attain a perfection equal to or greater than that of Abraham, to such an extent is perfection in man's power. I acknowledge the saying, as I see it, of the ancient Eleazar, whom all the Hebrews of old follow.<sup>40</sup> But what could one say that is more foolish or unmindful? For even if sound reason were ours to command, please tell me, where do you find the will wholly inclined toward the law? כי יצר לב האדם רע, 'For the imagination of the heart of man is evil' (Gen. 8).<sup>41</sup> Now what is in itself evil cannot of itself be made good, for it cannot change its nature and become different from what it is – unless you mean to say that he can be a god to himself and his own creature – for sin has not merely become a habit, but part of man's very nature. I fully admit that to read the law may in some manner sway the heart, but its effect is limited, and no one by reading scripture could ever change his nature. What purpose does the teaching of the law serve if not to make known the will of God, so that you may know what the creator demands and requires of you? Listen to what Seneca, a pagan, who among the ancients was the greatest and most vehement proponent of virtue that ever lived, says about this matter. He admits that although reason leads us to and demands purity and virtue from us, our desires furiously resist and oppose it. He therefore reckons that no man is good, but that among men some are worse than others.<sup>42</sup>

Now let us come to the present matter, observe and meditate on the law day and night,<sup>43</sup> so that finally you will discover and know that God שדי (*šadday*), that is to say, having and containing within himself sufficiency of all things,<sup>44</sup> is joined to you by a covenant and has made himself yours; and he

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40 The point of reference is unclear. Eleazar was the third son of Aaron and succeeded his father as high priest of ancient Israel.

41 Gen. 8:21.

42 Capito oversimplifies Seneca's position. While the Roman philosopher characterized the behaviour of the non-sage as vicious, and occasionally referred to sin as a universal phenomenon (*De ira* 2.10.7; 3.26.4; *De clementia* 3.4.3), he also believed in the possibility of an immanent goodness, in which reason submits to the rule of truth.

43 Cf. Psalm 1:2.

44 'El-Shaddai' (*ēl šadday*) is often translated as 'God Almighty,' but Capito has followed the traditional rabbinic interpretation, which took *šadday* to mean 'which is sufficiency,' that is, the 'Self-sufficient One.' Olivétan, on the other

asks you to esteem him as such, to believe that he is faithful in his promises, and that you expect no good save from him alone. All other things are powerless to help without the obedience of faith, אמונה (*ëmûnâ*), which is the sure knowledge that our God is one God alone and there is no other at all.<sup>45</sup> From this stems and proceeds the great love for God, by which this commandment is satisfied: 'And you shall love [the Lord] your God with all your heart and with all your soul,' etc. (Deut. 6).<sup>46</sup>

From this fountain spring the works and exploits of a faithful man, which are led and guided to the love of God, through which he is wholly dedicated and devoted to celebrate and magnify the glory of God, in order that he may accept everything from the hand of God, both freely and cheerfully. In the same way God commanded the people of Israel to remember that they entered the [Promised] Land not by their own righteousness or by the goodness and integrity of their heart, but on account of his promise, confirmed by oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. 9).<sup>47</sup>

O blind heart, which does not see true goodness is not acquired by closely attending to the law, if the Spirit, who is the renewer of hearts, is absent! For we easily believe that all things come from God, which is clear and made manifest from the creation and in many other ways,<sup>48</sup> especially in all of scripture and in the course of the works of God – as you also discover when you consider the profane histories. But it is common for one to search for other aids and help in this life, on which one relies more than on God. Even the very holy men of God were not totally exempt from unbelief, for the perils and dangers of life broke their spirits, like Abraham, who pretended that Sarah was not his wife,<sup>49</sup> and Moses at Me-Meribah,<sup>50</sup> that is, waters of strife, both of whom suffered grievous lapses.

Therefore, the knowledge of the law reveals man's sin, that is, his unbelief and trust in other creatures, which is a denial of the one and only God.<sup>51</sup> Thus it shows him the lack of mercy and false love that he has toward his neighbours, which is contrary to charity; it shows also other things like feel-

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hand, in his marginal note on Gen. 17:1, understands the name to mean 'the destroyer or the one who can destroy everything,' and translates it as 'almighty' (see Olivétan, *La Bible*, f. a iv v).

45 Cf. Deut. 6:4.

46 Deut. 6:5; and Lev. 19:18.

47 Deut. 9:5.

48 Cf. Rom. 1:19–20.

49 Cf. Gen. 12:10–20, 20:2.

50 Cf. Num. 20:24.

ings and appetites, which one sees and perceives each day in the actions and conduct of men. Far from removing sin, knowledge of the law stimulates it still more. For 'the law of God brings wrath,'<sup>52</sup> inflaming desire and inciting the flesh to reject as cruel the providence of God that bids us rather to love him with our whole heart;<sup>53</sup> for all of us being what we are, alas, are altogether given over to self-love and not to the love of God or of our neighbour.<sup>54</sup>

What will you then do with someone who wishes to deny such manifest corruption of our nature? Clearly it is up to you to admonish him to speak the truth according to the testimony of his heart rather than his lips, in the same way as you could effectively refute him who says that fire does not burn, by placing his hand in the middle of the flame. In like fashion, by long experience many holy people have known what great pestilence and evil there is in the heart of man.

It is the case, moreover, that the knowledge of the good and honourable things revealed by the law of God does not cure the malady but rather makes it worse and compounds it (as St Paul often made clear to the churches – that sinners are justified by faith).<sup>55</sup> This universal doctrine is clearly understood by our accursed nature, for example, it was imputed to Abraham as righteousness that he believed God's promise: 'Your seed will be as,' etc.<sup>56</sup> This is once again declared in the covenant made with Moses by these words: 'Hear, O Israel, [the Lord] your God is one God.'<sup>57</sup> By this word he promises that he will give all things to Israel, and likewise invites Israel to take and receive everything from himself, to expect no blessing which does not come from him, and to owe no duty or service to anyone but God, who gives all things to all men.

What conscience could sustain and endure this law, without straight-away becoming terrified and distraught when it finds that it does not have a faith that matches and responds to the Word which is so great and full of grace? For most often we do not have in common one God when we have so many earthly follies as help and aids. Then too, by poverty of faith we are held back from loving our neighbour, whom we ought to love in God as much as we love ourselves (Lev. 19).<sup>58</sup> Again, the little faith we have withers

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51 Cf. Rom. 7:7.

52 Rom. 4:15.

53 Deut. 6:5.

54 Cf. Matt. 22:37–40; Mark 12:28–34.

55 Rom. 4:1–25; Rom. 7:4–8:8.

56 Gen. 15:6.

57 Deut. 6:4.

58 Cf. Lev. 19:18.

within us. We seek aid from anything at all except from God, and always expect less of God, which is the reason why we do not live in pure simplicity before the Lord. Hence God withdraws and disappears from those who place their hope and trust in the aid of creatures, seeing that we consider and are in awe of base and earthly things rather than of true and heavenly things. Such is human intelligence and understanding.

Therefore, given that we do not have a full and complete faith in this promise – ‘I am the Lord your God’<sup>59</sup> – we are like those who withdrew and retreated from the mountain upon hearing the voice of God.<sup>60</sup> We both believe and do not believe. We willingly hear the words of salvation, and yet we shrink from them. We long to hear them, but we cannot bear to endure them, for God, the true and just, makes a covenant with us and requires something from us in return. Therefore, let us desire the covenant of God, provided that it be offered to the ears of the heart by a mediator, since there is nothing that one hears from the mouth of the Lord that would not be dreadful to us without a mediator. The flesh indeed is fearful. It does not understand that God is true to it in his promises and wholly fails to embrace him by faith. It is also terrified and distraught by the thought that it ought to have such a faith and firm conviction of God’s goodness, and that it ought to hope, await, and receive all things from God, and to praise him for everything – yet it does not at all possess the requisite faith. The flesh is also dismayed by the lack of love, which it ought to render both to God and to one’s neighbour. Equally frightening is the commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’ (Lev. 19),<sup>61</sup> and this one (if we were under the law): ‘Do not bother the bird that is brooding its eggs or that is covering its chicks.’<sup>62</sup> For the whole force and power of this commandment rests on the fact that we believe God as if we were standing before him and hearing these words from his own mouth.<sup>63</sup>

What hope of salvation remains then to us, if even the free and liberal promises are beyond our grasp? Indeed, they are beyond our grasp when we are asked to have an equal and corresponding faith in them, whereas we are ruled and stirred up by so many vain hopes. To be sure, not only the com-

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59 Ex. 20:2.

60 Exod. 20:18–19.

61 Lev. 19:18.

62 Cf. Deut. 22:6–7.

63 As Capito explains in the following paragraphs, these commands are ‘frightening’ because human beings are not capable of fulfilling them on their own. They need the help of the Saviour.

mandments of the law, but also the promises, fill us with fear. They terrify us, for all these things want and command us to have a pure and whole heart before the Lord – something that no living man can ever accomplish.<sup>64</sup>

Let us then turn back and seek the mediator, as did the people round the mountain [of Sinai], for this mediator has perfectly fulfilled the covenant and has purged us, not with the blood of calves (as Moses did in times past), but with his own blood, through which he has fulfilled the accord and covenant of grace. Thus we are purified, showered, and sprinkled with his blood.<sup>65</sup> Faith such as this exceeds our natural understanding and capacity.

God has promised the New Testament, called 'the New' because it must be so in spirit, and not according to the conditions of former times. The Old Testament always consisted of the blood of beasts; the New consists of new blood. Thus eternal redemption was accomplished by an eternal offering and sacrifice. The covenant is unbreakable and permanent, and has been made complete by the eternal blood, which belongs to God. The kingdom of the Messiah, the son of David, has no end.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, he must be the immortal king, and it is necessary that new, immortal men, who are created according to God,<sup>67</sup> should be citizens of this new and eternal kingdom. Yet until now, the promises and covenants of God have had no force, and man's transgression has prevailed because of his evil heart. This is the root of the evil on which the promises, though grafted, could not take hold. The Messiah of the Lord, because he has an eternal kingdom, has also found eternal redemption. It is therefore necessary that he remove יצר הרע,<sup>68</sup> i.e., the wicked thought, which the ancient Hebrews hoped would be done. But thanks to God we experience it as something that has been done already, for sins are not imputed to us through the grace of him who has chosen us in Jesus Christ. Through his Spirit the vestiges of sin, that is to say, a wicked heart and wicked inclinations, are daily, little by little, and more and more, cleansed and purified, so that a new heart and spirit<sup>69</sup> are being formed by him who renews all things,<sup>70</sup> that is, the Lord's Christ.

This was clearly revealed to the prophet Malachi: 'He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi and refine them like

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64 Cf. Deut. 10:12; 1 Tim. 1:5.

65 Cf. Heb. 9:14 and 10:22.

66 Cf. Luke 1:32-3.

67 Cf. Eph. 4:24.

68 See above, note 15.

69 Cf. Ps. 51:10.

70 Cf. Rev. 21:5.

gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.<sup>71</sup> What other proof do you require? For he is obviously speaking about Christ, who, at his second coming to the world after his resurrection, purifies his followers. With the flames of the Spirit he burns off the filth and stains of sin, which were in them. Then they may rightly end by taking the holy foods, which are added to the other sacrifices, by way of fulfilment.<sup>72</sup> For these sacrifices are righteous, valid offerings – that is to say, their bodies are a ‘living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God,’<sup>73</sup> a reasonable service of those who are regenerated. But how are they then fit and competent for this? Certainly, by the Spirit of Christ, who accuses them of sin, and who cauterizes gently and washes away the dregs and filth of the heart.<sup>74</sup>

O profound mystery! He who was crucified, returned to life, and ascended to heaven in order to fulfil everything. When he dwells in us, the hearts of believers are enlarged and filled; he dwells in them and through them he accomplishes the work of redemption, for he ensures that our sins are not imputed to us, even though both the law and the promises declare that they were strictly imputed to us.<sup>75</sup> For all promises are made under certain conditions, namely, that we hear them, that we observe them, and that we follow them, that is to say, that we believe and firmly keep them, and put them purely into practice. When will flesh and blood be able to attain and fulfil them?

But the eternal and perfect redemption has already been completed in Christ,<sup>76</sup> and we expect no one else who can repair and replace the desolate and ruined things. It is therefore necessary that at his entry and blessed welcome he should bestow a better heart and by his liberality grant full faith, which our unbelieving nature does not possess. This faith in Jesus Christ sees and recognizes that ‘God has concluded all things in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all.’<sup>77</sup> It also knows that the Father has given us Christ and all things with him,<sup>78</sup> whose righteousness removes and erases our sin. For this righteousness is ours, and his immortal life (which is ours) in God, extin-

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71 Malachi 3:3.

72 An allusion to the supplementary offerings, consisting of flour or wine (cf. Num. 15:1–21).

73 Rom. 12:1.

74 Cf. Isaiah 4:4 and 53:4–11; 1 Pet. 2:24.

75 Cf. Ps. 32:1; Rom. 4:8.

76 Cf. Heb. 9:12.

77 Rom. 11:32.

78 Cf. Rom. 8:32.

guishes in us the death of Gehenna,<sup>79</sup> which never dies. His inexpressible felicity and blessedness destroy and devour the profound misery of those, who are condemned by their sins to hell. Without Christ the faith in the promise cannot appease or calm our heart or our conscience, both because it is not yet full and complete, and also because it cannot fulfil and complete the conditions that are annexed and joined to these promises. But with Christ and in Christ, to whom all promises belong,<sup>80</sup> faith satisfies and satiates the conscience. This happens on account of our belief that our lack of faith and our sins have been pardoned and forgiven through the righteousness of Christ, who was made for us righteous before God.<sup>81</sup> Neither our frailty nor our wilful disobedience can ever harm or frustrate such faith. But trust in a salvation and in an uprightness derived from any other source leads altogether to perdition. Thus it happens that those, who place their trust in their works and think that they are made righteous before God by them, are shut out and rejected from the righteousness of God, because they wish to establish and find their own means of righteousness. By contrast, those whom Christ has granted the gift of faith, are cleansed by the death of Christ and obtain absolution for their sins, and by the same Spirit are daily renewed and remade into new men.<sup>82</sup>

For this reason, one can see and know that he who is the son of David is God, and that God reconciles the world to himself through and in the man Christ.<sup>83</sup> For God alone has and holds the power to create and recreate; he alone can change the form of things and make from the old and evil heart a new and good one. Some have said very foolishly and mistakenly that God has bestowed upon and shared with the angels the power to create. By the same token, one could say that he might have made them participants in his divinity.<sup>84</sup> God is *שׁוּרֵי*, as we have already said.<sup>85</sup> He does not rely on,

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79 In the Bible, Gehenna derives from a place outside of Jerusalem known as the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, one of the principal valleys surrounding the Old City. Gehenna is a destination of the wicked, different from the more neutral Sheol/Hades (hell). The phrase 'death of Gehenna' refers to an everlasting state of death in hell (also called 'the second death'), which Christ, by descending into hell, took upon himself on behalf of believers. The damned, however, are condemned to suffer it. This death has no end, and it is perhaps in this sense that Capito writes that it 'never dies.'

80 Cf. 2 Cor. 1:20.

81 Cf. 1 Cor. 1:30.

82 Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

83 Cf. 2 Cor. 5:19.

84 Cf. 2 Pet. 1:4.

85 See above, note 44.

and has no need of the help from anyone else. Nevertheless, Christ has full power and perfect redemption, Ezek. 34.<sup>86</sup> The Lord God, in establishing his kingdom, made David, his servant, ruler under him, but he himself is God forever blessed. For Christ did what pertains solely to God alone, and this power to do such things surpasses in every way the capacity of all nature. This mystery, of course, cannot be explained in a few words. O what incomparable kindness is in this ineffable mystery, that God should dwell in the flesh, but even more ineffable is the mystery that the flesh of Christ should dwell in God! For he entered into immortality, which belongs only to God,<sup>87</sup> and through him we too go to God. What then? Has the law been abolished? This is answered in the apostolic epistle to the Hebrews, where it is said that the new abolishes and gets rid of the old.<sup>88</sup> The law, however, still remains, as far as the substance of the covenant is concerned. For the law consists of two parts: first and second. The second is temporal; the first eternal. It is for this reason that the people of Israel, having returned from Babylon, were rebuked for having taken so much pain and effort over external sacrifices, while abandoning faith and charity, of which the Lord says in Hosea, 'For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.'<sup>89</sup> And again, 'I write to them the great things of my law' (Hosea 8).<sup>90</sup> God always exhorts his people through his prophets to these principal things: the knowledge of God, which is faith, mercy, kindness, and love for one's neighbour. But what did they do? Without faith they made their sacrifices, which are abominations to the Lord, who denies that such sacrifices were commanded of them (Jeremiah 7).<sup>91</sup>

The chief parts of the law are thus written in the hearts of men,<sup>92</sup> and to this very day are said to be the new law, because it is no longer contained in decrees.<sup>93</sup> And Moses and his law belong to this first part. But the second and lesser parts (because they are of the world, that is to say, exterior and visible) neither belong nor pertain to the kingdom of Christ, which is inward and heavenly. Let us attend a little to Isaiah, who commands that we be washed, without making mention of external things.<sup>94</sup> Circumcision lasts לעולם,<sup>95</sup> just

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86 Ezek. 34:11–31.

87 Cf. 1 Tim. 6:16.

88 See Heb. 8–10.

89 Hosea 6:6.

90 Hosea 8:12.

91 Cf. Jeremiah 7:22.

92 Cf. Jer. 31:33.

93 Cf. Eph. 2:15.

94 Cf. Isaiah 1:16.

95 The Hebrew means 'unto eternity' or 'forever.'

as long as the world lasts, as do the other things that pertain to it, but the end of the world is אחרית הימים,<sup>96</sup> the end of days, when the day of Christ follows, whose kingdom is not of this corruptible world,<sup>97</sup> for it is eternal and incorruptible, but the form of the world, as great as it is, will pass away.<sup>98</sup>

We read in a certain passage in the book of the Talmudists that the law will be abolished in the reign of Christ, except in the case of the book of Esther and a few nameless trifles, where there is debate and disputation with respect to what ceremonies will be abandoned.<sup>99</sup> These concern matters of worship, which the Jews, being outside of their land, do not and cannot observe. In fact, the Lord abolished them when the temple was destroyed, along with the ark of the covenant, the priesthood, the kingdom, and similar things, yet David continues to reign as king. Hosea 3: 'The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, etc. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king.'<sup>100</sup> Therefore King David is the Messiah, under whose reign the Jews were exiled and dispersed throughout the world, as the law indeed warned,<sup>101</sup> and because Israel according to the flesh<sup>102</sup> does not obey the kingdom of this King David, God has chosen another people to be Israel, which the prophet Jeremiah describes in chapter 33.<sup>103</sup> But when will they return? When the fulness of the gentiles has come in.<sup>104</sup> Certainly it is no

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96 The original French text has a spelling mistake in the Hebrew – אחרים instead of אחרית.

97 Cf. John 18:36.

98 Cf. 1 Cor. 7:31.

99 Cf. Esther 9:28. Capito's reference here to Esther is from the Midrash Mishle 9. The Midrash Mishle is a ninth-century rabbinical commentary on the book of Proverbs, where it is explained that in the World to Come, all of the festivals will no longer be celebrated, except for that of Purim. This midrashic teaching is drawn from Esther 9:28, in which the biblical verse explains that Purim will not cease to be celebrated among the Jews. For an English translation, see *The Midrash on Proverbs*, trans. Burton L. Visotzky (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 49. The midrash is cited in R. Bahya's commentary on Deut. 31:21 (see below, note 106). Capito here has deviated from the original meaning of Bahya's text. Bahya is very clear in his commentary that all changes in practice will occur in the World to Come, during the period of the resurrection of the dead, and not during the messianic age. Capito, of course, attributes these teachings to the messianic age as an explanation for why rituals and commandments need no longer be observed.

100 Hosea 3:4–5.

101 Cf. Lev. 26:33 and Deut. 4:27.

102 Cf. 1 Cor. 10:18.

103 Jeremiah 33:7–26.

104 Cf. Rom. 11:25.

mistake or misunderstanding to say that the law has been abolished under Christ, because the reason for the law ceases and is excluded, for they say that the law is given on account of the wicked heart, as the author of the book, entitled *Mitzvot Gadol*, says in his preface,<sup>105</sup> as does Bahya on Deut. 31.<sup>106</sup> Indeed the law arouses the wicked heart, as the Jew knows well enough. St Paul is in agreement, writing to Timothy, 'The law is made for the unrighteous,' etc.<sup>107</sup> In these three things – race, law, and promises – I wish the Jews would not rest their glory so much on the letter as on the spirit;<sup>108</sup> I wish they always bore patiently the punishment inflicted by the Lord and did not rely so confidently on their Talmud or rabbis. Like the Turks with their Qur'ān, and Christianity without Christ, with its constitutions and decrees, the Jews are often held back from coming to the true light and understanding. Surely they would be ashamed of themselves and feel dread as they treat and behold the law on account of the sin which is in man and which clings to him. They would distrust their own power and strength, and would finally seek the promised salvation, and possess it just as we believers do now.

Let us pray therefore that this salvation may shine forth and be made known to each and every one, in order that the temple and city of Jerusalem, that heavenly land, may be fully edified, and that we may see the bride of Christ adorned with these beautiful gifts, Amen.<sup>109</sup>

Paul in Romans 12: 'Glory and honour and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.'<sup>110</sup>

### Letter 556: 12 June 1535 [Strasbourg], Capito, Martin Bucer, and Caspar Hedio to the City Council of Strasbourg

The manuscript is in Basel SA, Erziehungsakten Y 4 (unnumbered). The letter may have been sent together with one from the XIII of Strasbourg to Basel,

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105 A reference to Moses ben Jacob of Coucy's *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol* (SeMaG), a thirteenth-century treatise on the oral law. This book is included in the list of Hebrew works at the Strasbourg Gymnasium (see CWC 2, p. 501). The exact reference within that text is *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, positive commandment no. 12. A Hebrew-Latin edition was published by Sebastian Münster under the title *Praecepta Mosaica sexcenta atque tredecim* (Basel, 1533).

106 Rabbi Bahya ben Asher of Saragossa (1263–1340), *Commentary on the Pentateuch* (Naples, 1492). This is the first book included in the list of Hebrew works at the Strasbourg Gymnasium (see CWC 2, p. 500).

107 1 Tim. 1:9.

108 Cf. 2 Cor. 3:6.

109 Cf. Rev. 21:2.

110 Actually Rom. 2:10; cf. Rom. 1:16.

dated 12 June 1535 (Basel SA, Erziehungsakten Y 4). For the context of the letter, see the headnotes to Epp. 532 and 538.

Noble, strict, firm, circumspect, honourable, wise lords. A few months ago, the illustrious, most noble prince, our gracious lord Duke Ulrich, asked the circumspect, honourable, and wise city council of Basel to send him Master Simon Grynaeus, whom until now he has employed in the organization of the university in Tübingen. When the above-mentioned city council of Basel asked repeatedly for his return, his Princely Grace requested in writing and once also through a personal messenger to keep him for a longer period. So far, they have declined his request. There is, however, such great need for this man in Tübingen and in the whole of the duchy [of Württemberg]. He is of very great benefit to the area that everyone would be fairly helped if he stayed longer. First, it is well known how important it is for the whole duchy as well as its neighbours and all who have turned from the papal abuses to the purer teaching of the holy gospel that this university be well and wisely instituted. Secondly, we have no university in our land that has been reformed in a Christian manner and in which it would be convenient for people to enrol. Therefore, it has been endowed by the duke with no less than 3,000 gulden a year. There is ample opportunity, moreover, to do much good through this university, if it is organized in a Christian manner and set on the right course.

So far this has not been possible, for the men who were contacted as potential lecturers were either too far away or had other obligations, so that they were unable to come at this time, and some declined to come. Therefore other people had to be contacted, not all of whom have accepted the invitation. Thus the university is not yet staffed, and even if all the lecturers were available at this time, one would still have to worry about a lack of cooperation in the beginning. Furthermore, young men who are skilled in languages and in the arts are not always as well trained in religion as is necessary. Grynaeus is learned in languages and all the liberal arts and is regarded as an expert by all scholars. He is a popular man and of high repute, so that no one is better qualified than he to guide the lecturers who have been appointed to the school and those who will be appointed in future, and no one is more capable of leading them in religious matters, especially since he is also very agreeable in his lectures and in his actions.

Master Ambrosius Blaurer, who was supposed to assist Grynaeus in the organization of the university, is very busy with his parish and does not enjoy as high a reputation among scholars. It would therefore be not only impossible for him to accomplish by himself what Grynaeus could easily accomplish, but there would also be concern (and he himself is quite worried) that some of the scholars might immediately turn against him. Thus there

would be serious strife in the university right from the start, and this would spread thereafter to the whole land and beyond. In any case, Satan leaves nothing undone to cause dangerous divisions and religious factions in that duchy. In addition, the churches there have adopted rather diverse ceremonies, and it would be necessary to establish a more uniform order, and that could be done if all parishes were staffed with assistants. In that respect, too, Grynaeus could produce results, for he carries considerable weight with the duke and with many others, and is sincerely blessed in the Lord. In Basel, thanks be to God, he is not needed as urgently in church matters, and even if he were needed, there are others who can accomplish the same results. Since Christians ought to consider the advantage of the kingdom of Christ, not their own, and should always loyally serve this cause, in whatever location, we trust and hope, once the gracious ruling lords of Basel understand what great opportunity Grynaeus has provided in Tübingen to further the kingdom, how necessary his presence is there, and what troubles one must fear if he is taken away from Tübingen when his term ends, they would send Grynaeus to Tübingen themselves, even if he were in Basel now. Since Your Graces know for the most part the state of affairs in the duchy and how important it is to all Christian estates to have religion properly organized in that duchy, and the important contribution Grynaeus could make to it, it is our most humble petition that Your Graces write, for the sake of Christ's honour, to the circumspect, honourable, gracious lords of the city council of Basel and remind them of this matter in the spirit of neighbourly friendship and beg them to permit Grynaeus to remain in Tübingen for another year. This is not meant to take Grynaeus from them; conversely he would provide significant counsel for [Württemberg], and create a Christian order in the university. After all it is everyone's duty to do their best publicly to promote the kingdom of God, a matter in which no one should have regard for himself and his people's interests. May Your Graces loyally consider the needs of our common church in this matter.

Your humble servants in the Word of God,  
 W. Capito,  
 C. Hedio,  
 M. Bucer, and others.

**Letter 557: [End of June 1535, Basel], Boniface Amerbach to Capito**

The following three letters deal with the offence caused in Basel by a passage in Erasmus' preaching manual, *Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nikolaus Episcopus, [August 1535]), which was in the process of being typeset at the time. The offending passage ran: 'What great

dignity must be maintained by those who are the ministers of the New Testament and every day immolate this heavenly sacrifice adored even by angelic spirits, and who touch with their hands the immaculate lamb!' (see below, Ep. 559, note 1). Oswald Myconius took offence because he interpreted the passage as a reference to the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. Since this conflicted with the interpretation of the reformers, he felt that the book ought not to be printed in Basel. He did, however, ask Bullinger to weigh in on the matter (see HBBW 5, Ep. 601). Bullinger responded on 29 June 1535, stating that he was displeased with Erasmus' statement, but that it was up to the Basel censors to intervene and to stop the printing if inappropriate passages were found in the work (HBBW 6, Ep. 602). Alarmed by Myconius' criticism, the mayor of Basel, Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, demanded that certain words be removed or changed. Capito heard of the affair when he was forwarded a copy of the offending passage, and asked to intercede. Accordingly, he wrote a letter to the mayor of Basel justifying Erasmus' wording on the basis of the usage of the Fathers. Myconius, however, remained opposed to the publication of the work (see HBBW 6, Ep. 607). On 12 August 1535, the Basel printer Nikolaus Episcopus forwarded the first three books of the *Ecclesiastes* to Capito, asking him to note anything that might give offence and need correction (see below, Ep. 563). Capito continued to express his support for the work (see below, Ep. 575).

Printed in AK 4:360–1, Ep. 1958. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Lack of learning harms religion and piety. Erasmus, now resident in Basel, had no intention to give offence with his preaching manual, *Ecclesiastes*, yet could not escape Myconius' criticism. This alarmed the mayor [Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen] who demanded the removal or change of words like 'immolate' (*immolare*). Yet that word appears [in translations of] Chrysostom and Cyril, and the Greek equivalent, [θύειν], is used by the council of Nicea. It seems that nothing can be said clearly enough to escape cavils. Amerbach asks Capito to intercede, for he fears that Erasmus will take offence and leave Basel again.

#### **Letter 558: 1 July [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Boniface Amerbach**

Printed in AK 4:362–3, Ep. 1960. For the context, see the preceding letter. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito agrees to intercede on Erasmus' behalf and write to the mayor. He has received a letter from the printer [Nikolaus] Episcopus, enclosing the offending passage. Capito himself sees nothing wrong with it and refers Amerbach to Bucer's writings on the Eucharist. He regrets the

tendency to make rigid doctrinal statements and brand the views of others as heretical. Nevertheless he does not wish Amerbach to bear Myconius a grudge and will gladly write to him as well. In the meantime Amerbach should prevent Myconius' criticism from reaching Erasmus' ears.

**Letter 559: [After 1 July 1535, Strasbourg], Capito to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen**

The autograph original of this letter is in Basel UB, Ki. Ar. 25a, 126. For the context, see above, Ep. 557 headnote. For Meyer, see above, Ep. 501, note 5.

First, the grace of God, gracious dear lord. I am told that Erasmus wrote in his *Preacher*, 'What great dignity must be maintained by those who are the ministers of the New Testament and every day immolate this heavenly sacrifice adored even by angelic spirits, and who touch with their hands the immaculate lamb!'<sup>1</sup> These words supposedly go against the pure interpretation of the sacrament. They may be regarded thus if they are interpreted in the most simplistic fashion according to their basic literal meaning. I beg Your Honour, however, kindly to consider the following points, which also represent the opinion of my dear brother Oecolampadius<sup>2</sup> of blessed memory and are maintained by us and all believers:

1. We conduct our business in the question of the sacraments and otherwise, such that it constitutes the truth in God and agrees with the conscience of all believers, and we handle it in the most edifying manner.
2. We know it is the truth when scripture in its natural sense agrees with us, when the interpretation of the sacred councils and holy teachers agrees with us, and when the use of sacraments in the churches is in compliance with them as well, for what goes against scripture is not valid before God. It raises suspicion if something does not agree with the interpretation of the holy teachers and the councils, goes against conscience, or does not agree with the sacramental action or the right usage of the sacraments, or is not in accord with true belief.

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- 1 I.e., Erasmus' preaching manual published under the title *Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi* (Basel: Hieronymus Froben and Nikolaus Episcopius, [August 1535]). See ASD V-4:104, ll. 472–5. The quotation from Erasmus is based on Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio* 3.4 and 6.4 (see HBBW 5, Ep. 602, note 4).
- 2 For Johannes Oecolampadius (d. 1531), see CWC 1, Ep. 11 headnote.

3. Scripture says, 'The Lord took the bread, broke it,'<sup>3</sup> etc. In this passage, bread is mentioned – we all know that. He breaks the bread and gives it to his disciples, and then says, 'This,' (namely, the bread which he breaks) 'is my body.'<sup>4</sup> Thus the Lord provides two things: the bread and his body, and he commands his disciples to eat both – bread [as nourishment] for the body, and his body [as nourishment] for the soul. Thirdly, he says, 'As often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me.'<sup>5</sup> This is what he commands them to do, whence we carry out Christ's command, which we would not do, if we did not have his words.
4. The council held at Nicea, which comes closest to the apostles' style and which Oecolampadius of blessed memory used as a foil against error, said, 'Through faith we know that the Lamb of God lies on this holy table, the Lamb that atoned for the sins of the world, which was sacrificed by priests, but not according to the practice of sacrifices; and if we truly use his precious body and blood, we believe that it is the sign of our resurrection.'<sup>6</sup> Chrysostom writes in Homily 83, 'Many people say, "I would like to see the form of the Lord, his shape, clothes, and shoes." Lo, you behold him, you touch him, you eat him. And you indeed desire to see his clothes, but he gives himself to you not only to see, but also to touch and eat and receive within you.' Thus far the words of Chrysostom.<sup>7</sup> Here we have the sacrifice of Christ, that is, his flesh is offered, which the faithful eat, drink, and thus touch the Lord.
5. Through the rite of the sacrament God elects all of us in the body of Christ. Among his members are some called ministers, such as we who hold the office of preachers. They serve to build up the body of Christ, that is, to bring the congregation to God through Christ. But since we are blood and flesh, it happens through the corporeal word and corporeal signs, both offered to the faithful in the service of the church, in communion with Christ, and for their

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3 Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19.

4 Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19.

5 Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24.

6 In Gelasius of Cyzicus, *Historia Concilii Nicaeni*, lib. 2, cap. 30 (PG 85.1317B), quoted in Oecolampadius, *Quid de eucharistia veteres tum Graeci, tum Latini senserint, dialogus* ([Basel], 1530), ff. F3v–F4r.

7 Actually Chrysostom's Homily 82.4 on Matt. 26:26–8 (PG 58.743), quoted in Oecolampadius, *Quid de eucharistia veteres tum Graeci, tum Latini senserint, dialogus* ([Basel: Froben], 1530), fols. [F5v–F6r].

salvation, such that what is corporeal concerns the body, and what is heavenly concerns the soul and the spirit. Just as the lieutenant<sup>8</sup> of Christ takes the bread in his Lord's name, and gives it to the disciples and says, 'Take and eat, this is my body,' etc.,<sup>9</sup> the obedient disciples accept it as it is offered to them, both the bread with their mouth which goes into their bodily stomach, and the body of Christ in faith for the renewal of the soul.

6. There is a different way of expressing it: the bread in this administering [of the sacrament] is a sign or figure of the body of Christ, which is presently given, for the Lord gives his disciples that of which he speaks. Thus one may interpret 'the bread is' as 'the bread signifies' my body. And that is not incorrect, as long as one understands that the signified body of Christ is offered at the same time, as Tertullian and Augustine wrote, as well as Oecolampadius, and which was never denied in my presence by Oecolampadius or Zwingli.
7. But it is a dangerous error if someone wanted to say that the body was naturally bread, or that the physical body of Christ was stuck physically in the bread, like grain in a sack. That is the only point Oecolampadius decried, writing, 'It is foreign to our faith to speak of a substantial union of the Word with anything but the human nature; we receive life in a different way through the Spirit of the incarnate Christ who suffered,' etc.<sup>10</sup> Although the papists and others do not like to confess it, it is true that they teach that the whole body is wholly in every crumb of the host. Thus they direct our belief toward a physical and local presence, a local but invisible presence, like a peasant sitting under an invisibility cloak, but that is foolish talk and a mockery of the faith.
8. Since all action in the church is directed toward Christ, and the Supper does not revolve around the bread and wine, but the communion with Christ, the ancients out of concern for true faith worried that they were sacrificing<sup>11</sup> Christ, since they touched him, ate

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8 In German, 'befelhaber.'

9 Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19.

10 Oecolampadius, *Quid de eucharistia veteres tum Graeci, tum Latini senserint, dialogus* ([Basel: Froben], 1530), fol. C2v: 'Aliena enim a fide sunt, verbum uniri alteri naturae quam humanae substantialiter, aliter nos vivificari, quam Christi incarnati et passi Spiritu.'

11 The text has the verb 'schlachten,' but in the margin, Capito has written the synonym 'metzigen,' perhaps to give a further nuance to the word.

him, drank him, etc. Thus they said that these things happened figuratively, that the body of Christ was signified by the words, 'You eat the Lord, you drink the Lord,' etc. But to avoid the papistical error, they spoke cautiously and called it 'a mystery, indicated by faith,' etc.,<sup>12</sup> for one was speaking of a spiritual action. This explanation was sufficient at the time, whereas in our time we are not satisfied.

9. In the Council of Nicea it was expressed thus: 'When the bread is offered, we think of nothing lowly, but lift up our minds and know in our faith,' etc.<sup>13</sup> This sufficiently indicates that reason can only show a natural union or coarse corporeal presence, but faith leads us through reason to the right hand of God and accepts together with the physical bread that is offered the true body of Christ, who sits at the right hand of his Father, for the heart is with his treasure in heaven.<sup>14</sup> Chrysostom likewise offers sufficient explanation in the above-mentioned homily: 'Since then the Word says, "This is my body," let us both be persuaded and believe, and look at it with the eyes of the mind, for Christ hath given nothing that can be grasped by the senses; although present in things that are perceptible, they are all νοητά, that is, understood through faith. So also in baptism, the gift is bestowed by a perceptible thing, that is, by water; but what is accomplished – the birth and renewal, I mean – is perceived by the mind. For if you had been incorporeal, he would have delivered you the incorporeal gifts plainly, but because the soul has been locked up in a body, he delivers you the things in a perceptible form, although they await understanding through faith.' Thus far Chrysostom.<sup>15</sup>

Chrysostom agrees with Oecolampadius and with us, [the preachers of] Strasbourg, saying that the bread is offered together with the body of Christ, not in a perceptible manner, but through the guidance of our spirit and faith. This terminology is not used where the sacraments are not used correctly, which makes Luther rage against people who refuse to say that the

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12 Cf. 1 Tim. 3:9, 16.

13 The source of this quotation is unknown.

14 Cf. Matt. 6:21 and Luke 12:34.

15 Actually Chrysostom's Homily 82.4 on Matt. 26:26–8 (PG 58.743), quoted in Oecolampadius, *Quid de eucharistia veteres tum Graeci, tum Latini senserint, dialogus* ([Basel: Froben], 1530), fols. [F5v–F6r].

true body of Christ is offered in the sacrament. He speaks in extreme terms, as is his habit. We cannot change him. Dear God, everything needs practice. These are spiritual matters. Anyone who deals only in other matters should cease to judge our spiritual mysteries in his ignorant manner.

Chrysostom adds to the passage cited above these words: 'Many people say,' etc.<sup>16</sup> Who would be offended by these words if he has understood correctly what precedes? They are comforting to believers, for in the Supper faith is paramount. It strengthens through eyes, mouth, hands, and everything, so that a believer says joyfully and in truth, 'I see with my eyes, I touch with my hands, I eat and drink with my mouth the body and the blood of Christ, my Lord himself.'<sup>17</sup> He does not see just bread, but bread that is the body of Christ in faith, and thus makes no distinction and sees no distinction in the bread, for he sees only the body of Christ, which is everything to him, for as the Nicean creed says: 'He sees the offered bread, but he sees nothing else, feels nothing else, does not think of himself, and touches in everything Christ alone.'<sup>18</sup> Ah, dear sir and brother, how I wished we learned to judge Christian matters in a Christian manner and with understanding! But people want nothing beyond the external matter and stick to it, which fills the ears of the community, so that neither the leaders nor the congregation understand Christ's Spirit, life, forgiveness of sins, assurance of conscience, word, sacrament or the nature of our ministry. Indeed in such matters one should listen to other people, who have knowledge and can show us the way.

Finally, since Erasmus says what Chrysostom and the Council of Nicea have said and expresses himself cautiously enough, it is my urgent request, for God's sake, not to allow yourself to be talked into taking the slightest step against his work. It is not advisable and will cause much trouble. Furthermore his work shows how the administration of the church must be improved. I say 'improved,' not 'changed,' for it would not be difficult for my dear brother to lead a life following others, had he not been in the vanguard. You have derived no small benefit and understanding from him, if one considers it rightly.

You can tell that Erasmus has spoken in a guarded way when he calls the Eucharist 'a celestial sacrifice to be adored even by angelic spirits.'<sup>19</sup> Thus it is not natural or physical bread, nor localized bread, shut up like money in a purse, two claims that go against our recognized truths. If we cannot learn

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16 See above, note 7.

17 Cf. Matt. 26:26-8; 1 Cor. 11:23-5.

18 The source of this quotation is unknown.

19 See above, note 1. The phrase is stated first in Latin and then in German.

to understand that, we can never stand before men of pious and God-fearing conscience, who believe that this is all about Christ and who in their true and essential faith cannot find anything corporeal or carnal in the body and flesh of Christ. Even if both Luther and Erasmus were wrong, we could do nothing to prove them wrong other than teaching action in spiritual matters that is more glorious and truthful than their action, as we have indicated, and I know that your and my conscience must agree. It is Satan himself, who always bothers and harasses us and never improves us. If anyone acts contrary to justice, he will find his judge. May God grant me to act humbly according to his command.

I briefly wrote to Myconius,<sup>20</sup> for he is stubborn, and would only become more contrary if I wanted to keep him away by force. Furthermore I cannot confer with everyone in this lengthy manner, and I would not have spent the time and effort on just anyone, but I value Basel and you especially, and I wish to God we were zealous for the right reason. People allow everything else to slip by. This is the only business on which they concentrate, in which they press on to the final point. They criticize what is well spoken, because they either do not understand or do not want to understand, out of ignorance and inexperience. Now I commend you to our Lord, dearly beloved sir and brother, may he grant both of us true understanding in our actions, to stand before him and not be ashamed, forever and ever, Amen.

Do not allow yourself to be moved by the complaint in Luther's letter.<sup>21</sup> We know that no one can go against us, whereas we in turn do not condemn anyone for saying the truth. Thus if Luther or Erasmus say something in public, it is no tragedy. When he calls me a *Schwärmer*,<sup>22</sup> meaning a confused and errant man who does not conform to our faith, it does not concern me. My conscience absolves me, whatever other people want to say. My conscience comes first and knows what will serve the honour of God, who thus will reveal my innocence. I shall be patient until then. And in truth, the reproaches will soon cease. I know that my gentleness has harmed the opponent more than the unreasonable wrath of some people.

Finally, I ask you to ensure that no one publicly complain about such passages; rather, let everyone first learn to understand the matter, and fur-

20 See below, Ep. 560a. For Myconius' reaction to the passage from Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* quoted at the beginning of this letter, see Ep. 597 headnote.

21 According to Millet, this is a reference to Luther's *In epistolam ad Galatas* (Wittenberg, 1535); Luther's letter to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen from 1536 is no longer extant (see below, Epp. 613; 616, note 13; and 619).

22 See above, Ep. 477, note 1.

thermore, pass judgment only as far as he has been directed to do so and may be advisable. For any foreigners, who look to Oecolampadius or to us, will think better of us and will not think that we have no understanding of the sacramental words. And if we wanted to go against the flow, it would give weight to our opponents and provide an opportunity for people to fall back on the external sacraments, to seek salvation in their own works and in the church, whereas these things do not last. If salvation is to be found, it will grow out of faithful hearts and thus prove that they stem from a good root. Thus be commended to the Lord.

Yours willingly, Wolfgang Capito.

Dear sir, please write to me if it seems advisable to you. I shall indicate my opinion truthfully, as it stands, but in the end may God's will be done. Also, keep this letter, and if I need it as well, I may find it at your place and save myself the work [of making a copy], for I have similar [letters to write] every day.

#### Letter 560

This letter is now Ep. 616a.

#### Letter 560a: [Before 15 July 1535, Strasbourg], Capito to Oswald Myconius

The letter is no longer extant, but a portion of it is cited by Myconius in a letter to Bullinger, dated 15 July 1535. Printed in HBBW 5, Ep. 617, ll. 1–8.

Greetings. A few days ago I wrote to Capito that I despair of concord with Luther.<sup>1</sup> The answer he gave me was so puerile in my opinion that I showed the letter to [Simon] Grynaeus and asked him to read it, in case I had misunderstood Capito's words. But Grynaeus was of the same opinion as I. I shall cite only one passage: 'You say, Luther asserts the corporeal presence. So what? Is divinity not also vested in Christ in a corporeal manner?<sup>2</sup> Thus corporeality is not always a mathematical quality. It is sometimes found to be heavenly and divine.' You see what he is saying? As if Luther agreed with Capito and did not rather interpret 'corporeally' as 'in essence' and 'in reality.'

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1 Neither Myconius' letter nor Capito's response is extant.

2 Col. 2:9.

**Letter 561: 30 July 1535, Strasbourg, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

Printed in Schiess 1:730, Ep. 623.

Greetings. Once again, I warn you, most respected brother and sir, to make an effort to convey the *Chronicle* to us in a timely manner.<sup>1</sup> You will get ample information from Bucer's letter<sup>2</sup> about the state of the underground churches the Lord has in France, and what hopes good men may have of the king.<sup>3</sup> For Philip and Hedio have both been honoured with a summons to a meeting of the kings.<sup>4</sup> Yet we would have preferred Bucer to accompany them on the journey.<sup>5</sup> The king is very clever, and he has men in his court who are great

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- 1 Johannes Trithemius' *Chronicon insigne monasterii Hirsauensis* ... was not published until 1559 in Basel. It is a universal chronicle to 1370, based on factual as well as fictitious sources. Capito, however, seems to have been reluctant to have the book published by his relative, Wolfgang Köpfel, since he had earlier sustained heavy losses. On 7 March 1535, Martin Frecht wrote to Blaurer, mentioning that he and Bucer had discussed the printing of the chronicle, but felt that Köpfel was busy enough printing other works already (Schiess 1, Ep. 549). On 19 March, however, Frecht again wrote to Blaurer, informing him that Bucer supported the printing in Strasbourg because Capito was in debt for around 2,000 gulden, and could only be saved if Köpfel printed books like the *Chronicle*, which would sell well (see below, Ep. 613 headnote). He asked Blaurer to arbitrate (Schiess 1, Ep. 557). Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516) first learned Greek and Hebrew in Heidelberg. In 1482, he entered the Benedictine abbey of Sponheim, near Kreuznach in the Palatinate. The following year he was elected abbot. As abbot, he sought to reform discipline among the monks, placing greater emphasis on studies, but he faced stiff opposition. In 1506, he resigned the abbacy and on 12 October was elected abbot of the Benedictine abbey of St Jacob in Würzburg. Trithemius wrote several reference works, including two books on stenography. The *Chronicon* was his major historical work.
- 2 This is a reference to Bucer's letter to Blaurer, dated 7 July 1535 (Schiess 1, Ep. 605).
- 3 I.e., Francis I (1494–1547), king of France (1515–47).
- 4 For Philip Melanchthon, CWC 1, Ep. 30, note 7; for Caspar Hedio, see CWC 1, Ep. 47 headnote; and for Hedio and Melanchthon's participation in a planned meeting of Charles V and Francis I, see above, Ep. 554 headnote. At the beginning of October 1535, Bucer wrote to Thomas and Margaret Blaurer that the Elector Johann Friedrich refused Melanchthon permission to attend the meeting, a regrettable move if it was intended as a slight to the French king (Schiess 1, Ep. 640). Duke Georg of Württemberg wrote to Ambrosius Blaurer on 6 October 1535, likewise expressing regret that Melanchthon was prevented from attending the meeting (Schiess 1, Ep. 643).
- 5 Cf. Ep. 578, note 8.

admirers of Germany; but the enemies will not fail to tempt the minds of each person in his retinue. It seems that we must have a man who has a most acute mind and is also experienced. In my opinion, my friend Bucer is the most suitable man in those areas, and for many reasons. But the Lord willed it otherwise. Perhaps we shall fare like Paul in Asia, in Mysia, Bithynia, etc.<sup>6</sup> We are prevented by the Spirit, when he does not supply the opportunity to those who are desirous, and indeed takes away the opportunity that is offered. For Bucer was called upon in an earlier letter on the initiative of very powerful nobles in the court. Pray to the Lord with the faithful that he may effect everything through us for his glory. Give my sincere greetings to Paulus Phrygio.<sup>7</sup> Strasbourg, 30 July 1535.

Yours, Wolfgang Capito.

Please see to it that the enclosed is forwarded to Veit Hugsberger.<sup>8</sup>

### Letter 562: 5 August 1535, Geneva, Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret to the Evangelicals of German Switzerland and Germany

The following is an open letter from Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret in which they report on the state of the violent persecution suffered by the evangelicals in France in the wake of the *Affaire des Placards* of October 1534, when inflammatory evangelical placards were posted in various locations in Paris, including on the door to the bedchamber of Francis I.

Printed in Herminjard 3:327–32, no. 521. For Farel, see CWC 2, Ep. 347 headnote; for Viret, see above, Ep. 534, note 23.

Greetings. Grace and peace! We have heard, not without deep sadness, of the afflictions, loss of possessions, exile, imprisonment, exceptional torture, and unheard-of punishment by which our pious brothers are suppressed, overwhelmed, and torn apart everywhere in France. But nothing grieved us more than the cruelty against the brothers who live in that part of France which is commonly called Provence.<sup>1</sup> We cannot hear or speak without tears of their severe persecution.

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6 Acts. 16:6–8.

7 For Paulus Phrygio, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote.

8 I have found no biographical information on Veit Hugsberger.

1 The persecution began in Provence in 1528. At the beginning of 1533, Guillaume Serre and six other Waldensians were condemned to be burned at the stake. In 1534, the bishops of Cisteron, Apt and Cavaillon, and other cities, searched for Waldensians. In March 1535, thirteen of them were handed over to the civil authorities and executed on 5 April.

The population is large, but very simple-hearted and pertinacious in their pursuit of the true Christian religion, yet they were infamous until now for many reasons – because they did not wish to confess the purer sort of Christianity and rather clung to the execrable rites of the papists and to their traditional and superstitious ways. The region was always open to the wrongdoings of the impious and to papal tyranny, so much so that it often fell victim to the enemies of the truth and became subject to various punishments. But although the Antichrist attempted to weaken their faith by every means, and forced them sometimes to simulate a great deal, he was nevertheless unable to suppress the vestiges of the old religion in these simple people. The simplicity of Christ shone forth in them, as did the modesty and charity taught so often by Christ.

They are commonly called Waldensians.<sup>2</sup> We have no doubt that a report of them has reached your ears. They have always been most intent on agriculture, and have made a living for themselves and their families with manual labour and the simplest of skills, yet they suffered daily afflictions, so that they could hardly draw breath. The furor of the enemies abated for a while, and the persecution ceased, until the name of Luther became known to the world.<sup>3</sup> As soon as Antichrist noticed that he was being attacked in some quarter and people were emerging everywhere who professed the gospel and threatened his kingdom with ruin, the fight was resumed. He tried to expel all the pious people together with the others who wished to be known by the notorious title of Lutherans, and wanted to destroy those good men completely. The whole weight of the war fell on them. For when the blood-thirsty enemy could not kill them all off, he sated his furor and, like a rapacious wolf in the middle of an innocent flock, gave vent to every passion, and raged among the sheep of Christ.

For some years now the Waldensians have been exposed to the licence of the impious, and could find no refuge wherever they turned. When it became known that there were some rather wealthy people among them, they became rich fodder for the pope's rapacity and bottomless avarice. As long

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- 2 The Waldensians were the followers of Peter Waldo, a twelfth-century reformer from the south of France. They were one of the many reform movements in late medieval Catholicism, and advocated a return to the vows of poverty and the preaching of the gospel. Their movement was declared heretical, and its followers suffered persecution. In the sixteenth century, they merged with the Calvinists.
- 3 According to Herminjard, the Waldensians of Provence had found a protector in Louis XII (r. 1498–1515). The cardinals and bishops tried in vain to accuse them before the king, who, after having been informed about their religion and customs, held them in the greatest esteem.

as these good men had anything to throw into the gaping jaws of the rabid dogs, they were treated with a little more clemency. But now that the insatiable tyrants have gone home, loaded with booty taken from those wretched men, and when they realized that there was hardly anything left, they began to rage, not only against the faculties,<sup>4</sup> but against many thousand people, and no longer under the pretext of exacting legal justice; rather, they invaded some counties with an army – a gang of criminals willing to slay whomever they encountered.<sup>5</sup> They burned down some houses, and raided everything else, so that nothing was left, and if by chance some timid woman came their way, they prepared to violate her. The men had thought it best to run from the coming furor. I shall not speak of the slander that overwhelms them now, and the torture used to force the unwilling to confess what had never occurred to them. The situation was such that inquisitors of faith were not lacking, who tortured the limbs of the pious and threatened them with death, unless they denied that Christ was born of a virgin.<sup>6</sup> They did this to support their own avarice and to burden the Waldensians with greater unpopularity and infamy among the ignorant multitude. And in this manner they continued examining them over the next years.

Now, however, the Waldensians are under even greater pressure, for the enemy keeps at them, threatening everyone with the most cruel measures. They no longer dare to live in their shacks or gather sufficient grain to feed their families. They wander through the pathless wilderness with their wives and children, or hide in remote caves, feeling safer living with wild beasts than with men of that kind. The scarcity of all things increases their misery, for the enemy reaps what they have sown. Wherever they turn, they find themselves in such straits that they cannot see even the smallest chink through which they might escape. They can neither remain in the place, nor leave safely, for the enemy has set traps for them everywhere. The wretched people have no plan and no assistance. They merely relate their misery to us through frequent messengers – those that manage to escape the hands of the enemy – and they beseech us to help them in their misery and in their manifold danger, if there is any way, at least through prayers and counsel.<sup>7</sup>

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4 The point of reference is unclear.

5 The events described here took place either on 19 June or 19 July 1535 (see Herminjard 3, p. 329, note 5).

6 This is an allusion to the Dominican Jean de Roma, an inquisitor in Provence.

7 Cf. the unpublished joint statement from the cities of Zurich, Bern, Basel, and Strasbourg to Francis I, dated 28 December 1535, entitled 'Instructio Tigurinae, Bernensis, Basiliensis et Argentinensis reipublicarum, etc., ad Franciscum regem Gallorum pro adflictis Christianis, qui persecutionem patiuntur in Provin-

We try to help them as far as we can, and if we have no means to help them, we commend them to the church with prayers, and attempt to console the afflicted, as far as is in our power. We do nothing more than to grieve with our brothers and members in Christ, all the more so the less we can help them. We have tried every means to find a way to advance the glory of God and look out for our brothers at the same time. But we are so completely without counsel and means of assistance that we cannot look out for them or for us, except that we decided to send this pious brother<sup>8</sup> to you, who knows everything exactly and was there for the greatest part. You will hear from him everything that happened to them. At the same time you may counsel him what you think should be done by us. For he has preached Christ purely and is not unaware of the tragedies stirred up by the impious, for he was many times in imminent danger of death, had not the Lord wanted him safe as a man whom the church still needed. He will tell you in good faith what he saw and heard himself, and what our advice is. For we can hardly describe in writing the incredible tyranny, with which that people is continually burdened.

We have supplied what we can, and we hope that you will not deny them your help in future, if you can help them materially or with counsel. We have no doubt that you will prove yourselves Christians. All of us who are of one faith, share in one cause, and are linked by the same ties of the Spirit and of charity. We are all tied to Christ. Consider what is useful and what is conducive to the glory of Christ and the need of our brothers. The people have been weakened and are suffering the greatest poverty. They cannot demand peace from the tyrants and they have no safe way to pass through the midst of the enemy, for they are encumbered with wives and children, and they lack both money and refuge.

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cia. Item pro Waldensibus' [Statement of the cities of Zurich, Bern, Basel and Strasbourg, etc., to Francis, king of France, for the afflicted Christians, who are suffering persecution in Provence. Likewise for the Waldensians]. There are multiple versions of this *Instructio* in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 42, no. 13a-d.

- 8 According to Herminjard, this might be Antoine Saunier, an evangelical preacher to the Waldensians. He studied at the Collège de Reims in Paris. On 26 February 1530, he was imprisoned in Paris for more than fourteen months because of his evangelical beliefs. In 1532, he was a minister in Payerne (Canton Vaud). From 12–24 September 1532, he participated at the Waldensian synod at Chanforan. In September 1535, he was imprisoned at Pignerol for six months. On 21 May 1536, he became rector of the Collège de Rive, near Geneva. On 14 February 1537, he became a citizen of Geneva, but was expelled from the city in December 1538. Thereafter he worked as a minister in Perroy (Canton Vaud).

In such a wretched situation we must try even extreme means, and following Abraham's example, hope against hope.<sup>9</sup> We therefore thought it worthwhile to see whether a pious prince would give them a fallow area to cultivate, for the people are experienced in agriculture. They are used to hard labour, and in this fashion one might help a wretched people and in turn render some advantage to the neighbours. Otherwise, if the audacity and the boundless furor of the enemies do not abate and allow them to live safely in their houses and enjoy their possessions, there is nothing left for them but to take to the road and walk wherever the Lord directs them. Indeed it is better to die right away than to live in harsh servitude and be forced into idolatry and superstition, or to be slaughtered and torn to pieces by continual persecutions. The enemy spares no effort to destroy their piety. Now there is no hope. The order for decamping has been given, unless the Lord suddenly and beyond all hope frees his people from tyranny and snatches them from the maws of the enemies.

Furthermore, we beseech all of you who are candidates of piety and professors of purer Christianity to remember your brothers, put yourselves in their shoes, and each as best as he can, either by counsel or materially, or at least through prayers, help your brothers who are locked in battle with a most terrible enemy. This pious brother comes to you with grace. Receive him, we beg you, as a faithful minister of the Word, tried and found true in many afflictions. When you have decided what you think is best, do not begrudge us the favour of informing us. Farewell. Geneva, 4 August 1535.

Your brothers, Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret.

No one can put in words, dearest brothers, the great calamity of the pious. We therefore beseech you in the name of Christ to do what you or others can do and take heed of the pious.<sup>10</sup>

Yours, Farel.

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9 Cf. Rom. 4:18.

10 As of 30 July 1535, Farel and Viret knew that Francis I was going to publish an edict of amnesty in favour of the evangelicals of his Estates (see Herminjard 3, Ep. 518, notes 15 and 32). One can infer from Farel's comment in this letter and from another to Guillaume du Bellay (Herminjard 3, Ep. 530), that he and Viret did not trust the promises the king made in the edict of Coucy of 16 July 1535, which offered amnesty to all evangelical exiles from France except for 'sacramentarians,' provided that they abjure their errors within six months (see Jonathan A. Reid, *King's Sister – Queen of Dissent: Marguerite de Navarre (1492–1549) and Her Evangelical Network* [Brill, 2009], vol. 1, 25).

**Letter 563: 12 August 1535, Basel, Nikolaus Episcopus to Capito**

For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 557 headnote. The letter is printed in AK 4:362 (quoted in full in the headnote to Ep. 1960). The author, Nikolaus Episcopus (Bischoff, 1501–1564), was born in Rittershoffen, Alsace. He matriculated at the university of Basel in the spring term of 1518. In 1520, he became a Basel citizen and worked for the Froben press. He travelled to Chur with Hieronymus Froben, where both obtained MA degrees from the papal legate, Antonio Pucci. In 1529, he married Justina Froben, the daughter of Johann Froben in whose house, 'zum Sessel,' the couple took up residence. On 16 April 1529, Episcopus became a member of the saffron guild and joined the printing firm as a partner. Thereafter the imprints of their books show his name together with that of Hieronymus Froben. He continued to look after the commercial side of the firm's operations, attending numerous book fairs on behalf of the firm. On 27 November 1537, he had his coat of arms confirmed by Charles V. He held a number of civic offices. In 1524, he was a member of the new matrimonial court; in 1555, he was on the executive of the saffron guild.

[*Summary*]: Episcopus is in the process of printing Erasmus' [*Ecclesiastes sive de ratione concionandi* (Basel: Froben and Episcopus, 1535)]. He is sending the first three books to Capito, asking him to note anything that might give offence and require correction. There is no need to return the pages. Episcopus will send the rest of the book as soon as it is printed. He asks Capito not to share the pages with anyone. He does not want Erasmus to hear about the consultation and take offence. Hieronymus Froben sends his greetings. Capito may reply through the messenger, Heinrich [Billing], the step-son of the Basel mayor, [Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen].

**Letter 564: 19 August 1535, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to Martin Luther**

Printed in WABr 7:234–7, Ep. 2224.

[*Summary*]: The preachers are pleased with Gereon Sailer's message that Luther is willing to collaborate. The confession, which Bucer wrote for the Augsburg ministers, has been signed by the ministers of Constance, Frankfurt, Ulm, Esslingen, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, Landau, Weißenburg, Biberach, and Isny [see above, Ep. 554 headnote]. The Swiss churches are also in agreement, but due to the stubbornness of the people and the objections of individuals, they have not yet signed. The magistrate has asked Capito to go to Basel and Zurich and to the other Swiss churches to overcome their

resistance and bring about concord. Bucer and Sailer will approach Brenz in Stuttgart for the same purpose. It is important to conclude peace among the reformers and show a united front at the upcoming general council. They ask for Luther's prayers. The following points are important to remember: they must keep to the words of the Bible and they must avoid a relapse into papistical ceremonies. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist must be explained in the simple words of the Bible and the Fathers. They will avoid the question whether impious men can spiritually benefit from communion. 'We shall say nothing about what the impious eat.' They will further state that the effectiveness of the Eucharist does not rest on human merit. Some people are uncomfortable with the consensus between the southern cities and the Lutherans because they say it contradicts their earlier teaching. They hope that Luther's demonstrated good will and cooperation will smooth ruffled feathers. Their concord will arm them against Satan.

**Letter 565: 23 [August 1535], Basel, Capito to Guillaume Farel**

Printed in Herminjard 3:335–9, Ep. 523.

Salvation in the Lord, dearest brother. The man who brought your letter to us appears to be a very pious man.<sup>1</sup> He tells a tale of horrendous persecution! He came to us on the night before Bucer was supposed to depart for Swabia and I to the Swiss and the Allgäu.<sup>2</sup> We deliberated after dinner, invoking the Lord with silent prayers. So it was decided to obtain, as soon as pos-

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- 1 Possibly, Antoine Saunier, whom Farel and Viret sent to the Protestants of Germany in order to procure their assistance in favour of the persecuted Waldensians (see above, Ep. 562, note 8).
- 2 This journey of Bucer and Capito took place in the second half of August 1535. The purpose was to win over partisans to a reunion between the Lutherans and Zwinglians. Bucer went to Stuttgart, whereas Capito went to Basel, Zurich, and Constance. Capito was in Zurich from 25–28 August (see below, Epp. 566–8). On 1 September 1535, Johannes Zwick wrote to Vadianus, 'The venerable Capito was here recently ... He addressed the people of Basel and Zurich, worried that someone would, by some unfortunate action, irritate Luther who had been persuaded to look with favour on us. He pleaded with us not to allow the sacramentarian controversy be mixed up with any publication. They promised to comply, as long as they saw that the Lutherans were more placable' (VadBr 5, Ep. 838). On his return to Strasbourg, Capito met up with Ambrosius Blaurer in Tuttlingen (Baden-Württemberg), where the two men discussed the renewed efforts to bring Simon Grynaeus back to Tübingen (Schiess 1, Ep. 632; cf. Schiess 1, Ep. 633).

sible, letters to the king from the Duke of Württemberg and the Landgrave of Hesse on behalf of them<sup>3</sup> as well as letters from Christian cities in Switzerland.<sup>4</sup> Bucer wanted to add letters from the imperial cities, but I do not know whether he will be able to obtain them, for their meeting is at hand.<sup>5</sup> I myself did not think we should attempt it, for the king wants to incite us against the emperor, which, we know, would bring about the greatest ignominy to Christ.<sup>6</sup> We shall not rest until we have obtained something for the brothers. We shall exhort the churches to pray diligently. I have nevertheless advised the brother to make an effort not to undertake anything rash that goes beyond his calling and not to be too confident, and furthermore, faithfully to teach the living Christ to the peasants, that their grave response to the papistical abominations might be constant and flow from their understanding of this teaching.

We are grateful for the information about the disputation,<sup>7</sup> for there has earlier been much uncertain rumour about it. And is Caroli in favour of the mass [as it is described] in the Fathers?<sup>8</sup> I suppose he proffered the explana-

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3 I.e., the Waldensians of Provence.

4 According to Herminjard, the messenger of Farel and Viret must have left Geneva on 4 or 5 August and did not arrive in Basel until 22 August. During this journey, he may have solicited letters from the city councils of Bern, Zurich, St Gallen, and Schaffhausen to Francis I on behalf of the Waldensians. For an instruction from the Swiss cities in that regard, see above, Ep. 562, note 7.

5 Although there is an extant letter from Francis I to the Diet of Esslingen, dated 10 September 1535, in Herminjard's opinion, Capito is referring to the assembly that was held at Schmalkalden from 6–24 December 1535 (see below, Ep. 579). It is unknown whether Bucer obtained letters from the imperial cities in favour of the Waldensians.

6 Francis I had already tried several times to inspire the German Protestants to defy Charles V. This did not prevent the city council of Basel in August 1535 to mandate public prayers for the success of Charles V and his expedition against Tunis.

7 An allusion to the Disputation of Geneva, which took place from 30 May–24 June 1535, after which Pierre Caroli (see below) left the city for Basel.

8 Pierre Caroli (c. 1480–c. 1550) studied at the Collège de Bourgogne (MA, c. 1505) and at the Sorbonne (doctor of theology, 1520). In 1522, he went to his native diocese of Meaux with Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, Guillaume Farel, Michel d'Arande, and others who were attempting an evangelical reform of the diocese. He was censured by the Faculty of Theology in Paris for his heterodox beliefs, but found protection and patronage with Marguerite d'Angoulême. After the *Affaire des Placards*, he fled to Geneva in May 1535. In the fall, he matriculated at Basel, where he studied Hebrew, and in 1536, he became a minister in Neuchâtel. In that same year, he participated in the Disputation of Lausanne,

tions they give concerning the Lord's Supper according to the rite of the old church, or cited those whose use of the word 'mass' for 'Lord's Supper' is not entirely absurd. Is this, then, a new mass? The rites of the Supper may be used for the edification of any church, but does that mean it rests on the act performed (*opus operatum*)? Or on the action of the priest, on application, on satisfaction? You are using cogent reasoning! I agree, and at the same time I pray that we may treat Christ and Christ's business with purity. It is a pious prayer. I do not see that respect for the Fathers stands in our way, unless we put their writings on par with the authority of scripture. Furthermore, my dear Farel, anything that is clear in scripture – either openly affirmed or derived from the analogy of faith – both serve to edify the church of Christ and are full of solid piety. But there is much in the Fathers that is redundant and much that is missing. Yet the leadership of the Spirit shines forth in them somehow, and for his sake their writings are read not without benefit. To defend [one's belief] against the Fathers is not offensive, as long as it is done modestly and on the basis of the Lord's Word. For I cannot emphasize enough the great damage done by disdain for the Fathers, who have earned their repute among posterity, sometimes by assuming the crown of martyrdom. Certain primitive minds can hardly understand that we are closely following the Fathers, yet widely burdened with the suspicion of introducing something new. Pray to the Lord for me and our churches. Bucer sends his most sincere greetings to you and Viret and the church of God there. Viret rises in my opinion daily in proportion to his own belief that he is insignificant.

The church in Augsburg has sent a delegate<sup>9</sup> to Luther, who has convinced some citizens through his letters that he would rather collaborate

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where he accused Pierre Viret, Guillaume Farel, and John Calvin of heresy. Cited in 1537 to appear before the city council of Bern to answer charges of heresy, Caroli took refuge in Solothurn with the French ambassador. From there he went to Montbéliard and then to Lyon, where he returned to the Catholic faith. In July 1539, however, he participated in a conference with the ministers of Neuchâtel at Bonneville and requested pardon from them for abandoning his evangelical faith. The following year, though, he was in Metz, had relapsed into Catholicism, and engaged in polemics with the reformers.

<sup>9</sup> In fact, the city of Augsburg sent two delegates to Luther on 21 June 1535: Ge-reon Sailer (see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote) and Caspar Huberinus (1500–1553), Luther's go-between in Augsburg for the city's inclusion in the Schmalkaldic League. Sailer and Huberinus were sent to assure Luther of the city's desire for concord, and willingness to bring their teaching in conformity with his. They also wanted to secure Luther's assistance in gaining Urbanus Rhegius as a preacher. On 2 July, Sailer presented to Luther the Ten Articles on the Lord's

with the papists than with our church. The Augsburg emissary told Luther of their faith and explained what the magistrates had done and at what time, etc. Luther replied most amiably by letter that he no longer had any suspicions of us. We could ask nothing of him that he would not gladly do for the sake of concord. 'For once that concord is signed,' he said, 'I shall rejoice, shed tears, and sing with joy: Now you dismiss your servant in peace, etc.'<sup>10</sup> He seems to be intent to firm up peace among the churches. Furthermore, to ensure that the common ministers are equipped for the expected council,<sup>11</sup> he promises his help and is planning a meeting.<sup>12</sup> Farewell and pray for me to the Lord. 23 [August], Basel.

Wolfgang Capito.

### Letter 566: 24 August 1535, Basel, Capito to Joachim Vadianus

Printed in VadBr 5:244, Ep. 835. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito feared an attack, but their enemy, the Elector Joachim [of Brandenburg], has died; his son [Joachim II] is a pious man. Johann Friedrich of Saxony, who had been lured by the promises of King Ferdinand, is once more favouring the reformers. Most importantly, Luther has accepted the confession written by Bucer [see above, Ep. 554 headnote, and below, Ep. 603, note 20]. He has confirmed this in public letters to Augsburg [see

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Supper signed by the Augsburg preachers (see above, Ep. 554 headnote) as well as the chapter on the Lord's Supper from Bucer's *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534). This was meant as a gesture of good will and aimed at improving relations. Luther was pleased with the prospect of a speedy concord (see Brecht 3:46–47). It was Capito, during his stay in Zurich (see above, note 2) who informed Bullinger of the success of Sailer's trip (HBBW 5, Ep. 636, note 4, and Ep. 637, note 2). On 10 September 1535, Bullinger wrote to Vadianus that Capito had asked Bullinger and the Zurich reformers not to publish anything against Luther, especially after having expressed his willingness to work toward a concord when Sailer visited him in July (HBBW 5, Ep. 646).

- 10 A direct quotation from Luther's letter to the preachers of Augsburg, dated 20 July 1535 (WABr 7, Ep. 2212). Cf. Luke 2:29.
- 11 In his consistory of 16 January 1535, Pope Paul III formally decided to convene a council (see below, Ep. 566).
- 12 A reference to the planned meeting of the reformers from Saxony and Upper Germany. It eventually took place in May 1536 in Eisenach, where the Wittenberg Concord was formulated (see below, Ep. 594).

preceding letter]. Philip [Melanchthon], [Justus] Jonas, and [Nikolaus von] Amsdorf promise a favourable outcome. There will soon be a meeting of the reformers. The pope is planning a general council, which they will gladly attend [see Ep. 619 and Millet, Ep. 644a]. Concord will ensue. Bucer sends greetings.

**Letter 567: [End of August 1535, Basel], Capito to Boniface Amerbach**

Printed in AK 4:371–2, Ep. 1973. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito arrived in Basel the previous day and would like to arrange a visit with Erasmus [see below, Epp. 573 and 575]. If he declines, Capito will take no umbrage.

**Letter 568: 29 August 1535, Constance, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 5:334–5, Ep. 635. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Konrad Zwick believes that the Swiss should send a representative from Basel to [Ulrich von Württemberg] to cultivate his friendship and counteract the influence of [Erhard] Schnepf. The latter is about to publish a new church ordinance that may burden the churches with many ceremonies. Capito sends greetings to [Ulrich] Kambli, Johannes Haab, [Hans] Edlibach, and [Rudolf Lavater].

**Letter 569: [After 30 August 1535], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

This letter has been redated. It is now Ep. 577a.

**Letter 570: 3 September 1535, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Brenz**

Printed in Th. Pressel, ed., *Anecdota Brentiana. Ungedruckte Briefe und Bedenken von Johannes Brenz* (Tübingen, 1868): 154–5, no. 54. For Brenz, see CWC 2, Ep. 259 headnote.

Greetings. My hope for a settlement of the strife in the church is growing daily. It was hateful suspicion that held our two parties back. Nor do I see how our parties can remain suspicious in the future. It is true that I find much to be desired in certain churches of cities in the south. That will be gently corrected through Christ, with the help of the prayers of the pious and the assistance of our own efforts. So far we ourselves have obstructed

the course, whereas we should have been of mutual assistance. Those common people, who had no other goal than to supply material to quarrel over the sacrament, should have been restrained. Thus it will come to pass that your writings will be read with greater trust. They will embrace your good will and advice, and they will respect your authority when you make a recommendation, whereas now they recoil from them because they hear that it goes against what they can accept in their conscience. Add to this that Satan is intent on dividing us through that fatal quarrel, to prevent the Word of the Lord from being spread to other nations through our ministry. People who are of a more liberal mind and more acute judgment understand that our differences are more in the approach than in actual fact. Good God, I have personally heard what they think of you in Zurich, the praise they lavish on your writings. Yet they complain about the zeal of your people, who rave against them and abuse them from the sacred pulpit. I expressed my approval for their praise and countered their complaints, saying that empty rumours are often being spread, and furthermore, that you could not be held responsible for such empty nonsense. Rather, we know that you are most desirous of peace and have publicly and gravely attested to it in Augsburg, saying that you would redeem with your blood and life the concord we have achieved. For that is what Bucer heard you say, and Sturm, I believe, as you departed from us.<sup>1</sup> Time will heal the wounds our two parties have received. I do not think that Luther should ponder the cause of our prolonged quarrel or who committed the graver error. He has commended everything to his Christ, and we shall adopt the same attitude. Certainly I believe there is good reason for my silence, for I have said nothing and written nothing. And if they divided us with unjust calumnies, orally and in writing, the reason was that they were angry, although their anger had been aroused by rash and false judges. Now that you, the leaders, have returned peace to the churches, perhaps I myself will be inspired to add my public contribution, as far as I can, given my shortcomings. I shall certainly make every effort, under the auspices of Christ, to see the churches quietly progressing in Christ, so that there will be less room for those who seem to treat their ministry without suitable consideration for its dignity. Reconciliation of minds is the work of the mediator. For I know that the well-prepared books of our commander (for that is what I wish to call our Luther) have been ousted from many countries in this fatal disagreement. With your permission and under the aus-

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1 In August and September 1535, Johannes Brenz was in Stuttgart, preparing a church ordinance for the duchy of Württemberg (see HBBW 5, Ep. 635, note 6). It is quite possible that he visited Strasbourg during that period.

pices of Christ our King, we shall see them return to their old and deserted realm. For you will see, my dear sir, that the Swiss and French churches will receive the *Postilla*, that excellent book.<sup>2</sup> We shall publish it in German for our churches here in the south, for I hear that Luther has revised that divine work with due diligence, and we are awaiting it.<sup>3</sup> I only ask that there be no harsh words against his most obedient children. I know with certainty that Christ has many true Israelites everywhere, and many sincere hearts hidden away, whom we have gravely hurt through our disagreement. Posterity and Christ himself will give the palm<sup>4</sup> to him who wins a victory through patience and who corrects what is evil in a way that distinguishes between children and enemies. For what a great mass of vices remains to be removed on each side, dear sir. This makes it difficult to say which side has erred more gravely, excepting you, our leaders, to whom we are rightly in the habit of showing deference. Farewell in the Lord and let me assure you that these raw thoughts have flown from a sincere heart. Strasbourg, 3 September 1535.

Yours, Capito.

#### Letter 571: 12 September 1535, [Strasbourg], Capito to Simon Grynaeus

The following two letters concern renewed efforts to summon Grynaeus from Basel to the University of Tübingen, where he had taught for seven months at the beginning of the year (see above, Epp. 532 and 538 headnotes), until he was ordered by the city council of Basel to return. They sent Paulus Phrygio in his stead (see above, Ep. 538 and PC 2:276, no. 307). Bucer, Jakob Bedrot, and Capito each wrote letters to the city council of Basel in an attempt to convince them

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- 2 This is likely a reference to the *Enarrationes seu postillae Martini Lutheri in lectiones, quae ex evangelicis historiis, apostolorum scriptis, aliisque Sacrae Scripturae literis desumptae, per universum annum, tam in diebus dominicis quam divorum memoriae sacris, super missam faciendum, recitantur, fidelius atque diligentius quam ante hac recognitae et excusae* (Strasbourg: Georg Ulricher, March 1535), a new edition of the earlier *Enarrationes epistolarum et evangeliorum, quas postillas vocant Domini Martini Lutheri* (Wittenberg: Johann Rhau-Grunenberg, 1521). In 1539, Luther, however, declined to write a new preface to another Latin edition of his postils in Strasbourg. He claimed that he was no longer accustomed to writing in Latin since the majority of his works were now predominately in German (see Brecht 3, p. 251, who references WABr 8:596, Ep. 3394/LW 50:189).
- 3 The Strasbourg printer Wolfgang Köpfel produced at least four editions of the German *Postilla* in three parts over the course of the years 1527 to 1544 (see VD-16, L5592–L5604 and WA 10/1/2:xxx–xxxiv; cf. Brecht 3, p. 251).
- 4 Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.3.4.

to grant Grynaeus another temporary leave of absence – for example, Capito’s letter to the city council of Basel (Ep. 574, cf. HBBW 5, Ep. 643). Capito even made a special trip to Basel to advance this cause, arriving there on 31 October (see below, Ep. 578; Schiess 1, Ep. 650; and HBBW 5, Ep. 673). While in Basel, he wrote a letter to Ambrosius Blaurer, in which he reported that he had been unsuccessful in his endeavours (see below, Ep. 580). He then wrote a report to the city council, recommending that Grynaeus replace the ailing Oswald Myconius as the city’s professor of theology (see below, Ep. 581). Capito returned to Strasbourg on 8 November (see HBBW 5, Ep. 673, note 2, and below, Ep. 582).

A copy of this letter is in Zurich ZB, ms. S 39, no. 59.

Greetings. Give Blaurer’s frank words a frank interpretation.<sup>1</sup> For what does he seek if not the glory of God and respect for both in the eyes of the duke?<sup>2</sup> Therefore judge the case, taking into consideration their chagrin, who gave a wrong interpretation to your humane explanation, for you agreed to return on the condition that the council grant its approval. I quite believe that, but it is likely that they interpreted your words according to what they wished them to mean. Being present, you will easily replace Bucer,<sup>3</sup> but only after the departure of Brenz who is very prominent in that court of theologians.<sup>4</sup> The XIII will diligently write the same message to your people.<sup>5</sup> Sturm<sup>6</sup> left

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- 1 Likely a reference to Blaurer’s letter to Grynaeus, dated 6 September 1535: ‘Take care what you are about to do, what reply you will give to God the fairest judge, what you will say to the duke and to us. You have agreed in a straightforward manner to return after a month and a half; now you twist and turn to cheat our expectation. You want to appear dutiful in writing letters and making a list of things to do, but you can write nothing, advise nothing, effect nothing unless you are with us as soon as possible. For even if you continue to write what must be done and how much, are people not free to ignore your advice?’ (Schiess 1, Ep. 632). This may very well have been written in response to Grynaeus’ letter to Blaurer, dated 1 August, in which he wrote, ‘You will hear about my affairs within a few days; for our council will send a delegate to you, and then I shall write at greater length about everything’ (Schiess 1, Ep. 624).
- 2 I.e., Duke Ulrich von Württemberg (see above, Ep. 532 headnote).
- 3 See Blaurer’s letter to Grynaeus, 6 September 1535: ‘You want Bucer to be called! Good God, what inept advice, not to call it anything worse, as there are people who want to obtrude Brenz on us here, as leader of the university and as archbishop’ (Schiess 1, Ep. 632). See also below, Ep. 572, note 5.
- 4 For Johannes Brenz, see CWC 2, Ep. 259 headnote, and above, Ep. 570, note 1.
- 5 This letter is no longer extant.
- 6 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

three days ago, travelling to the duke.<sup>7</sup> He will accomplish what we have tried in vain, namely, to make the duke see that concord will be disrupted at great public danger and danger to himself, and to explain how he can restore peace among his people. Note Blaurer's solid<sup>8</sup> memory: he recalls in his letter to Sturm that I wanted to take your place, suggesting I was too stupid to be able to do it. But he has forgotten that I wanted to do so to serve the church of Basel in your absence, if it were useful, if it seemed necessary to prolong your absence, and if it seemed right to the council to summon me, for the sake of theology and the administration of the church. As for the rest: I know my shortcomings. Farewell and make yourself available to all the churches, your friends, brothers, Christians, and for Christ, and make ready for the journey at once. Farewell, 12 September 1535.

Yours, W. Capito.

### Letter 572: 13 September [1535, Strasbourg], Capito to Simon Grynaeus

There is a copy of this letter in Zurich ZB, m. S 36, 129, and Zurich ZB, ms. A 40, no. 6, p. 13. The following translation is of the latter. For the context, see above, Ep. 571 headnote.

Greetings. This morning, as I am writing this to you, Jacob Sturm<sup>1</sup> will embark on his journey to the duke.<sup>2</sup> He has received a mandate from the council<sup>3</sup>

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7 The exact date of Sturm's departure is unclear, since Capito provides three conflicting dates in three separate letters: here (9 September); Ep. 572 (13 September); and Ep. 574 (14 September).

8 Capito is being sarcastic here.

1 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote. For the date of his departure, see above, Ep. 571, note 7.

2 I.e., Duke Ulrich von Württemberg (see above, Ep. 532 headnote).

3 On 5 September 1535, Bucer wrote to Blaurer: 'Our people, I hope, will send Sturm to the duke to explain to him the general rationale behind the concord' (Schiess 1, Ep. 630). A few days later, he wrote another letter to Blaurer: 'Sturm will go to the duke and do what he can' (Schiess 1, Ep. 633). Then on 18 September, Sturm himself confirmed that he had been sent by the city council of Strasbourg to Duke Ulrich: 'I was sent by the XIII here to my gracious lord, duke Ulrich, with the mandate to promote sacramental concord in His Grace's realm, for several preachers in his duchy were heard to speak in a manner indicating that they wanted to disturb the peace and repress those who had been promoted by Blaurer. This would exacerbate the whole matter and retard the process. But please keep this a secret and to yourself' (PC 2:296, no. 322).

to advise him concerning concord, which will easily be established through his diligence. [Sturm] will urge him to publish an edict forbidding men like Schnepf and Blaurer from attacking each other with abuse.<sup>4</sup> Let them be content with a simple confession and treat each other like friends, as is the duty of Christians. Our friend Sturm has a plan which will instil the whole matter, as far as it concerns the duke, into the minds of the people. We hope that will give Blaurer a chance to recommend Bucer, whom the council is too embarrassed to propose on their own, although they are keen to give their permission at any time, if he is summoned, for they have a great desire to promote concord among the churches.<sup>5</sup> I fear, however, that Blaurer is fond of you and will commend Bucer less enthusiastically. For I know that his mind is set on bringing you to Tübingen. And many people think this is no vain undertaking. They think that you will be lost to the people of Basel if you go to preach in Tübingen, even on loan and for a short time, unless you are very firm and break your bonds and escape after finishing your stint, and if no one forces you against your will – unless we consider a mixture of flattery, command, and prayers ‘force.’ I would not want it to happen, as times are now, that we urge Bucer on them and that you, too, remain in the same place. There is an abundance of professors, whom the common concern for directing the university ties down with stronger commitments. But I am convinced that you would not listen to any prayers and switch from the church of Basel. For you have a splendid post with less trouble and unpopularity than you can expect in such a great realm and at such a large university. The best young men will nevertheless hurry to you in Basel. Indeed Sturm seems to be on the point of promising Bucer to the duke as a permanent lecturer of theology, if there is a persistent demand, nor does Bucer seem to object to it. I however objected, when Sturm gave me this impression, for Bucer is the bishop of our church, a status which we should not rashly change. Sturm will perhaps ascertain that you will be called by the duke, but I would not wish you to make a firm decision about your return until you respond to his summons. And yet I admonished him diligently to consider your interests as well, and not to call you unless he sees that it is absolutely necessary and inevitable. Bucer does not agree with me on everything here. He thinks that you should take up

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4 For Erhard Schnepf, see above, Ep. 530, note 8; for Ambrosius Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 192 headnote. For the theological dispute between Schnepf and Johannes Brenz, both Lutherans, and Ambrosius Blaurer, a Zwinglian-inclined reformer, see above, Ep. 532 headnote.

5 On the possibility of calling Bucer to a post at the University of Tübingen, see above, Ep. 571, note 3.

residence in Tübingen. We are dealing with the rest. I shall diligently pray to the Lord rightly to promote both of us in our zeal for the evangelical cause, lest we continuously and to no purpose obstruct your affairs with our advice. Farewell, 13 September.

W. Capito.

I am more afraid for your Swabian offspring on account of the Italian mind,<sup>6</sup> which I have found to be inconstant, faithless, and malicious in difficult matters, than of all the inconveniences which others fear. If he is called, I hope he will turn his back on the position, since he usually spurns what is generously made available. The duke may use Bucer for a long time, if he so wishes.

**Letter 573: 13 September [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Boniface Amerbach**

Printed in AK 4:374, Ep. 1978. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The Austrian baron [Balthasar II von Kuenring] includes 6 batzen with this letter. The money should be used to pay the messenger. Capito would like to be commended to Erasmus.

**Letter 574: 17 September 1535, Strasbourg, Capito to the City Council of Basel**

The manuscript is in Basel SA, Erziehungsakten Y4 (unnumbered). For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 571 headnote.

Noble, valiant, pious, circumspect, honourable, wise lords. As for my recent negotiations with Your Honours for the purpose of Martin Bucer going to Tübingen and the most learned Simon Grynaeus remaining with you, you have heard from my gracious lord Jakob Meyer,<sup>1</sup> *Altbürgermeister*, and the guild-master Theodor Brand<sup>2</sup> that I have certainly omitted no effort, trou-

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6 I.e., Bartolomeo Fonzio, see above, Ep. 510, note 11.

1 For Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, see above, Ep. 501, note 5.

2 Theodor Brand (or Brant, 1488–c. 1558) was a barber-surgeon, and member of the guild of the Golden Star. He took part in the Battles of Novara (1513), Marignano (1515), and Bicocca (1522). From 1520 until 1532, he was a member of the city council of Basel, on whose behalf he was a representative at Swiss diets. From 1533 to 1544, he served as an official in the guild (*Oberzunftmeister*), then from 1544 until 1558 as mayor (from 1544 to 1548 together with Adelberg Meyer zum Pfeil and from 1549 on with his brother Bernhard Meyer zum Pfeil).

ble, or work. Nevertheless, I did not succeed at this time and have achieved nothing but giving the impression of keeping Grynaeus from Basel. Thus I showed how useful and necessary he was for you, and how advantageous it was not to change his present good position. Yesterday, however, a messenger came to Jacob Sturm<sup>3</sup> and to me with a letter from the duke<sup>4</sup> addressed also to Grynaeus, summoning him on the basis of an undertaking which he is supposed to have given without reservation and which, as I can quite believe, was accepted without reservation. On that account I thought I should write to Your Honours and be of service to you in this matter. May God graciously grant us that it will go well and redound to his honour. Through God's grace and long experience, I know the needs and concerns of your community very well, and especially the affairs of the Basel church, and since I am also closely connected to your church, circumspect, honourable, wise lords, so that its well-being is my principal desire, and since I am willing to do everything in my power to promote it, I am sure that I have Your Honours' trust. Thus I say before God that at this time Tübingen and the duchy of Württemberg have great need of my dear brother Grynaeus, and as far as I have seen personally and know from experience, it is more beneficial to our and your welfare, and indeed to the welfare of all churches, than certain other plans which people may envisage, as the XIII here well know. For that reason they sent me earlier to Your Honours and others,<sup>5</sup> for there was much concern about Württemberg for a number of reasons, and Satan likes to cause trouble at all times, as I recently related in more detail to my lords, the deputies.<sup>6</sup> Thus the XIII made haste to send Jacob Sturm, *Altstettmeister*, to the duke with their instructions. He left here early on Tuesday<sup>7</sup> and will first of all bring to a conclusion the negotiations for concord which we have begun, to make peace in the whole church, and to establish a good administration, etc. Your Honours will likewise manifestly further the peace of the Lord and gladly lend their aid and wish it to be furthered and maintained in your city and in others, as all Christians are bound to do. Thus I and my brothers urgently ask you, for

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3 For Jacob Sturm, see CWC 1, Ep. 48 headnote.

4 Duke Ulrich von Württemberg's letter from 19 August is no longer extant (see PC 2:295, Ep. 295, note 1).

5 For Capito's visit to Switzerland and southern Germany at the end of August, see above, Ep. 565, note 2.

6 In Basel, three senators were appointed as the deputies (*Deputaten*) to oversee the city's schools and university.

7 I.e., 14 September 1535. For the date of Sturm's departure, see above, Ep. 571, note 7; for the purpose of his trip, see above, Ep. 572, note 3.

God's sake and for the benefit of all churches and principally the Christian cities, to give Grynaeus an extension, and say so in a friendly letter to the duke, indicating the reason why you are sending Grynaeus, why you have kept him so far and denied the repeated requests of the duke, but are now willing to permit it, etc. There are enough suitable arguments to establish that Grynaeus will not [permanently] leave Basel under any circumstances, nor could anyone request it in the duke's name, which Your Honours must consider according to their excellent understanding. Thus I commend myself to you, offering you my willing service for the honour of God. May the Almighty give you health and long life in the interest of Christian and peaceful government, and advance you in his grace and the knowledge of Christ. Amen. Given at Strasbourg, 17 September 1535.

Your Honours' willing servant,  
Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 575: 20 September [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Boniface Amerbach**

Printed AK 4:375, Ep. 1980. For Amerbach, see Ep. 542 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito has read Erasmus' *Ecclesiastes* and finds it most stimulating [see above, Ep. 557 headnote]. It breathes the spirit of Christ. He sends greetings to Erasmus and thanks him for the opportunity to see him [see above, Ep. 567]. He hopes that the monarchs will follow Erasmus' advice and restore peace to the world.

**Letter 576: 25 September [1535, Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 5:368–9, Ep. 651. Bullinger received this letter on 30 September and quoted the first few sentences in a letter to Vadianus on 16 October (see HBBW 5, Ep. 662, ll. 19–26). For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: [Christoph] Froschauer will inform Bullinger about the council. [Francis I], the king of France, is undermining the plans of the others. He wishes to align the pope [Paul III] with the German Protestants against the emperor, [Charles V]. Capito thanks Bullinger for his advice [subject unknown]. He sends greetings to the mayor, [Diethelm] Röist, to the guildmasters, to [Hans] Edlibach, as well as to scholars and ministers. Capito has not yet seen Philip [Melanchthon's] new edition of the *Loci communes* [Wittenberg: J. Klug, 1535].

**Letter 577: 5 October 1535, Wittenberg, Martin Luther to the Strasbourg Preachers**

Printed WABr 7:286–7, Ep. 2251.

[*Summary*]: Luther thanks the Strasbourgers for their letter and is confident that concord can be achieved. It remains to settle on a time and place for a meeting [see below, Ep. 594 headnote]. If Luther's presence is desired, the meeting should take place in Hesse or Coburg, since Elector [Johann Friedrich I] will not permit him to leave the realm. Once they let him know their preferred time and place, he will inform the brothers in Saxony, Pomerania, Prussia, and elsewhere and ask them to choose one delegate each. Their messenger returned late because he was attacked by robbers.

**Letter 577a: 18 October [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 5:394–6, Ep. 663. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The situation in France is uncertain because [Francis I] is shifty. [Jean Poncher], a man of high standing, was hanged. Rumours that the evangelicals have made concessions are false; [Philip Melanchthon, Martin Bucer, and Caspar Hedio] have expressed their private opinions in letters to [Guillaume du Bellay]. Capito has not yet read Hedio's letter, and only read Bucer's when he was in Constance. He stresses that their opinions have not been officially endorsed by the churches. He suggests a meeting of the evangelicals in Basel, which would be convenient also for the people of Bern. The emperor [Charles V] is planning a council. He is under the influence of the pope [Paul III], but is more sincerely concerned about religion than the French king. Capito hopes for the best, given the emperor's religious devotion. At the same time he fears that there will be great disagreement at a council; nor can the matter be settled in a short time. And what can be expected of a council that is overshadowed by German and Spanish military might? Capito sends greetings to Leo [Jud], Conradus Pellicanus, Theodor [Bibliander], and Erasmus [Schmid]. He encloses [unspecified] writings of Philip [Melanchthon].

**Letter 577b: [Beginning of November 1535], Strasbourg, Capito, and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Frankfurt**

This is a report (*Gutachten*) in the form of a letter. The original is no longer extant, but there is a copy in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 167, no. 11, ff. 507–15

(printed in BDS 16:155–66, no. 5). It was sent with a separate statement from Bucer, written at the same time (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 167, no. 11, ff. 516–23/printed in BDS 16:167–78, no. 6). For the context, see above, Ep. 551b head-note.

[*Summary*]: As requested, the Strasbourg preachers offer their advice concerning the restoration of papal ceremonies at St Bartholomew's and the threat of the Frankfurt authorities being placed under the imperial ban if they refuse to comply. Their first consideration must be to please God and to suffer for their faith if necessary.

Secondly, they must consider the extent of the demands. Does the Catholic clergy insist on restoring the mass and reverting to their old practices [of simony and concubinage]? This would be counter to the gospel and the Church Fathers as well as to imperial law, *In Novellis* 123 [CICiv 3:593–625], and church law, Dist. 32, c. *Nullus et praetor* [CICan, Decretum Gratiani 1, Dist. 32, c. 5–6], Dist. 81, c. *Si quis*, [CICan, Decretum Gratiani 1, Dist. 81, c. 15], and *De cohabitatione clericorum et mulierum* [CICan, Liber Extra, lib. 3, tit. 2, c. 10]. These passages also threaten with excommunication those who attend church services offered by clerics who are simoniacs and live in concubinage.

Thirdly, the duty and responsibility of the Frankfurt authorities must be considered. They have legislative authority, which is from God even if it has been granted by the emperor. It is the duty of all secular authorities to serve the will of God and to do away with false worship (according to Deuteronomy and the Corpus Iuris Civilis, chapter 1, *De summa trinitate et fide catholica* [CICiv, Cod. Just. 1.1.8.11] and elsewhere). Their God-given authority must be used for good purposes (2 Cor. 10[:8]) and in particular to preserve the faith taught by St Peter (c. *De legibus et constitutionibus principum, Digna vox* [CICiv, Cod. Just. 1.14.4] and c. *Si contra ius et utilitates publicas omnes* [CICiv, Cod. Just. 1.2.6]). Frankfurt would therefore not be in violation of imperial law, if they enforced correct worship. Although the emperor published a number of edicts against the reformers on the initiative of the papists, they have never been fully enforced. Indeed it is the emperor's command 'that no one should wage war against another for the sake of religion.' Thus it is not likely that he would place those who introduced improvements in religion under the ban. After all, imperial decrees are valid only when they are ratified by all the estates, according to the Codex *De legibus et constitutionibus* [CICiv, Cod. Just. 1.14.8]. If the Catholics practise the wrong rites, Frankfurt has an obligation to abolish them (Rom. 13[:4]).

Fourthly, failure to abolish Catholic rites would invite God's wrath, and it is better to suffer at the hands of men than of God.

Philip [Melanchthon] reportedly advised Frankfurt to restore the Catholic rites,<sup>1</sup> but the Strasbourgers believe that the civic authorities have an obligation 'to do away with false teaching and godless ceremonies among their people, just as they are obligated to do away with all public offences, vice, and evil-doings,' even in the face of strong opposition.

'When someone holds an office from the emperor through the agency of a prince, he must not take instruction regarding his office from the prince, when he knows how the emperor wants him to handle the matter.' All authority comes ultimately from God (Deut. 13) and false worship must not be tolerated (Augustine writing to Boniface in *The Correction of the Donatists* [chapter 7]). No authority, whatever its jurisdiction, must 'allow what is not right or exempt anyone anywhere among the creatures from doing right.' St Chrysostom comments on Romans 13: 'Every human being is subject to authority, even if he is a prophet or an apostle – he is still subject to the sword' [*Homiliae in epistolam ad Romanos*, hom. 23 (PG 60.615–16)]. Thus Frankfurt was right to abolish the mass and must stand by that decision, or they will incur the wrath of God.

When Theodosius ordered a Jewish synagogue to be rebuilt, St Ambrose admonished the emperor not to promote false rites [Letter to Emperor Theodosius, Ep. 40:6–7 (PL 16.1103–1104)]. Similarly, Ambrose himself resisted Valentinian, when he favoured the Arians [Ep. 21 (PL 16:1003–1007)]. Furthermore, if the authorities restored the mass in Frankfurt, they would go against the interests of other evangelical estates and set a dangerous precedent. Bremen and Münster are in a different category.<sup>2</sup> 'The bishops assumed too much power in those cities ... although they should be no more than their patrons in furthering true rites.'

The emperor and the estates have acknowledged their need for reform and their right to introduce them, and it is a sign of grace that God has aided not only the cities in the Palatinate, but also individual noblemen in Gemmingen in maintaining the Reformation against powerful resistance. Thus

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1 See above, Ep. 551b headnote.

2 In 1522, the city of Bremen, but not the archbishopric of Bremen, adopted the Reformation against the resistance of the archbishop, Christoph von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1487–1558). In 1541–3, the prince-bishop of Münster (Westphalia), Franz van Waldeck, with the support of Philip of Hesse and Bucer, attempted in vain to introduce the Reformation in his territory. In the case of Bremen, Melanchthon deemed it appropriate not to oppose the restoration of the cathedral's imperial foundation over which the city had no authority, that is, *ius patronatus* (see BDS 16, no. 5, note 64, and MBW T6, Ep. 1658; cf. above, Ep. 551b headnote).

Frankfurt must bear the danger rather than restore Catholic rites. The Strasbourgers pray for the enlightenment of the papists who deny their abuses and call the reformers heretics. Frankfurt must not abet their sacrilege. They hope that the godless actions of the papists will drive people into the arms of Christ.

In conclusion, they urge the Frankfurt authorities not to permit false rites or yield to human power. Faith requires sacrifice. They must serve God rather than the world or risk his wrath.

**Letter 578: 1 November 1535, [Basel], Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

In this letter, Capito explains his final efforts to convince the city council of Basel in person to grant a leave of absence to Simon Grynaeus so that he might teach again at the University of Tübingen (see above, Ep. 571 headnote).

Printed in Schiess 1:753–5, Ep. 653.

Greetings. I have made every effort to act in your interest and that of the church of Christ in Basel, for, as Bucer has written,<sup>1</sup> the XIII asked me to go to [Basel] for that reason, although I left without hope and much against my will. Yesterday,<sup>2</sup> soon after my arrival, I went to the leaders who are called 'heads' here.<sup>3</sup> When I showed them my mandate, they responded that they believed their letter had been given to the duke,<sup>4</sup> such that they were not

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- 1 See Bucer's letter to Blaurer, 28 October [1535], in which he reports that they wish to forestall any decision about Grynaeus until Capito, scheduled to leave for Basel the following day, has consulted with the authorities there and informed those in Stuttgart of the outcome (Schiess 1, Ep. 650).
- 2 For Capito's trip to Basel in the fall of 1535, see above, Ep. 571 headnote.
- 3 Most likely Capito is referring to the *Deputaten*, the three senators who had oversight of Basel's schools and university (see above, Ep. 574, note 6).
- 4 The recall of Grynaeus from the University of Tübingen back to Basel greatly upset Duke Ulrich and the Strasbourg preachers (see above, Ep. 571 headnote). On 12 October, therefore, the city council of Basel sent its secretary, Heinrich Ryhiner, to Strasbourg to explain the Basel position (see Strasbourg AVCU, AA 1813). On 28 October, Ryhiner wrote to Jacob Sturm, who was on his way to Württemberg at the time (see above, Ep. 572, note 3), informing him that he had taken the advice of Strasbourg and written to the duke apologizing for the manner in which the matter of Grynaeus' recall had been handled. At the same time, he asked Sturm to speak in person to the duke and Ambrosius Blaurer to protect Grynaeus from any possible slander or disgrace. The city council of Basel wrote a letter to Sturm much to the same effect on 1 November (see PC 2:277, no. 307, note 1).

at liberty to change anything. I protested strenuously that it did not seem advisable to our people, who had attested to this so many times, to have matters go differently from what had been reported to them: that the report was untrustworthy; that Grynaeus would return; that he had first of all been asked to make good on his promise to the duke, to whom he seems to have given assurances that he would return within five weeks; that this was burdensome to the neighbours, to the churches, to all good people, etc. They answered quietly that the matter had been transacted before the whole council, indeed before the people, and yet, if that was my wish, I could discuss the matter again the next day before the council. I did so, and at such length as I could, and once again they said in a very friendly manner that it could not be done. They were pleased with my speech and with our zeal, for wanting to look after the good of the churches, etc. This is our ruin: we do everything too precipitously. If indeed I had deferred the action a day or two, I really believe I would have achieved what I wanted. But I had been asked to send a messenger to you and our friend Sturm<sup>5</sup> as soon as possible. They gave [me an opportunity to address] the council so soon, that there was no opportunity to summon people on whose judgment many depend – something that should have been done in the first place. Therefore consider, my dear Ambrosius, what you see is the will of the Lord. He teaches us patience in this way. You still occupy first place in the heart of the duke, as you will discover from Sturm. This little cloud will soon pass and make way for great serenity. Even if there is no hope, I have not yet given up. They will suffer their own torment, I know, when they deny such a small request to people who have pleaded for it so many times, and yet I shall demonstrate at some time how even there we were delayed. The council is very good, the men truly pious, but the matter was almost done in public, although, as I said, I might have achieved something, had I been given time. Ah, my brother, see to it lest you give an opening to deceit, and they lay traps for you (for I can guess something of this sort from your letters) in order to look after their own peace and their own benefit. I am sorry that I resisted, interceded, and objected before the matter had run its course. But what can I do? I want one thing; the Lord another. We are certainly wretched if we look at what we suffer and overlook for whom we suffer and what is the end-point of this tragedy. Farewell. 1 November 1535.

W. Capito.

After closing this letter, I shall devote myself to prayers, beseeching the Lord not to allow harm to come from what I have done, even if no benefit comes

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5 I.e., Jacob Sturm.

from it. I have no doubt that it will do no harm, nor shall I leave off until my mind is at peace and I have brought my friends together in a more felicitous manner. For many people find it hard to accept that matters turned out differently from what we had hoped. The Lord lives. Satan will be trampled underfoot.<sup>6</sup> Farewell once again, my dear Blaurer, respected brother in the Lord. After a sharp discussion, they almost persuaded me that the opinion of the council was not against us; the fact is that they believe they could not omit (and indeed that it was not beneficial to omit) sending such a prudently written letter. It was therefore decided to send the letter, because as long as the messenger was in the presence of the duke, it gave pause to many people who asked themselves what Basel was doing. They still had hope that both the duke and you yourself would interpret it in the best sense. If not, they could bear what the duke writes. Then they would be called to counsel once again, that is: they didn't want to say no, and they didn't want to say anything affirmative. Someone also mentioned a missive sent from the council to our Sturm,<sup>7</sup> that he should probe the duke's mind, and him writing back that things would proceed according to the duke's own letter. I have done my best to see this letter or at least a copy, but the scribe was hiding out somewhere. Whatever it is, Sturm will show you the letter. It is my considered opinion that we should leave the matter to the Lord and try to have either Bucer go, or go myself until he is released from his work and from the impending journey to France.<sup>8</sup> If this comes about, we shall faithfully stand by you, nor do I doubt that the Lord will give us an opportunity. I pray to the Lord that he may look upon us wretched people. Farewell again and again.

**Letter 579: 2 November 1535, Basel, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 5:411–14, Ep. 671. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: At the forthcoming meeting at Schmalkalden [from 6–24 December 1535], a theological colloquy is to be arranged. The Strasbourgers have written about this to Luther. Capito welcomes the delay in the printing of Theodor Bibliander's *Apologeticus*. The city council of Frankfurt is hard pressed by the representative of the archbishop of Mainz [to restore St Bartholomew's Church to the Catholics, see above, Ep. 551b]. The Strasbourgers

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6 Cf. Gen. 3:15.

7 See above, Ep. 572, note 3.

8 See above, Ep. 554 headnote, and Ep. 561, notes 4–5.

are against clauses in the proposed contract which would allow the celebration of mass. In view of the planned general council, the emperor [Charles V] has begun to hire mercenaries. He has hopes of defeating the Protestants. It is important that they preserve a common front and refrain from internal strife. Believers must defend the truth with their lives, but they should become martyrs only for articles of faith necessary to salvation. The preachers of Zurich will be praised for their moderation if they change their mind about publishing Bibliander's work. Capito asks Bullinger to be discreet and not cause any ill feelings between Brenz and the Strasbourgers. He sends greetings to Bibliander, [Conradus] Pellicanus, and Erasmus [Schmid].

**Letter 580: 3 November [1535], Basel, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

For the contents of this letter, see above, Ep. 571 headnote. Printed in Schiess 1:756–7, Ep. 656.

Greetings. This was a very unpleasant task.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to everyone's expectation I could not obtain this small matter. Thanks be to God who showed me that there was some use in this journey, for I learned that the men in office are very straightforward and exceptionally pious, zealous in doing their duty. They take a strict view of all vices, patiently accept advice, and oblige those who give them honest advice. 'What?' you say, 'Why has your request been rejected?' 'It was my mistake,' I say. 'I have acted too hastily.' If the Lord had given me one more day to transact the business in private at a slower pace, I would no doubt have obtained what I asked for. Bucer and I were in a rush, and this haste made trouble for us. I do not make excuses for Grynaeus, who was altogether in a position to leave the city if lack of experience had not stood in his way. He is the kind of man I described, before he was last summoned by the duke.<sup>2</sup> That will serve as an excuse, you know, and yet he loves you so much, he can hardly love you more. For some time now men have been present to arbitrate between the duke and Ulm.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps there

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1 I.e., trying to convince the city council of Basel to grant a leave of absence to Grynaeus.

2 For Duke Ulrich von Württemberg, see above, Ep. 532 headnote.

3 On 3 November 1535, Sturm reported to the XIII from Göppingen that he had been meeting with emissaries from Hesse, Württemberg and Ulm to discuss the quarrel between Duke Ulrich and the city of Ulm over competing claims to the town of Heidenheim (see above, Ep. 539, note 7). Philip of Hesse pro-

will be an opportunity to call us. I know you will not neglect such an opportunity as long as it is in the public interest for you to accept living on foreign soil until a suitable successor is found on whom you may put your burden and to whom you may pass the torch. I am beginning to breathe again, for I found it hard to swallow that indignity. I have already vomited four times, and people bear such beatings patiently, although we are at fault if we do not bear common emotions naturally. Farewell, Basel, 3 November.

W. Capito.

**Letter 581: 3 November 1535, Basel, Capito to the City Council of Basel**

The manuscript is in Basel SA, Erziehungsakten X, 1, 4, no. 5. Although listed by Millet, this is a report rather than a letter. The document is entitled *D. Capitos bedencken, der schulen und kilchen halb uff den dritten November, von im angezeigt* (Dr Capito's opinion concerning schools and churches, presented on 3 November).

[*Summary*]: Capito offers the following suggestions for the improvement of schools and churches: Simon Grynaeus should replace [Oswald] Myconius, who is in poor health, as professor of theology [see above, Ep. 571 headnote]. Furthermore, he should be released from lecturing on philosophy. Theology is the most important subject and should be a common denominator for all faculties. Indeed foreign students come to Basel primarily to study theology. [Pierre] Caroli, the Frenchman, might be put in charge of dialectic; and there would be room for another learned philosopher.

In the Latin school of [Ulrich] Hugwald are a number of boys, but only three who are suitable to continue their studies, and perhaps only one capable of proceeding to theology. It is high time to train successors to take over from the present generation of ministers. It would be best to send [Johannes] Oporinus and Thomas Grynaeus to study theology and subsidize them at the rate of 20 or 24 gulden. Hugwald appears to be a pious man and would make a good pastor, but who would take over the school then? One might support

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posed that Duke Ulrich should control Heidenheim and that Ulm be paid around 6,000 gulden to compensate them for their loss. This sum was to be paid jointly by Hesse, Württemberg, Augsburg, and Strasbourg. This proposal was motivated by the thought that the quarrel between Ulm and Württemberg was detrimental to the evangelical cause and thus the neighbouring estates should have a lively interest in reconciling the two parties. It appears that this plan was not executed (see PC 2:302, no. 326, note 2).

young men up to the age of eighteen at the rate of 6 to 12 gulden, for parents will not invest money unless they see a future benefit. Even if young people are supported up to their twentieth year and in the end turn away from theology, it is no loss to the community, for they will be good citizens and serve as suitable scribes, administrators, and magistrates. There are enough physicians and jurists. The magistrates must support theological studies, the basis of all faculties. Capito again urges them to appoint Grynaeus as theology professor.

Even if there should be a surplus of theologians, they are useful in other professions, 'for anyone who can carry a hundred, can carry ten.' The magistrates may use the income from the monasteries and collegiate churches to finance the training of ministers. Capito notes the practice in Strasbourg, where vacant benefices are turned into bursaries.

The church is an assembly of all Christians. Laymen should therefore assist in its administration as church wardens (*Kirchenpfleger*). It is the task of the secular government to keep an eye on the ministers and preachers to ascertain that their life and teaching are respectable. If someone does not live up to expectations, he should be admonished in private. Capito asks that ministers be adequately compensated for their work. This would encourage young people to study theology. Capito furthermore admonishes the council to enforce existing morality laws. He does not advocate undue severity, however.

The position of pastor at St Peter's in Basel is vacant. Capito asks the council to appoint a man who is competent to preach and can offer both discipline and consolation. He mentions Dr Sebastian Meyer, Master Wolfgang [Wissenburg], [Johannes] Gast, and others as candidates, although Meyer may be too old to take on that task [see below, Epp. 596a and 617].

He recommends meetings and collaboration between neighbouring states and praises the duchy of Württemberg. He asks again that Grynaeus be appointed to lecture on scripture.

### **Letter 582: 9 November [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 5:414–15, Ep. 672. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Shortly after Capito's return from Basel [see above, Ep. 571 headnote], the preachers received a letter from Luther, a copy of which is enclosed [see above, Ep. 577]. They have asked Luther to establish a time and place for a meeting, preferably in the spring. He asks Bullinger to support their efforts to reach a concord and furthermore urges him to pay attention to the training of ministers. 'You are supporting six people; sixty would not be sufficient.'

**Letter 583: 9 November 1535, Strasbourg, Capito to Joachim Vadianus**

Printed in VadBr 5:257, Ep. 846. For Vadianus, see CWC 1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito admonishes Vadianus to live up to his responsibilities and ascertain the ministers' qualifications. A pastor must be a man of authority, vigilant and zealous for the well-being of the church. At the same time, Vadianus must make sure that pastors are rewarded with a stipend that allows them to concentrate on their task rather than being obliged to continue doing manual work. He suspects in any case that they devote themselves to manual work out of 'superstition' rather than necessity. He has written to Dominik [Zili] at greater length and asks Vadianus to read the letter. The office of the pastor should occupy a man completely. He apologizes for assuming the role of an advisor. It was Markus Bertschi of Basel who told him about the state of Vadianus' church [in St Gallen].

**Letter 584: 27 November 1535, [Wittenberg], Martin Luther to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

Printed in WABr 7:327–8, Ep. 2274.

[*Summary*]: The Strasbourgers are under the wrong impression if they think Luther wishes to subject the forthcoming meeting to the will of princes and cities. He merely wishes to keep them informed and hopes for their cooperation. He is keen on reaching agreement among the reformers. For health reasons, he would prefer to have the meeting at Easter or later. He will discuss a meeting place with [Johann Friedrich I], duke of Saxony. In the meantime, he will prepare the ground for consensus.

**Letter 585: 19 December [1535], Strasbourg, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

Printed in Schiess 1:764–6, Ep. 665.

Greetings. Bucer is damaging his health with too much work.<sup>1</sup> Today he had a dizzy spell and had to leave the church before completing the Lord's Supper, but I hope he is out of danger now. He wrote yesterday rather urgently (as I see now that I read it over), since the matter is of the greatest importance.

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<sup>1</sup> Bucer mentioned that he was unwell in a letter to Blaurer, also written on 19 December (Schiess 1, Ep. 664).

I do not think the letter should be shown to your own brother.<sup>2</sup> Rather read each point and ponder it privately, my dear Ambrosius, lest we be dangerously 'shipwrecked in the harbour.'<sup>3</sup> First of all, it is abundantly clear from what happened in the past that this is not a case of reintroducing the old ceremonies that have been abolished, nor do we betray Christian liberty by attempting to make peace with the adversaries; rather, we want to be one in the Lord so that we do not impede each other's course. For this purpose we must end the Sacramentarian controversy, which in any case already seems to have died down, unless it is brought back to life by untimely zeal. In that meeting,<sup>4</sup> unless I am completely mistaken, we must make a decision about the core of our teaching: what to guard firmly and what points to concede to the papists and to what extent. And if our worry appears superfluous, it is nevertheless important to agree on these two points: to what extent it is necessary to diverge from the old doctrine and to what extent from the administration of the old church. For no one will be forced to adopt a [specific] ceremony. After we have cooperated for so many years, we shall easily come to a decision if we look to God and are not hatefully divided by passions.

Luther has put away any harmful suspicion of us. We, too, have better hopes concerning him. I have worked diligently in Basel to bring about a discussion concerning the whole matter between us, Constance, and the Swiss churches before we approach Luther. Our friends replied that they had already understood as much from the people in Zurich and Bern. I hope only the best for the people of Bern as long as Berchtold<sup>5</sup> is there. You know best, however, whether Joachim Vadianus can be counted on.<sup>6</sup> The people

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2 For Ambrosius' brother, Thomas Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 6. He was vehemently opposed to Bucer's efforts to mediate between the Lutherans and the Zwinglians in the matter of the Eucharist (see below, Ep. 594 headnote). Around 18 November, Bucer complained to Ambrosius Blaurer that certain people in Constance were agitating against him, and specifically named Thomas Blaurer (Schiess 1, Ep. 661). Toward the end of November, Bucer made a similar comment to Ambrosius, urging him not to accept his brother Thomas' views (Schiess 1, Ep. 662).

3 Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.5.76.

4 See below, note 8.

5 For Berchtold Haller (1492–1536), cathedral canon and reformer in Bern, see CWC 2, Ep. 290, note 71.

6 For Joachim Vadianus, see CWC 1, Ep. 109 headnote. Johannes Zwick wrote to Bullinger on 3 December that some people suspected Vadianus would yield to the Lutherans (see HBBW 5, Ep. 696, l. 81). Bullinger, however, wrote that he hoped that Vadianus would represent St Gallen (HBBW 5, Ep. 703).

of St Gallen depend on him. Perhaps there is no need to despair of Schaffhausen, once the other churches reach a consensus.<sup>7</sup> But I do not see how we can decline a colloquy in these times of unrest.<sup>8</sup> Let us pray that we shall be heard. As for the remainder, may it rest with Christ to effect everything according to his will. It is absolutely necessary for you to be at the side of Johannes Zwick.<sup>9</sup> You will relate the whole truth to your people with him as witness. In the teachings about the Eucharist and in the universal doctrine, I do not discern any notable difference, for we all preach Christ as the justifier and perfecter. In the ministry, some people seem to designate what is below the dignity of the Spirit, which we may be able tacitly to correct and without notifying the whole church. Even if our plan completely displeases them, it

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7 I.e., an agreement on the Lord's Supper.

8 Capito had earlier expressed his desire for a colloquy in Basel (see above, Ep. 577a). Bucer, too, expressed a similar desire for a colloquy in his letter to Blaurer (Schiess 1, Ep. 664), as did Berchtold Haller in a letter to Bullinger (HBBW 5, Ep. 705, note 11). Bucer confirmed that Johannes Zwick was going to discuss such a meeting with the Zurich preachers (Schiess 1, Ep. 662). Already on 1 December, Leo Jud, Conradus Pellicanus, Theodor Bibliander, Oswald Myconius, and Simon Grynaeus had met in Aarau to discuss a possible agreement over the Lord's Supper with the Lutherans (see HBBW 5, Ep. 690, note 3). At the meeting in Aarau, the representatives composed a statement on the Lord's Supper, which was, however, rejected by the theologians of Bern. Another meeting took place in Basel, 31 January–4 February 1536, with delegates from Zurich (Bullinger and Leo Jud), Bern (Caspar Megander), Basel (Oswald Myconius and Simon Grynaeus), Schaffhausen (Erasmus Ritter and Benedikt Burgauer), St Gallen (Johann Valentin Furtmüller), and Mulhouse (Augustin Gemusaeus). Constance had objected to any more colloquies and did not send a representative (see below, Ep. 588, note 4). Capito and Bucer arrived on 1 February, when the delegates were already busy drafting a confession of faith (see below, Ep. 594 and Schiess 1, Ep. 677). They had considerable influence in the framing of the twenty-eight articles, especially with the article on the Lord's Supper, suggesting that the terms in the article on the Lord's Supper should be replaced by others less offensive to Luther. The conference in Basel ultimately produced the First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession. The Confession was first published in Latin and was subscribed to by all the lay and clerical delegates on 4 February 1536. Leo Jud prepared a German translation, which is considerably fuller, but of equal authority with the Latin. It is divided into twenty-seven articles, omitting a separate article on faith. For a modern edition, see *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche*, ed. E.F.K. Müller (Leipzig, 1903; repr. Waltrip, 1999), vol. 1, 101–9, and *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, ed. Philip Schaff and revised by David S. Schaff (New York, 1931; repr. Grand Rapids, 1983), vol. 3, 211–31.

9 For Johannes Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1.

would certainly seem beneficial at least to discuss it with the adversaries in public. You, together with Johannes Zwick and one or two councillors, must be present at the meeting we hope to have with the Lutherans, for you have been in the public eye of the churches for so many years – how can we possibly excuse your absence? Indeed (I know you hate this), they would easily regard you as the head of the new party in the world.

The issue your brother Thomas raises is not at all impious, nor taken up for inane reasons; for what is in the interest of you all should not be carried out by one or two men, but rather with the knowledge of all. Indeed, he defends Philip<sup>10</sup> and Bucer for exposing advice meant for one person and to be kept private, and exposing it in such a manner that, with sufficient explanation, it would give no great offence to anyone who has knowledge of Christ. Furthermore, if an offence was committed in this matter, this case will serve as a warning to many to move cautiously and on tiptoe among such bogs and thickets and not to transact a public matter through private counsel. We can safely assume that the papists will make no concessions to promote a firm agreement in Christ, for once justification by faith is conceded, the whole deceitful act collapses, although we must negotiate broadly with them if they concede any action.

In sum, most respected brother and first among those to be praised in the Lord, you must not let this draw you away from the meeting; rather, transact in every detail what your people ask you to do, and you will do it easily. They are not thinking of imposing the yoke of ceremonies, and even if they wanted to impose it, it will be to our advantage to refute their arguments in public, for they have no firm basis. Yet we know that Luther will not suffer anything of that sort. Furthermore, Osiander of Nürnberg clearly appears to be a changed man, for he writes in most friendly terms.<sup>11</sup> Believe me, I shall make every effort to be present at the meeting, and I believe it is well known to them that I am in close agreement with you. Therefore I know, my dear sir, you will not begrudge any meeting, either with the Swiss churches or with the Lutherans, for you will never do anything that might bring harm to the churches. You have a great deal of authority. Let us be present and together maintain our views. We can do it. We shall deliberate about it.

Please send Sponheim's *Chronicle*<sup>12</sup> in a container either through the printer in Tübingen, if he is in Tübingen, or to Baden; if he is in Hirsau, [send

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10 I.e., Philip Melancthon.

11 For Andreas Osiander, see CWC 2, Ep. 229, note 5.

12 See above, Ep. 561, note 1.

it] to the house of Master Bernhardi,<sup>13</sup> who was once a scribe in your city. I want it in a closed container to avoid it being damaged en route or harmed by the tricks of malevolent people. In this manner it will reach us intact. I have written to Paul.<sup>14</sup> I am writing this, being very busy because Bucer and some other people are sick. May God preserve you for a long time on behalf of your church. Strasbourg, 19 December.

Yours, W. Capito.

Sieur de Roberval<sup>15</sup> wrote this to me, adding a few things from a letter of Rognac.<sup>16</sup> They have been exiled from France because of Christ. They appear to be good men.

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13 Unidentified.

14 For Paulus Phrygio, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote.

15 Jean-François de la Rocque de Roberval (c. 1500–1560) was a French Calvinist and the lieutenant-general in New France. He lived at the court in the circle of the crown prince, Francis, who on becoming king of France, continued to be his protector. This fact saved his life in 1535. As a Protestant convert, he was outlawed, along with other Protestants, including Clément Marot. He soon returned to France and again lived at the court. Roberval had, however, jeopardized his fortune. It was then that he seems to have conceived the idea of recouping his fortune in New France. In 1540, he had completely recovered the favour of Francis I, who appointed him as his 'lieutenant-general in the country of Canada,' where he was charged with 'spreading the holy Catholic faith.' In 1542, Roberval arrived in New France, during which time his expedition navigated the Gulf of St Lawrence and the river without incident. He established his colony at Charlesbourg-Royal on Cap Rouge, where Jacques Cartier had already built a fort. Roberval named the colony France-Roy in honour of Francis I, but the colony failed and lasted only a few months. Roberval returned to France, ruined by his Canadian colony. In 1560, he became one of the first victims of the Wars of Religion, after exiting a Huguenot meeting in Paris.

16 A likely reference to Antoine II de Louvain, sire de Rognac (see Millet, Ep. 693). After the *Affaire des Placards* of October 1534, the Protestants of France, who had hitherto enjoyed the sympathy of the Francis I, became victims of a repressive response by the French authorities and were forced to flee the country. Some of these refugees were cited by the *Parlement* of Paris in January 1535, including 'le seigneur de Rognac et sa femme.' The *seigneurs* of Rognac held the patronym of 'Louvain.' The first known was Antoine de Louvain (died before 1525) and his widow Antoinette d'Orbec. Their eldest son, Antoine II de Louvain was a page of Francis I in 1518. In 1523, he paid homage to Francis I for his seigneurie of Rognac. On 25 January 1535, he fled to Strasbourg, where he took out citizenship, but seems to have left the city for a time, given the above letter. By 1539, he had left Alsace. For more on him, see Gaston Zeller, 'Un réfugié français à Strasbourg sous François Ier: le sire de Rognac,' *Revue d'Alsace* 83 (1936): 229–53.

**Letter 586: [December 1535, Strasbourg, Martin Bucer and Capito to the City Council of Bern]**

The manuscript of this incomplete draft, written by Bucer, is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 38, no. 26.

Noble, strict, honourable, circumspect, upright, wise, gracious lords. First we wish Your Graces an increase in the Spirit of Christ and offer you our humble good will and service. We beg Your Graces in the name of the Lord Jesus and the improvement of his holy church to receive our letter graciously and with a Christian mind, and to ponder it and take it to heart, for we seek nothing else here than to understand in every point the true counsel of Christ and to maintain it strictly and without divergence. We furthermore hope Your Graces have perceived us as especially desirous of and zealous for the church [of Bern] and its preachers and the improvement of its ministers. To this the late respected ministers Berchtold<sup>1</sup> and Franz<sup>2</sup> have always borne witness.

We have greatly vaunted ourselves before everyone, saying that we did not do our own will and did not follow human opinion, but paid attention only to the pure, simple, and clear Word of God, and that we understood it so well that we undertook to teach it to the whole world; and yet we could not for many years come to an agreement, but have engaged in a horrible quarrel about what to believe and how to teach the divine gospel service and the holy sacraments – we have no doubt Your Graces know this very well and will consider how bad and abhorrent it is in itself and also how grave an impediment it was to bringing the truth of Christ to our Germans and to all nations, which would be of great advantage also to all friends of the truth. We quarrel although the Lord has given us such a simple, correct, and clear account, which was understood by many in the better church of old without difficulty and dispute and thus practised. After all, the Lord revealed these things not to wise and clever people, but to simple minds with little understanding.

This is our only goal – as God knows and will be our witness: to avoid such grave and harmful trouble caused by our disagreement and to avert such an unchristian battle. This has driven our actions for eight years now. We have undertaken on the request of our magistrates and other godly princes, lords, and preachers, and of our own will, working with all our might to ar-

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1 For Berchtold Haller (1492–1536), cathedral canon and reformer in Bern, see CWC 2, Ep. 290, note 71.

2 For Franz Kolb, see above, Ep. 469, note 29.

rive at the one true understanding of God together with the preachers and our church, as we did in other articles of Christian doctrine. We have tried to arrive at complete agreement, for both parties have greatly boasted of seeking nothing but the truth and glory of Christ. Thus we did not desist from seeking a negotiated agreement in this business between the churches, although Satan always interjected some obstacle and hindrance. We thought it likely that the Lord, who gave his commandments to all Christians, would of course not deprive any of them of the ability to understand them, as long as they asked him for understanding with sincere modesty and sought not their own advantage but only the truth and improvement in this matter. Thus, as long as the fault does not lie with us, the matter is not so difficult, for it concerns all Christians. Therefore, the Lord will not begrudge his Holy Spirit; he will counsel us some day and help everyone to understand the meaning of this article, as he has helped with all the other articles of his teaching. And indeed we have always strongly felt his grace and assistance in this matter. However much Satan put himself in our way, the Lord notably and wonderfully promoted the agreement and union of the churches. Now, praise be to God, there is no church in the German lands or in the kingdom of Denmark, which has not publicly embraced the correct meaning in this business, and publicly confessed it. For many reasons, we have also tried to settle this matter earlier, as we did four years ago by gathering our preachers in synods or in other proper assemblies, acting in a timely manner and without haste, deliberating about these things and discussing them. For we have no doubt that it will be recognized that the Lord has given us in his sacred gospel not merely an empty sound – in baptism not merely water, and in the Supper not merely bread and wine – but also an understanding for its meaning, that is, rebirth and deliverance from sin, which require accepting the true union of his body and blood. Thus, since both parties maintain that Christ the Lord is truly God and man, is and remains in heaven, and saves us only through his power and his work, we must finally come to an agreement, for the quarrel is not about the thing itself but only about words and exposition. Now, Master Ulrich<sup>3</sup> and Dr Oecolampadius of blessed memory already reached an agreement with Dr Luther and the others at Marburg about the words and about baptism, and therefore signed a common statement. And everyone is still content with it. Likewise, Master Ulrich himself said so in the last conversation he had with me, Capito, concerning this matter at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, and with me, Bucer, after the Diet, when I returned to him from [a

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3 Both Zwingli and Oecolampadius died in the fall of 1531.

visit with] Luther. He furthermore wrote in this sense in his last book,<sup>4</sup> addressed to the German princes, saying that there was in the holy Supper not only bread and wine, but also the body and blood of Christ – the quarrel was only about the local and earthly presence of Christ. There is ample evidence also of this interpretation in the books of Dr Oecolampadius, who endorsed this interpretation with a voluntary statement about the concord, which I delivered to the Prince of Lüneburg.<sup>5</sup> Our preachers subscribed to the same interpretation in the last confession written at Basel.<sup>6</sup>

For this reason we have always believed that God will also help your preachers and your church to come to an understanding and agreement in this matter, and have thus faithfully negotiated with other churches, saying that they should listen to your wise words and you to theirs. For the whole quarrel rests on the interpretation of what is being said. The other churches believe that you are too extreme in separating the Word of God from the sacrament, while your preachers interpret the words of the others as if they connected the gifts of God too much to earthly things. And to speak the truth, we must confess that our dear sirs and brothers, your preachers, have given no less cause for this suspicion, than the others for the suspicion in which your preachers hold them. Several of your people have prompted such suspicion during the last Lent, in printing and otherwise through their talks. They acted in such a manner that for a long time we had little hope of reaching an agreement with them, the reason being, as far as we can see, that they do not take the right view and do not judge rightly about the other churches; nor did they judge rightly earlier on about the words of the holy Fathers and scripture.

Once the quarrel proceeded to that point and suspicion on both sides became stronger, we were worried that no concord would come about between yourselves and the other churches, unless your people would take their time and in all seriousness expound the words of the holy Fathers and scripture. But so far there has been no opportunity among your scholars and

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4 See Ulrich Zwingli, *Ad Carolum Rom. imperatorem, fidei Huldrychi Zwinglii ratio: eiusdem quoque Ad illustrissimos Germaniae principes Augustae congregatos epistola* (Zurich, 1530). For the problems that resulted from its reprinting in 1536, see below, Ep. 594 headnote.

5 In Bucer's letter to Ernst von Lüneburg (1497–1546), he complains about the polemics of Andreas Osiander against his efforts to reach concord (see *CorrBucer* 5, p. 345, Ep. 415, l. 21). For Zwingli's criticism of Bucer's work, see his letter to Bucer and Capito from 12 February 1531 (*CorrBucer* 6, p. 389, Ep. 454/CWC 2, Ep. 435).

6 I.e., the Second Confession of Basel (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).

yourselves to have such a timely and earnest exposition of the matter. But while we persevere in our promotion of Christian concord in the one and true understanding of Christ with the utmost conscientiousness, Satan agitates and promotes trouble and suspicion between us and the others, and he does so without any fault on our part, as far as we know.

**Letter 587: December 1535, Strasbourg, Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to Ruprecht von Pfalz-Veldenz**

Millet included Capito's *Responsio de missa* (Strasbourg, 1537; rev. ed., Strasbourg, 1540) in his list, presumably because it is epistolary in form. Due to its length, however, we have opted to translate just the beginning (ff. A[1]r–A[6]r) and the epilogue (ff. c4v–[c7]r). In 1534, Ruprecht von Pfalz-Veldenz (1506–1544; regent of Zweibrücken from 1532 until his death) asked his counsellor, Jakob Schorr (see below, note 1), to provide an opinion as to whether he should forcibly intervene against priestly concubinage. Schorr responded by arguing that Ruprecht had no authority to regulate marriage, outlaw concubinage among the priests, or abolish the mass. Capito's *Responsio de missa* was also written at the request of Ruprecht. He argued that Schorr's counsel threatened public tranquillity, a point he had made earlier in his defence of the abolition of the mass in Strasbourg. In contrast to Schorr's counsel, Capito implored Ruprecht to take an active role in reforming his territory, or, as Kittelson puts it, essentially granting him 'emergency episcopal powers.' In the end, however, Ruprecht heeded the advice of the Strasbourg preachers, and forced priests living with concubines either to marry or leave his territory. For a more detailed treatment of the *Responsio*, see Kittelson, pp. 199–204. Capito's dedication of the *Responsio* to Henry VIII is dated 9 March 1537 (see Millet, Ep. 639).

The pastors and ministers of the evangelical church of Strasbourg wish the most illustrious Ruprecht, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Bavaria, and Count of Veldenz, etc., the peace and happiness of Christ Jesus.

For the glory of Christ, we offer all our efforts to Your Highness, most illustrious prince and foremost example of piety among your people. A few days ago, we read the counsel regarding the reform of religion and morals written by one of your courtiers, a man exceptional in his erudition and experience, it seems.<sup>1</sup> His most earnest purpose is to deter people from purg-

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1 Jakob Schorr von Hasel (c. 1484–1566), chancellor in Zweibrücken to Ludwig II Count Palatine. After completing his legal studies at the age of twenty-five,

ing the errors of the mass and from prohibiting clerical concubinage. For he denies that abominations of this kind can be abandoned without arousing the indignation of the omnipotent God and incurring the appropriate punishment from His Imperial Majesty, whom all princes must obey by law as their leader. Anyone who considered using force and authority to abolish the filth of Antichrist such as the mass and clerical concubinage (he says) would clearly go against Holy Writ, especially chapters 8 and 9 of Daniel, and against the most severe decrees prohibiting any change in religious matters, which were publicly sanctioned by leading men in so many assemblies. Such actions would go against the office of the princes and magistrates, he says – but that would restrict their powers to temporal matters. They would have no other bailiwick than temporal matters; indeed the government of Christ's kingdom would be diametrically opposed to the office of laymen, that is, the guarding and protecting of faith and the gospel, and religion as a whole would not be within the competence and power of the prince. It would mean that the gospel was indeed the Word of the Lord, but no creature would be able to contribute anything of significance to the creator.

He corroborates these propositions broadly and with many arguments, and among them all defends most vigorously clerical concubinage. In his opinion, they ought neither to be forced to enter lawful marriage, nor be deprived of their lovers by any worldly authority, unless they are manifest adulterers and not only consort with women who are unsuitable for priests but impudently and deplorably associate with others as well. Those women must be kept from cohabiting with priests, according to the advice of this exceptionally pure man. For if a woman associates with one priest in good faith and the pair is joined by the close ties of mutual love, they are like legitimate spouses and it would be sinful and offensive to God to separate them. For it is conjugal affection that makes them truly spouses, and it is their unwillingness to be parted that makes their union a marriage rather than the solemn promise given at a wedding or the blessing or the public church ceremony. He corroborates that opinion citing the authority of the Church Fathers, con-

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Schorr initially worked with his father in Meisenheim. Around 1514, he became the court clerk of the Gutenberg community of Minfeld. On 13 May 1527, Ludwig II appointed him his private secretary and in 1529, his chancellor. After Ludwig II's death in 1532, Schorr requested a leave from his duties as chancellor, but remained until his death a counsellor to Ruprecht and his successor, Wolfgang. Schorr was an emissary at the Diets of Speyer (1542), Nürnberg (1543), and Augsburg (1548). He was married twice, first to Elisabeth Breidenacker, then to a daughter of a Blumenauer family of Strasbourg.

ciliar decrees, and the testimony of ancient and recent writers, and with arguments that are lucid, at least in the eyes of the author himself. It was no obstacle (he said) that their association, their private love affair, and their mutual agreement not to desert each other during their lifetime were secrets and unknown to the people. After all, Sarah's marriage to Abraham was not invalidated by the opinion of the people who thought she was his sister.<sup>2</sup> Their marriage remained intact even though, out of consideration for her fear, Abraham himself asserted that she was his sister. Public knowledge in itself had no effect on a marriage. Indeed, one must beware of interrogating the couple more closely about their sentiments and the spirit in which they cohabited. Rather, it was in the nature of charity to expect the best of them. Furthermore, if they separated sometimes, as is often the case if the union becomes too much for one partner, it brings no disadvantage to a marriage, for sometimes other people who are truly married separate too.

Up to this point he defends a priest's cohabitation with his lover under the heading of marriage with an argument that seems not at all solid, but he proceeds to another: even women who admit to being prostitutes should not be ousted from this delicate arrangement as long as they cause no disturbance in the community – rather they must be tolerated in the hope that they will repent. We must all acknowledge that we are sinners and unworthy of divine grace. Thus we are not justified to act severely against these partners in crime. In addition, he argues that such an obscenity must be tolerated because the world will retain its character and nature forever, and of the two evils we must choose the lesser, as can be sufficiently concluded, he thinks, from the story of Lot<sup>3</sup> and the old man in Gibeah.<sup>4</sup> Finally, he proves with a detailed summary of the arguments above that threats and terror ruin a person's will to improve and he points out those who either in the margravate of Baden and elsewhere were too eager to change accepted practices and thereby deserved divine punishment. The Word of the Lord does not need the protection of the princes, [he says] – its efficacy does not depend on Your Highness, nor on the preachers, etc. And hence he concludes that, in his judgment, everyone ought to be allowed to observe what he thinks should be observed, both in matters of faith and his attachment to the woman who shares his bed, as long as the ties of public tranquillity are not loosened. He adds an epilogue, which does not lack artful composition.

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2 Gen. 12:10–20.

3 Gen. 19:1–14.

4 For the story of the Levite and his concubine, who spent the night at the home of an old man in Gibeah, see Judges 19.

This is the sum of the whole book, which we believe requires a more elaborate answer based on the instrument of Truth. May Your Highness receive us with a liberal mind as ministers of Christ. Do not fault us for assuming the task of responding publicly on what may be private authority. For we do not believe that we are culpable or not called to respond on behalf of religion and morality, or that we are like wrong-headed advisors who give harmful advice to the detriment of the public. As long as we are called and should be listened to, as follows from our vocation, let us hope we will be given an opening that will allow us to reveal knowledge concerning the kingdom of Christ. And what may we not hope from such a great prince? You are regarded a citizen on account of your modesty, a father on account of your care and vigilance for Christ's flock that has been entrusted to your government by the Lord, and with the approbation of all, a true bishop. Through your effort, a door was opened to the Word of the Lord. Not only was it introduced with great benefit, but also very widely received. Now Satan in his cunning is attempting to weaken the strength of the Word by raising objections under the guise of counsel, fearing that the remaining abominations will be abolished. Thus we fearlessly address Your Highness, regarding you as our prince rather than a foreign prince, and speaking out about the means of upholding doctrine and the evangelical life in the face of calumnies.

We are also motivated to perform this duty by Christian charity toward our brothers who act as shepherds of souls there. Charity drives us to offer mutual assistance when it is useful, following the example of the apostles who proved their teaching through a most holy consensus among them. Thus nothing is sweeter to a pious mind or more readily done. Therefore, the testimony we give about the teaching and judgment of our brothers, who serve your subjects in the gospel of Christ, will no doubt give them singular pleasure just as it is our great pleasure to provide it. This is certainly a cause we have in common, for we preach Christ together and in the same Spirit. Indeed we are not so impudent as to meddle for petty reasons in a business that is not ours.

Thus our counsel appears to concern three questions: first, the extent to which lay magistrates have the right to judge in matters of faith and concerning the clergy; second, who is called a legitimate wife and who a concubine; lastly, whether the Fathers and the ancient churches had a right to prohibit concubines categorically, for it is known that they prohibited them.

We will discuss these three questions on the basis of Holy Writ, the customs of the ancients, and the laws of the emperors and popes, as far as the Lord grants us to do so. This will clarify the central point of our advice: what is appropriate for Your Highness to decide in church matters and what

is less appropriate. Indeed, the counsel itself should not be without effect, for Christian charity is solicitous and impels us to undertake this task. Therefore, take our zeal in good stead, for we give our explanations according to our sincere faith, most gently and without acrimony, so that there will be nothing anywhere that could incite the mind of your counsellor to strike back. Rather, we ask that he bear with us in the spirit of fairness as patrons of the Truth since he assumed the right to complain about it freely. The matter and argumentation should not offend him, for he avers that he will follow the better opinion and listen to the authority of Holy Writ. Furthermore, his writing would indicate that he is a learned, experienced, well-respected man, whose judgment is confirmed by his conduct, who is concerned for the welfare of the whole realm of Your Highness, and will therefore freely bear what our defence requires us to say. But he is in grave error because he does not know in what the salvation of the princes and the people properly consists; because he is not very knowledgeable in scripture and the doctrine of faith and therefore gives more weight to reasoning than to clear scriptural passages; and because he is zealous to preserve for the Christian people a secular state without God and Christ rather than the kingdom of God. His treatment appears to be civil, but because he uses blind reason as his rule, it appears blasphemous and impious to us and in the judgment of the Spirit.

Unfortunately, almost all people have now degenerated into this impiety. They fight against the gospel of Jesus Christ. For whoever deliberates about the public good should observe the nature of Christian religion rather than carnal inclinations such as ambition, hunger for power, avarice, luxury, envy, hatred, and the rest of the spiritual diseases.<sup>5</sup> And in this list I include public tranquillity which goes beyond piety, the kind that this counsellor keeps forever before his eyes, as if he were devoid of all religion. How, then, can he fail gravely to offend Christ and his glory, even if he does so perhaps unwittingly and out of zeal for public welfare? For as a man thinks, thus he speaks.<sup>6</sup> Without religion, how can he say anything about that true religion of ours, which appears folly to flesh and blood? What great harm he brings

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5 For the sins of the flesh, see Gal. 5:17; by contrast, for the fruits of the spirit, see Gal. 5:22–3.

6 Cf. Prov. 23:7.

to the whole community by trusting in this method! For if he wins his argument, human beings will immediately abandon all concern for God's glory, that is, their firm faith in Christ who is God and man, and the probity among human beings which corresponds to faith. Emptiness and conceit will be left and a pretence of wanting to help public rather than private interests. There will be nothing sincere, nothing sound anywhere. The rule governing their actions will be self-interest which corrupts all human actions, as we shall make manifest in what follows ...

[Epilogue]: Therefore, most illustrious prince, after discussing the subject of this counsel at length we believe we have made clear to you, who has been placed in a position of authority, that you have received from God the commission to strike fear into evil-doers, especially when they disparage divine glory and the salvation of souls – to which may be added that you must remember that your bailiwick is restricted to corporeal things, whereas the ability to minister to souls belongs to God and Christ alone. He delivers them only through the word of the preacher and the other ministers of the church, and to him all that is sublime among humans necessarily yields. When, therefore, a magistrate accepts authority from God without human input or procedure, he should act according to the will of the supreme Lord, and must fulfil his duty faithfully, disdaining human threats, lest he be accused of faithlessness. Indeed, since human beings require obedience to their commands, why would we wretched men mismanage God's commission contrary to his will? Our human superiors must be listened to, but only as long as they keep to their jurisdiction and give instructions without hindering anyone in the execution of any part of his office. They must be listened to even if their instructions are unjust, or even if they are detrimental to our fortune and our life, as long as they do not endanger our conscience. Therefore, human law is always subject to this qualification: 'if it does not go against any of God's commandments.' It is not up to the emperor, who is a servant of God, to exempt priests from what God has ordained because they are humans, although he may free some people, if there is reason, from institutions ordained by humans and from public obligations by conferring on them a privilege or private right. But there can be no privilege or private right which brings harm publicly to all or privately to some individuals. The functions of the prince should serve the public good and even the good of individuals, not their destruction. And since it is the law of Christ to benefit all and harm no one, to suffer rather than do injustice, no Christian has the right to accept a privilege which is concerned only with the leisure of one person at the expense of other people's labour. How then can clergymen ever make use of such excessive privileges in good conscience, when these privileges are granted, not for the purpose of being of service to the church, but of provid-

ing them with the 'secret power of lawlessness'<sup>7</sup> to safeguard carnal desires, when they are a licence for doing evil and give impunity to evil-doers and libertines? Thus the exemptions of canons and abbots do not prevent a prince from reforming religion and restoring honesty in life. For some clergymen maliciously use such loop-holes and maintain them. The mass, which is advertised as worship of God and satisfaction for our sins, and that deplorable clerical concubinage, which sets a very bad example and is truly the principal source of corrupting the public, are impious and external actions. Who does not know that they are therefore subject to the jurisdiction of the prince, which strikes fear into all evil-doers?

It remains only to pray to the Lord that he may lend his aid and grant his Spirit to Your Highness, who is most inclined to turn the church to true piety and an honourable life. Unfortunately, the church has been miserably defiled now for some centuries by numerous and most shameful blots, the disgraceful deeds of bad men, and nefarious crimes against God and men. It has been led astray from its original integrity and lies prostrate, deformed, abject, and trampled underfoot. The resistance to this holy and necessary task of reform is proportionate to the fear of these satraps, who are afraid of a reformation and improvement of churchmen and who stubbornly flee from it. For being vicious themselves, they hate nothing more than the lovable probity of good men, when it is conjoined with piety. They focus all their attention on avoiding anything that comes close to apostolic rule, nor do they want to be obliged to tolerate it in others. For no one has attempted so far to appeal to them to reform their lives. That is the reason why they obstruct and disturb to such an extent actions undertaken to correct the ministry of the church and the morals of the ministers, and why they use for this purpose pseudo-theologians, who work with subtle questions and captious disputations. No doubt their zeal and machinations will come to naught if only the princes and magistrates continue bravely to bring back the gospel into the churches of Christ and reform the morals of the clergy and the common people, recalling them to a better life.

May Christ the Lord assist our prayers and make you follow in the footsteps of your relatives and kinsmen among the truly outstanding princes. May you aspire to reforming the morals of your people, so that you may successfully light the way for other princes, once that grievous opinion of the patrons of vice is overcome and ousted. May the same Christ preserve Your Highness for a very long time, keeping you unharmed and fortunate, strong and successful in restoring the doctrine and discipline of faith. We commend our insignificant selves to you. Strasbourg, in the month of December, 1535.

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7 The phrase 'mysterium iniquitatis' (power of lawlessness) is used in 2 Thess. 2:7 (Vulgate).

**Letter 588: 8 January 153[6, Strasbourg], Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

The autograph original of this letter is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 32/280. It is partially printed in Schiess 1:776–7, Ep. 673.

Grace and peace. Your letter to Bucer has arrived.<sup>1</sup> Oh, my brother, I share your complaint about the malice of our time. I see plainly where the desires and the zeal of partisans<sup>2</sup> will lead, whereas they should focus their desires on Christ alone. Dr Paulus<sup>3</sup> writes that he does not dare do anything without you taking the initiative. For we gave him a grave warning not to make any rash statements about marriage. The tedium of this life will go on, as we labour more and more under the task entrusted to us. Christ will grow among some people through our ministry; evil men will be rendered worse.

I have every reason to seek concord with the Lutherans, for under Luther's name the best men are gathered. They worked against us, driven by some fatal disease, but we must suffer this temptation with patience. It is possible that the more quarrelsome among us are giving them considerable opportunity. On both sides men can be found, who have too much confidence in their own cleverness.

Our Constanceans will harbour no more suspicions about us, once they allow themselves to hear that we are working for the cause of concord. And I do not doubt that they have received letters written rather passionately and with considerable liberty.<sup>4</sup> In his answers, Bucer warns them of the danger. For I know that Satan is agitating to cause dissent or certainly wants to arouse suspicion. I would rather overlook things, as long as they can be overlooked without disrespect to Christ. But our friend says, 'I know to whom I am writing and what I owe to God.' Under no circumstances does he wish to admit the thought that the ministers could become angry at him, for they are committed to God, and he is making a sincere effort. Therefore, my dear Ambrosius, warn me in private if his rash candour has given offence to that best of churches. We will do our best to heal the wound we have caused. I have no doubt whatsoever: since we have been very close so far, we shall not

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1 This letter is no longer extant.

2 The Latin is 'studiosi,' which can mean either studious and devoted to studies or zealous.

3 For Paulus Phrygio, see CWC 2, Ep. 197 headnote.

4 For Constance's decision not to send representatives to the upcoming colloquy in Basel at the end of January (Ep. 585, note 8), see below, Epp. 588, 588a, and 593a, and especially 593b, and 597–8.

depart from that colloquy with differences in opinion, contrary to our habit. The main point is: we must be willing to hasten this crucial meeting among us.<sup>5</sup> We won't say anything about titles. In my mind you are a great man, and I admire you; I shall treat you in my letters as an equal and colleague, although I know where you stand before the Lord, and where I stand, who can barely and with much effort carry out my office, I am made for him, etc.<sup>6</sup>

Concerning Sponheim's *Chronicle*:<sup>7</sup> please send it in a container once you have acquired it at my expense. Our messenger will return here, or else entrust it to the bookseller in Tübingen.<sup>8</sup> I am embarrassed to keep you with this nonsense from your true labours which you undertake for Christ. Bucer [will write] about Hildebrand<sup>9</sup> and other things. Farewell in the Lord. 8 January 1536.<sup>10</sup>

W. Capito.

Bucer has ruined his health substantially by working too hard.<sup>11</sup> I have tried to dissuade him from working in the early morning hours, etc. My family sends greetings to you.

**Letter 588a: [Before 10 January 1536, Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Zwick**

In this letter, Capito expresses his desire to hold the Zurich preachers to their earlier promise to meet with the Strasbourg preachers to avoid the risk that the Swiss be excluded from the concord sought between the various evangelical camps. The Swiss preachers did meet in Basel at the end of January. Capito and Bucer represented Strasbourg (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).

Capito's letter is no longer extant, but Zwick cites a lengthy portion of it in a letter to Bullinger, dated 10 January 1536. Printed in HBBW 6:61–2, Ep. 720, ll. 2–34. For Johannes Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1.

I would like to copy a passage from Capito's letter which I received this very

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5 See above, Ep. 585, note 8.

6 Cf. Isaiah 43:21.

7 See above, Ep. 561, note 1.

8 Identity unknown.

9 The context is unknown, and the name too common to allow a positive identification.

10 The manuscript erroneously has 1535.

11 See above, Ep. 585, note 1, and below, Ep. 591, note 7.

hour, if I by any chance can get hold of the woman<sup>1</sup> who is on the point of departure:

'We have begged you,' he says, 'to effect that the people of Zurich keep their promise. And now you write<sup>2</sup> that they are going to keep their promise and respond fairly to us. You do not indicate what that response is going to be, whether they are willing, as promised, when summoned with other Swiss evangelicals, to make themselves available in Constance or Basel, and whether you are hopeful of achieving your mission; and if not, whether they ought to be prepared in another way. For you know, dear Zwick, what trouble may be in the offing if the Swiss brothers alone are excluded from that general concord of the churches, and more so because they have had such high hopes for themselves. What shall we say when we are asked by princes and churchmen in that great meeting,<sup>3</sup> 'And what about the Swiss churchmen?' Shall we say, 'We have tried everything to call them all together in some place and discuss the whole affair, and they promised they would make themselves available, and swore they would consider it sacrilege if they did not. Yet we could not compel them in any way, either by ourselves or through the agency of others, to fulfil their promise and to undertake to meet with us in some place about this matter, and to discuss it in public as in the presence of the Lord. They acted in this fashion, although they had earlier on written they had not been provoked by us. The tract addressed to the people of Münster<sup>4</sup> had been written in a learned and pious fashion and ex-

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1 Identity unknown.

2 Zwick's letter is no longer extant. Cf. his letter to Bullinger, 10 January 1536 (HBBW 6, Ep. 720, ll. 45–9): 'They say I have written that you will stand by your promises and respond equitably. They base this on these words: 'I wrote those in Zurich what you asked from them and what you want done. In his response, Bullinger assured me that they would stand by what they promised Capito.' I have certainly written nothing else about your promises. They received my explanation but were not satisfied.'

3 I.e., at the forthcoming colloquy in Basel that met from 31 January–4 February 1536.

4 Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534). A modern edition of the letter is available in BDS 5:119–258. The treatise is a point-by-point rebuttal of the published minutes of a disputation held in Münster on 7 and 8 August 1533 between the Strasbourg theologians and Bernhard (Bernd) Rothmann, a prominent Anabaptist theologian in Münster, as well as of Rothmann's published Confession of faith. The rebuttal was first sent in the form of a letter to Münster, but was considered so valuable that it was dedicated to the city council of Augsburg (see above, Ep. 527a). The title is often given in an abbreviated form, as *Ad Monasterienses* or *Oeconomia ad Monasterienses* (see below, Ep. 598).

pressed their own opinion and attested to their own spirit,' etc.? We all know that promises going against God have no validity, but stubbornly to deny a meeting that has been requested so urgently and so many times cannot be pious, unless we, who demanded it, are either impious or completely unqualified to deal with the people of Zurich in the affairs of Christ. We hope that they have formed neither judgment about us, and even if they have found much lacking in us, they would nevertheless, we trust, concede our zeal for Christ. That should have animated them in spite of everything they might fear from a meeting with us, and at the very least they should have been motivated by our Lord Jesus' promise: 'Where two or three [are gathered] in my name,' etc.<sup>5</sup> We shall not mention what true charity demands and how forthcoming, indeed ardent, the apostles were to make themselves available, when the other party merely tolerated it (not to speak of asking for it urgently).<sup>6</sup> Christ, our salvation, also knows, my dear Zwick, how sincerely we thirst for the salvation of those churches. Furthermore, to speak candidly, we are certain in the Lord, if they deign to hear us, that we shall come to an agreement, which will contribute greatly to brighten the glory of the Lord,' etc.

**Letter 589: [10 January 1536, Zurich], Heinrich Bullinger to Capito**

Printed in HBBW 6:59–60, Ep. 719. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Bullinger cannot make any public promises concerning the forthcoming meeting [see above, Ep. 585, note 8]. He thanks Capito for Philip [Melanchthon's] books. So far, he has read them only cursorily and can therefore give no opinion, but he notes that Melanchthon is more circumspect now. He does not understand what Capito writes about a new order of the church. He does not wish to seek reconciliation with the Catholics. The rule of the pope is the rule of Antichrist. The kingdom of Christ will make greater progress without the Catholics.

**Letter 590: 15 January 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Margaret Blaurer**

This letter has been renumbered Ep. 593a.

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5 Matt. 18:20.

6 Cf. Rom. 1:8–15; 1 Cor. 16:5–9; 1 Thess. 2:17–3:5; and HBBW 5, Ep. 517, ll. 12–14.

**Letter 591: 17 January 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer**

Printed in Schiess 1:777, Ep. 674.

Greetings. Bullinger persists in rejecting a colloquy.<sup>1</sup> He says one may expect very little benefit from it, and yet it may cause a great deal of evil. I beg you, how can meeting in the Lord, in his cause, and according to his Word cause any inconvenience to pious men? If we do not meet, I know they will in the future seek with much effort what they now decline when it is freely offered to them. A pious gathering is very important; staying aloof is nothing but dissent. The man who stands on his own is rarely a man of Christ. We are still trying to argue with the brothers to give us a hearing in the Lord and allow us to debate about the cause and glory of the Lord. If they say no, let them look out for themselves. They will be sorry for their stubbornness. Farewell in the Lord and if you can get the *Chronicle* of the abbot,<sup>2</sup> send it through the bookseller in Tübingen.<sup>3</sup> Geneva is in great danger.<sup>4</sup> They say the city has been given as booty to the tyrant of Mysnia (*the Lord of Musso*),<sup>5</sup> whom the people of Bern could not bear. The French king sent a herald to them.<sup>6</sup> It is

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- 1 Despite Bullinger's initial reservations, he and Leo Jud, along with preachers from Bern, Schaffhausen, St Gallen, Basel, Mulhouse, and Strasbourg, did end up attending the colloquy in Basel, which ran from 31 January–4 February 1536 (see above, Epp. 585, note 8 and 589, and below, Ep. 593).
- 2 See above, Ep. 561, note 1.
- 3 Identity unknown.
- 4 See also below, Ep. 593.
- 5 The italicized words are in German. The so-called tyrant of Mysnia was Gian Giacomo de' Medici di Marignano (1495–1555), alias Medeghino ('little Medici,' since his family was not related to the Medici of Florence). He fought against France in 1521 for the duke of Milan. In 1523, he brought the castle of Musso (Mysnia) into the duke's territory. In 1525, his invasion of Veltlin led to a war against the people of the Graubünden (Grisons). After his defeat by Duke Francesco II Sforza in 1528, he seized the Milanese dominions around Lake Como. His attack on Morbegno ultimately prompted the so-called Battle of Musso of 1531–2. The Swiss, except for the Five Catholic Cantons, provided military support to the confederates. After the peace treaty, through which possession was returned to Milan, Gian Giacomo returned to Piedmont, entered into the service of Charles III, duke of Savoy, and fought the Bernese in the canton of Vaud in 1536. After this battle, he served Charles V in Italy, Hungary, Flanders, and Germany. From 1552 to 1555, he commanded the army in the siege of Siena. He died in Milan, where he was called to defend the city against the French.
- 6 Guillaume du Bellay (1491–1543), seigneur de Langey and oldest brother of Cardinal Jean du Bellay, was a French diplomat and general under Francis I.

believed that he will bring them aid – I only hope in time and in good faith. Apparently an army has covertly entered France, without any of the magistrates realizing it. Bucer is once again in good health.<sup>7</sup> May God preserve you. Strasbourg, 17 January 1536.

W. Capito.

### Letter 592: [January? 1536, Strasbourg], Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the Reader

This letter was printed as the prefatory letter to Stephen Gardiner, *De vera obedientia oratio* (Strasbourg 1536), ff. A2r–[A6r].

Stephen Gardiner (c. 1497–1555) studied at Trinity Hall, Cambridge (bachelor of civil law, 1518; doctor of canon and civil law, 1521/2). He lectured at the faculty of law from 1521 to 1524. In 1524, he was engaged as secretary to Cardinal Wolsey. In that capacity, he was active in the divorce proceedings of Henry VIII, accompanying Wolsey on his mission to Francis I in 1527, and twice journeying to the papal court in 1528 and 1529. As a reward from the king, he was made archdeacon of Worcester in 1528, of Norfolk in 1529, and of Leicester in 1531. On 3 December 1531, he was consecrated bishop of Winchester as well. He frequently served the king on diplomatic missions in France between 1535 and 1538, and in Germany in 1539. On 10 February 1535, Gardiner renounced the jurisdiction of the Roman See, and shortly thereafter published his *De vera obedientia oratio*. From November 1540 to September 1541, he was engaged as Henry's ambassador to Charles V. In 1544, he joined the invasion into France, while in late 1544 and in the winter of 1545–6, he was dispatched on two embassies to Charles V. Following Henry VIII's death in 1547 and the accession

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After his studies in Angers and Paris, he entered military service. In 1526, he attempted to recruit Swiss mercenaries. In 1526–7, he was active in Italy. Between 1529 and 1534, he made five trips as a French legate to England. Between 1532 and 1536, he made four trips to Germany, where he worked to disband the Schmalkaldic League, to help in the financial preparations for the reconquest of the duchy of Württemberg in 1534 (see above, Ep. 532 headnote), and to arrange a concord between Protestants and Catholics. Although he was a patron of reform-minded scholars and advocated a reform of the Catholic Church without a break from Rome, his desire to secure a concord between Protestants and Catholics was driven less by religious than by the political motive to weaken imperial power in Germany (cf. below, Ep. 593). As the French governor of Turin (1537–9) and of all of Piedmont (1540–2), he distinguished himself through his wise rulings and prudent military policies.

<sup>7</sup> See above, Ep. 585, note 1, and Ep. 588, note 11.

to the throne of Edward VI, Gardiner returned to his diocese, but was imprisoned in September 1547 for refusing to accept Edward's religious reforms. He remained imprisoned in the Tower of London until August 1553, when Mary I entered London following the death of Edward. On 23 August 1553, Gardiner was made lord high chancellor and crowned Mary queen on 1 October 1553. Until his death in 1555, Gardiner worked for the renewal of England's allegiance with Rome.

Greetings, pious reader! We recently obtained a speech concerning true obedience by the bishop of Winchester, Rev. Father Stephen, and could not refrain from making it available to you, for he teaches like a true bishop. His style is both solid and pious, erudite and elegant, as he teaches that true obedience consists in following the Word of the Lord in everything, and that obedience to God must be observed first of all by princes and magistrates, who bear the sword. It is their task to act like gods, fathers, and shepherds to those whom God entrusted to them, to whom we are all in all. And this is all the more important because they must see to it that true religion be taught and everything arranged according to God's pleasure, thus proving themselves true heads of the churches in succession to Christ. It is the role of bishops to pasture the flock of the Lord by dispensing the holy gospel and to lead his flock in everything to Christ by setting a living example, and to do so by obeying the princes according to the Word of God rather than by commanding them. Finally, the man who excels all others in this holy office through his faith and zeal, holds the true primacy among them. Here at last you will see a wonderfully pleasing and skilled writer who uncovers that most pernicious pretence, which the Roman pontiffs are maintaining before almost the whole West, claiming that they have the government of the spiritual and worldly kingdom, that they are the first vicars of Christ in the lands and have the highest and absolute power over the churches and their princes in general.

O truly remarkable kindness of God to the most serene king<sup>1</sup> and the whole kingdom of England, to whom he gave such bishops! England has not only this man, who combines in himself true piety and solid learning and truly episcopal solicitude for the flock of the Lord. It also has Thomas Cranmer,<sup>2</sup> archbishop of Canterbury, the primate of the whole English church,

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1 Henry VIII (1491–1547), king of England (r. 1509–47).

2 Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556) was the court chaplain of Henry VIII. He studied at Cambridge (BA, 1511; MA, 1515; ThD, 1523), and in 1530 became archdeacon

a man who leads a holy life and is full of learning, constancy, and zeal for the excellent administration of the church. We have seen him ourselves and have spoken with Edward Fox,<sup>3</sup> bishop of Hereford, not without reaping an extraordinary harvest of piety. A man most amiable and admirable in every respect, he was sent by the most serene king of Britain as ambassador to the German princes and cities, who intended to restore the churches according to the Word of the Lord. He is gifted with great modesty, kindness, learning, keen judgment, and that truly episcopal quality, exceptional ardour for the kingdom of Christ. Similar to him is his colleague Nicholas Heath, archdeacon of York.<sup>4</sup> Anyone who knows England says there are numerous other men adorned with such virtues, whom the most pious king put in charge of his churches, doing, indeed, what the Lord enjoined him to do, that is, being a shepherd and father to his people. Thus you may see that he is motivated not by an impious desire for power or an unwillingness to accept just and holy rule when he abolished the rule of the Roman bishop in the English church by passing a law in parliament, with the consent of all estates and with everyone knowing the law.

He recognized the truth: the church of Christ was ruined by false bishops at its own peril, and it was an impious lie to claim that they were exempt from the princes' oversight. For God subjects every single soul to the su-

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in Taunton. In January 1532, he travelled to Germany and went to Nürnberg, where he married a niece of Andreas Osiander. After his return to England, he became archbishop of Canterbury in March 1533. At the request of Henry VIII, he annulled the king's marriage to Catherine of Aragon on 23 May. Under the reign of Edward VI, he became a leading figure of the English Reformation, spearheading the Book of Common Prayer (1549/52) and the 42 Articles (1552). His involvement in a failed coup against Mary I led to his conviction and burning at the stake as a heretic.

- 3 Edward Fox (c. 1496–1538) began his studies at Cambridge in 1512, where he received his doctor of theology. In 1528, he travelled to the continent for the first time on a diplomatic mission. Thereafter he helped steer the campaign for Henry VIII's divorce and for Royal Supremacy. In 1535, he became bishop of Hereford. That same year, he met the Strasbourg theologians and spoke with Luther and Melancthon in Wittenberg.
- 4 Nicholas Heath (c. 1501–1578) studied at Christ's College, Cambridge (BA, 1520; MA, 1522). After holding minor benefices, he was appointed archdeacon of Stafford in 1534. The following year he accompanied Edward Fox on his embassy to the Lutheran princes. He was involved with Cranmer in publishing the Great Bible of 1539 and in 1540 became bishop of Rochester. He joined the king's council on 3 October 1540 and in 1545 was named to a commission for the suppression of superstitious practices. In 1543 he was elected bishop of

preme powers which bear the sword,<sup>5</sup> that is, as St Chrysostom explains the passage, not only the so-called secular people, but also priests and monks; indeed he adds, 'even if you are an apostle or an evangelist, even if you are a prophet or any other kind of person, inasmuch as this subjection does not destroy piety. The apostle does not simply say "Let every person obey,"' Chrysostom adds, 'but "Let every person be subject to."' <sup>6</sup> Thus far Chrysostom. Priests are in charge of all mortals as far as the administration of God's Word is concerned, for all must obey the Word of God, but since neither learning nor life always gives them what is required by their office, God wanted them to be at all times under the jurisdiction and power of the princes and magistrates, who have the power of the sword. Princes, too, alas, are much deficient in doing their duty; indeed, because the majority of princes are bad, God wanted them to be left to his own judgment while being sacrosanct to all mortals.

We should be motivated by the prominent and most generous gift God bestowed on the English church, for he inspired its prince with such a mind, and we should pray ardently to God to give the same spirit to our princes, that they will do their duty and recognize its nature and prove worthy of it. Most importantly, we should pray that they remove from the government of the church those men who are not truly in the church, that is, men who are manifestly impious in their lives and teachings; for the apostle forbids us to take food with such men, who are adulterers, whorers, idolaters, rapists, drunkards, and polluted with other great sins and crimes.<sup>7</sup> If you commune with them in the sacred rites, the very laws of the pontiffs exclude you from holy communion. And let us pray that they put in charge of the churches men such as are demanded by the apostle and all the laws of pious princes and indeed the canons of the popes – men who believe in Christ and live in him, and are suited and willing to preach him.

In our time, however, you find anyone taking up the office and the title of bishop, even people who have never seriously inquired into the nature of the episcopal office, not to speak of fulfilling it. Rather, they concentrate all their efforts on fighting the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in every pos-

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Worcester, but in 1551 he was deprived of his bishopric because of his refusal to accept all of Edward VI's reforms. By 1553, he had returned to the Catholic faith. Under the reign of Queen Mary, he was restored to the bishopric of Worcester and, in 1555, became archbishop of York.

5 Cf. Rom. 13:1–7.

6 Chrysostom, Homily 23 on Romans 13:1 (PG 60.615).

7 Cf. 1 Cor. 5:11.

sible way, and are seen to turn away, and indeed to extinguish, all religion and holiness of life by their nefarious licence, impious teaching, and sinful life. In choosing pastors for the flock of the Lord they require them first and foremost to vilify those who teach the pure gospel (they call it the Lutheran gospel); for the rest they do not care what they know and how they live as long as they have not taken wives in lawful matrimony. For if some belly-worshipper<sup>8</sup> flees to them from the evangelical camp, who has taken a lawful wife, they tolerate her as long as she does not occupy the status of an honest wife. They say the order of the church does not permit any priest to be married, but they do not care about him bedding a concubine or worse. This is how they observe the canon of the Council of Neocaesarea, which says, 'If a priest marries, let him be removed from the clerical order; but if he commits fornication or adultery, let him be excommunicated from the church and be reduced to doing penitence among laymen.'<sup>9</sup> Those men, who have committed incest, adultery, and fornication, are not tolerated in the church by the laws of God and the principal saints, yet our bishops, who are knowledgeable and prudent, put them in charge of churches! But if a man, conscious of his weakness and to avoid fornication, takes a wife according to the commandment of God as explained through the apostle (1 Cor. 7),<sup>10</sup> and has in mind to live without sin as the husband of one wife, as the law of God requires of a bishop,<sup>11</sup> that man cannot be tolerated in the sacred ministry! Is that not trampling on the law of God for the sake of human traditions? And while our bishops put such depraved and deplorable men in charge of the holy office, they do not admit into the light of evangelical truth, which shines powerfully everywhere, men who would administer the sound doctrine of Christ among the widely dispersed and dangerously lost flock of Christ. Everywhere people are getting rid of religion; all respect for honesty has been lost, all shame is abandoned, and crime and vices rush into the world with the greatest vehemence.

What can be the outcome, if not certain and eternal ruin, and in a very short time, too? God cannot tolerate his kindness being fought with such great furor, for he has shown great and splendid kindness to our generation. Truly, we must 'pray without ceasing'<sup>12</sup> and with the most urgent prayers to

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8 Capito uses the Greek word κοιλιολάτρης, which denotes people who worship their belly like a god. Cf. Phil. 3:19.

9 Gratian's *Decretum*, prima pars, distinctio 28, canon 9, pars 6, which appears in CICan 1:103.

10 1 Cor. 7:2.

11 1 Tim. 3:2.

12 1 Thess. 5:17.

God that he may open the eyes of our princes, grant them an understanding of the place he has given them to occupy, and make them true shepherds, fathers, and gods to their people. Let them disdain that fictitious pseudo-immunity and false authority they claim for the church over everyone. They have extorted it from princes, partly relying on superstition, partly using force. Rather, let them obey the Word of God and the examples of the most pious leaders Moses, Joshua, and the pious judges and kings of the ancient people, as well as the examples of Constantine,<sup>13</sup> Theodosius<sup>14</sup> and others who through laws for the Christian people that are still extant, and through their rule over all bishops and the whole clerical estate, took care that religion was safe and protected. No one can grant to clerics the power to destroy the church of God. The immunity pious princes once gave to holy bishops does not extend to the majority who today vaunt the title of bishop, since they have nothing in common with those holy Fathers. Although pious princes gave immunity to the clerical order, they never intended that privilege to exempt bishops from [princely] jurisdiction. All the laws concerning bishops and church property, which are extant in the *Codex* and *Novellae* of Justinian, attest to this beyond a shadow of doubt. Indeed, one of them sufficiently proves these points – the summary constitution 123<sup>15</sup> – but there are many others. Indeed, godly princes believe that looking after religion is their prime duty, and that the whole clerical estate is subjected to their supervision. Later, the Roman pontiffs extorted power by force and deceit from the princes who ruled the Roman Empire in name rather than in fact.

True liberty and immunity of priests consist of preaching in their sermons the truth of the Lord freely and without fear, and to exemplify it in their lives for all mortals to see, the greatest kings and the lowest people alike. It is tyranny, not freedom and clerical immunity, to teach with impunity what is impious and to live a sinful life. If the religious oath of princes can confirm anything to our pseudo-bishops, that oath is a most impious tie. And if princes can abdicate power to those who bring such great ruin to the Christian commonwealth, then a father can be released from his duty to defend his children, a married man from the vow to his wife, a general's authority over his army can be taken away, and a captain's command over his ship and his obligation to the people for whom he governs the ship. It

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13 Constantine I, or the Great, (r. 306–37) was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity and summoned the Council of Nicea in 325, the first ecumenical council.

14 Theodosius I, or the Great, (r. 379–95) was a Roman emperor who made Nicene Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.

15 See Justinian's *Novellae constitutiones* 123, which appears in CICiv 3:593–625.

will truly bring the gravest wrath of God upon us to believe that princes and magistrates have no right to defend the Christian commonwealth against these pests, or to think that any man's tonsure or ordination through rote words entitle him to abandon all piety with impunity and in turn attack a man who professes piety, and to do so in order to protect idolatry and live a life of unheard-of perversity, trusting in the power and wealth of the church, the legacy of the crucifix. Truly, we must beg God on bended knee to grant us, who are clearly like lost sheep without a shepherd, princes 'after his own heart,'<sup>16</sup> who will pasture his flock and protect the work of their hands, who will rule with righteousness and fairness,<sup>17</sup> and who will guard above all the purity of doctrine and church administration, and furthermore all of life. Thus at last may we truly become people of God, freed from all internal and external enemies, serving in his sight the Lord himself and our Saviour with holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. The Holy Spirit has shown in Zechariah and all the other pious prophets that this is the happiness that comes closest to the kingdom of Christ.

In the meantime, pious reader, enjoy the spirit and truly episcopal intention which are so clearly shown in this speech of the bishop of Winchester. Learn from it the meaning of true obedience of all estates in the church of Christ. Pray to the Lord to stimulate similar teachers of obedience everywhere in great numbers, to grant them an increase of learning of this kind, that it may flourish everywhere. Let us come together at last. Let us be truly united and gladly profess all holiness and piety under one head and king, under our supreme bishop and Lord Jesus Christ, whom every tongue ought to profess as the Lord.<sup>18</sup> To him be glory forever. Farewell.

W.F. Capito,

C. Hedio,

M. Bucer and the other Strasbourg ministers.

**Letter 593: 17 January 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:76–80, Ep. 728. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito does not have Bullinger's letter at hand and replies from

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16 King David was described as a man after God's own heart (see 1 Sam. 13:14 and Acts 13:22).

17 Cf. Psalm 72:2.

18 Phil. 2:11.

memory. Discord favours Satan's plan. Capito and Zwingli were in agreement and pursued the same goals, inspired by Erasmus. Capito honours the memory of Zwingli even though they had some disagreements, specifically concerning the policy that led to the defeat at Kappel and concerning Capito's attitude toward the Anabaptists. Now that a general council is in the offing, it is important for the evangelicals to have a meeting in spite of their differences of opinion. Bullinger need not worry about concessions to the Catholics. [Henry VIII] professes the gospel teaching. [Stephen Gardiner], the bishop of Winchester, warns in his tractate [*De vera obedientia*, see above, Ep. 592] against the power of the pope and any concessions to him. Others, including Bucer, are of the same opinion, as is evident from his preface to the reader [i.e., the preface to *De vera obedientia*?]. Bucer published Bullinger's letters in a friendly spirit. Capito is surprised to hear that some of his letters to Zwingli are still extant. He talked about this matter with Zwingli's widow and his friends and was assured that they had been burned. Capito has tried his best to deal with the exiles from Solothurn (*Solothurner Banditen*) in response to Bullinger's request. While in the realm of Wilhelm [von Fürstenberg], they published an apologetic pamphlet in Augsburg, [*Warhaffte entschuldigung der Neün Mannen*, December 1535], expressing surprise at Zurich for having turned hostile to them. Their complaint is vain and will soon be forgotten. The council of Strasbourg would help them if they acted within the law, but none of the exiles has come here. An [unnamed] person has become involved. The exiles are rather rigid in their attitude, but Capito hopes they will relent.

Capito regrets the danger incurred by [Guillaume] Farel and the people of Geneva. A rumour is circulating that [Francis I] has hired mercenaries. The French king has offered his assistance to German evangelicals, which is ironic in view of his persecution of French evangelicals. They place their trust in the English and the arguments in [Stephen Gardiner's] book sent by [Jakob] Bedrot. Capito reiterates the importance of a meeting between evangelicals. If Bullinger does not want to participate, it will not impact their personal friendship.

**Letter 593a: 25 January [1536], Strasbourg, Capito to Margaret Blaurer**

The manuscript of this letter is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 41/229. For Margaret Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 194, note 21.

Greetings. There will be a most respectable meeting of the brothers, like a

grave *Fasttag*.<sup>1</sup> I am occupied with the letters of certain men, which I have kept back. Oh, my dearest sister, see to it that Johannes Zwick<sup>2</sup> is present. We shall be there [in Basel] in spite of the difficult times, or rather in spite of our poor health. I know your loving heart will be delighted when you hear from Zwick on his return how much success the Lord grants to those who look up to him. Nothing evil can come of it, only much good, when we meet Christ, for whom alone we have regard. May the Lord save you. Farewell. 25 January, Strasbourg.

Wolfgang Capito, yours in the Lord.

**Letter 593b: 27/8 January 1536, [Constance], The Constance Preachers to the Preachers Assembled in Basel**

Printed in HBBW 6:101–5, Ep. 737. Capito and Bucer were the representatives of Strasbourg at the meeting of the evangelical Swiss cantons, Mulhouse, and Strasbourg, in the city of Basel, 31 January–4 February 1536, and thus among those addressed here (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).

[*Summary*]: The Constance preachers received an invitation to the colloquy on 25 January. Because of the short notice, the city council decided against sending delegates. They are therefore putting their views in writing. They do not think new formulations are necessary for the concord with Luther since the confession submitted in Augsburg [in 1530] was, as far as doctrine is concerned, mutually recognized and has not been changed since. They recommend to the Swiss preachers that they join the concordat on that basis. If there are any doubts left about the Sacramentarian question, they leave the matter to their fellow preachers. While they have always considered the Lutherans their brothers, they cannot envisage a concord with the pope. There is no need to discuss a general concord at this point. Any agreement will come about through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the gospel, not through uniformity of rites. They are desirous of mutual consultation and admonition, however. They send special greetings to Bucer and urge those present to protect the faith and maintain charity.

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- 1 I.e., a day of fasting and prayer. For the upcoming meeting of the Swiss and Alsatian preachers in Basel, 31 January–4 February 1536, see above, Ep. 585, note 8.
- 2 For Johannes Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192 headnote. Zwick did not receive permission from the city council of Constance to attend the meeting in Basel (see below, Epp. 593b, 597–8).

**Letter 594: [After 4 February 1536, Strasbourg], Capito and Martin Bucer to Martin Luther**

This is the first letter that Capito and Bucer wrote to Luther immediately following the Basel Colloquy at the end of January/beginning of February 1536 (see above, Ep. 585, note 8). At that meeting, mention was made of the negotiations that would ultimately lead to the Wittenberg Concord of 1536. In this letter, Capito and Bucer inform Luther that the Swiss were coming around to his way of thinking. They underscore (and indeed, exaggerate) the agreement between the Swiss and Luther, and downplay the obvious Zwinglian elements of the First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession that was drawn up in the wake of the Basel Colloquy. Bucer, as well as Capito, hoped that any unresolved differences might be settled and concord achieved at a future colloquy attended by representatives from both camps.

On 27 November 1535, Luther had suggested to the Strasbourg clergy that a meeting between Lutherans and southern German/Swiss preachers be held after Easter 1536 (see above, Ep. 584 and HBBW 6, Ep. 716). On 25 January 1536, he informed Elector Johann Friedrich of the need for such a meeting, suggested Eisenach as the site, and declared his readiness to cover his own expenses (WABr 7:353–4, Ep. 2290). Two days later, the Elector responded to Luther, granting him permission to attend a colloquy at Eisenach (WABr 7:355, Ep. 2291). In February, Capito and Bucer wrote that they were waiting for a summons to the proposed meeting. On account of illness, Luther did not finalize the arrangements until 25 March, when he sent a letter to Bucer, suggesting 14 May as a date for meeting in Eisenach (WABr 7:378–9, Ep. 3001, and below, Epp. 594, 602, 606–10).

Following this announcement, Bucer and Capito set about convincing the Swiss and southern Germans to attend. Capito and Bucer hoped that they, as the chief ministers from Strasbourg, could mediate between the opposing camps of the Lutherans and Zwinglians (see below, Ep. 600). Capito repeatedly expressed a desire for the Swiss to attend the meeting (see below, Epp. 599–601, 604–6). On 1 May, representatives from several Swiss cities met in Aarau where they decided not to attend the meeting (see below, Ep. 608 and HBBW 6, Ep. 813, note 5). Bullinger, the city council of Basel, and Johannes Schwebel in Zweibrücken personally wrote to Capito offering the same excuses for their refusal to attend as did the delegates at Aarau, namely, the distance involved and the lack of time (see below, Epp. 607, 609, and 611). The main reason for their refusal, however, was the fear that Luther would be too dominant in Eisenach (WABr 7:406–8, Ep. 3019). Melancthon therefore favoured cancelling the meeting. Because of Luther's health the meeting had to be postponed to 21 May and was ultimately moved to Wittenberg (see below, Epp. 610 and 612).

The Lutheran representatives at Wittenberg were Luther himself, Melancthon, Justus Jonas, Caspar Cruciger, and Johannes Bugenhagen, along with Justus Menius (Eisenach) and Friedrich Myconius (Gotha). Pomerania and Prussia did not send representatives. The southern Germans were represented by Bucer and Capito (Strasbourg), Martin Frecht (Ulm), Jacob Otter (Esslingen), Boniface Wolfhart and Wolfgang Musculus (Augsburg), Gervasius Schuler (Memmingen), Johannes Bernhardt (Frankfurt), Martin Germanus (Fürfeld in Kraichgau), Johannes Zwick (Constance), and Matthäus Alber and Johannes Schradin (Reutlingen). The strict Lutherans, Andreas Osiander, Johannes Brenz, and Erhard Schnepf, did not attend, although Bucer had been urged by Luther to invite them (see below, Ep. 603, and his letter to Bucer from 25 March).

Shortly before the meeting, however, the prospects for concord were seriously jeopardized by the deliberate reprinting of Zwingli's *Ratio fidei* (Zurich, [1530]) under the title *Christianae fidei ... brevis et clara expositio*, edited by Leo Jud ([Zurich], 1536), along with a collection of letters by Zwingli and Oecolampadius, *Oecolampadii et Zwinglii epistolarum libri quatuor...* (Basel, 1536). The collection of letters had a preface by Bucer (f. [12]r) that was intended to appease both the Zwinglians and Lutherans, but ended up having the opposite effect. The publication of the texts irritated the Wittenberg reformers and cast doubt on the relationship between the theological allies. Reports from Myconius and Menius, however, helped to allay suspicions. On the morning of 22 May, Capito and Bucer met initially with Luther in order to set the agenda. They also presented the First Helvetic Confession to Luther and his colleagues (for the confession, see above, Ep. 585, note 8). Over the next few days, they discussed baptism, the power of the keys, education, and the government's power over ecclesiastical affairs. Discussions drew to a close on Ascension Day, 25 May. Melancthon was assigned the task of drafting the Wittenberg Concord, which was discussed on the afternoon of 26 May. The Wittenberg Concord was signed on 29 May 1536 by all the participants except Johannes Zwick of Constance, who did not have the necessary authorization.<sup>1</sup> At the conclusion of the meeting, services were held in a celebratory spirit. For a modern edition of the Wittenberg Concord, see BDS 6/1:114–34.

At the meeting Luther had affirmed that unbelievers (*impii*) received Christ when partaking of the Lord's Supper, while Bucer denied it. In the end, the participants agreed to a formula that distinguished between unbelievers (*impii*) and the unworthy (*indigni*). Although compromises were made on both sides, the Wittenberg Concord has a strongly Lutheran character, particularly with respect to the 'real presence' and the issue of *manducatio indignorum* (i.e.,

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1 See Brecht 3, pp. 48–51; Greschat, 135–9.

that even the unworthy receive Christ in his real presence). Therefore, the most significant outcome of the negotiations was the settlement of the Sacramentarian controversy almost entirely in Luther's sense. Although the Concord was signed by all of the participants except for Zwick of Constance, it was not formally adopted at this point. For ratification, the representatives had to submit the document to their fellow preachers and the authorities at home (see below, Ep. 612 headnote).

Printed in WABr 7:357–9, Ep. 2293.

[*Summary*]: Bucer and Capito are expecting Luther's summons to a meeting once he has obtained the consent of the Elector (see headnote). They attended a meeting in Basel on 1 February with representatives from the evangelical towns of Zurich, Bern, Schaffhausen, St Gallen, Mulhouse, and Biel. They agree that the sacraments are not only symbols of their communion with God, but also symbols representing the gifts of the Lord: rebirth in baptism, the body and blood of the Lord in the Supper. They reject the concept of *opus operatum* [i.e., the efficacy of the rite itself] and stress that salvation is by the grace of God alone and that the sacrament is received through faith alone. They assured their fellow ministers that this agreed with Luther's beliefs (see below, Ep. 594a). The ministers returned to their congregations, confident that they would subscribe to these beliefs. Bern has 204 parishes, Zurich more than 100, Basel approximately 30. There are other evangelical parishes in the region of Glarus and Appenzell, in Thurgau, in Toggenburg, and in the Graubünden, although these regions are not universally evangelical. They ask Luther to speed up preparations for a meeting.

**Letter 594a: 5 February 1536, Basel, The Preachers Assembled in Basel to the Preachers in Appenzell**

Printed in HBBW 6:118–19, Ep. 743. For the context, see above, Epp. 585, note 8, and 593b.

[*Summary*]: The assembled preachers report that they have concluded their meeting. The pastors of Appenzell may find out details from the St Gallen delegation. They did not issue invitations to the pastors of Appenzell, Glarus, and Thurgau because their governments are not sufficiently committed to the evangelicals. The purpose of the meeting was a concord with the Lutherans. On the request of the Strasbourgers, they formulated their doctrine in a way acceptable to the Lutherans. They called baptism 'the water of regeneration' (*regenerationis lavacrum*) and the Lord's Supper 'the body and blood of Christ.' They ask the pastors to support the concord to allow them to overcome the papists.

**Letter 595: 6 February 1536, Basel, Capito and Martin Bucer to Joachim Vadianus**

Printed in VadBr 5:305–6, Ep. 874. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: They have spoken with [Johann Valentin] Furtmüller and urged him to abandon the Catholic priesthood. He appears to be willing to do so and to take up the ministry. They call on Vadianus to arrange for his election, perhaps in the Dominican parish, and assure ministers an income that will allow them to concentrate on their task rather than obliging them to engage in physical labour. If Furtmüller stays with them for two months, they have hopes of strengthening his beliefs and training him in the correct administration of the sacraments. They praise Vadianus' religious zeal. They have also approached his colleague in this matter and have received assurances from him. They hope for a general meeting of evangelical ministers to settle all disagreements, which give them a bad name.

**Letter 595a: [11/12 February 1536, Strasbourg], The Pastors and Preachers [of Strasbourg] to [the City Council of Strasbourg]**

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 69, no. 45. The exact date is unclear. The manuscript bears the notation '12 February 1536.' The catalogue description for 1AST 69, however, gives the date as 11 February 1536.

Strict, steadfast, circumspect, honourable, wise lords! Paul Volz, formerly abbot at Hugshofen,<sup>1</sup> has for some years been employed by Your Lordships as preacher and has also preached at St Nicolaus-in-Undis to the nuns and

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Volz (c. 1480–1544) matriculated at Tübingen in 1496 and then continued his studies at the Benedictine cloister of Schuttern, near Offenburg. In 1512, he was appointed abbot of Hugshofen (modern-day Honcourt, Alsace). He was an active member of the Sélestat literary society, befriending both Rhenanus and Erasmus. In 1530, he was assigned as preacher and chaplain to the nuns in the cloister of St Nicolaus-in-Undis in Strasbourg, where he built up a popular following. He showed an independence of mind, however, and was more conservative than the Strasbourg reformers in some respects, but also deeply influenced by the spiritualism of Schwenckfeld. Because of his persistent refusal to sign the Wittenberg Concord, he was removed from his pulpit on 13 January 1537. Thanks to the efforts of John Calvin, Volz was reconciled with the Strasbourg reformers and made a full recantation in July 1539. He was again installed at St Nicolaus-in-Undis and later permitted to preach in the cathedral.

other people there. For this service the Honourable Council granted him 30 gulden in living expenses, on which he has drawn until now. It has come to pass, however, that many people hear his sermons, which is not without benefit since he preaches our Lord Christ faithfully. His burden of work therefore is increased, so that he has to spend more time and effort on planning his work, which includes reprimands and gentle admonitions. Thirty gulden is not enough to compensate him, especially in his old age and ill health. Furthermore, he used to take his meals with the prior of the Wilhelmites,<sup>2</sup> who recently fell ill with the smallpox, and so the pious old man is reluctant to eat with him, and rightly so. At his age and being in poor health he would also need a servant, who could lay a fire in the stove and serve him in other ways. One ought to take pity on him, for if he had thought of his own interests rather than those of Christ our Lord, if he had remained an abbot, he would have been amply compensated according to carnal standards. Thus it is our urgent request to grant him a sum that is appropriate and will allow him to keep house, provide meals for himself, and look after his bodily needs in a fitting manner; also that he may be looked after and be kept from danger. Thus he may live quietly in his old age and keep up his work longer and end his days in the service of God and our common city. For it is our goal for the Honourable Council to train young people as teachers and servants of the church. If the teacher's profession suffers, it spells the ruin of the whole religion and thereafter every good thing. Rather it is necessary that young people grow up to serve and be provided for so that they may serve for a long time and fruitfully. A man's health declines, whereas his teaching load increases, and so Your Lordships will have to consider what provisions are needed. We are not asking for anything excessive. May each of you consider what is an appropriate salary for such a man, and what is the minimum he needs for housekeeping. Thus you will please the Almighty. May he grant you long life, for his own glory.

Your Honours' willing servants, the pastor and preachers.

**Letter 596: 14 February 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Marguerite [de Lodieuse]**

This is the dedicatory letter to Capito's *Precationes christianae ad imitationem Psalmorum compositae & aliae quaedam, interiores pietatis affectus exprimentes* (Strasbourg: [W. Rihel], 1536) ff. [a1v]–a4v. The book was popular and was

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2 Identity unknown.

reprinted several times in the sixteenth century. An English translation by Richard Taverner appeared without Capito's letter under the title *An epitome of the Psalmes, or briefe meditacions upon the same, with diverse other moste christian prayers* (N.p., 1539). For a description of the *Precationes*, see P. Althaus, *Forschungen zur evangelischen Gebetsliteratur* (Gütersloh, 1927), 16, 30–1. A modern edition of Capito's letter can be found in Jean Rott and Olivier Millet, 'Miettes historiques strasbourgeoises,' in *Actes du Colloque Guillaume Farel: Neuchâtel 29 septembre–1<sup>er</sup> octobre 1980*, edited by Pierre Barthel et al. (Geneva et al., 1983), vol. 1, 274–5. For the identification of the addressee, see *ibidem*, 270–2.

Little is known about the dedicatee, except that she was a French refugee in Strasbourg. The writer is also known from a letter to Wibrandis Rosenblatt, Capito's wife, and to Elisabeth Silbereisen, the wife of Bucer, written in 1538 (see Millet, Ep. 699). Marguerite de Lodieuse may be the same woman as the unnamed French female refugee whose arrival in Strasbourg is mentioned in a letter from Conrad Gesner to Bullinger, dated 27 December 1534 (see HBBW 4, Ep. 497, ll. 14–17 and 49). By February 1536, the date of Capito's dedicatory letter, it seems that Marguerite was back in France, where she continued to occupy herself in comforting French evangelicals suffering from persecution.

Wolfgang Fabritius Capito to N, a woman committed to Christ.

Grace and peace in the Lord, Marguerite, most noble among the noble gems.<sup>1</sup> The printer Rihel<sup>2</sup> decided to publish these prayers in Latin. They are partly translated from German, partly written in Latin for people experienced in prayer. I wished to dedicate them to you that you may use them to arouse or examine your spirit, for most of them are written in the vein of David and with the power of Christ. The Spirit is the one who works in a person's prayers, and no one can acquire that divine experience by human industry. Nevertheless it was the Lord's will to impart to the person meditating on his Word a spirit to begin with, so that the recipient may strengthen the gift in equal measure. Thus the supplicant may successfully adapt the meditations of one man according to the Word to others similar in affect and occasion, animating and encouraging others to pray on account of the similarity and the likeness of their circumstances.

In this manner, it comes to pass that such rivulets of pious and afflicted souls, who flee to the Lord in this time of crisis, generously and frequently water the arid corners of their heart with the fountains of David or rather

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1 An allusion to her name, which is derived from the Latin word for pearl (*margarita*).

2 For Wendelin Rihel, the Strasbourg printer, see above, Ep. 514 headnote.

his plentiful rivers, for they are intimately suited to the mind of supplicants in our time. Indeed, it recently happened that people who bore the cross of Christ implored God's assistance and obtained what they prayed for. For you are not the only one who has suffered violence at the hands of the enemies, even if you are special because your upbringing has been genteel. You were married to a most agreeable and successful spouse,<sup>3</sup> enjoyed every comfort and a most generous husband, bore tender children and a newborn baby,<sup>4</sup> the unique hope of his family, and left your fatherland behind for Christ, going into exile to a people whose language you do not speak.

Indeed, the majority of our people may be beneath you in family and fortune, yet they are your equals in spirit, suffering danger courageously. Quite a few of the prayers have been written by a witness to Christ, who is in prison and in custody and thought he would be executed any time soon.<sup>5</sup> There is written testimony also by others who suffered pangs of conscience at other times and in other prisons. It is likely, therefore, in my opinion that you will read this and recognize your old emotions when, burning with desire for your family, you prayed to Christ to allow you to enjoy both him and them. When you received the sad (but false) news affirming that your mother, husband, children, relatives, and all your family had died by the sword of their enemy and persecutor,<sup>6</sup> you fully commended yourself to Christ, with great tranquillity and hopes for a better future, or rather faith in the providence of the Father.

At that time, you most piously [pondered] in your heart, 'Oh Lord, I know that every hair on my head is numbered for you, Father,' etc.<sup>7</sup> And you will confirm that there are many such prayers for minds resigned to their fate, for as they were caught up and in similar duress as you, they consigned themselves and all their possessions to the Lord, not without the most bitter agony of conscience. That indeed is death itself: to live as if one were dead to oneself and one's possessions. Just as everything has its season, so what is seasonable must be observed among the manifold emotions of the supplicants. Therefore, I have taken care to collect everything in an index, so that readers may find more easily what may bring to life the embers of the spirit, according to

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3 Identity unknown.

4 Identity unknown.

5 Millet proposes that the reference here may be to Caspar Schwenckfeld or one of his followers (Rott and Millet, *ut supra*, 271, note 25).

6 The identities of these martyrs are unknown, but they may well have been victims of the persecution of evangelicals in the wake of the *Affaire des Placards* in the autumn of 1534.

7 Matt. 10:30.

their feelings. For one is affected by physical danger, another by danger to the spirit, yet another person's mind is filled with terror of conscience, and another enjoys spiritual consolation, and so on, in all other emotions.

For there are formulas for praying, even a method of praying, that make us realize who we should be and that allow us to recall prayers more effectively. For that purpose, any scriptural passage works equally well. They also have the advantage that they practically guarantee God's promise, so that they become prayers of faith. Conversely, a prayer will be carnal if it is tossed uncertainly on the waves of our thoughts without the words of [God's] promise or command. For how can I hope to be heard without using the words of the Lord's promise? 'Whatever you ask the Father in my name will be given you.'<sup>8</sup> This is an excellent promise, and there are many passages like this one, which raise my hope: for example, 'Ask and it will be given to you';<sup>9</sup> 'Call upon me in the day of trouble';<sup>10</sup> and 'Pray without ceasing.'<sup>11</sup> This is the command of him whom we must obey.

He gives us the Spirit to approach the throne of grace as supplicants.<sup>12</sup> For without his command, who would dare to appear before the eyes of the divine majesty with such a lowly mind? And who could hope to obtain anything without [God's] promise, when he contemplates his own worth? Thus this book will be most useful to you because you have experienced both situations, and you are now without the help of an adviser; yet you are very much in need of advice, lest, once you return to happier circumstances, you are overcome with complacency, harmful trust in the flesh, and blasphemous contempt of God. This gift from me, your host, will urge you to keep on praying and meditating with fortitude, and once your spirit is practised in these habits, it will teach you the whole truth, will encourage you to do your duty, and animate you, being the most truthful exhortation, and indeed instruction to cultivate the new covenant. In this manner you call zealously on the Lord even when you are in peril of being dangerously courted by the world. You will be immune to the contagion of the world through God and will thank him like your celestial father. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, and the triune God – may he guard you, your husband, children, family and all your friends in Christ, us and all pious men anywhere. Amen. Strasbourg, 14 February 1536.

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8 John 14:13.

9 Matt. 7:7 and Luke 11:9.

10 Psalm 50:15.

11 1 Thess. 5:17.

12 Cf. Heb. 4:16.

**Letter 596a: 28 February 1536, [Bern], The City Council of Bern to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The following letter concerns the efforts by the city council of Bern to find a preacher to succeed Berchtold Haller, who had passed away on 25 February. The council therefore sent Simon Sulzer (see above, Ep. 534, note 18) to Strasbourg to extend an invitation to Sebastian Meyer (see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3), who had worked in Bern a decade earlier (see HBBW 6, Ep. 772). In spite of Meyer's old age and frail health, Capito and Bucer agreed to permit Meyer to fill the vacancy for a year or two until someone younger, such as Sulzer, could be trained to fill the position permanently (see below, Ep. 617). Markus Bertschi, a preacher in Basel, was also considered as a candidate, but no formal proposal was made to him (see HBBW 6, Ep. 766, note 12).

A copy of this manuscript is in Bern SA, A III 24 (D.Miss.b W), pp. 208–9.

First, our friendly greetings and best wishes. Pious, honourable, highly and well learned, and especially propitious dear sirs and good friends!

A few days ago our loyal brother and apostle of God's Word, Berchtold Haller, left this valley of tears<sup>1</sup> and joined the Lord to live in eternal peace and immortality.<sup>2</sup> This has caused much grief in our hearts, and we trust, when we beg the Lord, he will complete the work begun by him<sup>3</sup> through his vessels and his Holy Spirit, and grant us another minister to replace our loyal preacher who has died – a pastor useful to our church and suited for such duties. Therefore we have made haste to send our dear, loyal Simon Sulzer, the bearer of this letter, whom you know and who knows you on account of your good deeds, to seek with your help a solid, God-fearing, learned man in your region, who could further God's business and our community. We furthermore beg you kindly to consider the good of our church and to think of the task in the spirit of seeing God's work progress, which has been carefully planted and begun here through you and others, that it may, equipped with good workers, continue to improve and grow, producing fruit in the employ of the master of the vineyard. Accept our eternal gratitude and, for the rest, [...]<sup>4</sup> We will always be obliged to you. Given on 28 February 1536.

The mayor and city council of Bern.

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1 The German has 'Jammerthal' (valley of tears), which translates 'valley of Baca' (cf. Ps. 84:6), meaning either 'weeping' or 'balsam trees.'

2 For Haller, see CWC 2, Ep. 290, note 71.

3 Cf. Phil. 1:6.

4 The reading is unclear.

**Letter 597: 7 March 1536, Constance, Johannes Zwick to Capito and Martin Bucer**

The following two letters were written to explain why Constance sent no representatives to the colloquy in Basel between the Swiss cities and Strasbourg (31 January–4 February; see above, Epp. 585, note 8; 588, note 4; and 593b) and more specifically why Zwick was prevented from attending.

The autograph original of this letter is no longer extant. The translation is of the transcript in TB 9:35–6. For Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192 headnote.

To Dr Wolfgang Capito and Martin Bucer, his dearest friends, respected teachers and most famous brothers in the Lord, greetings and the peace of Christ.

I thank Christ who is the author of all good things<sup>1</sup> that the meeting in Basel<sup>2</sup> was successful, best and dearest of all men. He knows how I thirst for his glory and whatever is suited to promoting it. You are angry with me because I was not there, and my absence was interpreted as a desire to stay away from the meeting of the saints and to object to the most pious congregation in a manner that was not at all Christian.<sup>3</sup> But that is not my attitude, and you are angry with an innocent man. How I wished, by God, not only to see you in person but also to see Basel, which is a second fatherland to the exile. There God captured me after I had enjoyed bodily freedom for a long time. Whatever good he had decreed from eternity to bestow on me in his mercy, clearly came to me in Basel.<sup>4</sup> I need not mention my great desire to see many of my old friends. If nothing else, my eagerness to learn and my desire to hear the most learned men would have motivated me to undertake the journey. But what can you do if fortune does not go along with your wishes? They did not write a private letter [of invitation] to me, but an open letter written jointly by the brothers in Basel, and they asked the magistrates

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1 Cf. Heb. 11:2.

2 See above, headnote.

3 Capito's letter to Zwick, in which he chastised Zwick for not attending, is no longer extant. In a letter from Zwick to Bullinger and Leo Jud, however, dated 23 February 1536, Zwick explains, 'Capito is rather annoyed with me because I kept away. But, good God, even if I had been physically well enough to go, it would not have been proper to go anywhere against the will of the authorities. But I shall make my excuses to this excellent man as diligently as I can' (HBBW 6, Ep. 751, ll. 9–12).

4 A reference to Zwick's life as a Catholic before his conversion to the evangelical cause while studying in Basel, where he matriculated on 7 July 1521.

to send a representative.<sup>5</sup> Thus I certainly had to wait whether that legation would be entrusted to me or another of the brothers. Certainly the brothers had to wait and see what the magistrates wanted from us. When they commanded me to stay home, I could not attempt anything against their will; I could not even have gone against the will of the brothers. Since, then, I had no mandate either from the magistrates or from the brothers to go, and fate was not on my side, it was not proper for me at all to prepare my departure on my own authority. I would have aroused not a few suspicions both among the brothers and among the magistrates, if I had gone to Basel without a mandate in my own name. No one would have accepted such a decision if it was not made on the basis of public authorization. It would have been a very unbecoming example of arrogance to attend on my own authority while [there was a chance] that another man might have attended the meeting as an emissary of our magistracy. Who would not have called my presence there utterly disgraceful? Therefore, I had to show consideration for my church and for my own name and abstained completely from such an example of dishonourable conduct. Furthermore, your messenger came too late with his request, that is, two days after the messenger of our city had left, and he found me in poor health.<sup>6</sup> For during that whole time I had health problems and medical concerns, so that I could not at all look after my church function, not to speak of undertaking a journey.

Although I have given you my promise and obey you as a disciple does his teacher, respected Capito, you will not deny that I must nevertheless serve my church, which I lead not alone but with many others. Certainly I could not speak in matters that concern the community or do anything on my own authority without being blamed for great boldness and shamelessness. Have I not always kept my word, most sacred men? Three years ago, if I am not mistaken, when there was talk of a meeting of the Swiss brothers in Zurich to deal with some business that endangered concord and concerned the Sacramentarian question, I went immediately to Zurich, and when I found no such meeting, I nevertheless explained everything to the people of Zurich most faithfully, so that they lacked nothing further.<sup>7</sup> Afterwards I

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5 On 21 January, Myconius wrote to Zwick on behalf of the elders and pastors of Basel, inviting him and the rest of the Constance pastors to the colloquy in Basel (see Zurich ZB, Ms F 81, 353).

6 See above, note 3.

7 According to two letters to Bullinger from September 1532, Zwick visited Zurich briefly in the second half of September 1532, but the purpose of his visit is not explained (see HBBW 2, Epp. 130 and 138).

even gave you an account of my journey and testified in my letter to what I had achieved. You highly commended my faithful and diligent action.

On this occasion too, what request of yours have I ignored, dearest teachers and brothers? What have I neglected to do that could be done by me? You asked that I continue in my work at Zurich, that is, keep them from publishing an untimely apologia and afterwards from disparaging a colloquy. I promised you that I would look after this as best I could. I neglected nothing. I wrote to them as diligently as I could (for I could not write learnedly, as you know).<sup>8</sup> I exhorted them in this manner, if I remember: to abstain from apologiae, to make sure not to disdain their brothers, to abstain from hateful letters, to be prepared to meet and discuss matters; not to be severe during the colloquy, and if they objected to what was suspect, to do it without condemning what was sincere, etc.

When I heard that a meeting of the Swiss brothers was being organized in Basel, I urged the people in Zurich not to pass you over on that account.<sup>9</sup> They rejected this, giving firm reasons. I countered with other reasons, and urged them over and over again, and pressed on until I won them over. To leave nothing undone, I even wrote anxiously to the brothers in Basel and beseeched them with many words over and over again to give a date for the meeting. I obtained from the people of Zurich and Basel what I wanted. No doubt you were called to Basel on my initiative. And these days Bullinger wrote to me, thanking me warmly for not giving up and for arguing in Zurich that you should be summoned.<sup>10</sup> The Lord heeded my anxious heart, for he knows how greatly I feared you would be overlooked. Finally, most sacred men, when recently you wanted to know two things from me and I could not reply in my own name, I urged the brothers with whom I share certain affairs in our church, to satisfy your request and to indicate their inten-

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8 See Zwick's letter to Bullinger, 3 December 1535 (HBBW 5, Ep. 696).

9 Cf. Zwick's letter to Bullinger, 10 January 1536, in which he proposes to invite Bucer and Capito to a meeting in Basel in order to guard against later reproaches (HBBW 6, Ep. 720); and Zwick to Bullinger, 19 January 1536, in which Zwick writes that since the Strasbourg preachers were urging him to get a hearing before the Zurich preachers, he advises, despite his doubts of the usefulness of such a conversation, to invite Bucer to the proposed colloquy in Basel (HBBW 6, Ep. 730). On 21 January 1536, therefore, Bullinger invited Bucer to Basel on the recommendation of the Constance preachers and with the approval of Leo Jud (HBBW 6, Ep. 733).

10 This letter is not extant, but see Bullinger's letter to Bucer, thanking him for the service he rendered to the Zurich church at the meeting in Basel, 18 February 1536 (HBBW 6, Ep. 748).

tions and explain what they asked me to say in their name at the meeting. I even achieved that, and in such a manner that you can require nothing more from us. For just as we once approved the apologia attached to the Confession as being in agreement with the Word of God,<sup>11</sup> we still approve it today and we would want you to argue for it more than for anything else, partly because Luther and the Elector<sup>12</sup> have long been satisfied with it, partly not to necessitate suddenly or continuously the approval of many new things. And certainly, if I may say so freely, you would face fewer suspicions in this matter if you did not continuously urge everybody to approve of your teaching. Yet your teaching is certainly praised by many and will be praised, but it would not benefit your reputation if you demanded that praise always as if it were your right. Pardon your disciple, I beg you, for speaking freely with his superiors and teachers. Concerning the journey to the synod, I let you be the judges: is it right to travel in a public cause without the approval of the magistrates? If you believe that those things are completely in our hand, you are far off the mark.<sup>13</sup> We put some pressure on them, but in such a manner that we do not come across as authoritarian, and if we realize that they are not favourably inclined toward the matter, we readily withdraw, lest we harm by our importunity the affairs of Christ and the church in more serious concerns. We must take care not to irritate them through our fault with our mistimed attempts, and vice versa ensure that they do not sometimes take advantage of our modesty and respect.

Now I beg you both, dearest fathers, teachers, and brothers, not to be angry with me for not obeying you. Do not think that I am against colloquies among the brothers. How could I do that in the Spirit of God? I am not entirely in favour of synods or councils, as they are now called. I show a Christian spirit toward the colloquies among the brothers or against the enemies of the Truth, but in such a manner that I regret not to be able to do anything more than being a listener. Indeed, there are certain things that spoil the colloquies of the brothers. If they dominated the colloquies, it would be better not to have them. May Christ allow us to apply our minds in their proper

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11 I.e., the Tetrapolitan Confession, which was co-signed by Strasbourg, Memmingen, Lindau, and Constance, and presented to Charles V at the Diet of Augsburg in July 1530 as an alternative to the Augsburg Confession (see CWC 2, Epp. 414 and 416). It was published, along with Bucer's *Apologia*, in August 1531. For a modern edition of the Tetrapolitan Confession and *Apologia*, see BDS 3:13–318.

12 Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1532–47).

13 Literally, 'err by a whole sky' (Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.1.49).

place and to the proper things, and make them suitable to serve the church. Invoke Christ on my behalf, lest I neglect anything that pertains to his glory, and I in turn will do so on your behalf. May everything you institute for the church be to its benefit and for the good of everyone, and may it turn out well in the name of Christ, for you do not ask for anything in your hearts except his sanctification. Farewell in Christ Jesus and be convinced that I am very keen on your friendship, and wish for nothing more anxiously than your continued love and commendation to the Lord. Farewell again. Constance, 7 March 1536. Thomas<sup>14</sup> and Konrad<sup>15</sup> ask me to send you many greetings.

Yours completely in the Lord,  
Johannes Zwick.

**Letter 598: 7 March 1536, Constance, The Preachers of Constance to Capito and Martin Bucer**

For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 597. The original of this manuscript is no longer extant. The translation is of the text in TB 9:37–9.

The grace and peace of the Lord, most respected and dearest brothers in the Lord. We have learned from your letter to our Zwick,<sup>1</sup> among other things, of your exceptional benevolence toward us and our church, the ardent zeal of your charity, and your special concern that we for some reason might not be sufficiently supportive of the most desirous concord of the churches. In this matter we wish to reassure you and inform you of our intentions. There are two points in which you ask for our considered reply: first, you ask whether we still keep to our statement on concord with Luther<sup>2</sup> and to the *Oeconomia ad Monasterienses*<sup>3</sup> written here in the meeting of the Swabian brothers at the end of the year 1534;<sup>4</sup> second, you exhort us to go together with the bishops of the other churches to the future general synod (if it will come to pass).

Let this be our response to the first point: When over the course of these past years that unfortunate conflict arose among scholars of this region about

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14 For Thomas Blaurer, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 6.

15 For Konrad Zwick, Jr., see above, Ep. 469, note 4.

1 For Johannes Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1.

2 For the Stuttgart Concord of 2 August 1534, see above, Ep. 537, note 16.

3 I.e., Martin Bucer's *Bericht auß der heyligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534). See above, Ep. 527a, and Ep. 588a, note 4.

4 For the meeting at Constance in December 1534, see above, Ep. 545 headnote.

the business of the Last Supper, it heated up to the point where all moderation was put aside and the affair appeared to be carried in a spirit of contention and without control of passions (for in published writings and in sermons seasoned with the bitter and acrid salt of abuse the affair became infamous in the world and left no pious man without anguish over so many princes and peoples and nations being alienated from joining the gospel through this controversy). In these more than tragic evils we experienced the great and usual munificence of our God in that there was never any controversy about this matter either among ourselves or between us and others. Rather, we were completely unanimous and diligently exhorted our churches not to be offended by this inauspicious contest between scholars, not to abandon the sound teaching of the gospel, and not to slander anyone rashly or pass judgment, but instead to seek peace and love before everything else and to pray in unison to the heavenly father to give this tragedy a fortunate turn. With the same diligence we taught them the sincere, simple, and beneficial way of celebrating the Lord's Supper, which we believe lies principally in this:

We ponder this institution of Christ and remember the incomparable benevolence and the promises of our God together with the most ample merits of Christ obtained for us, as he triumphed over our enemies through his death on the cross. This we firmly believe and give thanks for it in our hearts. We know that anyone who attends the Supper in this spirit will receive Christ himself, wholly and truly, as he is truly present in the Supper. He lives in them and once and for all makes them the adopted children of God, nourishing them and giving them life not only through the bread and wine, but also through his own body and blood. Conversely, those who abuse that holy Supper and approach it without faith, provide for their eternal damnation by eating it.<sup>5</sup> This is what we teach in good faith and with the greatest diligence. We have prudently rejected anything that was doubtful and any conflicting opinions among the people. This was of great benefit to our churches. Whatever transpired about us could not be met with anything other than approval by our magistrates.

We also deserve your trust and therefore recall to your memory the events of the Diet of Augsburg, when you dealt with the article about the Supper freely and at length. Our representatives found it hard to agree on this formula in the Confession, for no other reason, of course, than that they asserted that both their lords and preachers had taken great care not to get involved in this dispute. This protest of our people prompted you to change

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5 Cf. 1 Cor. 11:27–9.

some things and make the proposed article clearer and more succinct in such a manner that it would not only agree well with your and our beliefs, but also that the confession would not even displease Luther and the Elector.<sup>6</sup> But you yourself know how much good that change did us. From that time on we took courage from our great hope that once the apologiae and the confessions were published, taken up and approved by both sides, an alliance would be formed and thereafter a strong concord. Indeed we have no doubt that it did exist in fact and will continue to exist unbroken. Our attitude today is the same as it was then, and we stand by the Confession that was presented and will stand by it, always hoping in our hearts for eternal peace and concord with all who teach Christ our Saviour and the pure Word of God to their people. Nor do we reject concord with them even if they use different terms in some cases, and if their interpretation differs from ours. We shall not reject concord, just as we shall never go against peace, and we are even less inclined to condemn them as long as they agree with us on the doctrine of justification.

In the remaining things, let them act for the edification of their churches and in turn permit us our terminology. In this manner, thinking of the concord of the churches and Christian liberty, we have long approved (and recently approved once more) the following: first, the Saxon Confession and then certain private confessions of Luther; finally, the articles proposed in the meeting of the brothers here by the respected Bucer;<sup>7</sup> soon also the booklet addressed to Münster;<sup>8</sup> and, furthermore, the Augsburg Confession and certain articles of the Swiss brothers. For although some variety is possible among all these confessions as it is among the churches, we nevertheless approve the confessions enumerated above and all churches even today, that is, we readily permit the churches to embrace any terminology they wish and to act and teach what is for the edification of their churches. We in turn wish to be given the same fair treatment by all, lest anyone force us to follow his fancy and his particular form of speaking or acting in the churches. We believe that it is in our interest and that our benefit and progress demand it. However, we wish this to be understood to mean that we shall not deprive anyone of the liberty to teach, exhort, and even correct us. We believe nevertheless that it will be most beneficial to us and our church if we carefully ponder in our

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6 Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1532–47).

7 See above, Ep. 545 headnote.

8 See above, note 3.

minds how dangerous it is and what risk our consciences undergo, which hardly allow us to draw breath. The better part of such evil arises from the fact that Christian liberty once preached to us has now cast us into the most wretched servitude under the pretext of the unity of the church. We shall not emerge from it until that Christian liberty is restored to us. But no one is ignorant of the ocean of evils that inundated the church when we lost that liberty. The recent dangers, which have not yet been sufficiently deplored, have us worried so that we believe we should not reform the churches in accordance with the newly established laws and constitutions. We still have the judicious advice of Luther, which he wrote to the people of Augsburg on how one may achieve a durable peace and concord among the churches – namely (as we have said), by ending all enmity and discord once and for all and suffering each other in Christian charity and mutual love (as behoves Christians).

Luther himself follows this counsel, showing his desire for this kind of concord. If only he had been obeyed so far, we would have more peace, and less work and trouble, for even if a thousand ways are thought out of making peace and concord, there will be no better method to achieve it in our opinion, nor a better method to firm up the concord among the churches without future danger. We shall not be in the way of a wide-ranging concord of this kind between us all, for we have had no disagreement with Luther so far. Thus we have no scruple to join in a concord with him, knowing that we have never offended him either in our writings or for any other reason, for he has stated his approval of our confession a long time ago. He avers, moreover, that his attitude is such that he will not only tolerate in Christian charity any men who conduct the business of the gospel in a sincere spirit and from the heart, but even those who attack him with the pen, as long as they show the same attitude toward him. There you are, most renowned men: we have not gone back on what has been transacted. At the same time, you will understand in what spirit we approved your confession and those of the others. Otherwise it would not have been right to swear on it without the consent of our churches.

Concerning the second question, whether we will attend a general synod, we reply:

We do not yet completely understand what urgent need there is at this time among the churches why synods must be called. We are still in two minds about whether calling synods is a good and useful means to look after the presents needs of the churches, and whether it can or should be done. Therefore, we must consult not only what good may come of them, but it must also be taken into consideration that we must not concede or permit

anything in public church matters without the consent of our magistrates. You need not expect anything from our brothers other than a sincere desire in all to propagate the kingdom of Christ as widely as possible and a burning zeal to promote concord. We cannot but advise you to ponder most diligently by what plans and efforts this can be brought about. To prevent any error, it would be useful if you gave your timely opinion to the other churches on the following matters: first, the correction of defects in the churches and the method and means of correcting them in your opinion, so that the magistrates and the preachers may in time deliberate about these points. In all of this, we have in mind to spare no work or diligence, and we shoulder any burden with alacrity for the sake of Christ. We pray to him from our hearts to rule the church in his Spirit, for he is the one head of his church, and to preserve it in sacred concord through the bonds of peace, to generate friendship, and to remove all scandal and purify it more every day.<sup>9</sup> Finally we commend ourselves and our church to you, most pious men, and ask for your help in prayers that the Lord will always be with us in his Spirit and that we may persevere in the sound doctrine of the gospel and the true unity of his church. Farewell. Constance, 7 March 1536.

All the brethren who preach Christ in Constance.

**Letter 599: 10 March 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:164–5, Ep. 762. In a letter that is no longer extant, Bullinger had asked Capito to find an apprenticeship in a pharmacy for a son of Christoph Klausner (cf. HBBW, Ep. 748). According to a letter from Bucer to Bullinger, dated 11 March, Capito had found a pharmacist willing to take on the young man, starting in September (see HBBW Ep. 763). For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The first pharmacist whom Capito approached did not find it convenient to accept an apprentice at this time. A second man also declined, saying that he already had an apprentice until December. Capito negotiated with a third pharmacist, who reduced his original demand from 24 to 20 gulden for training and boarding the young man. He might be induced to accept 18 gulden, however. Capito is awaiting instructions from the parents. He mentions the planned concord with the Lutherans and sends greetings to Leo [Jud].

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Eph. 4:1–6.

**Letter 600: 28 March [1536], Basel, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:196–9, Ep. 776. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The Tetrapolitan Confession was approved by both Zwingli and Oecolampadius. It was not considered to be incompatible with the Augsburg Confession, and they would not have published it, had it not been for the challenge issued by Johann Eck. Like the Lutherans, they made scripture and the Church Fathers the basis of their beliefs. Since the enemy has united against them, they do not think it advisable for Zurich to publish a new confession at this time. It would be best for all evangelicals to agree on one confession. Indeed Capito does not see any significant differences in their teaching and practices. They may, however, give the appearance of differing, which gave rise to Eck's jeering remark: 'There are as many churches as there are people.' For there were three camps, he said: Lutherans, Zwinglians, and the Strasbourgers 'in the middle.' At last, however, there is a will to arrive at a concord. Many tasks await them: reforming the schools and universities, safeguarding the property of the church, and making the ministers respected in the eyes of the people. They are waiting to hear from Luther the particulars of the planned meeting [see above, Ep. 594 headnote]. Bucer has once again gone to Augsburg to establish an evangelical church there, for they have not yet abandoned the mass or removed the images [see below, Ep. 603]. Duke [Ulrich] von Württemberg is taking strong action. The churches there are reported to be almost free of idols. Capito advises Bullinger to oblige the city scribe [Werner Beyel] by providing a scholarship for his son [cf. HBBW 6, Ep. 778].

**Letter 601: 28 March [1536], Basel, Capito to Joachim Vadianus**

Printed in VadBr 5:319–20, Ep. 885. For Vadianus, see CWC1, Ep. 109 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Luther has asked for a meeting. He has not yet responded to a letter sent from Basel through [Johann Feige], the chancellor of [Philip of Hesse]. An agreement may be imminent, but the Elector [Johann Friedrich I of Saxony] may regard it as a matter to be deliberated by the princes and city magistrates. The polemic over the Eucharist seems to have become more moderate. There are a few troublesome people in Kraichgau, in the realm of the Count Palatine [Ludwig V]. The Strasbourgers have written about this to Philip [of Hesse]. Capito has heard of the death of [Wolfgang Wetter alias Jufli] and the need for a minister to replace him at [St Gallen]. Capito men-

tions the teacher Sebastian Kunz in positive terms, but recommends [Johann Valentin] Furtmüller for the position of pastor.

### Letter 602: 2 April 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Johannes Bernhardi

The addressee, Johannes Bernhardi alias Hochstein or Algesheimer (c. 1500–d. before 12 October 1551), was a priest in Mainz until 1522, when he became parish priest in Algesheim (Rhineland-Palatinate). In 1524, he and Melchior Ambach were arrested on the initiative of the cathedral chapter of Mainz, and dismissed in April 1525. Later that same year, Bernhardi became a preacher in Frankfurt and together with Dionysius Melander carried on the Reformation in the city. On 16 May 1526, he married Katharina, daughter of Konrad Kraut, a fustian weaver of Frankfurt. Bernhardi was one of the co-signatories of the Wittenberg Concord in 1536. In 1537, he was called to Ulm, but returned to his homeland in 1544. He was eventually called to Herborn, but in 1549, he was obliged to resign his position on account of the Interim.

The text of the letter is printed in J.B. Ritter, *Evangelisches Denckmahl der Stadt Franckfurth am Mayn* (Frankfurt, 1726), 346, and in *Franckfurtische Religions-Handlungen* (Frankfurt, 1735), Part 2, Beil. pp. 28–9, no. XI. For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

Greetings. Praise be to God. At last we have obtained the hoped-for authorization for a colloquy with our brothers and especially with Luther.<sup>1</sup> On Cantate Sunday, if the Lord preserves our life, we shall be in Eisenach.<sup>2</sup> For according to the copy of this letter,<sup>3</sup> Luther summons us, and we have already agreed beforehand, indeed we freely promised to come even if he calls us to the furthest corner of Saxony. Therefore, although it is less than a month after the date of receipt of the letter and the Swiss brothers should have been summoned at the same time, we cannot act otherwise than at once to accept the conditions offered. Yet it is inconvenient that very few, indeed hardly any, of the Swiss brothers can be present. For nothing is more unwise than giving Satan room for disturbing matters. So far, however, a semblance of distrust is maintained between you and the Wittenbergers. I therefore wish, my Johannes, that you could be present on your own authority, but at public

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1 See above, Ep. 594 headnote.

2 I.e., 14 May.

3 Evidently a copy of Luther's letter to Bucer accompanied Capito's letter to Bernhardi. Luther's letter was dated 25 March and suggested 14 May as a date for the meeting in Eisenach (WABr 7:378–79, Ep. 3001).

expense. On 4 May, under Christ's aegis, we shall be with you,<sup>4</sup> and on the next day we shall travel to the agreed place. Make sure we have your company. When I see you, we shall talk about establishing schools. We too hope that this meeting will give us an opportunity to achieve these good things. May our Christ supply us with counsel and fulfil all our hopes. Farewell with your brothers in the Lord. 2 April 1536.

Yours, Capito.

**Letter 603: [c. 13 April 1536, Augsburg], Martin Bucer to Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers**

On 18 January and again on 5 March 1536, the city council of Augsburg sent a letter to the council of Strasbourg, requesting that Bucer be lent to them again in order to establish harmony among Augsburg's preachers on the matter of the Lord's Supper. The council complied, and on 28 March, Bucer left for Augsburg (see above, Ep. 600 and Roth 2:272, note 73). He ministered in the city from 6–27 April 1536, providing guidance among the preachers to remove the last remnants of Catholicism (that is, suppress the mass), to foster unity among the evangelicals in anticipation of the forthcoming Wittenberg Colloquy (see above, Ep. 594), and to combat the lack of church discipline.

In this document, Bucer supplies historical evidence to justify the convening of a council to settle theological disputes. The content of this letter resembles that of the letters sent from the city council of Augsburg to their colleagues in Strasbourg and Ulm regarding the forthcoming colloquy in Wittenberg, which are dated 13 April (printed in Roth 2:280–1, Appendix 3). Bucer's letter may have been sent at the same time.

The manuscript of this letter, written in the hand of Wolfgang Musculus, is in Strasbourg AVCU, AA 462, ff. 49–55. On the first page of the manuscript (f. 48) is written, 'Bucer's thoughts, addressed to his fellow preachers at Strasbourg, concerning the forthcoming colloquy / (Buceri Betencken ahn seine mitprediger zu Straßburg deß bevorstehenden colloqui halben).'

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Whether we can expect a meeting to benefit the churches of Christ, when at this time only one part, and few in numbers, come together to discuss the teachings of Christ and their correct dissemination.

To allow the truth in these matters to be heard properly, every Christian should first of all ponder how to live according to the Word of God and

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4 I.e., in Frankfurt.

obey it in all things, to orient himself not according to his own opinion but according to the counsel of God. For just as God alone has made all things from nothing, so all things are nothing and bring nothing (either benefit or harm) other than what God wants them to be or bring – benefit or harm. God reveals his will in his Word, so that we may judge and perceive from his Word alone the nature, type, and characteristics of everything. Now since the question arises whether we may hope that the meeting of the preachers and their joint dealings with the teaching of Christ and the administration of his church will serve the edification of the church, we must, whether we want it or not, act as it behoves Christians and must have no immediate regard for what our reason tells us about such a meeting, but rather what God's Word teaches us about it.

Now, if we want to learn from the Word of God what to think of such meetings, we have Matthew 18, where our Lord gives this commandment: when someone is involved in sins and unwilling to stop after he has been specifically admonished before witnesses, he must be brought to the attention of the church, that is, the community, and if he does not listen to the church, he must be considered a pagan and a publican.<sup>1</sup> And he gives this reason for it: first, that what we declare binding in our assembly will be bound in heaven, and what we loosen in this manner, will be loosened in heaven.<sup>2</sup> Here every Christian can see that the Lord gives the final judgment to the community, that is, the assembled Christians.

This is what the Lord commanded us. Another reason is this passage: 'Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'<sup>3</sup> If this promise of the Lord is valid for all Christians, it must also be valid for all Christian preachers. It follows that all who undertake to hinder the meeting of the Christian preachers, as if it were disadvantageous to the church of Christ, either do not admit that the promise which was given by Christ is valid in the case of the preachers or they do not believe that they will come together in the name of the Lord. The one is contrary to our faith; the other contrary to love. The passage in Matthew 18 shows that it pleases the Lord to have his people come together and that he wishes to grant them from heaven anything on which they have agreed on earth, for he is among them. Everyone who believes in

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1 Matt. 18:15–17.

2 Cf. Matt. 16:19 and Matt. 18:18.

3 Matt. 18:19–20.

Christ must allow this to be valid for the preachers, and must allow that they are Christians.

That it is especially useful for the church when preachers and leaders of the church come together from time to time and jointly discuss their ministry, we can see from the coming of the Holy Spirit to the holy apostles. When a question arose in Antioch concerning the need for circumcision, Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders. They gathered for the sake of this matter and acted jointly in a fruitful manner (Acts 15).<sup>4</sup> St Paul taught us how the church should make decisions (Acts 16).<sup>5</sup> He sent for the elders of Ephesus and made his decision together with them concerning the administration of the church. Our Lord, too, explained the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, sometimes to all, at other times to a few of the apostles, at greater length than he had done before the people (Matt. 13).<sup>6</sup> This again shows clearly and irrefutably that it is better for the preachers and their superiors to meet occasionally and jointly to discuss the business of the Lord.

This is also required on account of the need of the church and the order of God in the distribution of his gifts. We see how at all times great misunderstandings arise in the church. Thus the Lord does not distribute his gifts evenly, but to each man according to his will, such that each man needs the other and may benefit from him, as we are related to each other like the members united under one head. Thus he gives to each man the ability to serve for the edification of the common body of the church, according to the measure of faith God has allotted him. Therefore, he wants us to gather together the gifts he has given us, and each supplement from his gifts the shortcomings of the other (Rom. 12, 1 Cor. 12, Eph. 4).<sup>7</sup>

The command is given us by God: one person should aid and serve the other, thus drawing people closer together. This has given rise to such proverbs as, 'Four eyes see more than two,'<sup>8</sup> 'If one hand washes the other, both come clean,'<sup>9</sup> 'One man deserves another,'<sup>10</sup> 'No one can advise himself,'<sup>11</sup>

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4 Acts 15:1–12.

5 The point of reference is unclear, but may refer to Acts 19:1–22.

6 In Matt. 13, Jesus delivered a series of parables to the people, but explained their meaning in private to the disciples.

7 Rom. 12:3–8; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4:7–16.

8 Cf. Wander 1:176, no. 200; Singer 10:373–4.

9 Cf. Erasmus, *Adagia* 1.1.33; Singer 5:377.

10 Wander 3:607, no. 383.

11 Wander 3:1485, no. 15, and Singer 13, p. 27.

and other such sayings. And that is also why Solomon said, 'Woe to the man who is alone, for if he should fall, there is no one to help him up.'<sup>12</sup> This is also the reason why people in all matters that concern them like to take much counsel and bring together several people whom they regard as knowledgeable about the matter, thinking what one does not see, the other will.

Now, at this time, when God has just guided us out of deep darkness and when we are severely put to the test by false and misleading teaching, it is not desirable to have before our eyes such notably wrong understanding everywhere. It is necessary, therefore, for those to whom the dispensation of the holy gospel has been committed to come together frequently to discuss their ministry among themselves. For there may be a reluctance to communicate to each other that a misunderstanding has taken place. This certainly goes against divine and natural right and all experience of divine order in all human action. For there is nothing more important and more conducive to communication than meetings and consultations with many people, who are concerned and knowledgeable about such matters. This is attested by the many letters and meetings of experienced and learned good friends and associates.

We must conclude from this that all who want to stand in the way of a meeting of preachers either consider the preachers unchristian and wrong-headed, or they are going against all truth which has been clearly set out in the Word of God and is supported by all right human understanding and experience. One should prevent rebellious, evil, scheming people from meeting, not people who are to preach the faith of Christ. For if we fear that they are people whose meeting is detrimental, we should not let them preach at all.

Some people claim that more trouble than good came from the councils and meetings of the bishops and scholars. That is true of the councils and meetings of false and wrong-headed bishops and scholars, as happened under the papacy. For just as what is good becomes stronger when it is brought together by many and does more good than when it is divided and separated, so evil becomes stronger and causes more harm when it is brought together by many than when it is divided and separate. Pious shepherds come together and thus provide more counsel for the sheep; wolves come together and do more harm to the sheep. If evil troublemakers come together in a community, they create much mischief, but when the appointed rulers of the community come together, they avert all mischief and create everything that is good. Just as people are godly or ungodly, prudent or foolish, so are their gatherings – either beneficial or harmful.

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<sup>12</sup> Eccl. 4:10.

Men of old, both during the apostles' time and later on, held many councils, as we read in the *Ecclesiastica historia*<sup>13</sup> and in the holy Fathers. It would be shameful to say in our time that councils and meetings of preachers of the gospel and ministers of the church have always caused more harm than good. How many councils did the holy martyr Cyprian alone summon, as we read in his epistles,<sup>14</sup> and similarly Augustine and the holy Fathers? People object, citing St Gregory Nazianzen's letter to Procopius, a powerful man under Emperor Valens, who summoned him to a synod on behalf of the emperor. St Gregory said he himself avoided all meetings of bishops, for he had not yet seen any synod produce a good outcome, or one that reduced evil and did not heap up more; he was concerned about the quarrel and power struggle in the synods held in his time.<sup>15</sup>

But if someone considers the condition of the church at that time, when the Emperor Valens,<sup>16</sup> who was an Arian, persecuted true believers and furthered the Arians, he will not condemn all meetings of preachers on the basis of these words of St Gregory, for at the same time Basil the Great, who was closely linked and in agreement with Gregory, wrote a letter to St Ambrose, that it was a great gift of God if he granted the ministers of the church an assembly where they might discuss the teaching of Christ.<sup>17</sup> Thus the above-cited words of Gregory to Procopius, who later on became a tyrant and was miserably killed by Valens,<sup>18</sup> in which he also excuses himself from coming to the synod on account of his health, cannot be applied to any but the rebellious and quarrelsome meetings of bishops in those troubled times, when the tyrant Valens threatened wretched ruin to the church. Of course this holy man would have approved of the council of Nicea and many other salutary and useful meetings.

But to come to our own time, is there anyone who has not found notable improvement after the synods and meetings of the ministers of the di-

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13 A reference to Eusebius of Caesarea's *Historia ecclesiastica*, a fourth-century chronological account of the history of the development of early Christianity from the first to the fourth century.

14 St Cyprian became bishop of Carthage in 249, a position he held until his martyrdom on 14 September 258.

15 Gregory Nazianzen to Procopius, Ep. 130 (PG 37.225A–B).

16 Valens, Eastern Roman emperor (r. 364–78) was an Arian; his brother and co-emperor, Valentinian I (r. 364–74), was a Nicene Christian.

17 St Basil the Great to St Ambrose, Ep. 197 (PG 32.709–14).

18 Procopius was a Roman usurper and member of the Constantinian dynasty, who proclaimed himself Roman emperor in Constantinople on 28 September 365. After his defeat at the Battle of Thyatira, Emperor Valens had him executed on 27 May 366.

vine word, which were held among the churches of Upper Germany and elsewhere up to the present time? People met at Marburg, partly under duress and with minds quite unprepared, and yet God granted them to form a consensus on all points of Christian teaching and allowed them to sign an agreement, except for one point only, concerning the corporeal presence.<sup>19</sup> Now people have a much friendlier attitude, and most of Luther's party have accepted our confession, as we have accepted theirs. The articles of Augsburg satisfied Dr Luther, and they contain neither more nor less than our confession and the written apologia, on which the four cities have agreed.<sup>20</sup> We wish to go no further with any statement and have never done so, which we are willing to demonstrate to anyone.

Since, then, all Christian meetings called for the purpose of Christian dealings with the teaching of Christ are good and salutary in themselves, because they have the promise of Christ's blessing, as we indicated. They are all the more necessary and salutary for the preachers, the more they need to conduct the teaching of Christ in its fullest, most certain, and uniform manner. Moreover I know the preachers who have now been summoned to come together. They are zealous for God and yield to the truth of Christ – a feeling lacking everywhere, alas, yet most important in my opinion – so that I cannot but think that it is most useful and necessary for the church to further and in no way hinder the desired gathering of preachers.

And although there might be some concern on account of such a meeting, one should compare it with the trouble, which is not just a matter of concern, but is certain to follow if the meeting does not go forward. For one may be concerned that the wrong kind of people come and destabilize the nascent concord, but we must hope (and in my opinion there is no doubt) that God will give us grace and [what we fear] will not come to pass. Should the meeting not take place, contrary to the authorization given repeatedly, and should it be called off, some people have unfortunately sown so much suspicion that nothing would be more certain than that all the world would raise a hue and cry, saying that we misled the people and deceived them. I would not know how to renege with good conscience, for I advanced in this

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19 I.e., the Marburg Colloquy, which convened from 1–4 October 1529 at the behest of Philip of Hesse, during which Luther and Zwingli found consensus on fourteen theological points, but failed to agree on the matter of the Eucharist.

20 I.e., the Ten Articles composed by Bucer and signed by the Augsburg preachers (BDS 6/1:77–82, no. 5); the Augsburg Confession and Apologia of 1530 and Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia of 1530, signed by Constance, Strasbourg, Memmingen, and Lindau (BDS 3:13–318).

matter with good conscience and on the basis of scripture, as well as on the encouragement and support of my superiors and brothers.

My efforts to arrive at the concord, which I began in Augsburg and continued afterwards with Dr Luther and the churches of the Swiss Confederacy – the apologia for our confession, which had the same basis, also the fact that we accepted the Saxon confession at Schweinfurt<sup>21</sup> – all of that was done with the encouragement and support of our gracious lords of Strasbourg and of the other cities adhering to our confession, and their preachers as well. When I was recently summoned by the illustrious, noble prince, my gracious lord, the Landgrave, to go to Philip Melanchthon in Kassel,<sup>22</sup> I first went to Constance and consulted with the preachers of the cities of Augsburg, Constance, Ulm, Memmingen, Lindau, Kempten, and Isny, and was encouraged by those at Esslingen and Biberach. These preachers came to the meeting with the authorization and support of their lords. I would have liked to see representatives from the councils of these cities, but I could not get the support of Constance and Memmingen, although associates of the two city councils were present at the colloquy.<sup>23</sup>

There I received from all the above-mentioned preachers unanimous directions how to attain concord with Luther's party while allowing us to keep to our teaching and explanation in the matter of the holy sacrament, as I wrote in the booklet to the people of Münster<sup>24</sup> and also to the bishop of Avranches.<sup>25</sup> Thus I was to accept and ratify the concord in the name of them all, for they regard the contents of the above-mentioned books in agreement with scripture and the truth and have acknowledged them accordingly. The contents, however, agree with the apologia we wrote earlier, an apologia accepted by the lords and preachers of the three cities who were signatories to

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21 See above, Ep. 472, note 2.

22 For Bucer's meeting with Melanchthon at Kassel, 27–29 December 1534, see above, Ep. 545, note 5; see also MBW T7, Ep. 1736, a letter from Melanchthon to Veit Dietrich, c. 15 March 1536, in which Melanchthon mentions a letter from Capito with a pledge from the Upper Germans to participate in a discussion on concord.

23 For a list of the representatives at the meeting in Constance in December 1534, see above, Ep. 545 headnote. Constance and Memmingen were represented by secular officials, namely, Johannes Jung and Thomas Blaurer (Constance) and Gervasius Schuler and Eberhard Zangmeister (Memmingen).

24 I.e., Martin Bucer, *Bericht auß der heyiligen geschrift* (Strasbourg, March 1534; see above, Ep. 527a headnote).

25 I.e., Martin Bucer, *Defensio adversus axioma Catholicum, id est, criminationem R.P. Roberti Episcopi Abrincensis* (Strasbourg, 1534; see above, Ep. 539, note 5).

our confession, and later also by the lords and preachers of Ulm, Esslingen, Isny, and Biberach, which accepted everything as correct.<sup>26</sup>

Afterwards the above-mentioned preachers presented to them all the positions of Philip and myself, as proffered at Kappel and based only on the Saxon Confession.<sup>27</sup> Throughout this period there has been no complaint from either the lords or the preachers of the above-mentioned cities. Afterwards, Dr Gereon of Augsburg<sup>28</sup> met with Dr Luther and obtained from him the approval of the Augsburg Articles, which I composed in all matters of content according to our confession and apologia, as indicated by us at Ulm and in other cities, including the fact that Dr Luther regarded it as desirable to meet at some time and to discuss among us not only the holy sacrament but the whole business of Christian doctrine.<sup>29</sup> The goal was to manage it in all aspects with greater agreement, and wherever necessary, also defend it, either at a council or at an imperial diet. Thereupon the preachers of Augsburg, Ulm, and Esslingen, and we preachers of Strasbourg, wrote to Dr Luther with the knowledge of our lords, and offered loyally to keep the concord in the above-mentioned manner and saying furthermore that we regard it as useful (what others wrote to him, we do not know) to meet and treat together of all Christian doctrine.<sup>30</sup> This was also the expectation of our lords, who were willing to promote all of this, recognizing that it served the edification of the churches, so that they would gladly accept and assist in such a meeting.

When Dr Luther replied and started to negotiate a time and place for the meeting, and the lords of Augsburg also wrote to our lords in this matter, saying that they regarded it as desirable to cooperate with Dr Luther, we wrote back to Dr Luther, again with the approval of our lords and the preachers of Augsburg and Ulm, that we would accept whatever meeting

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26 I.e., the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apology of 1530, or a reference to the confession mentioned in Ep. 564.

27 I.e., the Augsburg Confession and Apology of 1530.

28 For Gereon Sailer, see CWC 2, Ep. 411a headnote. On 21 June 1535, Sailer along with Caspar Huberinus were sent by the city council of Augsburg on a mission to assure Luther of their good intentions, desire for concord, and willingness to teach in conformity with his teachings. As a gesture of goodwill, they wanted to secure Luther's assistance in hiring a preacher acceptable to him. Because Urbanus Rhegius was unavailable, Johann Forster was sent instead. On 8 September, Sailer sent a letter to Luther in which he related the experiences he had upon his return from Wittenberg – first in Strasbourg, then Balingen, Stuttgart, Esslingen, Ulm, and finally Augsburg (WABr 7, Ep. 2239).

29 See above, Ep. 565, note 10.

30 See above, Ep. 564.

place and time he named, although we would like the place to be in the region of Hesse and the time around Easter.<sup>31</sup> We named that time so we could in the meantime contact the churches in Upper Germany, as was done. Thereupon our lords directed their representatives to accept a meeting for that time in Schmalkalden, as they indicated themselves. Since all of us got to this point in our negotiations and left it to Dr Luther to name the time and place, as he has now done, and since he also writes that he would inform his people and among others the people in Nürnberg at any rate, we cannot see how we can in good order or in good conscience refuse him this meeting now and cancel it. Since then I have discovered that some agitators among the nobility have tried to cast suspicion on our negotiations with Dr Luther, but have not been successful so far. Thus I saw a letter at Andreas Rem's [house],<sup>32</sup> saying that Master Philip [Melanchthon] intended to go to the Leipzig fair, as he also wrote to me.<sup>33</sup> But his presence at the meeting is very necessary. Furthermore, Dr Luther's health is unstable, and he is truly most necessary for our churches and must agree to this concord.<sup>34</sup>

For this reason I cannot see how it can be good not to indulge Dr Luther's wishes with respect to time and place, for he has announced it also in the Saxon lands and written to the people in Nürnberg, and I am supposed to indicate the time and place to Brenz and Schnepf.<sup>35</sup> And even if he were willing to name another time, he will decide it without regard to himself rather than for his own sake. It was quite inconsiderate of Dr Luther not to write to us earlier concerning the date, but who knows who prevented him from it? I would also have liked to see the meeting organized, as Master Philip proposed, in the presence of government officials. Indeed I would still want, if possible, to have someone from the government delegated, as done in Frankfurt. But whatever Dr Luther does in all this, and whatever his thoughts, one might perhaps trust him in this matter. However this may be, we have our cause – our confession and apologia – beyond which we do

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31 For the discussions over the planned meeting that would eventually take place in Wittenberg from 21–29 May 1536, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

32 For Andreas I Rem, see above, Ep. 515b, note 2.

33 Melanchthon's letter is no longer extant. He was in Leipzig from c. 9–12 May 1536 (see MBW Epp. 1732–6).

34 For Luther's poor health, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

35 Luther's letter to Andreas Osiander and the people of Nürnberg is no longer extant, although in a letter to Bucer, dated 25 March 1536, he mentions that he had written to them. In the same letter, Luther asked Bucer to inform the southern Germans and the Swiss, as well as Johannes Brenz and Erhard Schnepf of the forthcoming meeting at Eisenach (see WABr 7, Ep. 3001).

not wish to go even with one word, and should this happen, our superiors and brothers have, praise be to God, a good understanding of the cause of Christ. They will insist on the Truth and look loyally to the Lord. Whatever the leaders may introduce, we shall not concede much. The agenda of the meeting will focus primarily on ensuring that no one speaks against the main articles of Christian teaching, and on coming to an agreement orally, as has been negotiated earlier on in various writings, and to completely remove all misunderstanding and suspicion, which could not be achieved with written communications. This is what I regard to be useful in the matter, since Luther has no intention to call on the [secular] authorities in this meeting, and perhaps no one will join him and his people; indeed, they might be reluctant in his region to send someone. Yet two [secular] representatives were asked by the communities at Frankfurt to ride with the preachers of that region to the meeting and give them their advice if necessary.<sup>36</sup>

For the sake of the Upper German churches, it would be useful, in my opinion, to send Vadianus with one or two preachers at most, to this meeting.<sup>37</sup> Grynaeus, however, should not be of the party,<sup>38</sup> whereas I would like [to see] Leo,<sup>39</sup> Bullinger<sup>40</sup> and Pellicanus.<sup>41</sup> May God grant us what is best. Amen.

**Letter 604: 18 April 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:236–7, Ep. 796. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: The meeting with the Lutherans will take place soon [see above, Ep. 594 headnote]. Capito fears that Bullinger and his colleagues may not

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36 For the representatives at the meeting in Wittenberg, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

37 For Joachim Vadianus, see CWC 1, Ep. 109, note 14; for an invitation to Vadianus, see HBBW 6, Ep. 796, note 1.

38 For Simon Grynaeus, see CWC 2, Ep. 447 headnote. Bucer's insistence that Grynaeus not be part of the entourage at the meeting in Wittenberg must have stemmed from his weak performance earlier on 28 May 1535, when he had organized a colloquy at Tübingen. That meeting confirmed a compromise reached earlier at Stuttgart on the basis of Luther's Marburg proposals that Zwingli had rejected. The Lutheran party eventually came to control the Württemberg church completely, thanks in part to Grynaeus.

39 For Leo Jud, see CWC 2, Ep. 270 headnote.

40 For Heinrich Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

41 For Conradus Pellicanus, see CWC 1, Ep. 89 headnote.

be able to participate on such short notice. He asks Bullinger to supply him with a letter showing his desire for concord without however discussing any doctrinal positions. He is too busy to write more. He sends his greetings to Bullinger's colleagues, to the council, and especially [Werner Beyel and Diethelm Röst].

**Letter 605: 18 April 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger, Conradus Pellicanus, and Theodor Bibliander**

Printed in HBBW 6:237–8, Ep. 797. For the context see above, Ep. 594 headnote. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito recommends to them [Giovanni] Angelo [Odoni], a student of Bucer. Odoni has asked for an introduction, and Capito hopes they will give the Italian a hospitable reception. He has already written to Bullinger about the meeting in Saxony. Capito intends to attend in spite of his poor health. He repeats his request for a letter indicating Bullinger's desire for peace and concord and asks him to show the present letter to [Conradus] Pellicanus and [Theodor] Bibliander.

**Letter 606: 19 April 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:247, Ep. 802. For the context, see above, Ep. 594 headnote. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito urges Bullinger to attend the meeting with the Lutherans. Bullinger is 'young in years, but grave in authority.' He will learn more at the colloquy than through many months of reading. Speech is more revealing than written communication. He himself will go to Eisenach in spite of his poor health. There will be no representatives of the secular government, which will allow the theologians to express their opinions more candidly.

**Letter 607: 30 April 1536, Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger to Capito and Martin Bucer**

Printed in HBBW 6:269–72, Ep. 812. This is the letter requested by Capito in the preceding letters, Epp. 604–6. Bullinger also sent a copy of his letter to Myconius (see HBBW 6, Ep. 813). For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Bullinger and his colleagues are unable to attend the meeting with the Lutherans because of the short notice and their inability to consult

with the numerous churches under their jurisdiction in that short period of time. He emphasizes that this does not indicate a lack of respect for Luther or reluctance on their part to seek peace and concord. He praises Luther and states that the ministers of Zurich agree with the other evangelicals and hope they will arrive at a concord. He notes that they have defended their beliefs at great danger to their lives. For the substance of their beliefs he refers Capito and Bucer to the recent meetings at Basel and asks them to assure Luther of his spirit of cooperation. He and his colleagues will pray for a successful outcome of the meeting in Eisenach and send greetings to Luther and his colleagues.

**Letter 608: 1 May 1536, [Aarau], The Swiss Evangelical Cantons to Capito and Martin Bucer**

On 1 May 1536, representatives of the towns and cantons of the Swiss Confederacy (Zurich, Bern, Basel, Schaffhausen, St Gallen, Mulhouse, Biel, etc.) assembled in Aarau. They sent a letter to Capito and Bucer who were on the point of travelling to Eisenach, explaining why they could not be present. They asked them, moreover, to convey the following message in their names. For the context, see above, Ep. 594 headnote. The letter was sent together with an *Abschied* of the assembly at Aarau as well as another letter from the Swiss Evangelical Cantons to the XIII of Strasbourg, also dated 1 May 1536 (Basel SA, Kirchenakten A 9, ff. 239r–240v).

Printed in Johannes Stumpf, *Beschreibung des Abendmahlsstreits*, ed. Fritz Büsser (Zurich, 1960), 77–8.

To the respected, most learned and erudite Dr Wolfgang Capito and Martin Bucer, etc.

First we offer our friendly service and good will. Respected, most learned and erudite, beloved, good friends and Christians! We have received a friendly letter<sup>1</sup> from our loyal dear confederates at Basel (to whom our trusted dear neighbours of Strasbourg sent it) telling us that they had been invited to a meeting and convention of the most learned Dr Martin Luther and other Saxon, Hessian, and Upper German churches at Eisenach in the Thuringian Forest, on 14 May next.<sup>2</sup> They asked whether we could or would send a number of our scholars there as well. Since we desire nothing more

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1 Perhaps a reference to Myconius' letter to Bullinger, 9 June 1536 (HBBW 6, Ep. 842).

2 See above, Ep. 602, note 3.

than to see peace and concord in the church, dear sirs, especially concerning the article of the sacrament of the holy body and blood of Christ, on which there was disagreement in words more than in substance, we came to Aarau today and consulted in this matter. Although several of our preachers are willing to go to the above-mentioned meeting, dear sirs, (although they have not been summoned by anyone) and are especially inclined to have a friendly colloquy, it was not possible to send anyone in a hurry because of the short notice and the long distance. We ask you especially to inquire whether they bear us any ill will or resentment (of which we know nothing at all) and to defend us and to ask them to cease any resentment as well as to stop and kindly prevent all slander and abuse such as has been uttered by associates on both sides. Furthermore, to give Luther and other prudent men a trustworthy understanding of our religion and practices, we would like to refer them to the confession (or *Bekentnis*) recently drawn up at Basel and ratified by yourselves and our preachers.<sup>3</sup> We hope this confession merits their earnest and Christian consideration and will contribute to a good peace. We ask also that you inform us immediately of all actions taken there and shall show ourselves appreciative for it. Given 1 May in the year 1536.

Sealed with the seal of the honest and wise Master Johannes Haab of Zurich.<sup>4</sup>

**Letter 609: 3 May 1536, [Basel], Adelberg Meyer zum Pfeil to Capito and Martin Bucer**

Adelberg Meyer zum Pfeil (1474–1548) descended from an aristocratic and influential Basel family. Following in his father's footsteps, he entered the cloth

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- 3 I.e., the First Helvetic Confession of 1536, otherwise known as the Second Confession of Basel to distinguish it from the First Confession of Basel of 1534 (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).
- 4 Johannes Haab (or Hab, 1503–1561) became a member of the Great Council of Zurich in 1523, and of the Small Council in 1531. That year he also became guild-master. He held several government functions and was mayor of Zurich from 1542 to 1560. Haab was often sent as emissary to the diets of the Swiss Confederacy and was entrusted with important foreign and domestic diplomatic missions. Haab represented Zurich's interests in Mellingen, Bremgarten, and Bern, and he also took part in the peace settlement after the Second Battle of Kappel in 1531. He was an early follower of Zwingli and was one of the men who broke the dietary rules of Lent in the so-called Sausage Scandal in 1523. Haab participated as a representative of the saffron guild in the removal of the images from the churches in Zurich. As of 1525, he was a judge dealing with marital disputes (*Eherichter*) and as of 1530, a synodal delegate.

trade, and in 1514 became a member of the city council. From 1521 to his death, he was mayor every second year, the first to hold this office without confirmation by the bishop. He promoted Basel's gradual adoption of the Reformation and frequently represented the city at the Swiss diets and on other foreign missions.

The manuscript of this letter is in Strasbourg AVCU, AA 462, f. 97.

Our friendly, etc., Dear lords and friends. Our beloved friends and trusted neighbours, the XIII of the city of Strasbourg informed us of the meeting between the reverend and learned Dr Martin Luther and you and other ministers of the Lord's Word, our dear sirs and Christian colleagues.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the meeting is to bring about a resolution of the dispute which has gone on, not without great harm, trouble, and scandal to the church of Christ, concerning the article of the sacrament of the body and blood of our dear Lord, although it was more about words than about substance. When we were informed that it was decided to hold the meeting on the fourth Sunday after this past Easter at Eisenach, we received the news of such a meeting and of your Christian initiative with sincere pleasure.<sup>2</sup> For when we consider the benefit to the church of Christ which must come from such an agreement we could not think of anything happier than the indicated agreement. Indeed, we are desirous to see peace and unity in the church. Thus we beg God from our heart to give and grant you his grace and Spirit for the sake of the honour of his holy name. May the mentioned agreement truly come to pass in the Lord.

We are favourably inclined to send one of our preachers to your meeting and to have him attend it with the above-mentioned Dr Martin Luther (with whom we sincerely wish to be united in the Lord). Yet, as you, my dear sirs, may well realize, this is not possible at this time on account of the large distance and the short notice. We, therefore, kindly ask you to excuse us as best you can for not sending anyone to this joint meeting and to indicate to them that we are most desirous for a proper Christian union, and loyally to commend our church to them; we intend to be deserving of this recommendation and would therefore advise them in a Christian spirit and in the Lord to work zealously in this meeting for what may serve the promotion and true union of the church of Christ and the sanctification of God's name, as we know you are minded to do. No doubt this will please and comfort all Christians and terrify our persecutors, who have taken great pleasure in our

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1 For the meeting at Wittenberg, 21–29 May 1536, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

2 I.e., 14 May 1536.

division. We shall not be found lacking in anything we can do to further this aim. May God give you an increase in grace. Given on 3 May 1536.

Adelberg Meyer.

**Letter 610: 12 May 1536, [Wittenberg], Martin Luther to Capito**

Printed in WABr 7:409–410, Ep. 3021. For the context, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Luther received Capito's [no longer extant] letter of 22 April only on 11 May. For health reasons he cannot attend the meeting planned for 14 May in Eisenach and asks that they come to Grimma (in Saxony) instead, where he hopes to appear on 21 May. Philip [Melanchthon] was absent and could not reply. He hopes that Christ will inspire true concord in them.

**Letter 611: [Second half of May 1536, Zweibrücken], Johannes Schwebel to Capito**

Printed in *Centuria*, 295–8, no. 84. For Schwebel, see Ep. 469a headnote. The letter cannot be dated precisely, but it must either precede or overlap with the meeting of the evangelicals at Wittenberg from 21–29 May 1536.

Johannes Schwebel to Wolfgang Capito.

We repeatedly read your letter,<sup>1</sup> which has given us incredible pleasure. For we hope that God will grant his Holy Spirit to this holy meeting of peace,<sup>2</sup> so those, who until now have 'preached the gospel of peace'<sup>3</sup> with great faith and constancy, may come to an agreement on the doctrines of sacred religion and consult most successfully on behalf of peace in the church. I wish I could see that venerable meeting, to see all those most learned and pious men together, the grave deliberations of the elect organs of the Holy Spirit about the gravest matters.<sup>4</sup> You have no great need for our presence, and we cannot be present, as much as we would want to be with you. Among other things, the greatest obstacle is the fact that we are both alone in looking after our office and cannot be away for any length of time. Our dear Glaser<sup>5</sup>

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1 This letter is no longer extant.

2 I.e., the meeting of the mainly German evangelicals with Luther, which led to the Wittenberg Concord (see above, Ep. 594 headnote).

3 Isaiah 52:7 and Rom. 10:15.

4 Cf. Acts 9:15.

5 For Caspar Glaser, see Ep. 445a, note 4.

is prevented from going by his poor health. I, however, have no colleague who could look after my church in my absence.

We, therefore, give eternal thanks to you for deeming us worthy of this honour and regarding us suitable to be admitted into the presence of the most famous men. We shall be present in spirit, if not in body, and shall ask the celestial father to give you the ‘Spirit of wisdom and counsel’<sup>6</sup> to allow for the establishment of peace in the church. You know, dearest Capito, we have always been most desirous of peace and sincerely hated those hateful quarrels. We freely agree with the pious and erudite men who hand down the doctrines of our faith purely and simply. We subscribe to their teaching, which greatly pleases our most illustrious prince.

We ask you, however, to communicate to us on your return from the synod, what was transacted there, that we may promote the glory of Christ with common zeal together with you and glorify him in every way. If we need to do anything on our part, we leave this completely up to you, Melanchthon and Bucer, our respected brothers. For we know you would not undertake anything that is at variance with sacred scripture. In the meantime, if there is an opportunity, and we are able to depart without disadvantage to our people, we shall not delay and spare no expense and shirk no labour. Farewell.

#### **Letter 612: 13 June [1536], Frankfurt, Capito to Johannes Brenz**

In the following letter, Capito provides Brenz with a brief account of the proceedings at the recent colloquy, which resulted in the Wittenberg Concord (see above, Ep. 594 headnote, and Eells, 198–204). For a much more detailed report by Wolfgang Musculus, one of the representatives of Augsburg, see *Analecta Lutherana: Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Luthers*, edited by Theodor Kolde (Gotha, 1883), 216–30, and Henning Reinhardt, ‘Das Itinerar des Wolfgang Musculus (1536),’ *ARG* 97 (2006): 28–82. Capito’s letter to Brenz was written on the same day as Epp. 613 (to Luther) and 614 (to Jodocus Neobolus).

The Wittenberg Concord was signed on 29 May 1536 by all of the participants except for Johannes Zwick, the representative of Constance (see above, Ep. 594 headnote). The participants left Wittenberg, entrusted with the arduous task of convincing the governments and theologians who had not participated in the colloquy to subscribe to the Concord so that it could be formally ratified and adopted. Capito, Bucer, and the representatives from southern Germany

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6 Isaiah 11:2.

left Wittenberg on 29 May and stopped over in Naumburg, where they met with Philip of Hesse and Justus Jonas (see MBW T7, Ep. 1747). In compliance with a special request from Duke Philip, Capito and Bucer made a side trip to Homburg and Marburg, where they discussed the Concord with the preachers of those towns (BDS 6/1, p. 172). As a result, they arrived in Frankfurt on 2 June, a day later than the rest of the entourage. There, over the next few days, they agreed on a common report concerning the Wittenberg meeting to be submitted to their city magistrates (see BDS 6/1:135–74, no. 11). Most of them left Frankfurt on 5 June, while Bucer and Capito remained for another week.

By 15 June, Capito was back in Strasbourg (see below, Ep. 615). Over the next few months, both he and Bucer were busy seeking approval for the Wittenberg Concord, not only in Strasbourg, but also in the cities of southern Germany and Switzerland. On 22 June, they drafted their own lengthy statement about their negotiations at Wittenberg, which they submitted to an assembly of the XIII of Strasbourg, the preachers, teachers, and church wardens on 29 June (see BDS 6/1: 203–6, no. 13). With the exception of Paul Volz, Wolfgang Schultheiss, and Anton Engelbrecht, they were all amenable to the Concord (see below, Ep. 622, and Greschat, 139–40). On 26 August, the city council of Strasbourg officially subscribed to the Concord (Eells, 207).

As for the other towns and cities of southern Germany, on 22 July, Bucer reported to Luther that Frankfurt, Worms, Landau, Weißenburg, Esslingen, Augsburg, Memmingen, and Kempten, along with Strasbourg, had agreed to the articles of the Concord, although formal ratification was still needed (see WABr 7:471–3, Ep. 3050). The following day, the Augsburg clergy informed Luther that after careful deliberation they too had signed the Concord (WABr 7:474–6, Ep. 3051). In a letter to Luther on 20 July, Capito himself had expressed concerns that the quarrel in Augsburg between Johann Forster and Michael Keller would jeopardize the ratification of the Concord (see below, Ep. 619). On 30 August, Joachim Vadianus in St Gallen informed Luther that he personally had accepted the Concord (WABr 7:514–19, Ep. 3073/VadBr 5:358–61, Ep. 911) – a copy of Vadianus' letter to Luther was sent to Capito (see HBBW 6, Ep. 897, note 4). On 2 November, Johannes Zwick in Constance reported to Bullinger that several cities had ratified the Concord: Esslingen on 3 September; Reutlingen on 13 September (see WABr 7:538–9, Ep. 3080); and Memmingen and Kempten on 16 September. Constance, as well as Ulm, Biberach, Isny, and Lindau, were still debating what to do (see HBBW 6, Ep. 908). On 4 September, Capito reported to Luther that all of the churches in Swabia, except for Ulm, had subscribed to the Concord. Martin Frecht, one of the co-signatories at Wittenberg, blamed the delay on Caspar Schwenckfeld's activities in Ulm (see Brecht 3, p. 53 and below, Ep. 622). On 30 October, finally, the city council of Ulm declared that the Concord conformed to the Augsburg Confession and

the Apologia. They confirmed their agreement in a letter to Luther, in which they also reported Biberach's acceptance (WABr 7:572–8, Ep. 3096). In his reply, Luther charged the preachers and citizens of Ulm to abide by the Wittenberg Concord (WABr 7:591–2, Ep. 3105). The Concord was rejected by Constance, however, in November. Ambrosius and Thomas Blaurer, as well as Konrad Zwick, remained hostile to the articles of the Wittenberg Concord, despite efforts by Bucer and Melancthon to win them for the cause (see WABr 12:224–35, Ep. 4266, and below, Ep. 627).

Although Bucer and Capito had little success in convincing the Swiss to join the cause, the widespread doctrinal agreement among German cities and principalities contributed to the consolidation of the Schmalkaldic League in the Holy Roman Empire (see Brady, *Sturm*, 89, and Greschat, 139–43).

The letter is printed in Th. Pressel, ed., *Anecdota Brentiana. Ungedruckte Briefe und Bedenken von Johannes Brenz* (Tübingen, 1868), 184–5, no. 60. For Johannes Brenz, see CWC 2, Ep. 259 headnote.

Rejoice together with us, respected brother in Christ. Congratulate the churches of our reborn gospel on the concord which the Lord has shown, nay, concluded between us who were present in Wittenberg with Luther and the other pillars of the church.<sup>1</sup> To outline briefly what has been transacted: The meeting was not held in Eisenach, as agreed, because the orderly way to concord had been upset by certain troublemakers, who published Zwingli's letters and that ill-fated book of letters.<sup>2</sup> No sight could have been more deplorable in the opinion of Luther and his colleagues. The result was that we were treated rather roughly at the beginning and in turn almost conceived inimical thoughts. But then Bucer (and to some extent, I) explained that everything was done in good conscience, as it was in fact – with the grave statement that we were prepared at once, before God and facing Christ, to respond concerning our faith and doctrine to anyone who inquired about it, as long as they deigned to request it from us.

The next day, we were barely given another hearing after lunch, for the usual health problems meant that Luther was not available in the early

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- 1 For a list of the participants at the colloquy in Wittenberg that met from 21–29 May 1536, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.
- 2 The colloquy was going to meet in Eisenach, but eventually met in Wittenberg. For the untimely publication of Zwingli's *Ratio fidei* (Zurich, [1530]) under the title *Christianae fidei ... brevis et clara expositio*, edited by Leo Jud ([Zurich], 1536), as well as a collection of letters by Zwingli and Oecolampadius, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

hours.<sup>3</sup> Bucer gave an authoritative speech about the Eucharist with the support of others in our retinue. Then Luther got up and went into an adjoining dining room to deliberate with a committee of pastors – Philip,<sup>4</sup> Pomeranus,<sup>5</sup> Creutziger,<sup>6</sup> Jonas,<sup>7</sup> Hieronymus Weller,<sup>8</sup> [Justus Menius] of Eisenach,<sup>9</sup> and [Friedrich Myconius] of Gotha.<sup>10</sup> When he returned, he spoke in very friendly terms, saying that everything had turned out differently from what he had expected, for he had been certain that the Concord was doomed. And yet he had listened to us speaking plainly concerning this article. He had been persuaded by the most hostile letters of certain people to think that we had given birth to veritable monsters in the remaining articles. Therefore, we dealt with baptism in the following discussions. They were surprised to hear

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- 3 For Luther's health problems at the time that led to protracted discussions over the colloquy's location, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.
- 4 For Philip Melancthon, see CWC 1, Ep. 29, note 7.
- 5 For Johannes Bugenhagen (Pomeranus), see CWC 1, Ep. 135, note 6.
- 6 Caspar Cruciger (Creutziger), Sr., (1504–1548) studied in Leipzig and Wittenberg. In 1525, he became preacher and rector at the Johannisschule in Magdeburg and in 1528, professor of theology and preacher at the Castle church in Wittenberg. In 1529, he took part in the Marburg Colloquy, and was clerk at the colloquy of Worms in 1540. In 1539, he was involved in the Reformation in Leipzig and participated at the religious colloquies of 1540/1 as secretary of the Protestant estates. He helped revise Luther's translation of the Bible and edit Luther's sermons and addresses.
- 7 For Justus Jonas, see CWC 1, Ep. 126 headnote.
- 8 Hieronymus Weller von Molsdorf (1499–1572) was the son of a mayor of the Saxon town of Freiberg. Weller studied first at the cathedral school in Naumburg. On 9 October 1517, he matriculated at the University of Wittenberg (BA, 1519). Thereafter he worked as a schoolteacher in Zwickau and Schneeberg. In 1525, he returned to Wittenberg to study law, but soon switched to theology. He was a resident pupil of Martin Luther, in whose household he remained for eight years. In 1535, he received his doctorate in theology under Luther's supervision. In August 1536, he married Anna am Steig, a daughter of a Freiberg patrician. In 1539, he received an ecclesiastical position. With the introduction of the Reformation in his native Freiberg, he received an annual income of 200 gulden to teach theology at the town's gymnasium. His lectures were extremely popular and attended not only by the students of the gymnasium, but also by the local townsfolk, earning him the nickname 'the Freiberg prophet.'
- 9 Justus Menius (1499–1558) studied in Erfurt and Wittenberg. From 1529 to 1552, he was superintendent of Eisenach and in 1546, he also became superintendent of Gotha. After his removal from office on account of the Osiander controversy, he became pastor in Leipzig in 1557. Menius worked as a *visitor*, participated in various religious colloquies, and authored numerous texts.
- 10 For Friedrich Myconius, see CWC 2, Ep. 423 headnote.

us acknowledge original sin in learned terms, for it is forever in the hands, eyes, and hearts of wretched mortals; baptism is purification and rebirth by which all sins are removed, and a new spirit is conferred, etc. In this manner we dealt for some days with other matters in fullest agreement. Finally, because Luther could only be active for a few hours on account of his poor health, we added toward the end of the colloquy that we had accepted the confession of the princes at the meeting at Schmalkalden;<sup>11</sup> if we appeared to be teaching anything contrary to it, they should ask about it to avoid undue worries. Then they accepted us as brothers and admitted us to communion in the body of Christ. Bucer preached at Wittenberg and in Neumark in the presence of the prince;<sup>12</sup> I in Eisenach. We were treated with the greatest courtesy. But because we were few, and they did not have their most important people with them, and because such an important matter also concerned the magistrates, it was decided not to conclude a universal concord even if we clearly were in agreement. We, too, agreed to this, although we had a mandate from other churches. The Swiss do not disagree. I shall send you their articles of confession, which you will [soon] receive. The brothers have already left.<sup>13</sup> I therefore commend our concord to your sincere heart. Do as our fathers did. Make an effort to stop the more quarrelsome [among the Kraichgauers] from hurling abuse at the 'Schwärmer.'<sup>14</sup> Bucer sends his warmest greetings. Martin Frecht,<sup>15</sup> Johannes Zwick,<sup>16</sup> and the others who are in our retinue send their warmest greetings to you and Isenmann,<sup>17</sup> to

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- 11 Possibly a reference to the provincial diet (*Bundestag*) at Schmalkalden that ran from 6–24 December 1535. See *Die schmalkaldischen Bundesabschiede, 1533–1536*, edited by Ekkehart Fabian (Tübingen, 1958), vol. 2, 59–78, and Gerd Domasch, *Die Religionsprozesse der rekusierenden Fürsten und Städte und die Erneuerung des Schmalkaldischen Bundes, 1534–1536* (Tübingen, 1961), 64–76.
- 12 I.e., Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1532–47).
- 13 For the articles of the First Helvetic Confession that the Swiss sent to the meeting at Wittenberg in May 1536, see above, Ep. 594.
- 14 See above, Ep. 477, note 1.
- 15 For Martin Frecht, see above, Ep. 539 headnote.
- 16 For Johannes Zwick, see CWC 2, Ep. 192, note 1.
- 17 Johann Isenmann (c. 1495–1574) studied at the University of Heidelberg (BA, 1515; MA, 1516; BTh, 1523), where he was dean of the faculty of philosophy in 1523/4. In 1524, he was parish priest of St Michael in Schwäbisch-Hall, where Brenz was then preacher. In 1538, he was made superintendent. In 1546, he fled Schwäbisch-Hall for Wimpfen on account of rumours of war. In 1549, he was dismissed from Schwäbisch-Hall and became pastor in Urach, then in 1551, pastor at St George's in Tübingen. During that time he was also the general superintendent of the southwestern portion of the duchy of Württemberg. In

whom we would like you to convey our greetings as well. Frankfurt, on the third day after Trinity.<sup>18</sup>

Yours, Capito.

### Letter 613: 13 June [1536], Frankfurt, Capito to Martin Luther

This is the first letter in which Capito himself makes mention of personal debts he had incurred as a result of bad investments in the local printing presses, in particular that of his relative, Wolfgang Köpfel. After the negative publicity generated by Köpfel's unauthorized publication of the proceedings of the Disputation of Baden in 1526, Capito seems to have distanced himself from his relative. Köpfel was fined and the affair may have contributed to his bankruptcy (see CWC 2, Ep. 288a headnote). According to minutes from a meeting of the XXI in November 1533, Capito, along with his fellow preachers, was censured by the city council at the Synod of Strasbourg: 'Capito supplies the printer with texts on account of being in debt; he has not managed his money well, and should be more careful' (Dacheux, p. 222, no. 5026). Capito was also involved in the printing business of Matthias Apiarius, much to the chagrin of Bucer. In October 1534 he complained that Capito's involvement with the press was hindering his work as a reformer, forcing Bucer to pick up the slack: 'Apiarius tries hard to involve Capito in certain things – I don't know what to call them – for which he is unsuited. Capito has been ruined by debts before, and those who know about it say there is no hope for him if he continues his relations with that man. The whole thing will collapse soon' (see Schiess 1:568, Ep. 471). By 1535, it was reported that Capito was in debt for around 2,000 gulden (see above, Ep. 561, note 1). According to Capito's letter to Luther here, by 1536 his debt was under control.

Printed in WABr 7:432–7, Ep. 3038.

[*Summary*]: Capito assures Luther of his good will and gratitude. The Wittenberg Concord has given him peace of mind. He asks Luther to write to the Swiss, expressing his satisfaction with their desire for concord and explaining that he has approved of their confession but wants it 'expressed in simpler words and in accord with the articles in which we confessed our faith.'

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1551, he was one of the co-signatories of the *Confessio Virtembergica*. In 1558, he was the first evangelical abbot of the monastery in Anhausen/Brenz, and head of the monastic school there.

<sup>18</sup> Trinity Sunday fell on 11 June in 1536.

Capito is using Luther's letter to [Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen], the mayor of Basel, to good effect [see below, Ep. 616, note 13]. He will attempt to induce other churches to subscribe to the Concord and has no doubt that Constance will agree, putting his faith in Johannes Zwick.

Capito explains that he is burdened with debt due to his investments in a printing house, but that the matter is now in hand. He hopes to be on an even better footing, if Luther gives him the first printing rights to a revised edition of his *Postilla*. He furthermore asks Luther to allow [Wendelin Rihel] to publish his German biblical commentaries in one volume with a new preface. He notes that there are good scholars in Strasbourg who can see Luther's works through the press and translate them into Latin. He sends greetings to Luther's wife and promises to send her a gift on his return to Strasbourg [see below, Ep. 621].

#### **Letter 614: 13 June [1536], Frankfurt, Capito to Jodocus Neobolus**

The autograph original is no longer extant, but there is a copy in TB 9, 137, which is the basis of the edition printed in Olivier Millet, 'La correspondance du réformateur strasbourgeois W.F. Capiton avec Jodocus Neuheller, compagnon de table de Luther (1536–1538),' *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français* 129.1 (1983): 77–8.

Jodocus Neobolus (Jost Neuheller, 1504–1572) matriculated at the University of Heidelberg in 1522, then at Marburg in 1531 and Wittenberg in 1532. Shortly thereafter, he taught in Augsburg. In 1535, he returned with his pupil, Hans Honold, to Wittenberg, where he obtained an MA. After his meeting with Bucer and Capito in 1536, Neobolus acted as an important middleman between Luther and the Strasbourg reformers. After a brief stint as deacon in Tübingen, Neobolus worked as parish priest in Entringen (1540–57 and 1560–8) and at the Herrenalb monastery (1557–60). In 1551, he was part of the Württemberg delegation at the Council of Trent.

I beg you to remember on your journey, my dear Jodocus, that the Concord,<sup>1</sup> sacred and most necessary for the churches, may be disturbed by evil tongues. The minds of our Swiss friends (with the exception of a very few who favour sectarians) are favourably inclined toward the Doctor [Luther], and through our zeal his repute generally acquires lustre and perhaps now that the Concord has been signed will become even more illustrious, as far as it depends

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1 For the Wittenberg Concord, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

on us. But because Satan does not desist from ruining and disturbing our manifest tranquillity, I fear greatly that inexperienced people will make slanderous remarks about matters of small importance that have not yet been reformed. Furthermore, there are even among us rather contrary, not to say, treacherous people, who have promised us concord up front, by in fact nurse discord. If anything is written about this to the Doctor or to yourself, please inform me of it at once – this I ask through Christ and for the salvation of the churches. You will find that we shall act with determination to protect the Concord and the purity of gospel teaching. For both the public magistrates<sup>2</sup> and the Swiss are not averse from us but rather inclined toward true concord in the Lord, and indeed so are the better sort of ministers.

So much about public affairs; and now about private matters. Send me through friends in Augsburg what is being published at the Frankfurt Fair and is worth reading, especially of the works of the Doctor and Philip,<sup>3</sup> which appear to be conducive to promoting piety and literature. Thus you will best support our wishes. For until your people began to obtain privileges, they bought nothing of what was printed here. Hence our people were deterred, or our printers did not vie for the best, or did so in a tardy fashion, so that the attraction of novelty was lost, which draws inexperienced people more than usefulness. Thus it came to pass that the best books reached only learned men, and few among them. For I do not believe that Luther's inspired and felicitous commentaries on chapter [15] of [1] Corinthians, on [chapter 17 of] John, and on Christ's Sermon on the Mount<sup>4</sup> have reached Switzerland at all, except perhaps one copy of each sent to Bullinger. When we saw to it that they were published by our printers, more than 400 were distributed in Switzerland. I do not just consider the profit of the merchants, although I do have some regard for it; rather, I consider the public, which, deprived of the sacred flames that shine forth from the divine breast through the power of God, may again grow cold. Nothing, believe me, is more effective in producing true concord in the Lord than the circulation of the Doctor's and Philip's books. Please assist me in my wishes. If I have enough time, I shall write to the Doctor, asking him to put into one volume the German didactic works

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- 2 According to Millet, this is a reference to the cities of the Holy Roman Empire in southern Germany and Alsace, whose support for the Wittenberg Concord Bucer and Capito hoped to gain.
- 3 For Philip Melanchthon, see CWC 1, Ep. 29, note 7.
- 4 The reference is to these three works by Luther: *Das fünffte, Sechste und Siebend Capitel S. Matthei* (Wittenberg, 1532/WA 32:299–544); *Das 17. Kapitel Johannis* (Wittenberg, 1530/WA 28:70–200); *Das 15 Capitel der 1. Epistel S. Pauli an die Corinther* (Wittenberg, 1534/WA 36:478–696).

in which he explains scripture, and to commit them to me for printing.<sup>5</sup> I beg you to intercede with him to make this happen. I will repay his good will liberally. The *Loci* of Philip are already being printed, translated into German by Justus Jonas.<sup>6</sup> Please send me a copy of it through the merchants and patrons in Augsburg. I shall gladly give you in return whatever you ask for, and more, and I promise you my help in turn. I have brought away with me *A Simple Way to Pray*.<sup>7</sup> A good number of copies of that book should be sent to prominent Swiss leaders. Much will accrue from this to Christ, and more respect for the Doctor than from my prolix efforts. For concord must be promoted not only by words but also in substance. Farewell in the Lord and take this in good stead. Use my letter well – I have written it from the heart. Frankfurt, on the third day after Trinity. I am delayed here for the fourth day now for the sake of bringing order to this church.

Yours, Capito.

Please give me the names of your patrons in Augsburg, so that I may solicit their friendship myself, if I don't have it already, or increase it on your account. For I intend to make very great use of your friendly spirit.

#### Letter 615: 15 June 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Ambrosius Blaurer

The manuscript of this letter is in St Gallen KB, Ms. 33/41. It is partially transcribed and summarized in Schiess 1:802–3, Ep. 704.

Greetings. I will deal with what you write about Christoph to Bucer.<sup>1</sup> An unpleasant rumour is circulating here that he has deliberately fomented a revolt against the mayor and the judges. We readily agree with your testimony.

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- 5 For Capito's plan for a Strasbourg edition of a select works of Luther in one volume, the first step toward the publication of Luther's *Opera omnia*, see above, Ep. 613, Millet Ep. 646, and Eike Wolgast, 'Der Plan einer Straßburger Luther-Ausgabe (1536/38),' *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 7 (1966): 1032–6; cf. *idem*, *Die Wittenberger Luther-Ausgabe. Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Werke Luthers im 16. Jahrhundert* (Nieuwkoop: M. de Graef, 1971).
- 6 Melancthon, *Loci communes, das ist, die furnemesten Artikel Christlicher lere*, trans. Justus Jonas (Wittenberg: Rhaw, 1536). For Capito's comments on an earlier edition of the *Loci communes*, see above, Ep. 576.
- 7 Martin Luther, *Eine einfältige Weise zu beten* (Wittenberg: Lufft, 1535/WA 38:351–75). For an English translation, see Matthew C. Harrison, trans., *A Simple Way to Pray* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000).
- 1 Possibly a reference to Christoph Zorner (or Zörner or Zürner), an Anabaptist painter originally from Kreuznach (Rhineland-Palatinate). On 22 October 1533,

Many complain that the professors are suddenly absenting themselves from lectures and that there is no practice of disputations, without which there is little progress, especially in the disciplines. I know people who live there and complain of the loss of time. They live at greater expense with their teachers than is usual in Germany. Perhaps they want to become rich for once.

Oh, love of the public! If you can spare any time from organizing and serving the churches, turn your mind to this matter as well. For reasonable expenses, discipline, which is the cement of good society, and the vigilance and industry of the instructors are a blessing not only for the universities but for many states everywhere. Meanwhile the faculties<sup>2</sup> are being exploited by lazy instructors; the students are imbued by their parents with the worst

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it was reported, 'There is no complaint against the painter Stoffel, except concerning the Sacrament; he is of Luther's opinion and believes that public disputations are useless' (QGT 8:176-77, no. 440). In 1535, he gave up his Strasbourg citizenship and moved to the duchy of Württemberg (QGT 16:94, no. 1365). After 1535, he was active as pastor in Wildberg (Baden-Württemberg) and Kauchenheim (modern-day Kaufenheim, Alsace). By July 1536, he was back in Strasbourg, where Bucer, who called him 'Euthymos' [= 'cheerful,' a pun on the meaning of his surname, which means 'raging'], enlisted the help of Blaurer to secure a new position for him in Biberach (Baden-Württemberg). Despite Bucer's efforts, the position was given to another candidate (see Schiess 1, Epp. 710, 727, and 732/QGT 15:41, no. 738; Schiess 1, Ep. 755/QGT 15:61, no. 753; and QGT 16:551). On 22 May 1538, Zorner and his wife Ottilie Isenburger purchased a house in the Krutenau, a city quarter in Strasbourg near the Wilhelmites (see QGT 15:151-2, no. 826). On 4 October 1542, Zorner 'launched an appeal concerning his books, which were still kept in Wildberg' (QGT 15:535, no. 1214); on 4 November 1542, the council noted, 'Duke Ulrich von Württemberg replied to the appeal of Christoph Zorner, former parish priest of Wildberg, in which he declared that, as a result of the appeal, His Grace commanded the officials at Wildberg to forgive his debt and send on the books' (QGT 15:537, no. 1219). Finally, on 7 May 1544, the city council of Strasbourg reinstated Zorner's citizenship, writing, 'Christoph Zorner, pastor of Kauchenheim, gave up his citizenship in 1535, moved to Württemberg, and stayed there for a time. In the meantime he paid all the levies imposed by the administration and the guild. He did not swear allegiance to any other authority. Since he was regarded as an Anabaptist in Württemberg, he returned here. He asks the lords to consider that he gave up his citizenship rashly, yet paid during his absence the levies imposed on citizens by the administration and guild. He asks that his citizenship be kept up, so that he might take advantage of it again. If, however, our lords did not wish to grant his request for the reasons cited (which he did not expect from them), he would have to buy the citizenship' (QGT 16:94, no. 1365).

2 I.e., at the University of Tübingen.

morals, with ignorant hatred of letters, and are left with arrogance and a sense of self-importance. Farewell and continue to receive Christ and us all with that love of yours. Strasbourg, 15 June 1536.

Wolfgang Capito.

### Letter 616: 22 June 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen

The following letter is the first in a series that Capito wrote in his attempt to win over the Swiss to the Wittenberg Concord following his return to Strasbourg on 15 June (see above, Ep. 612 headnote). It was expected that the Swiss Protestant cities would put up the stiffest resistance to the Wittenberg Concord. Both Capito and Bucer pursued two courses in order to overcome the opposition: first, they asserted, albeit with a great amount of equivocation, the fundamental agreement between the Wittenberg Concord, on the one hand, and the Eucharistic teachings of Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and articles of the First Helvetic Confession, on the other; second, they attempted to win over individual cities, particularly Basel and Bern, where supporters of Luther and Zwingli could be found. Although Capito and Bucer made significant inroads, they ultimately failed in uniting the Lutheran and Zwinglian camps.

In Basel, the chief reformer, Oswald Myconius, reacted negatively to the Wittenberg Concord at first. Despite pressure from the city council to endorse the Concord, he wrote to Zurich (1 July 1536) to ascertain the opinions of Heinrich Bullinger and Theodor Bibliander. He criticized the ambiguity of the Wittenberg Concord. He was unwilling, moreover, to accept Capito's claim that there was no difference between the articles of the Wittenberg Concord and the First Helvetic Confession (HBBW 6, Ep. 857; cf. HBBW 6, Epp. 862–4).

On 19 July, Myconius sent a letter to Bullinger, Pellicanus, and Bibliander, again criticizing the Wittenberg Concord. He mentioned that the Strasbourg reformers had sent two writings to the city council of Basel: (1) Bucer's *Explicatio sive declaratio/Ermahnung und Erklärung* of the Wittenberg Articles, dated 22 June – copies of which were sent in both German and Latin (BDS 6/1:180–98, no. 12). They may have been enclosed with the present letter to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen and with Ep. 616a below. (2) A text dated 5 July (BDS 6/1:209–15, no. 15) which, according to Myconius, 'has the most mendacious title: "This Confession drawn up at Wittenberg contains nothing new; rather, it is implicit in Oecolampadius' and Zwingli's writings and in the Tetrapolitan Confession presented at Augsburg. It is generally and publicly confessed, and specifically contained in the Basel Confession, which was drawn up by the delegates and preachers of the evangelical cities in February, 1536.'" Myconius concluded his letter by stating, 'Bucer opposes us much more pertinaciously than Luther' (HBBW 6, Ep. 866).

A few weeks later, however, Myconius' attitude had changed. The city council of Basel sent two of its chief ministers, Simon Grynaeus and Andreas Karlstadt, to Strasbourg in order to discuss the Wittenberg Concord with the Strasbourg theologians (see below, Epp. 618–19, and HBBW 6, Ep. 866, notes 15–16, and Epp. 870–1). The two men returned to Basel with Bucer's new *Erläuterung* [Explanation] of 17 July (see below, Ep. 618), which gave a distinctly Zwinglian slant to the contents of the Wittenberg Concord. On 2 August, the majority of the ministers in Basel decided that the *Erläuterung* was in agreement with the First Helvetic Confession of 1536. Their decision was read at a meeting of the city council of Basel on 5 August.

In the autumn of 1536, several local synods were convened to decide whether to endorse or reject the Wittenberg Concord: on 24–25 September, a colloquy was held at Basel, at which Vadianus, Capito, Bullinger, Bucer, and Werner Beyel participated, and where the *Erläuterung* was discussed (see below, Epp. 623–5). At the end of September, Bucer sent a letter to Bullinger in which he naively stated that the Strasbourg preachers were delighted that Bullinger would champion the Wittenberg Concord (see HBBW 6, Ep. 898). On 17 October, a synod was held in Bern, where it was decided not to reject the Wittenberg Concord, since a rift among the Bernese reformers would be too risky, but the Concord was expressly approved only within the limits set by Bucer and Capito's interpretation of the document. On 24 October, the synod of Zurich met, during which the delegates rejected the Wittenberg Concord and endorsed instead a statement of their own Eucharistic doctrine. Joachim Vadianus had been invited, but declined to participate because of health issues (see HBBW 6, Ep. 877). The Zurich statement was approved by the Small and Great Council of Zurich on 25 October (see HBBW 6, Ep. 909, note 1).

By the end of December 1536, Bullinger expressed concern that Basel, under the influence of Myconius, would pursue its own course in the negotiations concerning the Wittenberg Concord (see HBBW 6, Ep. 928). Basel's commitment to finding a middle ground between Bucer and Bullinger was put to the test in the spring of 1537, when the Swiss were informed of a letter from Bucer and Capito to Luther (19 January 1537), in which they expressed their irritation over the delays and intransigence of the Swiss vis-à-vis the Wittenberg Concord and the debate over the Eucharist (see Millet Ep. 634, and Greschat, 141). The letter confirmed Bullinger in his distrust of Bucer and seriously damaged their relationship.

For Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, the mayor of Basel and a friend of Capito, see above, Ep. 501, note 5. The autograph original of this letter is in Basel UB, Ki. Ar. 23a, ff. 71–2.

First, my willing and ready service, dear lord and brother. My friend Hein-

rich<sup>1</sup> will report to you properly what was transacted and what happened on our journey.<sup>2</sup> The peace would have been lasting and solid, also concerning you, had it not been for the untimely publication of the letters.<sup>3</sup> There is an urgent need for people among you who have a greater understanding or who will not be so rash in acting publicly. Nothing is asked of them but to allow us to serve them and your church. We, however, wrote, negotiated, rode back and forth, and laboured greatly to make them serve the Lord in peace. On this journey alone we rode over 150 miles – and they are obstructing such an effort, sitting quietly at home. They shall be forgiven, but may God grant them to fall in line in the future and show concern for the consciences of so many simple souls, as well as for the land and people, widows and orphans, and for the effort we have made.

I have risked wife and child, life and possessions for this matter, and Bucer likewise, together with me, who now carries the burden and principally moves the matter forward. And they should also think of our lords who bore the great cost. The sole point is to reconcile the articles of Wittenberg with those that were recently established in Basel<sup>4</sup> and to recognize that they are fundamentally the same, with the exception of the article concerning those who receive the sacrament without being worthy of it, that is, whether they receive the whole sacrament in the way Oecolampadius<sup>5</sup> described it and which is further elucidated in the *Explanation* sent, an article which can

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- 1 Heinrich Billing (d. 1541), the step-son of the mayor of Basel, Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, was previously canon at St Leonhard before moving in 1526 to Zurich, where he was the first boarder of Pellicanus. In 1532/3, he matriculated at the University of Basel. In 1533, he went with Conrad Gesner and Johannes Fries to France, and in 1538/9, he studied in Strasbourg. He was friends with Thomas Platter, with whom he undertook a tour of Switzerland, and with Gesner, who dedicated to him his *Historia plantarum*. In 1541, Billing died of the plague.
- 2 I.e., on Capito and Bucer's journey to Wittenberg, where they attended a meeting of theologians from 21–29 May that led to the Wittenberg Concord, and back to Strasbourg (see above, Epp. 594 and 612 headnotes).
- 3 For the untimely publication of *Oecolampadii et Zwinglii epistolarum libri quatuor* ... (Basel, 1536), see above, Ep. 594 headnote.
- 4 The articles on the Eucharist that were composed at the Synod of Basel in Basel, 31 January–4 February 1536, that resulted in the First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).
- 5 In a letter earlier to Bullinger, Capito claimed that Oecolampadius himself was pleased with the Tetrapolitan Confession because it accorded with his own works on the Eucharist, namely, *De genuina verborum Domini, Hoc est corpus meum, iuxta vetustissimos authores, expositione liber* ([Strasbourg], 1525) and *Quid de eucharistia veteres ... senserint, dialogus* ... ([Basel], 1530) – see above, Ep. 600 and HBBW 6, Ep. 776, notes 9 and 10.

also be deduced from the Confession. We must attest to the truth and confess that those err who say that nothing but bread and wine is in the Supper. But we also know that Oecolampadius never spoke or wrote in this fashion and that he personally preached at Basel and printed the things contained in this Wittenberg article.

Dear sir, see to it that nothing is printed at this time concerning the business of the sacrament. And if you cannot hinder it, that it is phrased in accordance with the Wittenberg Articles. But it is better that everything is suspended until the [Wittenberg] Concord is ratified also by you. For such complex action requires a little more experience and great application. Complete agreement could be achieved if your preachers understood that the Tetrapolitan Confession and the articles of the Saxon Confession are in line with your articles,<sup>6</sup> if they freely and unconditionally accepted as true whatever is in accord with them and condemned whatever is against them, and if they accepted the Wittenberg Articles with good conscience and said so clearly in writing. As soon as you write in this sense to us, we shall speedily conclude the matter and see to it that a definitive day is set to end this strife. Furthermore, we could arm ourselves for the council His Imperial Majesty is planning. We shall send to Dr Luther whatever reply we obtain.<sup>7</sup>

As soon as we agree, then, to discuss with our government and brothers and also with you and your neighbours the contents of the above-mentioned articles, and as soon as we have a reply, we will forward it to Luther. Then we will see to it that a suitable day be set by the Elector for the authorities, so that a few people authorized by the rest can come and finally make a decision.<sup>8</sup>

Send this to Bern and St Gallen and anywhere else you wish. I wrote to my lord, the *Schultheiss* of Wattenwyl,<sup>9</sup> for his opinion on the business. The landgrave<sup>10</sup> is dissatisfied because we have not decided on or announced a concord and is worried that Bern will receive less help now that they are in trouble on account of the Saxons.<sup>11</sup> He is concerned also that some people may use this quarrel as an excuse to depart. But how could we have made a

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6 For the Tetrapolitan Confession, see above, Ep. 597, note 11.

7 See below, Ep. 619.

8 Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1532–47).

9 Hans Jakob von Wattenwyl (1506–60) was a member of the Great Council of Bern since 1525, and of the Small Council since 1526. In 1533, he was chosen mayor (*Schultheiss*) of Bern.

10 Philip I, Landgrave of Hesse (1504–1567).

11 I.e., the internal rift in Bern between the Lutherans and the Zwinglians that came to a head from 1538 to 1548, during which time Simon Sulzer became the leader of the Lutheran faction until his dismissal in 1548.

decision, especially when that unfortunate book of letters came in between, and furthermore, when we were not authorized to agree on your behalf in Basel to the wording decided? Yet we said publicly that we had no doubt one would encounter good will among you and your associates. We acted in the same way before the landgrave, which was the reason for his words.

Oh, my dear lord and brother, make every effort to prevent the evil Satan from causing trouble. We can no longer stand aloof as before. Six years ago we had peace and quiet and could afford to sit by and do as we please,<sup>12</sup> but now love for the churches and concern for the cities and the region force us to accept such risks and labours. No labour shall be too hard for us, but we must pray to the Almighty that it will not be in vain. And if necessary, I or Bucer will gladly come on your invitation and at our own expense. Thus I commend you to the Lord. Given on 22 June 1536.

Wolfgang Capito.

If there is anything in Luther's letter that might give offence to anyone, I ask that you keep it to yourselves and send me a copy, for I know that the pious man meant well.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Letter 616a: 5 July 1536, Strasbourg, Capito and Martin Bucer to the City Council of Basel**

For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 616 headnote. The manuscript of this letter is in Basel SA, Kirchenakten A9, ff. 242r–43r.

Pious, circumspect, honourable, wise lords! After Your Honours gave us instructions on behalf of your church, we would like you to know that, on account of Luther's illness, we rode to Wittenberg, twenty-eight miles from Eisenach, where we assembled.<sup>1</sup> There we treated publicly for nine days con-

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- 12 The German has 'und mochten des unsern warten, wo wir uns hetten wöllen uwer begeben.'
- 13 Luther's letter to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen is no longer extant (see above, Ep. 613, and below, Ep. 619, as well as WABr 7, Ep. 3033, note 9). Meyer did, however, respond to Luther's letter on 7 October 1536 (WABr 7:556–58, Ep. 3088).
- 1 See above, Ep. 594 headnote; for the distance, see Luther's letter to Bucer, 25 March 1536: 'Our prince has named Eisenach in Hesse as the place [for the meeting], twenty-eight miles from Wittenberg/Locum nobis princeps noster signavit Isenacum in confinio Hassiae, 28 miliaribus a Wittenberga' (WABr 7:379, Ep. 3001). Luther's letter is quoted in a letter from Johannes Zwick to Heinrich Bullinger, Conradus Pellicanus and Leo Jud, dated 27 April (HBBW 6, Ep. 808, ll. 9–11).

cerning all of our teaching. In the meantime two leaders of the [Swiss] confederates and their preachers indicated that they were inclined and willing to unite with us but apologized for their absence.<sup>2</sup> Thereupon we handed over your Confession, composed at Basel,<sup>3</sup> explaining how it corresponded to the Tetrapolitan Confession and the Apologia,<sup>4</sup> as well as the herein enclosed articles, which have been approved by all parties.<sup>5</sup>

On the second day, after some negotiation, Dr Martin Luther and the entire assembly no longer had any substantial objections, except that your articles were not sufficiently clear about the offering of the body and blood of Christ to satisfy the Elector,<sup>6</sup> princes, and others, including certain absent preachers at this time, since the book of letters, published by you, brought the passionate letters written by Zwingli at the beginning of the quarrel to the fore again.<sup>7</sup> In those letters he declared the sacraments empty signs of remembrance and added prefaces that are disputed to the present day. For this reason, we might have been suspected of creating concord in words, but in fact supporting erroneous teaching, namely, that there was [only] bread and wine in the Supper. Since, however, the interpretation contained in these Wittenberg Articles says nothing beyond what can be read in your Confession, they expect you to find the Wittenberg Articles acceptable if you are serious about a concord of the churches, for they too believe that they are in agreement with you.

Furthermore, they urgently begged us to act clearly and in a straightforward manner, for it was better to maintain the division between us than accept a peace and a common interpretation of the truth without fundamentally believing in it. That would necessarily bring about great trouble and confusion of consciences. And although we apologized earnestly at the beginning of the transaction on behalf of you, my lords and preachers of Basel, and also on behalf of Strasbourg for the book of letters, and although our

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- 2 For the refusal of the Swiss to participate at the Wittenberg Colloquy, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.
- 3 The First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession, the result of the Synod of Basel that met 31 January–4 February 1536 (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).
- 4 For the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia, see above, Ep. 597, note 11.
- 5 I.e., the Ten Articles composed by Bucer and signed by the Augsburg preachers in the spring of 1535 (see above, the headnotes to Epp. 545 and 554).
- 6 Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1532–47).
- 7 For the untimely publication of *Oecolampadii et Zwinglii epistolarum libri quatuor* ... (Basel, 1536), which contained letters from Oecolampadius and Zwingli from the beginning of the Eucharistic quarrel in the 1520s, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

apology was accepted as sincere by the assembly, we could make no further headway at the time, as we said above. We can well understand their concern that certain princes would make negotiations more difficult for us, seeing that all sorts of things are printed in that book which the Roman Imperial Majesty might consider seditious, if it were presented by malicious people, since our enemies leave nothing undone.

The union, however, has been delayed on purpose so far, circumspect, honourable, wise lords, to allow you, the confederates, to be included in the joint Concord. For our churches in the [German] Empire have never denied the presence of Christ and have clearly and expressly spoken of his presence, as is clearly and expressly confessed in the articles and can be read in the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia. We, therefore, kindly request that you, together with the pastors and our dear ministers of the gospel, study the articles we have sent you, together with the *Explanation*,<sup>8</sup> as well as our Confession and Apologia, and compare them with the Truth, and we hope you will find that we have added nothing that is not already in the above-mentioned Confession, has not been written by Oecolampadius himself and has never been contradicted by Zwingli and indeed admitted by him – as we can prove in several ways from their books with God's help. If anything should hold you and your people back, we are willing and ready, however, to give you further information – in person, if that is necessary. For this is an affair of faith that concerns the whole administration of the church and must be transacted with reason and transacted, understood, and taught openly, in public, if there is to be a true and lasting concord. It concerns many souls, who have been confused until now by this quarrel and turned away from our gospel.

Furthermore, without such a concord, we cannot achieve good administration, discipline, and improvement of our community. Finally, honourable, wise lords, we had instructions from the representatives at Aarau as well as from you.<sup>9</sup> Thus we ask Your Honours to be kind enough to send to the other Christian cities the articles in our reply and whatever other opinions of the matter you consider helpful in this business, together with an offer of our obedient and willing service. Please regard us as your willing servants in the Lord, to whom we herewith commend you, with a prayer that he may preserve us for the sake of his truth and peace. Amen. Given at Strasbourg, 5 July 1536.

Your Honours' willing servants,  
Wolfgang Capito,  
Martin Bucer.

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<sup>8</sup> See below, Ep. 618.

<sup>9</sup> See above, Ep. 608.

**Letter 617: 6 July 1536, Strasbourg, Capito and Martin Bucer to the City Council of Bern**

For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 596a. The manuscript of this letter is in Bern SA, A V 1421 (UP 56), no. 21.

Strict, honest, circumspect, honourable, wise, and just lords: Simon Sulzer<sup>1</sup> asked us to negotiate in your name with Dr Sebastian Meyer,<sup>2</sup> our dear sir and brother, about moving to Bern. This we did earnestly and with good will, as we both know what great need there is for such a sensible and experienced man, who will improve conditions with his good sense and his knowledge. Dr Sebastian himself realizes the needs of your church and the trust you place in him and the gracious favour you have shown him; he has the will and the heart to serve Your Honours. But we must confess that his old age and his poor physical health make him liable to new ailments, which is a concern and a cogent reason for him to reject Your Honours' summons. Such a task, which he is to undertake, will need a stronger man and more capable of work, given the number of your churches and the significant matters that every day come to the attention of the church of Bern. Since, however, we cannot do better for Your Honours on this occasion, we have persuaded the good old man – and he could not deny our request in good conscience – to venture it and do his best for one or two years, as much as he is able to do, and attempt the task if the Lord still wanted to use him. Thus we ask Your Honours to be satisfied this time with his and our good will more than with our actual deeds, and to take the old man into your loyal service, as you are inclined and have done in the past, for which he earnestly praises you.

You should understand, however, that he will not serve long in this position or not as long as your church needs him. Thus we repeat our loyal advice: As we told Your Honours above, we request that you train a man of your own, who might be entrusted with the office of public superintendent. But even today (we say this without disrespect to anyone) we know of no man more apt than Simon Sulzer, as we have attested earlier, on account of his good sense, zeal, skill, and Christian modesty.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, we would

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1 For Simon Sulzer, see above, Ep. 534, note 18.

2 For Sebastian Meyer, see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3, and above Ep. 513, note 10.

3 Sulzer was eventually called to Bern, where he served as a pastor and professor. There he promoted Bucer's attempts at conciliation with the Lutherans as embodied in the Wittenberg Concord, becoming head of what the Zwinglians regarded as a Lutheran faction in the church of Bern until his dismissal a decade later (see above, Ep. 616, note 11).

be very pleased, if we knew and could give your church a man like him for the position of superintendent. But for many reasons, which Your Honours know yourselves, it would be very useful for him and indeed necessary, if you wanted to enter into negotiations with him, to go elsewhere for a year or two at first, if only for the sake of tradition, and receive training and practice in this important position. We therefore beg Your Honours in the name of the Lord, loyally to consider both the needs of your churches and the precious gifts God granted to this man and to help him serve your church in a higher and more useful capacity than in his present position – a position in which he would prefer to remain rather than taking up the difficult and extensive work of a preacher in a place such as yours. But he is blessed with patience and will do whatever Your Honours command him to do. May Your Honours take our concern in good stead. The great need of the churches obliges us everywhere to act as we do, and our concern stems from the fact that we consider our two churches especially close.

Concerning the transactions promoting unity among the churches, we have written to the honourable council of Basel.<sup>4</sup> Dr Sebastian and Simon Sulzer have also been given a broad account of it. May the Almighty graciously grant us all to reach a true and Christian concord, as we certainly hope, and indeed the concord is already at hand in the Empire. We commend ourselves to Your Honours and will serve the honour of God. May the Almighty give you long life and health to govern in a Christian spirit. Given at Strasbourg on 6 July 1536.

Your Honours' willing servants,  
Wolfgang Capito,  
Martin Bucer.

**Letter 618: [17 July 1536], Strasbourg, Capito and Martin Bucer to the Basel Preachers**

In Millet, Epp. 618 and 619 are out of order chronologically. The two letters have now been switched around. The following is a summary of the 'Erlüderung der Witembergischen Articklen durch die predicanten von Straßburg gegeben' [Explanation of the Wittenberg Articles given by the preachers of Strasbourg]. It is printed in BDS 6/1:217–26, no. 16. For the context of the *Explanation*, see above, Ep. 616 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Simon Grynaeus and Andreas Karlstadt have come to discuss the

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<sup>4</sup> See above, Epp. 616 and 616a.

Wittenberg articles. The Strasbourgers asked them to voice any reservations they had. They discussed and clarified the following points:

- (1) The presence of the body and blood in the bread and wine are not an 'earthly mixture' (*irdische vermischung*); the signs, bread and wine, are earthly; the body and blood are heavenly.
- (2) They did not accept transubstantiation or local presence; they accept the real presence of Christ – the sacrament is not just a sign.
- (3) They cite Hilary, Chrysostom, Cyril, and Augustine for the use of the terms 'natural' to designate the spiritual effect of eating the Lord's body and drinking his blood. The meaning of the Wittenberg Article is the same as that given by Oecolampadius.
- (4) Sinners also receive the body and blood of the Lord, but are unworthy of it. They do not refer here to completely depraved men and unbelievers. This corresponds to the teaching of Oecolampadius.

They discussed other points as well but found the article concerning the Holy Supper the most difficult and therefore put their explanation in writing. Grynaeus and Karlstadt will relate the remainder orally. There is nothing in the Wittenberg Articles that cannot also be found in scripture and in the Fathers, that has not been taught by Oecolampadius and is not contained in Zwingli's answer to the German princes.

### Letter 619: 20 July 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Martin Luther

Printed in WABr 7:466–8, Ep. 3048.

[*Summary*]: Capito's respect for Luther increases daily. The mayor of Basel [Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen] treasures Luther's letter and will reply [see above, Ep. 616, note 13], but his priority is to establish concord in the city first, and then with the others. Capito is worried about Augsburg. There is a quarrel there between [Johann] Forster and Michael [Keller], which is harmful to the church. The important men in Mulhouse and Basel are in favour of the Concord. Basel has sent two leading ministers [Simon Grynaeus and Andreas Karlstadt] to discuss the matter with the Strasbourgers [see above, Ep. 616 headnote]. The plague is getting worse. Bucer has lost two youngsters and a baby boy. He received the news while in Frankfurt, where he is at present. Capito asks Luther to send his son [Hans] to be educated at Strasbourg. He can count on [Nikolaus] Gerbel, Bucer, [Petrus] Dasypodius, Jakob Bedrot, and Capito himself. [Jacques] Lefèvre d'Étaples and Erasmus have recently died, the latter on 11 July in Grynaeus' presence. Pope [Paul III] has called

a council [in Mantua, bull of 2 June], but Capito suspects his purpose is a reconciliation between France and the Holy Roman Empire that will allow him to concentrate on fighting the Protestants. He sends the *protestatio* of the Emperor [*Unsers Herrn Keyzers Protestation und abschied ...*, 18 April 1536].

**Letter 620: 1 September [1536], Paris, Baptista Nepius [Jean Lenfant] to Capito**

This letter is one of two letters Jean Lenfant wrote on the same date, both without a year of composition: the one here to Capito (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 159, pp. 305–8, no. 96), the other to Bucer (1AST 159, pp. 301–4, no. 95). All personal and place names are in code. ‘Baptista Nepius’ is a pseudonym for Jean Lenfant, seigneur de Chambray, a leader of the Protestants in Paris, who was in constant danger of his life. See C. Augustijn and F. P. van Stam, eds., *Ioanni Calvinii epistolae* (Geneva: Droz, 2005), 1:90–1, Ep. 16. His seigneurie near Metz in Lorraine was confiscated by the bishop of Metz when Lenfant, a vassal of the bishop, converted to Protestantism. In 1556, he travelled to Heidelberg, carrying out a mission on behalf of the Protestants of Metz. He was a member of the reformed church of Metz until the cardinal of Lorraine expelled him in the spring of 1558. On 23 April 1558, the city council of Strasbourg granted him refuge. That same year, he and Guillaume Farel visited the Palatinates of Simmern and of Zweibrücken, and the following year made a case to the governor on behalf of the Protestants of Metz, but without success. In 1574, Lenfant was arrested at Vic, near Metz, and hanged on the order of the cardinal of Lorraine. For further details, see Philippe Denis, *Les églises d'étrangers en pays rhénans (1538–1564)* (Paris: Société d'édition ‘Les Belles Lettres,’ 1984), 399–400, and Alain Dufour et al., eds., *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze. Tome XXV: 1584* (Geneva: Droz, 2003), Ep. 1681, notes 49 and 59.

According to Augustijn and van Stam, the editors of Calvin’s correspondence, the year date of Lenfant’s letters to Capito and Bucer can be established from Lenfant’s letter to Bucer (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 159, p. 301), in which he mentions two books as having just been published: an edition of Venerable Bede’s *Homiliae ...* (Cologne, 1535) and a Bible. The Bible in question may be the French translation by Robert Olivétan, published in 1535 (see Ep. 555a above).

I very much wish, most respected Fabritius, the affair of mortals were arranged such that impious men could not heap insults on the studies of good men and could not turn upside down illustrious thoughts. I would then declare how highly I value you and what great weight your most sacred admonitions always carry with me. Now, however, when unrestrained audacity and inveterate impiety cannot easily be overcome, we must bear with equa-

nimity the fatal calamity of our times and comfort ourselves and take our strength from the hope of immortal happiness. I have taken great pleasure in the arrival of Georges<sup>1</sup> because he bore the most ample testimony to a great man who has done much good to me and given me ample opportunity to perform a singularly pious office. Because, however, our degenerate age begrudges me leisure and secretly lies in wait for our pious will, I was obliged to dismiss our lofty thoughts and yield to our most unfair age. [Georges] came as a man especially dear on account of your sweet letters and most pleasing to us on account of the integrity of his life. We had hoped to enjoy the considerable benefits of his mind for some months, but when he recognized that piety was not at all safe here, he preferred to travel to our Passelius<sup>2</sup> rather than run a great risk without hope of pleasing results. It was hard for him to leave his most pleasant friends behind, and it bothered us a great deal that we were unable to prove our most willing spirit by heaping many benefits on him.

I must use such phrases, most respected teacher, and pass over how very much he lived up to the illustrious commendation of your piety. That would require complete peace, which our wretched age quite denies me. One day Christ will grant our desire to indulge in letters with free minds and thoughts. I would not hold back or yield in this matter to the insane fury of my enemies, if I did not have hope that our Antonius<sup>3</sup> can tell you everything faithfully. I shall only add that I begged Georges urgently on his departure to thank you in his name for the immortal benefits you and your sister<sup>4</sup> bestowed on him. I wish very much, most pious Fabritius, if you had time in your many preoccupations, to write to us briefly, to what extent one may publicly attend Neaeras.<sup>5</sup> At some point, I heard something [about this]

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- 1 Not identified. In his letter to Bucer, Lenfant writes, 'I have written to Dr Capito about Georges, but in quite obscure terms, for in these times it is not desirable to be more explicit' (Strasbourg AVCU, 1AST 159, p. 302).
- 2 I.e., John Calvin (see above, Ep. 546 headnote).
- 3 Possibly the same Antonius Carlaeus (Carlier) of Paris, who acted as a messenger between Jean Du Bellay, the court of the French king, and the Strasbourgers, and who is mentioned as 'Antonius Carlaeus heraldus' in letters from Jean Sturm written in 1547 and 1554 (see Rott 1, p. 301, note 6, and Rott 2, p. 46).
- 4 I.e., Capito's wife, Wibrandis Rosenblatt, his sister in Christ (see above, Ep. 469, note 30).
- 5 The point of reference is unclear. Neaera was a fourth-century-BC slave girl in a Corinthian brothel, whose struggle to move across the social and legal boundaries from slave to free woman and gain the position of legal wife dominated her life. As such, Neaera may be either a code name for the mass or for Nicodemism. It was a much disputed question whether Protestants in France could

from Dr Felinus<sup>6</sup> and read something in your books. As for the rest, some people give more credence to your books than to anyone faithfully relating [your teaching]. To make everything quite clear to everyone, I would very much ask you to steal one hour from your studies to assure your friends and impel them to great things. I asked Dr Felinus the same thing. Indeed everyone makes much of you two because of your singular piety and erudition conjoined with admirable holiness of life. This is what these men ask you, who wish you all the best. Much remains which cannot be said here and now. We ask only that you help your friends as soon as possible with your counsel, favour, and benevolence, for we are suffering and have lost hope. I wish I could stay here a long time to oblige my friends, but I fear that a general rumour will drive me [from Paris] to my native land [of Chambray]. I would prefer to come to you, if it can be done, for I have never been happier than when I was at peace in your benevolence, practising your outstanding virtues and piety, but this Christ will soon grant me. In the meantime I shall make an effort not to appear to fall short of my obligations. Given at Rome,<sup>7</sup> on the Kalends of September. The times do not require greater clarity, nor can I give it. It will be enough if Antonius plays the prudent Oedipus.<sup>8</sup>

Your disciple, who is sincerely devoted to you,

Baptista Nepius of Chambray.

Greet, if you please, all friends and sisters.

### Letter 621: 3 September 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito to Jodocus Neobulus

The autograph original is no longer extant, but there is a copy in TB 9, 209,

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publicly attend the mass and maintain their evangelical beliefs privately, so as to safeguard their lives. Cf. Nepius' letter to Bucer: 'Some excellent men persistently urge me to ask your opinion about that public Neaera ... whether it is better to stay away rather than fill your wretched eyes with that monstrous and most unworthy spectacle' (*Quidam optimi viri a me obnixè contenderunt, ut a te peterem, quid sentiret de illa Neaera publica ... num praestaret abesse, quam tot portentorum indignissimo spectaculo miserabiles oculos exsatiarem*), *1AST* 159, p. 301.

6 'Aretius Felinus' was a pseudonym frequently used for Martin Bucer. 'Martin' is derived from 'Mars,' the Roman god of war, whose Greek equivalent is 'Ares' – thus 'Aretius.' Bucer, sometimes spelled Butzer, suggests 'cleaner,' as in the German verb 'putzen' (to clean), which in turn suggests the cleanliness of a feline, hence Felinus (see *CorrBucer* 3, Ep. 223, note 4).

7 'Rome' is code for Paris.

8 A reference to Oedipus answering the riddles of the sphinx.

which is the basis of the edition printed in Olivier Millet, 'La correspondance du réformateur strasbourgeois W.F. Capiton avec Jodocus Neuheller, compagnon de table de Luther (1536–1538),' *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français* 129.2 (1983): 78–9.

The complaints of your people about our insolence were not rash. The people of Reutlingen had a merrier knight than suits our following.<sup>1</sup> One of them has not made up his mind so far.<sup>2</sup> We reproached them gravely, for we know in what matter they gave offence. The rest of them are all very modest men, I know, and not only the preachers but the knights as well. I believe the story of the girl in Frankfurt is made up.<sup>3</sup> It is best to reply firmly. I shall show this fabulous tale here to my friends, when I have time, for I shall devote today and perhaps tomorrow morning to writing letters. We know from them what

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- 1 On 13 September, Reutlingen reported its acceptance of the Wittenberg Concord (WABr 7:538–9, Ep. 3080). The identity of the knight is unknown.
- 2 Unidentified.
- 3 I.e., the story of Gertrude Metzge, the daughter of a fisher in Lebus on the Oder River (modern-day Lubusz, Poland). It appears in a letter by Andreas Ebert to Luther, written toward the end of July 1536. According to Ebert, a Lutheran preacher in Frankfurt/Oder (1479–1557), Metzge was about sixteen years old and 'weak in the head and possessed by the devil.' She was said to produce coins in a miraculous fashion, snatching them from her bed, from tables, or from the sleeves, coats, and beards of bystanders. She then put these coins into her mouth and attempted to chew and swallow them. On the initiative of the council, a Catholic priest was summoned from a neighbouring town to perform an exorcism, but his efforts were unsuccessful. The desperate girl was carefully guarded to keep her from committing suicide. Ebert exhorted the congregation in his sermons to pray on her behalf and persist in their prayers until she was cured (WABr 7:482–87, Ep. 3055). Luther responded on 5 August 1536, urging continued prayer for the girl and recommending that Ebert publish an account of the story, since it highlighted the importance of preaching the Word of God in combatting the devil rather than resorting to Catholic rites (WABr 7:489–90, Ep. 3057). Ebert's account appeared under the title, *Wundere zeitung von einem Geldteufel, ein seltzame, ungläubiche, doch warhafftige geschicht zu Franckfurt an der Oder beschehen und urkintliche außgangen* (= Amazing news of a money-devil, a strange and incredible, yet true story of happenings in Frankfurt an der Oder, which are documented) N.p., 1538 = VD-16 E 174; cf. VD-16 E 173. The story fascinated readers at the time. Georg Sabinus included a poem about the girl, 'Historia de puella Francofordiensi,' in his *Poemata* (Strasbourg, 1538), ff. H2v–H3r, and Jodocus Willich mentioned the story in the prefatory letter to his *In Ionam prophetam* (Frankfurt/Oder, 1549), addressed to the students of the University of Frankfurt/Oder (ff. A2r–A3v).

they wrote to Augsburg. We shall see to it that they act with gravity and veracity. You must make an effort not to believe just anyone who brings out tragic accusations, for people are surprisingly vain and desirous of tearing apart friendships.

My dear Jodocus, the papists are raging amazingly. On the grounds that the magistrates must not encroach on foreign jurisdiction, they want complete impunity for crimes and scandalous behaviour. Strive in every way to keep the Doctor from writing to the city council.<sup>4</sup> For no one can force the magistrates to do away with this execrable practice at this time; it is merely pointed out [to the papists] how blasphemous their action was and how obstinately they persisted in their impiety. We shall write about this to Luther as our patron and parent, as we have been advised by another party. Please write sometimes to Boniface and Musculus.<sup>5</sup> I send you as a gift *Palestina* with an index, for I have nothing else that is worthy of you.<sup>6</sup> I have enclosed a very small gift, a ring, [worth] two crowns for Katharina von Bora, the wife of the Doctor, the best of women, merely as a token of my inclination.<sup>7</sup> She deserves my affection for the reason that she cares for our common teacher devotedly like a sweet mother. Commend myself most dutifully to her. Perhaps I shall also write to her. The remainder you will hear from the Doctor, for there will certainly be a general concord. 3 September 1536.

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- 4 Luther seems to have complied with Capito's request, since his next letter to the city council of Augsburg was written on 29 August 1538 (WABr 8:274–75, Ep. 3251).
- 5 I.e., Boniface Wolfhart (see CWC 1, Ep. 102 headnote) and Wolfgang Musculus (CWC 2, Ep. 438 headnote). On 26 September 1536, Musculus mentions having received a letter from Neobolus, which is no longer extant. See Johannes Magirus, *Kurtzer gründlicher Bericht von dem Buch Ambrosii Wolfii* (Tübingen, 1581), 88–90.
- 6 This is a reference to Jakob Ziegler's *Syria ad Ptolemaici operis rationem...* (Strasbourg, 1532), which was republished under the title *Terrae sanctae quam Palistinam nominant ... doctissima descriptio una cum singulis tabulis ... authore Iacobo Zieglero ... Terrae Sanctae altera descriptio iuxta ordinem alphabeti ... authore Wolfgango Weissenburgio* (Strasbourg: Rihel, September 1536). The 1536 edition contains an index and an *elenchus* with biblical references to Ziegler's place-names.
- 7 Katharina von Bora (1499–1552), a former nun, married Luther on 13 June 1525. For Capito's earlier plan to send her a gift, see above, Ep. 613. Luther thanked Capito for the ring on behalf of his wife in July 1537, interpreting the gesture as a symbol of the unity between Wittenberg and Strasbourg. Unfortunately, he added, the ring had since either been stolen or lost (see Millet, Ep. 646).

I have not yet written to [Luther's] wife, because I have not had any free time.

Wolfgang Capito.

**Letter 622: 4 September 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Martin Luther**

For the context of the letter, see above, Ep. 612 headnote. Printed WABr 7:520–5, Ep. 3075.

[*Summary*]: Capito fears that the four letters he wrote (one en route) to explain the negotiations concerning the Concord are lost. He therefore recapitulates their contents. On his return [from Wittenberg] he dealt with the XIII and the senate of Strasbourg. They are amenable to the Concord. Among his colleagues, a few were dissatisfied – Paul Volz was firmly opposed. After Johannes Zwick of Constance spoke strongly in favour of the Wittenberg Articles, they approached Volz again. He had no arguments to offer, but remained uncommitted. Capito suspects that he favours adult baptism. He agreed to another discussion. His confidence seems to derive from the fact that Erasmus has left him 100 gulden. [Caspar] Schwenckfeld, too, edges him on with frequent letters from Ulm. Martin Frecht bitterly complains about his activities there. The Strasbourgers have sent Caspar Hedio and Matthew Zell to remonstrate with him. He was unwilling to talk to them.

Since the senate and the XIII are in favour of the Concord, letters were sent to other churches about the matter; in Strasbourg all except Volz subscribed, whereupon the council asked him to refrain from preaching. They would have written to Luther announcing their formal acceptance, but they knew that he also wanted the consensus of the rest. All the churches in Swabia, except Ulm, expressed agreement in private letters; they are now waiting for an official response. He regrets the apparent disagreement with [Johannes] Bugenhagen on whether unbelievers benefit from the Supper. He encloses a copy of a letter from the Basel church to keep him posted of the negotiations about the Concord in Switzerland. [Oswald] Myconius is now in agreement with them. When they promoted the cause personally in Basel, some people still objected. They also wrote to Augsburg, counselling the brothers not to provoke the council by asking for the abolition of the mass at this point. Even preaching against it creates a great deal of opposition. One of the councillors who favours the evangelicals asks Luther to refrain from writing to the city council. The question of the emperor's power is a particularly sensitive point. The question of faith and secular authority should be kept separate. Capito asks for advice on the question of private communion for the sick. He sends greetings to Bugenhagen, [Caspar] Cruciger, [Justus] Jonas, Philip [Melanchthon], and [Jakob] Milich.

**Letter 623: [c. 24 September 1536], Basel, Capito and Martin Bucer to the Participants at the Colloquy of Basel**

For the context of this letter, see above, Ep. 616 headnote. The document is edited in BDS 6/1:226–39, no. 17. This is not a letter proper, but an account (*Relation*) of the statement made during the colloquy, which began at Basel 24 September 1536. It is a follow-up to the *Erläuterung* (Explanation) given in writing to the Basel emissaries, Simon Grynaeus and Andreas Karlstadt (see above, Ep. 618), and sent together with Ep. 624.

[*Summary*]: Capito and Bucer report on their meeting with the Wittenberg theologians. They state that they did not subscribe to the belief that there is only bread and wine in the Supper; rather, together with bread and wine the body and blood of Christ are distributed to the congregation and benefit only believers. They do not believe in the natural union of the bread with the body of Christ, nor in his local presence. Although they agreed on these points, Luther wanted to draw up articles to be presented for ratification. ‘Thus the articles were signed by the preachers on both sides assembled at Wittenberg. They were to be presented by each of them to their churches and authorities. Thus we wish to present and relate these articles to Your Honours and friends, together with an explanation and rationale why they were drawn up in this manner’:

- (1) They believe in the real presence of Christ, but not in a natural union of the bread and body.
- (2) They do not accept transubstantiation or Christ’s local presence, only ‘sacramental union.’
- (3) The efficacy of the sacrament does not depend on the worthiness of the minister. It is given to worthy and unworthy recipients alike, but only believers benefit.

This should be taught to the people in a way they can understand, without getting involved in technical terminology.

**Letter 624: [24 September 1536, Basel], Capito and Martin Bucer on behalf of the Strasbourg Preachers to the Participants at the Colloquy of Basel**

The following letter was sent as an attachment to Ep. 623. Both texts have been edited as a single document in BDS 6/1:227–39, no. 17 (the letter on pp. 236–9).

Pious, dear, Christian lords and brothers, we ask and admonish you in the

Lord, in his holy name, and in the name of his poor, distracted church, which each of us, as best we can, must gather and edify, to consider and judge all actions and articles recounted here without much scruple as coming from our Lord Jesus. We attest before him that we began this effort to obtain concord seven years ago,<sup>1</sup> but promoted it with a new earnestness and greater hope after the Diet of Augsburg. We attest that we have acted in good conscience, with the interest of the Upper German churches in mind, so that we always raised and promoted the matter of concord. We could have achieved union with Dr Luther's party for our church and persons with good conscience at the Diet of Augsburg and made peace in all things, if we had given up the opinion and bidding of our dear brothers and churches in the praiseworthy [Swiss] Confederacy and separated from them.<sup>2</sup> Your Honours, dear sirs, should also note that we acted in this matter, from beginning to end, in writing and orally, with the knowledge, command, and will of our magistrates, as well as the respected preachers and magistrates of the cities in the Empire, such as Augsburg, Constance, Ulm, Memmingen, Esslingen, Lindau, Isny, Kempten, and Biberach. Our attendance at the meeting in Wittenberg and the signing of the proceedings in Wittenberg are the only things that have not yet been dealt with by all.

Furthermore, the above-mentioned articles<sup>3</sup> contain neither meaning nor text that is not in its purest and natural sense completely and clearly in accord with holy scripture, with the teaching and practice of the old and true church of Christ, from the beginning of the holy martyrs, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Cyprian, and so on to St Bernard, as well as recent writings, such as the *Dialogue* of the late Dr Oecolampadius,<sup>4</sup> likewise the response of Master Ulrich Zwingli to the invective of Eck.<sup>5</sup> These articles are also found in the disputation held at Bern<sup>6</sup> and do not differ in substance from them; these articles are also comparable and in agreement with the above-mentioned confession of

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- 1 I.e., the efforts to achieve concord between the Lutherans and Zwinglians at the Marburg Colloquy of 1529.
- 2 Cf. the arduous attempts of the Strasbourg preachers, on account of the rejection of the Lutheran position by the Swiss in the summer of 1530, to initiate a conversation with Melancthon (see CWC 2, Epp. 416–18, 420, 420b, and 422) and then with Luther in Coburg (see CWC 2, Epp. 426, 427, and 427a).
- 3 I.e., the contents of Ep. 623.
- 4 Oecolampadius, *Dialogus quo patrum sententiam de coena domini bona fide explanat* (Basel, 1530), f. [C8b].
- 5 Ulrich Zwingli, *Ad illustrissimos Germaniae principes Augustae congregatos de convitiis Eccii epistola* (Zurich, 1530). See also CWC 2, Ep. 422.
- 6 For the acts of the Disputation of Bern of 1528, see BDS 4:15–160, esp. 131–8.

our Upper German churches, as established this February in Basel.<sup>7</sup> Both the content and the words are furthermore contained and printed in the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia.<sup>8</sup>

We, the ministers of the Word in Strasbourg, commend these articles and offer proof with a clear conscience and without doubt, so that no Christian, who considers this according to natural right and ponders it, should have any doubts about it. Since, however, the quarrel is unfortunately of long standing and both parties have conceived grave suspicions of each other on account of a misinterpretation of their writings, it is not surprising that some pious and sensible people harbour doubts and shy away, partly from the writings and partly from the articles. But anyone, who deigns to compare these articles with the divine and other above-mentioned writings and accepts them according to their natural meaning, will no doubt have no objections to our account and counsel and will soon recognize that we are in agreement.

Since this is the case and not otherwise, which the Lord God will show to all pious Christians, we have high hopes in view of the godliness you all show, that you will apply yourselves to your best ability to further and advise acceptance of this very necessary concord of the churches, to subscribe to these articles, and to ensure that they are promoted everywhere and adopted, so that this unfortunate and harmful separation and schism of the churches be obviated. We have no regard for earthly things, for peace and hope are given by the Lord alone, and that is our only concern as we pray every day: 'Hallowed be your name; your kingdom come.'<sup>9</sup> May no one be kept back by the fear that this concord may introduce some error, tyranny of the churches, or anything unchristian, for if these articles do not contain the truth of Christ, he will loyally protect us, so that accepting the truth in this sense will not bring us trouble. Rather he will grant us that we preach his truth in a truly Christian manner and that we shall never give in to human temptation and preach anything untrue or unchristian. Therefore, not only should we not be deterred from this Christian concord by useless speeches of frivolous people and invectives against it, but we should also be corroborated in it, for we must recognize who it is that fights against this concord first of all, namely, the father of all lies and blasphemy.<sup>10</sup> May the Lord

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7 For the First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession, see above, Ep. 585, note 8.

8 For the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia, see above, Ep. 597, note 11.

9 Matt. 6:9–10.

10 Cf. John 8:44.

grant you, circumspect, honourable, wise, and dear lords, as well as all pious Christians, to understand this business in its full truth and stand by it, as it may serve the glory of Christ and the edification of the church everywhere,<sup>11</sup> and as every office and duty require. We beg Your Honours and dear sirs to take and accept all of our statement and action in good stead and commend ourselves to you as our lords to whom we offer all our good service.

Your humble and willing servants and brothers,

Dr Wolfgang Capito and Martin Bucer, in the name of all the ministers of the Word of the Lord at Strasbourg.

**Letter 625: [25 September 1536, Basel], The Swiss Preachers assembled at Basel to Capito and Martin Bucer**

For the context of this excerpt, see above, Ep. 616 headnote. A copy of this manuscript is in Zurich ZB, A 71, 269.

After we, the representatives of the ministers of the gospel in the Confederacy were sent to Basel, we understood from the various explanations of our loyal and dear brothers, the ministers of the Word at Strasbourg, that the above-mentioned Wittenberg Articles<sup>1</sup> sum up our Confession<sup>2</sup> and teaching here in Basel, neither weaken nor overturn it, and that they speak of the true humanity of Christ our Saviour together with his elevation into heaven, for he does not live in this fragile, carnal world, but remains in his heavenly nature, and that our Lord Jesus – provided the holy Supper is celebrated with the congregation according to the right institution of Christ and thus distributed to them – will be received and enjoyed only by the believing mind. We have never taught, moreover, that in the ceremony of the holy Supper only wine and bread are used.

We are joyful and praise God if there is good hope that we will arrive at a good agreement by these means. We have no specific instruction from our lords, the magistrates, or the churches, however, to conclude the matter, but only to listen and bring back the message we receive. Thus we have transacted everything between us and have noted down especially what our dear brothers of Strasbourg have related, being of good hope that God will

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11 Cf. Eph. 4:12.

1 For the articles of the Wittenberg Concord, see above, Ep. 594 headnote.

2 I.e., the First Helvetic (or Second Basel) Confession of 1536 (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).

graciously grant us to serve in unity for the progress and benefit of the gospel of Christ.

**Letter 626: [End of September 1536, Strasbourg, Capito] to Guillaume Farel**

This cryptic note, which likely was the postscript to a letter that is no longer extant, concerns efforts by the Swiss cities to gain direct access to Francis I. Capito seems to suggest that Wilhelm von Fürstenberg (see below, note 5) might be useful to them. It is printed in Herminjard 4:84–5, Ep. 572. For Guillaume Farel, see CWC 2, Ep. 347 headnote.

I had forgotten:<sup>1</sup> The Swiss churches were complaining they had no opportunity to negotiate with the French king,<sup>2</sup> except through his legates, if one happened to come to solicit them on the king's behalf. There are many pious hearts; there are also many people especially eager to obtain public tranquillity among the brothers.<sup>3</sup> I have not yet been able to find the brother.<sup>4</sup> The next step appears to be to write from here to Duke Wilhelm.<sup>5</sup> However, I do not know whether the brother could take care of conveying a letter. I shall know later.

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- 1 The expression 'hoc exciderat' is ambiguous. It could also mean 'this had slipped out.'
- 2 Francis I, king of France (r. 1515–47).
- 3 An allusion to the evangelicals of France, in particular the Waldensians of Provence and Dauphiné in southeastern France (see above, Ep. 562).
- 4 According to Herminjard, this reference is either to Claude Farel or Antoine Saunier (see above, Ep. 562, note 8). Claude Farel (d. around 1575), the brother of Guillaume Farel, was a notary in Gap (Dauphiné). In the 1530s, he embraced the evangelical faith and was forced to leave the town. As of August 1533, he was living in Switzerland. In 1537, he was installed as the administrator of the chapter of canons of Ripaille near Thonon-les-Bains, the capital of Chablais, a province in the former duchy of Savoy. Together with his brother, Gauchier, he purchased in 1540 the former Johannite commandry of La Chaux near Cossonay (canton Vaud). For many years, both brothers sought to regain their family's confiscated property in Gap.
- 5 Duke Wilhelm von Fürstenberg (1491–1549), who had embraced the Reformation, commanded the German mercenary soldiers in the camps entrenched at Avignon on behalf of Francis I. Up until 1536, the Strasbourg reformers had not contemplated soliciting the intercession of Wilhelm in favour of the Waldensians (see above, Ep. 565). By November 1536, however, the duke was in league with the evangelical cities of France (Herminjard 4, Ep. 578).

The brother has now agreed. He will accordingly receive a letter from the mayor, which I have composed.<sup>6</sup> He has copied it in his own hand, addressing it to Duke Wilhelm. For there is fear that that he will be late returning from the duke.<sup>7</sup> Pray to the Lord for our churches.

**Letter 627: 23 November 1536, [Strasbourg], Capito and the Strasbourg Preachers to the City Council of Constance**

For the context of the letter, in which Capito and the Strasbourg preachers react to the news that Constance has rejected the Wittenberg Concord, see above, Ep. 612 headnote. On 30 December, Johannes Zwick sent a letter to Conradus Pellicanus and Heinrich Bullinger, in which he mentioned that he and his brother, Konrad, would go to Strasbourg armed with the explanation of the Constance preachers as to why they rejected the Wittenberg Concord as well as their letter to Luther. This journey, however, never took place because Konrad Zwick became ill and a meeting of the Schmalkaldic League was announced (see HBBW 6, Ep. 930, note 4). The letter is printed in BDS 6/1:258–70, no. 19.

[*Summary*]: They have heard that the city council of Constance has written to the representatives of the Swiss Confederacy informing them that they are unwilling to accept the Wittenberg Concord or the *Explanation* supplied by Capito and Bucer [see above, Ep. 618]. Instead, they would negotiate with Luther themselves. The Strasbourgers do not think that this is conducive to peace. They explain their position on the Supper: both the earthly bread and the heavenly body of Christ are given to believers. The bread and wine are not merely signs; Christ is present in them, although not locally. This is what the church of old believed, and this was taught by Oecolampadius and published in his *Dialogue*. This is also the meaning of the Wittenberg Confession and Apologia, which agree with the Tetrapolitan Confession, as was stated at Schweinfurt. They remind the council of Constance that they accepted the Tetrapolitan Confession. They will find the beliefs concerning the Supper in the first Wittenberg Article. The second article denies transubstantiation; the third concerns unworthy members of the congregation, who will nevertheless be allowed to participate in the sacrament. There is nothing in

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6 According to Herminjard, this refers, in all likelihood, to the mayor of Strasbourg. The letter to Duke Wilhelm is not extant.

7 I.e., Christoph von Württemberg (1515–1568; reigned as duke from 1550 until his death), who brought 8,000 mercenary soldiers to Francis I (Herminjard 4, Ep. 572, note 10).

these articles that has not also been expressed in the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia, nothing that could promote superstition. This is why Johann Bader, reformer of Landau, recommended the Concord. Philip of Hesse and Philip Melanchthon praised the confession of the Constance preachers and regarded it as being in agreement with their own. They are aware of Thomas Blaurer's reservations, but in this matter one person's opinion should not dominate the discussion. The council must not stand in the way of a concord, which is feared by the papists, Anabaptists, and the followers of Schwenckfeld. Bullinger also agreed that there was nothing wrong with the articles. Capito and his colleagues emphasize that they must agree on the meaning, not the words. If the council insists on writing to Luther separately, the Strasbourgers ask at least to see the letter first. They may be able to avoid trouble by changing a word here or there. They present the following scenarios: if the council does not wish to accept the Wittenberg Articles, they should indicate to the Strasbourgers what they find questionable; if they insist on writing to Luther, they should allow them to comment on the letter before sending it off. The letter is signed by Capito, Caspar Hedio, Bucer, and Matthew Zell.

#### **Letter 628: 29 November 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Johannes Gast**

The addressee, Johannes Gast (d. 1552), studied in Frankfurt, Frankfurt/Oder, Wrocław, Budapest, and Vienna. Thereafter, he moved to Basel where he worked as a corrector for the printer Adam Petri. He married Apollonia Glaser. From 1525 until his death, he was deacon at St Martin's in Basel. In his sermons he often sharply criticized the professors at the university and his fellow pastors, holding them responsible for the sorry state of church affairs and morals in Basel. In the spring of 1545, he was relieved of his duties by the city council and fined, but soon reinstated. He wrote a diary covering the years 1531 until his death. See Paul Burckhardt, ed., *Das Tagebuch des Johannes Gast* (Basel: Schwabe, 1945).

The following letter was evidently written in response to an earlier letter from Gast (no longer extant), in which he asked for Capito to weigh in on the subject of clandestine marriages in light of a recent case in Basel. In response, Capito examines Basel's marriage ordinance of 1529, highlights potential problems, and suggests an emended ordinance. He bases his opinion on civil and canon law as well as the rabbinic authorities. The manuscript of this letter, with Capito's corrections, is in Zurich SA, E II 337, pp. 211–16.

Greetings. Matrimony is an external thing and of this world and falls within the powers of a judge, who bears the sword, but it happens that consciences are burdened in a wretched manner by marriage laws, which are not fairly

established, as the facts show when you read the ignorant summations and what has been written in the fourth book of the *Sentences* in former centuries.<sup>1</sup> This is what detracts us from preaching the gospel and obliges us to consider this a matter of civil law. The same obligation moved Dr Oecolampadius to see to it that new laws about contracting marriage were passed by the magistrate.<sup>2</sup> He tempered them according to the judgment of the people, as it was then, and we could not object to his attempt, for he was quite willing to listen to counsel. There is, however, one law among them that forbids a marriage contracted against the will of the parents, yet acknowledges the marriage contract as true and lawful, except that it gives the parents the right to disinherit the disobedient child, if they so please. For the rascally bridegroom would benefit from the sin of disobedience by obtaining their beloved daughter as his wife over the objections of the parents and later on their possessions likewise. Since the natural love of parents does not allow them to be severe avengers of their daughter's naivety, there is, however, little danger of them disinheriting her. By this law, which both forbids and permits clandestine marriage, it appears that the young woman in question has been deceived, for she thought perhaps she would obtain a congenial husband, even if her old parents disapproved. It is a failing of the human character that a strong young mind readily scorns old people. And so it seems that she laid herself open to the treacherous banquet or the young suitor only in the hope of obtaining a husband.

Experience teaches us many things. Thus we counselled and advised our magistrate simply to forbid such clandestine marriages. And we would define clandestine marriages according to the imperial laws as marriages that are contracted without the knowledge of those in whose interest it is to know, that is, of the parents or those who stand in their place. This argument is taken from the nature of matrimony. For the cohabitation of a man and woman is a civic matter and must therefore be agreed upon in public. Furthermore, it goes against God to trust in man, for he who trusts in man is deceived.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 See Peter Lombard, *Sententiae*, book 4, dist. 26–41, which deals with marriage.
- 2 For the section on marriage from Basel's Reformation Ordinance of 1529, see Emidio Campi and Philipp Wälchli, eds., *Basler Kirchenordnungen, 1528–1675* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 2012), 27–9. The Basel ordinances on marriage, divorce, and marriage courts borrow heavily from the Zurich marriage ordinance of 1525. See Emidio Campi and Philipp Wälchli, eds., *Zürcher Kirchenordnungen, 1520–1675* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 2011), vol. 1, no. 18; cf. Strasbourg's marriage ordinance of 1530 in Wolgast, p. 219.
- 3 Cf. Psalm 118:8.

'Cursed is he who puts his trust in man.'<sup>4</sup> Therefore, a young woman who secretly yields to the desire of her lover acts against the Word and merits to be struck by such ignominy. The punishment is worthy of the sin. Moreover, matrimony must be a union in the eye of God. Those who come together secretly come together without God, for they marry without his Word and without witnesses before whom the Word is confirmed according to the law. To such an extent does she trust her fickle lover who promises anything, while he gratifies the desire of his heart. Filthy desire, not divine will, has brought them together in the beginning.

Thus I must advise your judges and you, my brothers, to see that the council improve its law and prevent naive young women, deceived by empty hopes, from encountering such danger and keep so many consciences from being afflicted. For if there are go-betweens or if the lover himself, as is often the case, makes rather great promises, indeed, if he gives a clear indication of an ulterior wish, the young women themselves are eager for the husband they want and, if they have no opportunity to consult, stupidly believe him on account of their sex and age. Soon the imprudent youths become tired or leave their old love for a new one or think better of the affair. Hence the women who have been shamed have lost the better part of their dowry – the flower of virginity – so that they can no longer be married off. But let us assume that the matter does not become public knowledge and the two parties later become involved in other marriages although they know that the clandestine marriage between them is true, even if it was contracted in sin – what will happen in that case? What we see happens under papism. We doctors of theology deliberately counselled people with conflicted consciences to believe that the clandestine marriage was true and that the marriage contracted afterwards did not obtain before God. In the papistical ministry such people were forced to satisfy the marriage contracted subsequently for the sake of public order because that marriage was recognized in public, whereas the previous, clandestinely contracted marriage tied them down only in their consciences.

What advice can you give in this situation, I ask, other than that which theologians generally used to give? They advised them to acknowledge their obligation to the clandestine contract, which had come first; they did not consider the union with the spouse with whom each of them lived in an acknowledged marriage contract a true marriage, because it rested on later papal legislation. Therefore, the theologian says: you must leave the later marriage if you can, spurning that unfair excommunication, or if you cannot

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4 Jer. 17:5.

do so, you must pay the marital debt and yield your body like a captive. In your mind, however, you must obey your first and true husband, even if he is likewise involved in a marriage. For the second marriage has force in civil law; the first, which cannot be proved by witnesses, has force in the law of nature, as they say. That young woman of yours is an example who, by your law, has a husband in her conscience, but if he objects is freed, let us say, by your judgment, and may then marry another. Nevertheless, her mind will be somewhat disturbed if she thinks that the prior marriage is regarded to have been contracted on the basis of a promise [and is a union] which man cannot divide (Matt. 19).<sup>5</sup> And however much he objects, she nevertheless remains tied to him in her judgment. Your young woman will have doubts about your verdict, a human verdict. The pope would have kept her in the second marriage by his threats, and at the same time would have decreed that she was the wife of the first man by the law of nature, with no possibility of dissolving it.

There is a way to extricate her. When she leaves, let her leave like a sister, who is not a slave in servitude. Many people interpret the passage about the unfaithful party in this way. They do not think that one should apply this sentence to other similar cases to the prejudice of constancy in marriage. Furthermore, what can you do if a young man repents? How will you comfort him with the divine Word when he has been tied to a new marriage and his [first] young wife likewise to another? He will always think, 'you are married to the first one, you do not belong to the woman who is your wife now, for that is the law.' For even your law concedes that a clandestine marriage is a marriage, although contracted in sin over the veto of the magistrate. I certainly do not see what effective unguent you can put on that wound. Conscience is a slippery business. There is an infinite number of possible variants as we know by experience.

Therefore, I counsel the following decree: We believe that marriage should not be recognized as such, even if contracted before witnesses, if it was done without the knowledge and indeed the permission of the parents, until they give their consent. To this should be added a penalty, and a rather heavy one, against those who violate that law. This penalty should be levied even if the consent of the parents is later obtained. Secondly, if people contract a clandestine marriage, who are not subject to paternal authority, such as adult widows, and either party denies it, the judge will make no pronouncement but regard such a relationship against the law, that is, not a marriage. The reason for the first law is obvious to see: First, it is based on

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5 Cf. Matt. 19:6.

the nature of marriage. The cohabitation is publicly approved and therefore a public act. Aristotle in the *Economics* offers added proof.<sup>6</sup> A public act does not suffice when it is unknown to those whose first concern it is to know about it. Therefore Paul the jurist says, 'A marriage cannot take place unless everyone involved consents, that is, those who are being united and those in whose power they are.'<sup>7</sup> That law is reiterated in later imperial laws and in the old canons, notwithstanding that the emperors have subjected their law to those of the popes. For this does not cancel what is based on the authority of the emperor or of nature, or of divine law, on which the present law concerning parental consent to the marriages of children is based. Thirdly, the popes forbid clandestine marriages even today, yet at the same time sanction the transgression of their law to contract a legitimate marriage. Thus a clandestine marriage rewards a dirty rascal with the deceived young woman, in violation of natural, divine, and human law. Fourthly, nature denies that a marriage contracted against the will of the parents is a marriage, for an unmarried woman is under the authority of her father. Why then should anyone make her his own, against her father's will? The laws return a lost fowl to its owner. Should it be permitted in law to abduct fraudulently a daughter who has been educated with much effort, who is the heiress of her parents' possessions, and indeed the hope of their lives, and to remove her forcefully from the authority of one man to that of another? The law protects my money from thieves by hanging thieves, and ought my dearest token of love be exposed by the same laws to the deceitful desire of any man, even an enemy, or at any rate an ingrate, whom I do not want as my son-in-law? What kind of law, what kind of equitable principle would counsel that? Fifth, there is constant anguish of conscience, while, motivated by regret, one party denies to the other the words that were said, about which one can read also in the above-mentioned summaries. You may explain that yourself, my dear Gast, for the books are extant. Sixth, the unmarried woman does not have

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6 See pseudo-Aristotle, *Oeconomica* 1.3–4, where the author represents marriage as an intrinsically desirable friendship between quasi-equals, and as a state of life even more natural to human beings than political life.

7 CICiv, Digest 23.2.2; the jurist Paul (fl. c. AD 210) explained that the consent (*consensus*) of the spouses themselves and of their parents or guardians was necessary for marriage. Thus the husband's agreement alone sufficed if he had reached the age of discretion and was *sui iuris*, but if he was a *filius familias*, the law required both his agreement and that of his father. A woman who was *sui iuris* might nevertheless need the consent of her guardian. It is possible that in the early Republic the agreement of a *filia familias* was not necessary at all. When it came to choosing a spouse, the power of the father, *patria potestas*, probably weighed more heavily upon women than upon men.

the authority of a father to sell any of the family's possessions according to the common laws, and contrary to the laws, the surrender of her body would be [like selling] her paternal inheritance. I shall say nothing of the fact that marriages contracted in this manner are not at all solid, for since the parties have come together without judgment, the tie is broken once the hot desire abates, which encouraged cohabitation. That is what we usually see happen, and most of these marriages have an uncertain future and are full of trouble. Because a clandestine marriage has been contracted under the aegis of Satan, it is and continues to be without God and Christ, and therefore without grace and happiness. It is an evil beginning.

The reason for the second law is concern for the young woman's chastity. For the intention of a clandestine pact, whatever it may be, does not concern the judge at all. Obeying one's cupidity brings nothing but infamy. In this way [i.e., through the second law] she would remain intact, whatever grand promises her lover makes. What need is there for many words? Your young woman would not have received that rascal's filthy embrace, if there had been a public decree that no promise given without the knowledge of the parents could remove the stigma of lost virginity. This section of the law, once passed, should be read emphatically from the pulpit by the shepherds of the sheep of Christ.

#### Concerning the Present Case

Since such a law has not yet been promulgated, one must judge according to common law. There is one in your ordinance which begins, 'And if it so happens that a young man,' etc.,<sup>8</sup> according to which, I believe, it is possible to unite her with the absent man, if only circumstantially, and to decree that he must marry the woman he has deflowered. For it is not likely that she solicited his love or arranged the dinner, unless it can be established from the character of her earlier life that she was a bold woman, deceitful, and after men, rather than inexperienced and naive. But your letter shows him to be a youth without much shame, for he played music at night in the streets and spoke casually to his friends about his impure actions, and he had dealings with more than one young daughter and woman, etc., and had no scruples bringing his friends to witness his amorous affairs, which proves that he was not totally inexperienced in matters of love. The girl, however, seems to have been lured by the hope of obtaining a husband, who, she saw, was dying of love for her. Therefore, her girlish credulity is excused by your laws. Moreover, there are two witnesses confirming that he promised to marry her. On the opposing side, there is one witness, the procuress, who exposed

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8 Campi and Wälchli, eds., *Basler Kirchenordnungen*, 28.

a young woman who was under the authority of a father to such an insidious dinner. She is not credible in the face of two witnesses and such obvious conjectures. Rather, she deserves to be gravely punished by the magistrate according to existing laws. Indeed the magistrate must be severe in this matter. It is shameless, I admit, that the young woman brought the young man into her parents' house and very wrong in the law of God. But it somehow mitigates her fault that she likely believed he would be her husband according to your laws, which were practically the opposite of the laws among men of old. But it is much more shameless and therefore deserves very harsh punishment that the young man went there without any intention of marrying her, and only for the sake of fulfilling his desire. Furthermore, when he denies that he mentioned marriage, he only shows that his words are empty and mendacious, for why did he embrace the young woman with the knowledge of others, if he had not given the appearance of intending to marry her? Furthermore, the young man cannot argue that deceit was involved when he denies that anything was transacted concerning marriage – what deceit would there have been? Did the young woman on purpose seek shame and infamy from him? Is it such a negligible deed, I beg you, to deflower a virgin in her father's house? The men of old would have thought very differently. The civil laws punished a rascal who violated a virgin with capital punishment – it was no different from the punishment for adultery. Oh morals! Oh laws! What times we are living in! The gist of the matter is: a virgin has lost her grace and honour, which we consider the principal part of her dowry, a loss that cannot be made good except through a marriage contract. Who will marry her thereafter, when she is marked by such a stigma? I shall draw a simile from theft, which is forbidden by law. If someone steals my clothing and returns it torn and marked with spots of dirt, will he not be sentenced to return what he has taken away? And who would return worn-out shoes to a shoemaker when he has taken away new ones? He would have to return what he has taken away. And would you want to allow someone to return a virgin who has been violated? The laws ensure the return of powers taken away, why should there be no compensation in such a great matter? For one must take into consideration how highly our age values the intact body of a young woman and that men of old regarded a violated virgin as rejected.

#### Concerning the Law in Deuteronomy

Brenz wrote something about the law in Deuteronomy, but I do not have his book at hand, nor do I remember having read it earlier.<sup>9</sup> The law, however, is

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9 Likely a reference to Johannes Brenz's *Libellus casuum quorundam matrimonialium elegantissimus* (Basel, February 1536).

this, 'If a man finds a virgin who is not betrothed and seizes her [*arripuerit*], and lies with her, and they are found together, the man who lay with her must give the father 50 shekels, and she shall be his wife, and because he humiliated her, he shall not put her away all his life.'<sup>10</sup> The ancients interpreted the verb *arripuerit*, תפשה (*təpāšāh*),<sup>11</sup> as concerning a virgin who has been violated, and the law protects what they call אנוסה (*ʿānūsā*), a forced woman. The law then dictated that the rapist should pay the father 50 shekels of pure silver. That fine was called קנס (*qəṣnās*)<sup>12</sup> and was given to the father to compensate him for his loss, for it was in his interest to marry his daughter off as a virgin. If the father died before the case came before the judge, the money was owed to the daughter of the dead man.<sup>13</sup> This penalty was fairly constituted by the law, which forbids respect of persons. Rather, on the basis of reprisal and fairness, the judge fined the perpetrator of violent rape, imposing a triple penalty. This was at the judge's discretion and varied according to the circumstances of the case.

First, there was ברישה (*būšā*),<sup>14</sup> that is, a fine imposed according to the ignominy and shame brought upon the young woman, a value assigned according to the reputation of the parents (for example, if she was born from honest parents); if she was the daughter of a priest, her humiliation was regarded as being greater than if she was one of the common people, for the injury is greater. The second fine was פגם (*pəḡām*),<sup>15</sup> imposed for the spoiling or rather depreciation of her condition (for example, she was free and was raped); she lost her virginal grace, which reduced her almost to the state of a servant. The rape of a maidservant, however, was not punished among the frivolous Jews. The third fine was צער (*ṣa'ar*),<sup>16</sup> which is estimated according to the grief caused and takes into consideration the woman's age and method used. The judge in the temple imposes a combination of these four fines, which must be paid to the father of the raped virgin. Nevertheless, the perpetrator is obliged to marry her and keep her all his life, for he loses the right to divorce her because he has raped her.

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10 Deut. 22:28–9.

11 This is a reference to the verbal form in Deut. 22:28 ותפשה translated as 'and he seizes her.'

12 Cf. Mishnah *Ketub.* 3:4.

13 Mishnah *Ketub.* 4:1.

14 The more commonly used word for the fine is ברישת [bōšet]. Cf. Mishnah *Ketub.* 3:7.

15 Mishnah *Ketub.* 3:4.

16 Mishnah *Ketub.* 3:4.

So much for the law in Deuteronomy, which has some bearing on your young woman. For she was not raped since she was in the city, joined him for dinner in the house of her parents (*ex bonis utriusque*, as they say<sup>17</sup>), unless he pointed a sword at her and she gave in out of fear and can show so through the testimony of three suitable witnesses. If your judges require not only your laws, but also an example of divine law, proffer that law from Exodus 22, which says, 'If a man seduces a virgin, who is not engaged, and has dealings with her, he will endow her as his wife. If the father refuses to give her in marriage to him, the seducer must give him money equivalent to a dowry for a virgin.'<sup>18</sup> This is the law, more or less. It applies to your young woman, who is free and not engaged to anyone, and had intercourse without being forced. Now let us discuss the meaning of this passage in more detail.

It is seduction, פתוי (*pittûy*), if a man misleads and fraudulently cheats a woman, and lures her with lies. Hence a naive and inexperienced person is called פתי (*pēti*),<sup>19</sup> who believes anything said to be true. For this reason the impostor is called מפתה (*mēpattēh*),<sup>20</sup> who attracts the credulous young woman with flatteries and vain promises. In the Babylonian Onkelos this is rendered by the word ישרל (*yīšādēl*),<sup>21</sup> which denotes intent, according to the exegete Moses Nahmanides,<sup>22</sup> and a plan to act on something. It is almost the same as being committed and occupied in doing the deed. Thus the seducer, who traps the young woman, makes an effort to present a credible reason for meeting with her often, until he has conquered her mind, which happens in various ways, through flatteries, money, or the promise to marry her. He may obtain his wish on the basis of lies or the truth – in any way, as long as he does not use force to make her submit to intercourse. In that case, she is said to have been deceived, מפתה (*mēpūttā*), and the law protects her from prostituting herself once she has lost all shame and is desperate.

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17 I.e., 'in the interest of both' or 'benefitting both.'

18 Exodus 22:16–17.

19 See, for example, Proverbs 14:15, which is also cited by Nahmanides on Exodus 22:15.

20 Mishnah *Ketub.* 3:4.

21 This is the Aramaic word, which the Targum Onkelos uses to translate the Hebrew verb for 'seduce' (יפתה, *yēpattēh*) in Exod. 22:15. This translation is also cited by Nahmanides on Exodus 22:15.

22 Moses Nahmanides, also known as Rabbi Moshe ben Naḥman and by his acronym Ramban (1194–1270), was a leading medieval Jewish scholar, Spanish Sephardic rabbi, physician, kabbalist, biblical commentator, and great halakhic authority. He was raised, studied, and lived for most of his life in Gerona, Catalonia, Spain. See his commentary on Exodus 22:15.

In the tractate 'These maids,' it is written, 'If the deceived young woman does not want to marry her seducer, or the father does not wish to give her in marriage, or if the seducer refuses to marry her, he must pay the statutory penalty, and will then be free. For he was not obliged to marry her, but he gave her matrimonial letters as was customary for other virgins.'<sup>23</sup> This is a quotation from that source. A different method applied to the rapist of a virgin. For the law says, 'let him marry her,' only with the provision, 'and he will endow her, and if the father refuses,' etc.<sup>24</sup> Elijah of the Orient<sup>25</sup> interprets 'he will endow' as endowing with a letter as if she had been his wife and had been divorced, so that it may be known how much he has to give the repudiated woman on account of the divorce.<sup>26</sup> But the comment Girona<sup>27</sup> supplied on this passage seems closer to scripture and not very different from the earlier meaning, namely: מוהר (*mohar*), the word for dowry, means gifts which the future husband used to send to the betrothed, such as clothing or silver and even vessels to prepare the wedding, which the authors of the Talmud also call סבלינות (*siblônôt*).<sup>28</sup> The word in scripture, however, is

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23 I.e., אלו נערוה, Mishnah *Ketub.* 3.

24 Exod. 22:16–17.

25 Elijah ben Abraham Mizraḥi (d. before 1527), generally known by the Hebrew acronym Re'em, was a rabbinical authority and the greatest of the rabbis of the Ottoman Empire of his time. Born and educated in Constantinople, he headed a yeshiva and apparently figured as the leader of the city's rabbinical community. Aside from being an adjudicator of Jewish law, Mizraḥi possessed broad general knowledge on numerous subjects, including mathematics and astronomy; and he wrote a highly regarded treatise on mathematics and engineering, *Sefer ha-Mispar* (= The Book of Numbers, Constantinople, 1533). He also wrote commentaries on Euclid's *Elements* and Ptolemy's *Almagest* that were never published. Mizraḥi is known primarily for his *Sefer ha-Mizraḥi* (= The Mizraḥi Book), an important commentary on Rashi's commentary on the Torah. It was first published posthumously by his son Israel (Venice, 1527). Also published posthumously was a collection of his *responsa*, *She'elot u-Teshuvot Re'em* (Istanbul, 1561). Mizraḥi's *novellae* to the *Sefer Mizvot Gadol* of Moses of Coucy were his only writings published during his lifetime (Constantinople, 1533).

26 This interpretation is cited by Elijah ben Abraham Mizraḥi in his *Sefer ha-Mizraḥi*, Exodus 22:15. He cites the position of Rashi (Rabbi Solomon b. Isaac, Troyes, France 1040–1105), and takes issue with the competing interpretation of Nahmanides.

27 See Nahmanides, Exodus 22:16.

28 Capito includes the Hebrew and transliteration. The word refers to nuptial gifts a groom would send to his father-in-law or his bride. This is Nahmanides' exegesis on Exodus 22:16.

a derivative of מהרה (*mēhērā*), that is, speedily, because the wrong-doer was forced to send such gifts quickly, but when the father refused to give her in marriage, he had to add money, that is, by the agreement of the judgments of old, 50 shekels of pure silver. Thus it was up to the father and also to the young woman to refuse or accept the suitor, 'for it is not right that a sinner should be rewarded.'<sup>29</sup>

For if a marriage was contracted on account of a clandestine promise or a carnal union (as they say), without the consent of the father, the seducer would have been rewarded, that is, with a wife and in the future an inheritance from his father-in-law. Therefore the consent of both the father and even the young woman is required, as signified by the acceptance of gifts. Thereafter the perpetrator of the sex act could either pay the established penalty or take her as his wife. This right punished the sin of the young woman. For even if she was imprudent and the victim of fraud, she is not completely exonerated and is partly at fault for readily engaging in talk with men. That was the way in which the ancients treated seduction.

Now note the wording in all of this. The woman who has thus been deceived, either by the hope of marriage, or by money, or lured by the desire for something else, became a wife by the force of law and the tradition of the ancients, even if no mention of marriage was made, a point the judges ignored since the parents had not been aware of it. Nevertheless, she was a true wife by the law of God. For why would the perpetrator of the crime send a dowry or gifts for the preparation of the wedding? The same is clear from the context of scripture. 'He will endow her as his wife,' scripture says,<sup>30</sup> meaning, in that sense, he must send her presents or a dowry, to make her his wife and at once prepare for the wedding. Afterwards, if he refuses (לכנוס),<sup>31</sup> that is, to bring her to his house, as happened of old in the wedding ceremonies even under the imperial laws, or if the father or the young woman herself rejected him as husband, he wrote out the connubial letter, and she was then regarded as repudiated. In this way the honour of the young woman was protected and at the same time a fine paid to the father in compensation for the ignominy and the depreciation of her person and grace, according to the

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29 I.e., כי איננו הגון שיהא חוטא נשכר. Capito is here quoting part of a sentence from the commentary on Ex. 22:15 by Nahmanides, which in turn is an allusion to a phrase in the Mishnah (see *Hal.* 7.2). For the commentary, see *Perushe ha-Torah: le Rabenu Moses ben Nahman* (Jerusalem, 1959), 387. For an English translation, see Ramban (Nachmanides), *Commentary on the Torah*. Exod. 22:15, trans. Charles B. Chavel (New York: Shilo, 1973), 387.

30 Exodus 22:16.

31 I.e., to marry. Cf. BT *Ketub.* 2a.

estimation of the judge and over and above קנס,<sup>32</sup> that is, the legal penalty of 50 shekels. Again, when there is a matrimonial letter, there is a lawful marriage. For a marriage is contracted by כתובה,<sup>33</sup> that is, a letter or certified writing. The Babylonian Onkelos interprets this as follows: He will endow her as his wife, לאינתו ליה לקיימנה, קיימא יקיימנה ליה לאינתו,<sup>34</sup> that is, by contract he will confirm her as his wife. Therefore he first professed, as far as he was concerned, that she was his wife; then the father could either give or not give her in marriage, and the young woman had the right to refuse the condition. The result was that she was regarded as a repudiated wife and thus safe and secure in her reputation – על כתובה וקנס ובושה וצער – [that is], by means of the marriage contract, by the fine imposed by the law, and by the compensation for her shame and degradation.

Wherefore, if your judges accepted that law of God, she is his wife and they will pronounce her his wife through their judgment. Yet today he would not have the option of refusing her once she has been made his wife by a judgment, as it was once permitted by the judges in law. Jesus Christ put an end to the document of repudiation in Matthew 19 and added, 'What God has joined together,' etc.,<sup>35</sup> so that by that law and by the practice of the ancients such people too were joined and man could not separate them. You will note this. For it appears to be a very obvious conjecture that she, a young woman of good repute, prepared the dinner for the young man, and brought him to her parental home, with the knowledge of witnesses. She would clearly not have done so unless he solicited her beforehand and even if he did not promise to marry her, she was nevertheless forced into fornication by the way in which he made her comply with his desire. It is enough for the law that she was deceived and will then be made the wife of the seducer. There is hope the marriage will be happy, once the harsh beginnings have been overcome. If it were to be believed that the marriage will not last under any circumstances, it would be better to separate them through a judgment now. The judges very reluctantly make this assumption, as the laws expect the best from everyone, and one must wait until there is factual evidence to the contrary. But one must first of all consider the interests of the parents and the young woman and punish both [the procuratess and the young man] severely, especially the young man, so as to put a value on chastity and the honour of a virgin, and to enable a woman with a good dowry to find a more

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32 See above, note 11.

33 I.e., *Ketubah*, marriage contract.

34 Targum Onkelos, Exodus 22:16.

35 Matt. 19:6.

suitable husband if she has been rejected by him. Otherwise the unfortunate woman will be burdened with permanent ill repute and fall into greater sin because of her sex, her age, and because her feeling of shame has been weakened and lost, which is the key to a woman's chastity.

The laws must protect the sex (the female sex, I mean) and age from being exposed to fraud and prevent publicizing the fact that they have become victims of the desire of young men, prevent it being made public, so to speak, as is the custom of our time, unless the severity of the magistrate does not look out for them. You will promote this task with prudent zeal. Nor do I think the old neighbour should escape punishment for welcoming the young woman to a dinner at night in the house without knowledge of her parents, even if the young woman herself asked for it, although it seems that the neighbour was paid for this by the young man. She is not vindicated from the charge of procuring because she did not permit him to seduce her in her house. For it seems clear that she abetted his crime. But the judges will decide on the basis of circumstances and with greater certainty in this case, for they know it is their duty to consider what rights the laws give the father over his daughter, even in the laws of pagans.

I have written this, although I am very busy. I hope it will be of service to your church, to the same degree as it was inconvenient for me, and it will be most convenient if you make an effort to promulgate a law stating that a marriage is no marriage, which is contracted against the wishes of the parents or without their knowledge, and furthermore, to punish such sexual transgressions with the same severity, either by temporary exile or lengthy incarceration. For there must be examples of severity in a state, to keep innocence and simplicity safe. Lastly, I would like you to translate this into German to allow the magistrate and your judges to deliberate conveniently about these necessary laws. I also beg Myconius and Karlstadt to turn their minds to this.<sup>36</sup> In this manner your jurisdiction will be corroborated, and the invasion of infinite dangers stopped. I hardly dare to invite the illustrious Grynaeus to look at these rather humble affairs.<sup>37</sup> For I, too, very much begrudge spending much time and effort on anything but the gospel of Jesus Christ, although I am being involved in many thorny affairs of this kind, apart from these. Farewell. Greet all brothers in the Lord. Strasbourg, 29 November 1536.

Yours, W. Capito.

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36 For Oswald Myconius and Andreas Karlstadt, see CWC 1, Ep. 37 headnote, and Ep. 15a headnote, respectively.

37 For Simon Grynaeus, see CWC 2, Ep. 447 headnote.

I did not know he<sup>38</sup> was such a young boy, or he would have stayed with me or Bucer. Now he has been taken in by the family of Dr Frosch<sup>39</sup> and lives there until the Lord will provide another opportunity. You will recommend him in a letter to Dasypodius, our school teacher.<sup>40</sup> We have no man more suited to teaching than he. I commend this man to you. He is a citizen here. Hasten to send a messenger to Luther.

**Letter 629: 30 November 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Heinrich Bullinger**

Printed in HBBW 6:479–80, Ep. 920. For Bullinger, see above, Ep. 468 headnote.

[*Summary*]: Capito recommends the [unidentified] bearer of the letter, an exile from Lucerne, now a citizen of Strasbourg. He asks Bullinger to aid him. Myconius will inform him of the details. Both Capito and Bucer gratefully acknowledge Bullinger's interest in the Concord. They will attempt to convey his good will to the theologians of Wittenberg and reassure them that it was not fear that kept Zurich from accepting the Wittenberg Articles. He sends his greetings to Leo [Jud], [Theodor] Bibliander, and [Conradus] Pellicanus.

**Letter 630: 1 December 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to John Calvin**

Printed in C. Augustijn and F. P. van Stam, eds., *Ioanni Calvini epistolae* (Geneva: Droz, 2005), vol. 1, 148–50, Ep. 29.

[*Summary*]: Capito [and Bucer] have read Calvin's letter to [Simon] Grynaeus. Their slight disagreement cannot adequately be settled in a letter. Capito asks for a personal meeting. He had plans to visit Calvin on his return from Basel, but both he and Bucer have been absent too frequently from Strasbourg during the year and would prefer for Calvin to visit them. In the meantime he asks him to refrain from publishing anything. Discussing these matters jointly would no doubt make for more solid arguments.

**Letter 631: 26 December 1536, Strasbourg, Capito to Jodocus Neobulus**

For the context of this letter, see the headnotes of Epp. 594, 612, and 616.

Printed in Johannes Magirus, *Kurtzer gründlicher Bericht von dem Buch Ambro-*

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38 Identity unknown.

39 For Johannes Frosch, see above, Ep. 521 headnote.

40 For Petrus Dasypodius, see above, Ep. 515a, note 3.

*sii Wolfii* (Tübingen, 1581), 90–3, and in Olivier Millet, 'La correspondance du réformateur strasbourgeois W. F. Capiton avec Jodocus Neuheller, compagnon de table de Luther (1536–1538),' *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français* 129.3 (1983): 79–81.

Greetings. You write in a letter to Frecht<sup>1</sup> that the Doctor<sup>2</sup> is displeased; nor are we pleased, except that we see no danger in the present situation. When Zwingli was still alive, we strove to demonstrate to the Swiss churches that his teachings were not so far removed from those of Luther. At the time, he himself agreed with the Apologia of our Confession.<sup>3</sup> After his death we examined the matter more closely to see what agreed with the Truth and what was the common interpretation, and we first of all fastened on Zwingli's apology to the German princes, which he published after the meeting of princes at Augsburg.<sup>4</sup> I have approached the Swiss churches six times or more on behalf of that concord; Bucer, I believe, four times. Finally in March or April of this year, 1536, they agreed on the Confession of Basel, with the approval of the city magistrates.<sup>5</sup> We have no doubt that this Confession would have satisfied the Doctor in all respects, had not the quarrelsome publications which preceded it stood in the way.<sup>6</sup> For the Confession contains the truth itself, as it is in our articles, except that they apply it rather ineptly, being unnecessarily cautious. On their return home, each [of the delegates] communicated to his church the Confession, maintaining consistently that it is not at variance with either Oecolampadius' or Zwingli's teaching.<sup>7</sup> We made an effort to see

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- 1 For Martin Frecht, see above, Ep. 539 headnote. Neobolus' letter to Frecht is no longer extant. Capito mentions that he responded to it in a letter to Neobolus dated 12 January 1537 (see Millet, Ep. 632).
- 2 I.e., Martin Luther.
- 3 For the Tetrapolitan Confession and Apologia, see above, Ep. 597, note 11.
- 4 Ulrich Zwingli, *Ad illustrissimos Germaniae principes Augustae congregatos de conventiis Eccii epistola Huldr. Zwinglii* (Zurich, 1530). Zwingli sent the letter, dated 27 August 1530, to the princes who had participated at the Diet of Augsburg in the summer of 1530.
- 5 I.e., the First Helvetic Confession of 1536, otherwise known as the Second Confession of Basel to distinguish it from the First Confession of Basel of 1534 (see above, Ep. 585, note 8).
- 6 I.e., the importune reprint of Zwingli's *Ratio fidei* (Zurich, [1530]) under the title *Christianae fidei ... brevis et clara expositio*, ed. Leo Jud ([Zurich], 1536) as well as the publication of a collection of letters by Zwingli and Oecolampadius, *Oecolampadii et Zwinglii epistolarum libri quatuor...* (Basel, 1536). See above, Ep. 594 headnote.
- 7 See above, Ep. 612 headnote.

that good men taught according to it. We sent an excellent theologian from Strasbourg to Bern to prevent any error from being introduced in the church by imprudent men.<sup>8</sup> Bucer [will report] these days what transpired after our return from the meeting in Wittenberg.<sup>9</sup> For today the senate decreed definitely to write to the Doctor in January, in its own name and in the name of others, and tomorrow or the morning after that a messenger will go to Basel for this reason and report the decision there.<sup>10</sup> Yet the people of Basel have never been responsible for any delay.

I shall explain the rationale behind our counsel and respond to the letter you wrote to Frecht. Starting with what they know, we have undertaken to teach things of which we thought they were ignorant. Next, we used the authority of the dead<sup>11</sup> and the desire of the people to be edified, asserting that we teach nothing for which we do not have some indication in the works of Oecolampadius, and of which Zwingli would not have approved in his lifetime. In this manner we avoided any great commotion and not only taught the sole truth of the Eucharist, but the pure doctrine of the whole Christ to them. For some people believe that Christ is more clearly preached to them than ever before. In the meantime, there are people who complain about us, as if we had gradually led them away from their old belief and did not stop until we brought them all to Luther. Others, by contrast, talk nonsense, saying they know that we disdained these words until now, whereas we are making an effort to have them correctly taught, especially among those who listen to us.<sup>12</sup> In this way the Lord has restored the authority of Luther among the Swiss, for the most part, not only in word but also in fact, after it had almost collapsed on account of that lengthy quarrel. And the people of Basel especially also realize now that the efforts and arguments of the ministers in the churches to restore [concord] are very different from earlier efforts. Nor do the preachers deny it. I have never said, 'You deny the presence of Christ completely,' nor did I ever accuse them of misunderstanding the power of the church ministry, but through a long and complex process we arrived at the point that made a great man say in Basel, publicly and

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8 Sebastian Meyer (see CWC 2, Ep. 383, note 3) was sent by Strasbourg to Bern to fill a vacancy in the church there (see above, Ep. 617). He was succeeded by Simon Sulzer (see above, Ep. 534, note 18, and Ep. 617).

9 I.e., Bucer and Capito's letter to Luther, dated 19 January 1537, that caused such an uproar among the Swiss (see above, Ep. 616 and Millet 634).

10 For the letter from the city council of Strasbourg to Luther, dated 15 January 1537, see WABr 8:7-9, Ep. 3126.

11 I.e., the late Oecolampadius and Zwingli.

12 The Latin is unclear.

unprompted, 'Dear, pious Christians, don't think that you are given nothing but bread and wine or empty signs, as you thought until now and as has also been taught.' And he showed in many ways how profound the mystery was, and indeed most profoundly. The same man spoke eloquently in an earlier meeting, saying that we must enlighten the people using great prudence, for they did not know as yet what we were urging on them. Until now they confessed within these very walls that we ministers presented the true body and true blood of Christ in the symbols, and that we rightly said there would be no concord unless they taught it to the people as well; and it was necessary to go about this in a timely and skilful manner. There was no danger in Basel, under so great a mayor and such pious councillors.<sup>13</sup> However, it rightly disturbed the Doctor when people, who are unsettled in their minds, dared to say that the articles accorded with their former understanding, while their own conscience cried out against them, as did the testimony of the people and the books that are extant.<sup>14</sup> Thus they more clearly reveal their own vanity than obstruct the reputation of the Lutherans.

I know that Christ and the poor churches are so dear to the Doctor that he will not, on account of a few overly clever fellows, who are like a speck in the eye,<sup>15</sup> stand in the way of the salvation of so many thousand people. For the quarrel took Luther's books out of the hands of the Swiss, whereas they are now well received. The Doctor knows a man, whom he mentioned in his letter to the mayor of Basel, with whom we should perhaps have done battle, for we engaged in a skirmish in our letters and in a word fight, although we would prefer all round for him to end the quarrel and devote himself to his studies.<sup>16</sup> Then Schwenckfeld, who deviously causes divisions in many churches, will not be burdened unfairly with a bad reputation.<sup>17</sup> He will soon come to be traduced openly, but I hope the Doctor will find nothing lacking in our candour or judgment, as far as it is needed to dispel vain quibbles. But it seems in the interest of maintaining his gravity that other men should locally assert his authority. Bucer does this candidly and felicitously; I go about it sedulously. Schwenckfeld afflicts the churches more gravely than you can easily imagine. He has the ear of the leading men in the government, he pol-

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13 For Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen, the mayor of Basel and a friend of Capito, see above, Ep. 501, note 5 (see also Epp. 616 and 618).

14 Possibly a reference to the Schwenckfeldians.

15 Cf. Matt. 7:3-5 and Luke 6:41-2.

16 Luther's letter to Jakob Meyer zum Hirzen is no longer extant (see above, Ep. 616, note 13).

17 For Caspar Schwenckfeld, see CWC 2, Ep. 393 headnote.

lutes the source, and he writes anonymous pamphlets against Luther and us. He deliberately writes detailed letters and catechisms and other such things, and undertakes many journeys expressly for the sake of disparaging Luther. And his disciples take away the Doctor's prefaces to the New Testament and say that others must be rejected.

We, by contrast, have stated, and not without reason, that true concord cannot exist unless Luther's writings are in the hands of all our colleagues. That is the contentious issue now. Granted that some poison remains in the people and they are convinced that Luther is an ignoramus, or worse, an evil man, is it not possible that one or two sermons read from the pulpit will make the author of such slander the subject of ignominy in turn? Therefore, if you love Christ, obtain from the Doctor this favour: if anything offends him, let him trust us to remove it; let him assign this province to us in a letter; let him listen to us reporting the truth with a simple mind. We have lost sleep, incurred dangers, and spent much time, hoping for a lasting concord, so that it seems fair to indulge us if other people make plans of this sort, although they cannot harm the cause of Christ or the name of Luther. Farewell in the Lord, on St Stephen's day itself, in the year 1536. Strasbourg.

W. Capito.



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