

Chris Barnekov

From: Chris Barnekov [chris@scandhouse.org]

Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2012 7:52 AM

To: list@scandhouse.org

Subject: Church of Sweden threatens to defrock pastors who cooperate with the Mission Province

Church of Sweden threatens to defrock pastors who cooperate with the Mission Province

On February 20, the Consistory (domkapitlet) of the Church of Sweden's Gothenburg Diocese issued a decree warning "all pastors in Gothenburg Diocese" against conducting services or administering other "ecclesiastical acts" (e.g. weddings, funerals, baptisms) in conjunction with Mission Province congregations or koinonias (*worshipping fellowships: koinonias are typically composed of persons who are still members of a CoS congregation, but who seek more Confessional worship and teaching*).

The Consistory declares that such cooperation would constitute a breach of ordination vows that may be judged so serious as to require that the pastor (or deacon) be "defrocked" (authorization to act as a pastor in CoS be revoked). The Mission Province is specifically singled out by name, and is the only church body targeted.

On the other hand, the Consistory specifically states that its pastors *are* authorized to conduct services or ecclesiastical acts in conjunction with member churches of the Lutheran World Federation, the Methodist Church in Sweden, member churches of the Porvoo Communion, and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD).

In June 2011, on the other hand, the Consistory decided not to defrock Ulla Karlsson, a female pastor who had published a column in the Church of Sweden newspaper during Lent. The column directly attacked basic Christian doctrine, declaring *inter alia*,

There is no fallen creation and therefore the whole doctrine of the atonement is irrational! Throw out all the talk about sin, guilt, shame, blood, slaughtered lambs and other horrors! It has no place in modern times, among enlightened people!

The Consistory placed this pastor on probation, but did not find her to have committed a serious "breach of ordination vows" to be, or to be "in conflict with the Church of Sweden's faith, confession and doctrine." She was not defrocked. Participating in a Mission Province koinonia service, however, is now declared such a serious breach that it is grounds for being defrocked.

A pdf of the Consistory's decree (in Swedish) may be seen at http://www.brogren.nu/domkapitlet_gbg.htm

The original Swedish original text of Ulla Karlsson's column is at this link: http://www.kyrkanstidning.se/kyrkanstidning/nyheterwebbdebatt_plocka_bort_talet_om_synd-skuld_och_slaktade_lamm_0_16739.news.aspx

July 2, 2011 article in *Dagen* (in Swedish) reporting the Consistory's decision: <http://www.dagen.se/dagen/article.aspx?id=267364>

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