



Preface to the Second Edition

The first thing to be noted about this second edition of *Faith, Formation, and Decision* is that it is now entitled *Ethics in the Community of Promise*, which was the subtitle of the first edition. *Faith, Formation, and Decision* now becomes the subtitle and provides the three-part structure of the book as in the first edition. The title change was prompted by the conviction that the new title more clearly conveys the nature of the book.

I have retained the basic approach of the first edition and much of the original text. The theological and methodological perspectives presented in the first edition continue to express the view of the Christian life and ethic that I want to convey. There have, however, been some changes in the text. Additional biblical references have been included at various points. The issues used to illustrate the matters that concern the Christian ethic in our time have been updated and new ones added or substituted to reflect changes in areas of concern, such as bioethics, public policy, and social thought. There have been recent developments in public expressions of religious convictions with the purpose of influencing public policy. This phenomenon finds its place in the discussion. Environmental concerns were missing in the first edition. They are addressed to some degree in this edition. The discussion of the Beatitudes has been expanded somewhat to include a brief discussion of the virtue of courage. A greater stress has been placed on the dialogue of the church as a community of moral deliberation. The theology of the cross, implicit in the first edition, is here made a bit more explicit. One can find some references to recent Trinitarian discourse and its relevance for the Christian ethic. The endnotes have also been expanded with inclusion of new references, some of which represent more recent resources that further support points supported in the first edition by earlier sources.

Discussion questions have been added to the end of each chapter in the hopes that this will be helpful in the use of the book for classes and study

groups. In addition to the brief cases scattered throughout the text, I have added four longer cases with discussion questions in the appendices.

I am grateful to Trinity Lutheran Seminary and its board of directors for a generous sabbatical policy that has allowed me the time to work on this second edition. I am also grateful for the many students and others in various church venues with whom I have had the privilege, over more than a decade, of sharing and discussing the Christian life and ethic on the basis of the first edition. Their faith and their genuine quest for the truth of the Christian witness in a very conflicted and often confusing world have been a source of encouragement and inspiration. Thanks go to Fortress Press and Michael West for their willingness to publish a second edition. I have deeply appreciated my partnership with them, and I am grateful for their confidence in my work.

Most people find strength for life's tasks in the blessings of family, and I am no exception. I thank God for all of them. The first edition was dedicated to my father. Since that time, he has joined my mother in the church triumphant. The first dedication is in their memory. There has also been new life in the family. These are the wonderful grandchildren to whom this book is also dedicated. In family and in a wide variety of relationships with our neighbors, God gives us the blessing of one another in the promise of ultimate community in Christ and calls upon us to love as we have been loved. As we struggle to answer that call, we anticipate in faith, hope, and love that glorious future God has promised us in Christ. That's what this humble little book is all about.

Soli Deo Gloria