

**LETTER from the Lutherans in New Netherland to the Consistory at Amsterdam.  
October 4, 1653**

Reverend, Estimable, Highly Learned Pastors, and Honorable, Wise and Very Discreet Leaders and Overseers of the Community of the Augsburg Confession:

We, the community adhering to the Augsburg Confession in these New Netherlands, wish you happiness and salvation.

It is about five years ago that some members of our community here were sent to your honors for advice and assistance as to how in these American regions in New Netherland we might obtain a pastor and the public exercise of religion according to the Augsburg Confession. But it seems that at the time no binding agreement had been made among us in general and that for this reason these delegated persons were unable to accomplish anything with your honors for the attainment thereof. Hence, some of our people, not persevering in the faith, who undoubtedly had the largest means, withdrew.

Therefore, once again, but this time in writing, we seek and ask your honors' help and beg and pray that your honors be pleased to exert yourselves in our behalf to such an extent and to employ all means and efforts (as we, likewise, through the honorable Director Petrus Stuyvesant here, who is to be the sender hereof, by petition have requested the High and Mighty Lords the States General, our sovereigns, and the honorable Directors of the Chartered West India Company, our patrons), that the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession, together with a preacher thereof, may be tolerated here, in view of the fact that yearly, by the ships arriving here, we are being strengthened by people of our faith.

It is lamentable and a great sorrow to the steadfast that owing to the lack of free exercise of our religion so many of us have struck out on other paths, which they never knew before, whether they were fit to walk on or not. Therefore, in order still to prevent this in time, that no more persons may forsake the faith and that this undertaking and work may be the more firmly promoted, we have unanimously decided, first, to inform our authorities thereof by prayer and petitions, of which copies are enclosed herewith, and have then made an agreement whereby a pastor of this requested religion may receive an honest and reasonable salary from us.

Your honors may find out whether the petitions sent to their High Mightinesses and the honorable Directors have been delivered by our Director, or concealed. If concealed, your honors will please seal these open copies sent to your honors with some sealing wax and deliver them in our name to their High Mightinesses as well as to the honorable Directors of the West India Company, and receive their apostil thereon. And, having received an apostil [in the form] of Yes, to look around where your honors may call a suitable pastor (who is graduated, unmarried, learned, eloquent and of irreproachable life and conduct), in order to send him to us. His duties with us would be, not only to preach, marry and baptize, but also at first to be employed as precentor (voorsanger) in the church, for which services we hereby promise to pay him at first, because the congregation here is not yet organized and therefore has no cash on hand, a salary of eight hundred guilders\* a year, once, together with free dwelling and fuel, as is customary at other places, until with the blessing of God we may increase in number. Furthermore, he need not be ashamed to teach our children, from which he may also have the income.

This, faithful pastors and overseers, is what we are requesting of your honors, trusting that your honors for the love of our community and the glory of God will exert yourselves as much as possible and by word and deed help promote our cause, in order that we may at last enjoy what for a long time we have been longing for with our hearts and souls. Pray for it also in your church that this earnest request of ours may have its effect. God will no doubt grant his blessing thereto.

With greetings to your honors as well as to the congregation from all the brethren of the community in this country, we hereby commend your honors and the congregation to God's protection and beg to be remembered in your honors' and the congregation's prayers.

Actum, Manhatans, this 4th of October Anno 1653.

[Signed:] DANIEL LITSCHO  
HLNDRICK WLLLEMSSEN  
CHRYSTEYAN BABENSEN  
MATTHEUS CAPITO m[anu] p[ro]pria  
VOLCKART JANSZ  
HARMAN AEDU [Eduardsen?]

P. S. We hereby also notify your honors that on this day, the 4th instant, our petitions were handed to the honorable Director here, in order to send them for us to our authorities. Whereupon the honorable Director gave for answer that inasmuch as he had taken an oath in Holland before the supreme authorities not to allow any other

religion to be established in this country, he would not obstruct us therein if we ourselves could obtain permission to do so from the supreme authorities.

It appears, therefore, that in this initial request God is granting us his blessing, so that we hope that with your honors' co-operation God will grant the good effect of this undertaking. We, therefore, once more urgently pray your honors to promote these matters with all diligence, to the glory of God, the salvation of our souls and the propagation of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. This doing, we remain obligated to offer up our diligent prayers for your honors' welfare and the prosperity and growth of the congregation there.

And if in connection with our request any expenses should be incurred by your honors and the congregation there for the accomplishment of our purpose, your honors will please write us about it; we bind ourselves to refund the same in good faith. Valet ut supra.

\* \$320.

*Amst. Luth. Ch. Arch. Portfolio America.*