

## CHAPTER 2

### Jean-Jacques von Allmen, Biography

[In his writings], Jean-Jacques von Allmen has been able to pass on that which made up his life, that which his students at Neuchâtel and elsewhere so enjoyed from the master, that which his colleagues and friends must owe him—something firmer, deeper, more sustainable—a vision of Christian worship based on the immense love of Christ and the Church.

—JACQUES LEMOINE<sup>1</sup>

THE LIFE AND WORK of Jean-Jacques von Allmen was devoted to and shaped by the two central ecclesial developments of the twentieth century: the ecumenical movement and the liturgical renewal movement. His pastoral work, his scholarly writing, and his participation in the broader church all demonstrate his dual passion for the unity of the church and the revitalization of its worship. Bruno Bürki, one of von Allmen's students, wrote that the goal pursued by von Allmen throughout all his works was to push for a "courageous reform of the Church of Christ for the re-establishment of the church's unity."<sup>2</sup> This brief biographical sketch will review von Allmen's life in pursuit of these two passions and testify to the fruit it bore.

1. Lemoine, "Célébrer," 53. "Von Allmen a su faire passer ce qui fait sa vie, ce que ses étudiants de Neuchâtel et d'ailleurs ont tant apprécié auprès du maître, ce que ses collègues et ses amis lui doivent de plus ferme, de plus profond, de plus durable: une vision de culte chrétien fondée sur un immense amour du Christ et de l'Église."

2. Bürki, "Jean-Jacques von Allmen," 52.

### THE STUDENT

Jean-Jacques von Allmen was born on July 29, 1917, in Lausanne, Switzerland, to a devout family. His father, a chemist by profession, was originally from Neuchâtel, but took a job in Basel in 1918 and moved the family with him. His childhood and adolescence were spent there. Jean-Jacques von Allmen was baptized in 1933, at the end of a catechism course, as was the Swiss custom. In 1935, after completing his undergraduate education, he followed another Swiss custom by spending a gap year in England to complement his German and French language skills with a more solid grasp of English.

That year, at least parts of Switzerland were abuzz with the news that Karl Barth was returning to Basel from Nazi Germany. Jean-Jacques von Allmen was eager to study with Barth. But in the fall of 1936, he enrolled and began his studies with the Faculty of Theology of the Evangelical Free Church of the Canton of Vaud in Lausanne. He went to his birth town rather than Basel, in part because his mother held the “Cedar House” in high regard. The Cedar House was a small faculty established at the Free University in 1847. It had established a reputation as a serious institution, with academically excellent teaching and theological formation.<sup>3</sup>

His class was small: only eight students. But significantly, among von Allmen’s peers and friends was Roger Schutz, who would later become the founder and first prior of the influential Taizé ecumenical community in France. This was the beginning of a long and mutually appreciative relationship between the two.

One significant experience that colored von Allmen’s formation and future trajectory was his participation in the Second World Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh in August 1937. He was probably the youngest delegate present, and he was dazzled by people of denominations other than his own. He made friendships that would sustain him throughout his life, and established partnerships in the ecumenical efforts that would

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The sources for biographical information about von Allmen are primarily in French. For the purposes of this book, when I cite these sources, I will keep the body text in English. The translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own. I will not footnote every fact, but will do so where appropriate, as when an authority draws an interpretive conclusion, or when a turn of phrase is particularly felicitous. I acknowledge my indebtedness to the following articles: Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 561–75; Montmollin, “Jean-Jacques von Allmen,” 315–18; and Haquin, “Les sacrements de l’initiation chrétienne,” 135–50.

3 Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 562.

characterize his later years. His participation in this event was followed by attending the World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam in August 1939, where those present engaged in global reflection on ecumenism in what one biographer calls a “twilight atmosphere”—with the shadow of the German threat hanging over the event.

In the middle of his educational program, von Allmen moved to Basel to continue his studies there, where he spent two years learning from (among others) Karl Barth and Oscar Cullman, the most influential voices in the development of von Allmen’s theology. He learned his approach to scripture (particularly the New Testament) from Cullman, his approach to practical theology from Jean-Louis Leuba and Emil Brunner, and he read and re-read the texts of the sixteenth century reformers to detect traces of an awareness of the catholicity of the church. In his later years, it was the theological vitality of Barth that encouraged von Allmen to extend certain themes into ecclesiological and ecumenical fields.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to his studies, von Allmen became involved with the Christian Student Association. He was invited by Leuba to become a member of the editorial board of the magazine *In Extremis*. There, he was responsible for heading the news and information from the Student Association. He wrote other features, too, including a well-received and high-spirited article on his favorite poet, C. F. Ramuz, in which he celebrated what he called the “dear Barthism of Ramuz! Milk and honey for dialecticians!”<sup>5</sup> Many attribute his charming writing style and frequently poetic sense of form to the influence of Ramuz’s poetry.<sup>6</sup>

When the mobilization came for the war, Barth took up his part with his contemporaries. He alternated between serving his country as a soldier (for the neutral Switzerland) and turning his regular off-duty leaves into fruitful holidays, in which he would write both for his classes and articles for *In Extremis*.

Jean-Jacques von Allmen spent the prescribed semester at the University of Neuchâtel and graduated in the spring of 1941. He married Alice Tissot of Colombier in June of that same year, and in July, he was

4. According to one of his doctoral students, Hughes Oliphant Old, it was more Barth’s theological vitality than any particular theological position that charged von Allmen’s work. Cullman, Old says, was more influential in the development of von Allmen’s ecclesiology. See Old, “Reminiscences and Reflections.”

5. von Allmen, *In Extremis*, 57.

6. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 566.

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dedicated to pastoral ministry in Boudevilliers, a municipality in the canton of Neuchâtel.

### THE PASTOR

Jean-Jacques von Allmen had prepared to be a pastor, not a professor. He exercised what he considered this “essential” ministry with enthusiasm and joy for seventeen years, from 1941 to 1958. Unlike many of his colleagues, he never considered the pastorate as a stepping stone to academic heights. Bridel characterized his whole theological corpus as an encouragement and “exhortation to his brothers and pastors, among whose company he would have liked to stay.”<sup>7</sup>

Very little is written about von Allmen’s day-to-day pastoral work in these years. Yet the scholarly themes we will see articulated later reflect not only the energizing theology of Karl Barth but also the ordinary concerns of a pastor who has to preach and lead worship each Lord’s Day, and who has to engage daily with an increasingly pluralistic and secular culture for whom the disunity of the church is a scandal. It is not too much to say that his liturgical theology emerged from boots-on-the-ground ecclesiological experience as a parish pastor.

He began his pastoral service at Val de Travers, in the canton of Neuchâtel, among young, Swiss, German-speaking immigrants, from 1941 until 1943. He then served a church in Ponts de Martel, the French church of Lucerne.

These years were exciting ones for von Allmen. The previous decade had seen a renewal in the life and thought of all reformed churches, thanks in large measure to Karl Barth and his dialectical theology.<sup>8</sup> In addition, the Neuchâtel Reformed Church reconstituted its unity—after seventy years of separation—in 1938. This offered a small taste of success for those who long sought unity, and in the years that followed, it provided an enlarged field for his ministry and teaching.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout the war years, Switzerland had been, in many ways, cut off from the international contacts that had previously fed its cultural life. Nevertheless, as a young ecumenist, von Allmen developed relationships beyond the parochial circles in which he ministered. His growing friendship

7. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 564.

8. Montmollin, “Jean-Jacques von Allmen,” 316.

9. Senn, “Worship, Doctrine, and Life,” 454.

with Barth was one such relationship, but many foreign theologians took visits in Switzerland that were more or less illegal, and von Allmen made the most of these opportunities.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, during his years in Lucerne as the pastor of the French church, von Allmen was able to make his first discovery of Catholicism by frequently visiting professors and making friends among the faculty of theology there.

In 1945, he began work on his PhD at the University of Neuchâtel. He received his doctorate in 1948 and resumed his work in the pastorate in Lucerne until 1954. Then, he moved to Lignières until 1958. In that year, he accepted a position as professor of practical theology at the University of Neuchâtel, where his inaugural lecture, “The Holy Spirit and Worship,” testified to his love for pastoral ministry, as it explores the mystery of the church as the perpetually re-actualized work of the Holy Spirit.

## THE PUBLISHER

In addition to his pastoral duties, von Allmen was often found during these years pen in hand, either writing or editing the work of others.

In 1944 he published a French translation of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (the first in forty years), and in 1945, a translation of *Ministère de l'intercession* by Hans Asmussen. In 1948, he contributed a translation of the famous essay by Oscar Cullman on *Le baptême des infants et la doctrine biblique du baptême*. Another important work produced during the years of his pastoral ministry was the reflective and aptly-titled *La Vie Pastorale* (The Pastoral Life) in 1956. He also edited and wrote several articles for the highly esteemed *Vocabulaire biblique* (translated quickly into English), and in 1958, pursued a *ressoucement* of sorts—an adapted and enhanced recovery of the Heidelberg Catechism entitled *Appartenir à Jésus-Christ* (Belonging to Jesus Christ). All these works appeared in one theological collection or another, created under his impetus through the Neuchâtelois publisher “Delachaux and Niestlé,” with whom he developed and sustained a prolonged and fruitful relationship, becoming secretary of their theological collections in the late 40s.

Of course, this truncated list does not include his most important work of these years: his doctoral dissertation, published in 1947, but submitted early in 1948 to the faculty of Theology of the University of Neuchâtel. The dissertation—*L'Eglise et ses fonctions d'après Jean-Frédéric Ostervald*—was

10. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 565.

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dedicated to its subject, von Allmen's eighteenth-century predecessor in the training of clergy in Neuchâtel. Ostervald's work was characterized, like von Allmen's, by a desire to reform the worship of the church, and through it, to achieve a confessional rapprochement: "Ostervald tried . . . to reform the Neuchâtel church and to thus participate with a more general reformation of all the European churches."<sup>11</sup>

The thesis is divided into two parts, one dealing with the character or *identity* of the church, the other with the ministry or *functions* of the church. With regard to the church's identity, von Allmen stresses the importance for Ostervald of other denominations. In fact, Ostervald is very much like von Allmen in that he did not hide his attraction to Anglicanism. "In the Church of England, Ostervald saw a form of the global church which all Christians could join. She reflected the true image of the universal Church—having no pope, and during the Reformation, keeping everything that could be preserved."<sup>12</sup> At the same time, von Allmen is more critical of Ostervald in the second section, citing his moralism with regard to the Lord's Supper, and commenting that he "likes to talk about the struggle against ignorance more than he likes to talk about the truth."<sup>13</sup>

Jean-Jacques von Allmen's dissertation appeared in 1947 as Occasional Paper No. 3 of the "Theological Papers of the Protestant News," published by Delachaux and Niestlé. The years that followed were productive for von Allmen. But he was not content to publish only his own works. For twenty years, he animated this publishing house, was its full-time secretary from 1946–1948, and along with his *In Extremis* partner, Jean-Louis Leuba, launched *The Theological Papers* (*La Caheirs Theologique*) in 1943. These papers include more than sixty issues, featuring the most notable theologians of the time. The first two, in fact, are by von Allmen's seminary heroes, Oscar Cullmann and Karl Barth. In addition, von Allmen was an editor of the ecumenical journal *Verbum Caro*, published out of Taizé, for years—a journal to which he contributed many significant articles.

## THE PROFESSOR

In 1958, von Allmen was appointed to the chair of practical theology at the University of Neuchâtel. He remained there until his retirement in 1980.

11. von Allmen, "L'actualité de J.F. Ostervald, 65.

12. von Allmen, *L'Eglise et ses fonctions*, 48–49.

13. von Allmen, *L'Eglise et ses fonctions*, 65.

He was made assistant dean in 1961, dean of the faculty in 1963, and Vice-Chancellor in 1969. In 1971 he took part-time duties at the University until 1974 in order to help found the Tantur Institute in Jerusalem (about which more is below).

Despite these administrative responsibilities, von Allmen was active and productive in many ways. He maintained an ongoing relationship with local churches, preaching regularly and leading catechism classes and other small study groups. He traveled to many countries as a regular contributor to the Faith & Order Commission of the Ecumenical Council of the WCC and as a member and president of *Societas Liturgica*. In addition, by all accounts, von Allmen gave vigilant attention to his students. His lectures were clear, his insight visionary, and his passion contagious.<sup>14</sup> The work of his most notable doctoral students we have already hinted at in the footnotes, including scholars such as Bruno Bürki, Boris Bobrinskoy, and Hughes Oliphant Old, not to mention scholars such as Geoffrey Wainwright, who served with von Allmen on the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and has translated some of his best articles for the English-speaking world. Finally, in addition to all of this, von Allmen was an extraordinarily productive scholar during these years, writing more than a dozen books and 100 articles. The list of authors who were eager to contribute to the 1982 *festschrift* in his honor attests to the regard with which he was held.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, much of von Allmen's writing deals directly with topics in our line of sight: worship renewal and ecumenism. But beyond these topics, von Allmen wrote widely and deeply in the field of practical theology. A selective bibliography would include at least these works:

- "L'Ascension." In *Les étapes de l'an de grace, ouvrage collectif*, 87–106. Neuchâtel et Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1962.
- *Prophétisme Sacramental: Neuf études sur le renouveau et l'unité de l'Eglise*. Neuchâtel et Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1964.
- "Clergé et laïc." In *Verbum Caro*, 88–118. Taize, 1964.
- "A Short Theology of the Place of Worship." *Studia Liturgica* (1964) 155–71.

14. Bridel, "la passion de unite," 565. It is worth noting that one of the books at the heart of this study—von Allmen's *Worship: Its Theology and Practice*—is an edited translation of the lecture notes he offered in his Neuchâtel University course on worship.

15. See Bobrinskoy, *Communio Sanctorum*.

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- “Réflexions d’un Protestant sur le pédobaptisme généralisé.” *La Maison-Dieu, revue de pastoral liturgique* 89.1 (1967) 66–86.
- “Le Saint Ministère selon la conviction et la volonté des Réformés du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle.” In *Bibliothèque Théologique*. Neuchâtel et Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1968.
- “The Theological Frame of a Liturgical Renewal.” *The Church Quarterly* 2.1 (1969) 8–23.
- “La nécessité de l’Eglise pour la mission.” *Parole et Mission, revue de théologie missionnaire* 13.48 (1970) 59–70.
- “Une réforme dans l’Eglise, possibilité, critères, auteurs, étapes.” In Vol. 1 of *Recherches et Synthèses d’Oecuménisme*. Gembloux: Ducolot, 1971.
- “The Theological Meaning of Common Prayer.” *Studia Liturgica* 10.3/4 (1974) 125–36.
- “La primauté de l’Eglise de Pierre et du Paul: remarques d’un Protestant.” In *Cahiers oecuméniques* 10. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1977.
- “Le caractère communautaire du culte réformé” in *L’assemblée liturgique et les différents rôles dans l’assemblée, Conférences St. Serge, XXIII<sup>e</sup> semaine d’études liturgiques, Paris, 28 juin–1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1976, Edizioni liturgiche, Via Pompeo Magno* 21 (1977) 11–23.
- “Les marques de l’Eglise.” *RThPh* 113.2 (1982) 97–107.

## THE REFORMER

In 1958, when Jean-Jacques von Allmen took up the position as professor of practical theology at the University of Neuchâtel, his inaugural lecture was on the topic of “The Holy Spirit and Worship.” Von Allmen was always keenly interested in issues surrounding the church at worship, and his four most significant works—the works that resource our articulation of von Allmen’s liturgical ecclesiology in the next chapter—deal centrally with this defining ecclesial activity. Like his liturgical forbearer John Calvin, von Allmen sees the Holy Spirit as the animating force in the church’s worship, and the source of its renewal.



It is likely that von Allmen's most influential work is the publication of his liturgy course notes from 1960–61, initially published in French,<sup>16</sup> but quickly translated into English by Fletcher Fleet and published through Oxford early in his career (1965) as *Worship: Its Theology and Practice*. This same work was revised, expanded, and published in French at the end of his academic career—as a kind of capstone—as *Célébrer le Salut*.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, this work is the co-publication of a Protestant and Catholic publishing house, embodying von Allmen's conviction that common prayer is the “irreplaceable and promising source of reconciled life together.”<sup>18</sup>

The first section of this seminal work is primarily theological, articulating three key themes: worship as the celebration of salvation, worship as the manifestation of the church, and how worship, with its eschatological horizon, is both threat and promise for the world. The second section speaks more practically about the elements of worship, the participants in worship, the day and place of worship, etc. Bridel says that as a whole, the work “combines the precision of a manual with the freedom of an essay and the depth of a meditation.”<sup>19</sup> Bridel goes on to describe the book as “calmly reformed, a polemic on one front against ritualism, and on the other front against the Enlightenment, while at the same time reminiscent of the deep ecumenical impulses seen in the WCC BEM and Lima documents.”<sup>20</sup>

A key argument in this book (like Howard Hagemann's contemporaneous argument in *Pulpit and Table*) is the inseparability of the gospel proclaimed in worship in both word and sacrament. It was one of von Allmen's great satisfactions when the newly united Reformed Church in Switzerland declared the weekly celebration of the Eucharist normative for its congregations.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to this book on worship, von Allmen also wrote an important early volume on homiletics, *Preaching and Congregation*,<sup>22</sup> during the years when he was exercising this ministry weekly. In it, he often follows the theological lead of his friend Karl Barth, comparing the preacher to

16. von Allmen, “Jean-Jacques von Allmen, Liturgique-cours donné par le professeur.”

17. von Allmen, *Célébrer le Salut*.

18. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 571.

19. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 571.

20. Bridel, “la passion de unite,” 571.

21. Senn, “Worship, Doctrine, and Life,” 454.

22. von Allmen, *Preaching & Congregation* (a translation of *La predication*).

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the Virgin Mary, the bearer in words and flesh and human weakness of Divine glory. Tom Long calls von Allmen's work the "high water mark" of Reformed homiletics in the past century.<sup>23</sup>

The sacraments also received significant scholarly attention from von Allmen. His *Essai sur le repas du Seigneur* was written for the WCC Faith & Order Commission in 1966 and was immediately translated into English,<sup>24</sup> German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. It was recognized as one of the most generative pieces of ecumenical theology to emerge from that era.<sup>25</sup> In it, von Allmen's interpretive lens is primarily eschatological, and so he addresses various aspects of the sacrament in a dialectical way, echoing 'the already and the not yet.' For instance, von Allmen speaks of the Eucharist revealing the "limits" and the "fullness" of the church; he speaks of the meal as Communion with Christ and with others; he speaks of Christ's presence as both living bread and as sacrifice; and he underscores the importance of both anamnesis and epiclesis in the prayers surrounding the Supper.

His work on the sacrament of baptism was not published until later in his career. It is a combination of basic biblical and theological reflections on baptism, and contextual reflections in direct response to the challenge of a crumbling Christendom in Europe.<sup>26</sup> In it, one can see Barth's influence, as von Allmen stands, cross-armed and scowling at the widespread European practice of baptizing most infants. Though he does not question the *validity* of such baptisms, he writes that when done so, baptism loses its ecclesiastical dimension, its eschatological dimension, and its pneumatological character. It is, finally, "sociologically anachronistic and theologically irresponsible."<sup>27</sup>

This study will look much more carefully at these four major works on worship, preaching, and the sacraments in the next chapter. For now, note how they signal von Allmen's abiding interest in the reform of the church through the renewal of its worship.

His work in reform was not limited to his writing, however. With Wiebe Vos, a pastor of the Dutch Reformed church, von Allmen founded the *Societas Liturgica* in 1962, "an association for the promotion of ecumenical dialogue on worship, based on solid research, with the perspective

23. Day et al., *Reader on Preaching*, 11.

24. von Allmen, *Lord's Supper*.

25. Haquin, "Les sacrements de l'initiation chrétienne," 141.

26. von Allmen, *Pastorale du baptême*.

27. von Allmen, *Pastorale du baptême*.

of renewal and unity.” This international and ecumenical community is just one example of the ecumenical dialogue and partnership that came to characterize so much of von Allmen’s work—a theme to which we now turn.

## THE ECUMENIST

Jean-Jacques von Allmen devoted himself tirelessly to ecumenical efforts in service of the church’s unity. He had extensive knowledge of the academic and ecclesial realities of other countries and a deep appreciation for other traditions and his friends in them. This ecumenical work took two primary forms: writing and consulting.

Apart from the books we have already mentioned that have a significant ecumenical application (such as *The Lord’s Supper*), von Allmen addressed ecumenical challenges head-on in a number of important works. One of them, *Le Saint Ministère*, interestingly, is his mid-career book on “ministry” as understood and articulated by the sixteenth century reformers. This book is a commentary on the twenty-eighth chapter of the Second Helvetic confession, but it develops themes pertinent to the ecumenical present: the diversity of ministries, apostolic succession, and the episcopate. Among his most startling conclusions is his belief that the absence of a diocesan bishop in the Reformed churches is more sociological than theological, owing, in von Allmen’s view, to the indifference of the sixteenth century bishops to the reformers’ complaints and calls to return to the gospel, which resulted in the “episcopalization” of the pastor. In order for reformed churches to be valid ecumenical partners, argues von Allmen, the Reformed protest against the Roman doctrine of the priesthood needs to be more clearly stated. Furthermore, a truly reformed doctrine of ministry needs to be articulated in a way that does not exclude a diversity of ministries, does not dismiss apostolic succession (understood as indissolubly doctrinal and pastoral), and that does claim episcopal dignity for all its pastors.

Another article that takes up ecumenical concerns is von Allmen’s direct response to the problem of the recognition of the papacy by Protestants.<sup>28</sup> After a significant study of both history and the New Testament, von Allmen draws an ecumenically hopeful conclusion: “I believe that to the extent that he is the ‘successor of Peter,’ the Pope should become again simply the bishop of the Church of Peter and Paul. He thus might

28. von Allmen, “La primauté de l’Eglise de Pierre et du Paul.”

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become credible and acceptable to those who now reject how he justifies his ministry. In effect, this would signify that the Church of Rome, which has a vocational primacy, would renounce that primacy as a foundation for the ecclesiality of *other* local churches. It could become once again their simple and humble ‘prima inter pares.’”<sup>29</sup>

In addition to his scholarship, von Allmen was an eager and valued participant in ecumenical discussions throughout his career. For example, in 1958, he presented a paper on “The Holy Spirit and Worship” in the European Section of the Liturgical Commission of Faith and Constitution.<sup>30</sup> And in 1960 he presented a paper to the ecumenical “Group of Dombes” on “Pastoral Authority according to the Reformed Confessions of Faith.”

By the time of the meetings of Vatican II, von Allmen had considerable stature in the ecumenical movement and during one of the sessions was invited by Cardinal Bea to Rome. He remarked that the event of Vatican II gave renewed vigor to the ecumenical movement, making Protestants “ready to enter into dialogue, even in symphony, with the theology of Congar, of Küng, of Rahner.”<sup>31</sup> Rhapsodically, he concludes: “Karl Barth has rendered for us the Creed and Vatican II [has rendered for us] the Church.”<sup>32</sup>

But his largest ecumenical role was as a leader on the Faith & Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. At the fourth World Assembly, held in Uppsala (July 1968), von Allmen proposed a detailed analysis of the concept of secularization and theology of Christian worship. He actively participated in the final editing of the text whose title would simply be “Le Culte.” Von Allmen also took part in the meetings at Louvain in August 1971 and Accra in 1974, at which the tripartite structure for BEM was drawn up. He is thus at the very center of ecumenical reflection that fed teachers of all nationalities and denominations.

In 1971 von Allmen took a partial leave from his responsibilities in Neuchâtel to help found the Ecumenical Theological Research Institute of

29. von Allmen, “La primauté de l’Eglise de Pierre et du Paul,” 91. Interestingly, the recently installed Pope Francis may be heading in something like this direction, as he de-emphasizes many of his papal titles, preferring to be known as simply the “bishop of Rome.”

30. This was almost certainly a reworking of his inaugural lecture at Neuchâtel.

31. von Allmen, “Une réforme dans l’Eglise,” 55.

32. von Allmen, “Une réforme dans l’Eglise,” 55. His interest in conciliar ecclesiology continued to develop, and he served as an advisor to the Swiss Catholic Synod in 1972.

Tantur near Jerusalem, where he served first as vice-president, and then president until 1974.

In recognition of his commitment to ecumenism, von Allmen received honorary doctorates from three universities: the Reformed University of Strasbourg, the Faculty of the University of Aberdeen, and the Orthodox Faculty of Cluj in Romania.

Jean-Jacques von Allmen retired from teaching in 1980, and after a long illness, he died in Neuchâtel on December 17, 1994.

## SUMMARY

It is difficult to summarize a life or its influence on a generation of pastors and scholars. It is certainly true that von Allmen's thought has been taken seriously in the ecumenical world for half a century. Respect and recognition has also grown in his own reformed church tradition, especially in the last decade or so.<sup>33</sup> Yet the salient feature of von Allmen's liturgical theology is not so much its wide influence but rather the depth of his insight and the height of his vision for the church—insight and vision gleaned not through ivory-tower contemplation but by day-to-day ministry in local congregations. It is a mark of his piety and sanctification that von Allmen saw in his parochial sheep not just another flock with its own faults and foibles. Instead, he saw and experienced and testified to the sublime truth that those same people, animated by the Holy Spirit, are the very body of Christ. It is hard to say who have been more blessed by von Allmen's life and work: those who, at a distance, read and digest his works of theology, written at the intersection of worship and church, or the parishioners who received from his person the Word in proclamation and sacrament each week.

33. Bridel, "la passion de unite," 574.