

FOREWORD

The official *Proceedings* to the Synod of the Eleventh Synodical Convention of Lutheran Church-Canada are provided as the official record of the decisions, elections and activities of the Convention. I encourage all members of the Synod who receive these *Proceedings* to make them available to the members of their respective congregations and others so that the information contained herein may reach as many as possible.

The theme of the Eleventh Convention of Lutheran Church-Canada was “**Christ Alone, Christ Forever: 1417-2017**” reminding us of Solus Christus (Christ Alone) of the Reformation and that our salvation is found in none other. The Synod met in convention October 13-16, 2017 in Kitchener, ON. Because of the overwhelming amount of time needed to focus on the proposals brought before the Convention to restructure LCC, there was no essayist. However, that does not mean the Convention did not take time for study of God’s Word. Professor Esko Murto of CLTS, St. Catharines, led the Convention through “Luther’s” Psalm 46, and Romans 3 emphasizing the “righteousness of God.” We thank him for his timely studies and welcome his fellow members of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland who are now in altar and pulpit fellowship with LCC. Rev. Ken Mahar opened and closed each session with prayer and served as convention chaplain.

The convention met on Friday, October 13 before the Opening Service of The Sacrament to welcome and instruct the delegates so they would be able to begin in earnest on Saturday. Rev. Timothy Teuscher, 1st V.P. of the East District, was elected as President of LCC. There were changes in the Vice-presidents as the delegates adopted changes to our Synod structure which reduced the number of Vice-presidents to one. Rev. Thomas Kruesel, 2nd V.P. of LCC during the previous triennium, was elected. The convention was privileged to have both Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman and Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan, Presidents Emeritus address the assembly.

The main focus of this Convention was on the proposed changes to the structure of LCC. Amendments to the Statutory Bylaws, Constitution, and Synodical Bylaws were ultimately passed after days of deliberation. The homework now for congregations is to vote on the ratification of the amendments to the Synod Constitution. An information package outlining

these amendments along with an official ballot will be sent out to each congregation to facilitate this process. As a result of this historic and lengthy process, delegates were not able to finalize all of the elections. The Convention adopted a motion to have all unelected positions termed “vacant” and granted the incoming Board of Directors and the appropriate entities the authority to appoint members to fill these vacancies.

For more information, visit the convention website: synod2017.lutheranchurch.ca

I would like take this opportunity to thank the members of the convention staff who do so much work behind the scenes and receive little credit: Iris Barta and Marlene Mohr who struggled with a finicky copier; Rev. Rudy Pastucha who at the last minute served as assistant to the secretary and helped produce coherent minutes; the nomination and elections committees who do so much and miss most of the Convention; and last but not least, Iris Barta and Marlene Mohr again and those in the Synod office who have prepared these *Proceedings* for their prompt work in getting the convention’s information to you.

Since this is my farewell address as Synod Secretary, I would also like to thank President Robert Bugbee, Vice-presidents Nolan Astley, Tom Kruesel and Rudy Pastucha, the Board of Directors, the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure of Synod, and the Small Working Group on restructuring for their kind patience with me over the past six years. It has been an honour and a joy to serve with you.

As Lutheran Church-Canada embarks on the uncharted territory of its new structure, our prayers rest on all those who were elected or will be appointed to offices, boards, and commissions of the Synod. May God guide us all in carrying out those decisions that have been adopted and see them through to their completion.

Above all, we pray that our Triune God would continue to speak to and strengthen Lutheran Church-Canada that at the final day, we will be able to confess that we have preached: “**Christ Alone, Christ Forever.**”

Think of God Loving You,



Rev. Paul Schallhorn
Secretary

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CONVENTION DELEGATES**Alberta British Columbia District****Clergy**

Craig	Andrew	Lethbridge
Boehm	Curtis	Edmonton
Kubke	Roland	Stony Plain
Dressler	David	Calgary
Rink	Fred	Vancouver
Hoveland	Keith	Stony Plain
Hautz	Laverne	Fraser Valley
Kraemer	Jonathan	Edmonton
Wemyss	Ian	Fraser Valley
Schultz	Mark	Wetaskiwin
Tufts	Craig	Okanagan
Reddemann	Lorne	Cariboo
Abresch	Ron	Kootenay
Lyons	Scott	Vancouver Island
Bode	David	Calgary
Schutz	Michael	Okanagan
Eifert	Ken	Peace River
Moore	Vincent	Elk Island
Howard	Russell	Wetaskiwin

Lay

Jarvis	Fred	Okanagan
Walter	Larry	Calgary
Rodgers	Tyler	Lethbridge
Friesen	Clifford	Wetaskiwin
Eidick	Bruce	Edmonton
Mitchell	David	Edmonton
Gonnet	Kathleen	Stony Plain
Schulze	Stan	Wetaskiwin
Faulkner	Ron	Elk Island
Smith	Marvin	Kootenay
Bartlett	John	Peace River
Schellenberg	Allen	Vancouver
Hardy	Audrey	Okanagan
Felstead	Robert	Calgary
Laslop	Paul	Stony Plain
Trithardt	Susan	Fraser Valley
Nystrom	Roland	Vancouver Island
Haeussler	Gail	Cariboo
Schoenroth	Kevin	Fraser Valley

Advisory

Paulgaard	James	district BOD advisory
Fraser	William	district BOD advisory
Chambers	Steve	district clergy advisory
MacKay	Larry	district clergy advisory
Winstanley	Miriam	district diaconate advisory
Haberstock	Caleb	district youth advisory
New	Jacob	district youth advisory

Central District**Clergy**

Andersen	Gerald	Qu'Appelle
Schnarr	Cam	Red River
Falkenholt	Brian	Ontario
Schoubye	Harald	Red River
Haberstock	David	Wascana
Gust	Arron	Assiniboine
Kleemola	Randy	Southland
Quast	Jacob	Ontario
Rapp	John	Northland
Klages	Alex	Portage
Giese	Ted	Wascana
Keith	Murray	Saskatoon
Wood	Barry	Assiniboine

Lay

Ulmer	Calvin	Qu'Appelle
Buck	David	Southland
Marfleet	Jeff	Assiniboine
Haas	Todd	Assiniboine
Kangas	Eldon	Ontario
Wall	Jordan	Red River
Rocheleau	Merv	Northland
Niemi	Sam	Ontario
Cullen	John	Red River
Kendel	Dennis	Saskatoon
Heinemann	Walter	Wascana
		Portage
Raedecke	Mike	Wascana

Maunula	Michael	district BOD advisory
Paulus	Don	district office advisory
Koch	Don	district clergy advisory
Hastings	Amanda	district diaconate advisory
Wodajo	Kengnan	district youth advisory
Dobrohoczki	Kale	district youth advisory

East District**Clergy**

Bublitz	Marvin	Stratford
Voegel	Kenneth	London
Koehler	Mark	Hamilton
Schneider	Timothy	Windsor
Clifford	Robert	Hanover
Christoforidis	Vasilios	Toronto
Schroth	Andy	Kitchener
Pakrul	Peter	Toronto
Korsch	Robin	Kitchener
Meleg	Michael	Hamilton
Kuhl	Joel	Kitchener
Ritter	Larry	Niagara
Stefanik	Darryl	Niagara
Schieman	Donald A.	London
King	Bryan	Ottawa
Smilek	David	Ottawa
Teuscher	Timothy	Stratford

Lay

Putzman	Dan	Niagara
Keller	Earl	Stratford
Oberholzer	John	Kitchener
Tiegs	Reginald	Toronto
Famme	Howard	Stratford
Hogg	John	Hanover
Keller	Roger	London
Straby	Bill	Ottawa
Wolfe	Don	Niagara
Wenzel	Rick	Hamilton
Schweyer	Mark	Hamilton
Von Zuben	Edward	Toronto
Krestick	James	Windsor
Currie	Kenneth	Ottawa
Fooks	Barb	Kitchener
Wilson	Robert	London
Witzke	Karl	Kitchener

Advisory

Griffin	Lois	district BOD advisory
Schallhorn	Rosalie	district diaconate advisory
Holland	Darryll	district office advisory
Winger	Roger	district clergy advisory
Syens	Roland	district clergy advisory
Johnson	Isaac	district youth advisory
Hart	Davian	district youth advisory

OTHER ADVISORY DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES

<i>President</i>	Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee
<i>President Emeritus</i>	Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan
<i>President Emeritus</i>	Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman
<i>Vice-presidents</i>	Rev. Nolan Astley
	Rev. Thomas Kruesel
	Rev. Rudy Pastucha
<i>Secretary</i>	Rev. Paul Schallhorn
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr. Dwayne Cleave
<i>District Presidents</i>	Rev. Paul Zabel
	Rev. Thomas Prachar
	Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer

Board of Directors

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, Rev. Nolan Astley,
Rev. Thomas Kruesel, Rev. Rudy Pastucha, Dwayne Cleave
Rev. Paul Schallhorn, Rev. Kurt Reinhardt
Arnold Drung, Cindy Sholdice, Ronald Roller,
Grace Henderson, Cameron Pelzer, Alan Schmitt

Committee for Communication and Technology

Grace Henderson

Committee for Cultural Property and Archives

N/A

Committee for Mission and Social Ministry Services

Rev. Leonardo Neitzel

Commission on Adjudication

Rev. Neil Stern

Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, Rev. Paul Schallhorn,
Rev. Bill Ney, Rev. Dennis Putzman, Rev. Dr. Harold Ristau
Marilyn Schultz, Deacon Jennifer Frim, Gary Gilmour

Commission on Theology and Church Relations

Rev. Warren Hamp

Lutheran Church-Canada Financial Ministries

Mr. Allen Schellenberg

Board of Managers-Worker Benefits

Rev. Dr. Dieter Kays

Board of Regents - CLS Edmonton AB

Rev. Dr. James Gimbel, Rev. Daryl Solie

Board of Regents - CLTS St. Catharines ON

Rev. Dr. Thomas Winger, Rev. Robert Krestick

CONVENTION APPOINTMENTS

Convention Manager

Dr. Ian Adnams

Local Arrangements

Dr. Ian Adnams,

Kitchener Circuit

Host Congregation: Historic St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Registration and Hospitality: Udi Machel Scott

Page Coordinator and Head Page: Doris Schaeffer

Assistant to the Secretary

Rev. Rudy Pastucha

Worship Committee

Rev. Ken Maher (chair), Paul Walrath

Rev. Ron Mohr; Rev. Larry Gajdos

Delegate Choir Director: Rev. David Bode

Convention Chaplain

Rev. Kenneth Maher

Convention Parliamentarian

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan

Committee on Registrations

Grace Henderson (chair)

Committee on Nominations (as elected by districts)

Reg Tiegs (chair); Rev. Rudy Pastucha,

Rev. Vincent Moore, Rev. Bill Stanfel

Rod Johnson, Milton Joneson

Committee on Elections

Rev. Lorne Reddeman (chair), Don Paulus,

Rev. Robert S. Morley, Rev. Dr. Roger Winger

Resolutions Committee 1

(Synodical Structure)

Rev. Tom Prachar (chair), Merv Rocheleau;

Bill Straby; Ron Faulkner

Rev. Jonathan Kraemer, Rev. Robin Korsch

Resolutions Committee 2

(Parish Services, Higher Education & Church Relations)

Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer (chair), Rev. John Rapp

Barb Fooks, Jordan Wall

Robert Felstead, Rev. David Smilek

Resolutions Committee 3

(Administration & Finance)

Rev. Paul Zabel (chair), Jon Oberholzer;

David Mitchell, Deacon Miriam Winstanley

Rev. Alex Klages, Michael Maunula

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT Part 2

In this year's *Convention Workbook*, Pages E.1-E.13, you find Part 1 of my President's Report which was sent to delegates around August 1. I do hope you took the opportunity to read it. As a result, I shall not rehearse the information contained in it. I do intend to touch on several matters where I believe special emphasis or updates are needed.

In addition to the church leaders and special guests I listed for you in Part 1, we are also welcoming Bishop Torkild Maskvie of The Lutheran Church in Norway, and the Rev. Mark Dankof of the Lutheran Ministerium and Synod/USA. We're grateful for the time and trouble these colleagues have taken to be with us during these days. Both of their churches have in recent years been received into membership in the International Lutheran Council (ILC).

This is now the third Convention we have operated with a briefer time-frame than the ones of years ago. Good stewardship was part of that decision in 2011, because it obviously costs less to house and feed people for one less day. I am also persuaded that, if we really want more young and working-age participants, we're more likely to get them to come if they don't have to take quite so much time away from their regular work. This brief Convention is going to require some discipline and commitment on your part.

Some of that discipline has to do with your presence. Please come promptly to our sessions. If you make a point of being in your seat even a minute or two early, that's all the better! Please do not absent yourselves from our discussions unless you are serving on a Resolutions Committee or have a compelling need to be away. Please resist the temptation to make lengthy speeches, especially if your point of view was already expressed well enough by someone else. And please don't give way to a weakness I remember from the first Synod convention I attended in 1983 when we were all still part of "mother Missouri," that is, to use up precious time with amendments which may not be substantial, just because the wording from the Resolutions Committee is not your preferred way of saying things in every detail. I am trusting God to help us preserve the balance between rushing things through uncritically and nit-picking in a way that is not really constructive.

This is especially important at this moment when we are taking up very intricate and detailed matters relating to proposed changes to our Statutory Bylaws, Constitution and Synodical Bylaws. Nobody – and this includes those who are spearheading the proposals for change – believes that our *Handbook* documents will be in perfect shape after this Convention, even if restructuring proposals are adopted. The *Handbook* is going to require ongoing monitoring and improvement in the coming term, quite regardless of the big decisions we may make here this weekend. This is particularly true for that last component of the *Handbook* we call "Synodical Bylaws." I am asking that you give your attention to the pros-and-cons of the proposals coming before us, without making an overly large issue of every detail.

Restructuring

This brings me to the subject of restructuring, which will certainly be the great preoccupation of this 11th Convention. There is no way in these few minutes for me to even summarize properly everything that might be said on the subject. When it comes to the basic idea, I made myself clear in a recent issue of *The Canadian Lutheran*. I believe this is a proposal whose time has come. When you consider the very modest size of Lutheran Church-Canada, to think that it is smaller than some of the larger individual Districts of the Missouri Synod, it seems like just plain bad stewardship to me for us to be maintaining four separate corporations between the Synod and its Districts, all with separate conventions, separate governing boards, separate budgets, and all the rest. There must be a more prudent way of focusing both money and people resources on the essentials of the Lord's work, as opposed to maintaining all these separate small corporate pieces of machinery.

To be sure, one has to be clear that this Convention cannot decide to abolish the District corporations. That would be like a TD bank manager walking across the street to a branch of the Bank of Montreal and telling them to close. LCC and the District corporations are that distinct from one another. What this Convention can do and indeed will be asked to do is to declare that, as of January 1, 2019, Lutheran Church-Canada will no longer work through these various corporations to deliver ecclesiastical services to LCC congregations and people in the various regions of our country, but through one corporation.

The District corporations may decide that they should continue in existence for a time. That may well be necessary in the ABC District while certain legal challenges are worked through. Or our friends in the East may determine that the continued existence of their District corporation could be an efficient way of administering Church Extension funds in eastern Canada. But there is no compelling reason why Lutheran Church-Canada cannot provide ecclesiastical supervision and support through regional pastors across the land, even if they are all employees of the single corporation we call LCC.

I am aware that there is some sentiment here and there to postpone a definitive decision on restructuring yet again. Restructuring is an issue that has been on the mind of people in the Synod almost since we became autonomous, and here we are now, 29 years in since our constituting Convention of 1988. The past triennium brought great strain on our Synodical life together with the CEF crisis in western Canada, the ruptured relationship with Concordia University of Edmonton, and so on. It was against the background of those strains that the three Districts in 2015 by large margins were – if I may use this language – pleading with the Synod to do something by 2017. The CCMS and its consultant, Dr. Stahlke, carried a demanding load in moving this forward since those pleas were issued in 2015. We owe them a great deal.

My own sense is that the appropriate entities of our church, groups like the CCMS and the Board of Directors, would find it taxing to summon the focus and the stamina to draw this phase of uncertainty out for another 3-4 years. It would be hard on the Synodical staff also, which is not large even for more routine times, and which has had to incur much extra work to have everything ready for a decision at this Convention. If this “can” is kicked down the road yet again, I can still readily picture approaching a 2020 or 2021 Convention and hearing from certain segments of the Synod, “We need more time ... or more details.” I realize that some folks may feel like we’re standing at the edge of a diving board and feel a little afraid to jump. But, quite honestly, my sense is that the water won’t be any warmer 3-4 years from now than it is today!

To be sure, even if restructuring is adopted, it will take some time for us to settle into a new way of working. The entire year of 2018 will be busy as we seek to put the various elements of the new structure into place so they may operate. It will be like that spring when I was learning to ride a bicycle without training wheels. I scraped my knees and terrorized a

few neighbours who almost got knocked over as I zig-zagged down the sidewalk. But I did get the “hang” of it, and am persuaded that we can, too, even though the transitional period will be trying at times.

In other words, I ask you, for so many reasons, to vote “Yes” on the resolutions being brought to you by Committee #1. I ask you to do this by very strong margins, so that we will have consensus and so that congregations in the ratification phase will receive a clear signal from this Convention.

CCMS

I cannot touch on this issue of restructuring without speaking my personal word of thanks and affection for the members of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure and their Chairman, Pastor William Ney. The CCMS is small for a project like the one they were tackling in this past triennium. Of course, they did not have the authority to add to their voting membership without the kind of *Handbook* changes that must be passed at a Synod Convention. They overcame that disadvantage by adding several advisory members. This arrangement proved to be such a blessing as the restructuring project unfolded.

Very early on, the authority and role of the CCMS in this project had to be clearly understood and articulated. CCMS representatives often expressed this with two pillar principles; first, that the CCMS as a Synodical commission has every right to bring restructuring proposals directly to the Convention. It was good for all Synodical leadership to clearly understand that. In point of fact, that understanding was even clearly made in meetings of the LCC Board of Directors.

The second principle was that, even though the CCMS possessed that authority, it would not dream of bringing restructuring proposals forward without the support of the Board of Directors. The CCMS said that because it was not only concerned about its authority. It was concerned for unity and consensus within the Synod. In my hearing at least, nobody expressly answered the question, “What if?” I mean, “What if the CCMS and the Board of Directors hit a ‘snag’ at some point?”

I can tell you what my own assumption was. My own assumption was that, if such a snag arose between those two entities, they would seek to find a way to work it out. As most of you realize by now, exactly that sort of challenge took place on July 4-5 at a meeting of the Board of Directors, when the Board declined to give its approval to the document known as the *Act and Bylaws, Convention Draft* as

the best way of taking restructuring proposals forward. The Board of Directors favoured creation of a four-person “Working Group” representing both the Board and the CCMS to seek to overcome the snag.

The CCMS, meeting five days later, unanimously voted to participate in the proposed “Working Group” and were represented in it by their Chairman and Secretary. To clear up any lingering confusion on this matter, the CCMS recently directed an unequivocal letter to delegates to indicate that they freely and willingly made that decision.

Fortunately, the Working Group did not have to go back to “Ground Zero” and reinvent the wheel. They had the valuable input from the national restructuring survey of 2016 and the many circuit and regional meetings which had taken place, in which a number of clear preferences on restructuring arose from among the participants. The Working Group has sought to incorporate those tenets whenever possible in the amendments they finally proposed to the *LCC Handbook*.

The CCMS – again, unanimously – adopted those proposed amendments and submitted them to the Convention. I want to express my special esteem to the members of the CCMS for their clarity and courage under trying circumstances and a very formidable workload in recent months.

Board of Directors

Now I should like to shift attention to the LCC Board of Directors. They have served faithfully in the past triennium under terribly demanding circumstances. In any number of ways they have faced in a single Synodical term more troubling crises than arose in almost all the previous terms combined. These are men and women who are volunteering their time, providing their expertise in various areas, and seeking to navigate through bouts of turbulence we had not faced in this same way before. They would never claim to have done this work perfectly, or that substantial improvement is not needed in certain areas. The reporting from the Board of Directors in the *Convention Workbook* had become brief and needed expanding, which was done recently in the *Workbook Supplement* you received in mid-September.

In the matter of restructuring, a number of us on the Board of Directors became aware in the early summer that there was growing resistance toward using the *Act and Bylaws, Convention Draft* as the vehicle for restructuring. This was evidenced by the number of overtures submitted from congregations

and a District Board of Directors expressing concerns about that document’s approach. However, it was not confined to such overtures alone. In conversations with members in various parts of the Synod, I was being told of objections people were raising to that specific document, and also of delegates who intended to vote against it, even though they may have favoured the idea of restructuring in general. In mid-June I communicated my concern that, even after all this time and education, the polling carried out at the spring convocations indicated that the restructuring project was a long way from the two-thirds approval that would be needed to replace the *LCC Handbook* with a new document. This was troubling to me, because the two-thirds threshold is not just a formality required to change our Statutory Bylaws and our Constitution. Two-thirds is really a minimum springboard that we need for unity and consensus across the Synod.

Since the shift in course on restructuring which the Board of Directors and CCMS agreed to pursue this past summer, reactions from the field out there have been very encouraging indeed. In both the East and Central districts, entities and individuals have communicated a sense of relief that our leadership was following this path. In Alberta-British Columbia I have not been present at group gatherings, but a number of individuals – including several who are present here as voting delegates – have expressed themselves along the same lines. These positive reviews came also from people who were tempted for a time to vote “No” on restructuring, even though they say we need it.

I tell you these things because I support the men and women of our LCC Board of Directors. They have sought to manage crises, to cultivate the overall unity of the Synod, and to work cooperatively with other entities like the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure. And I ask this Convention to do everything in its power to affirm the work they have conscientiously done.

Recruitment

We need pastors. We will have an increasing need for pastors as a good number of colleagues retire over the next several years. We need good, hard-working, Biblically-faithful and people-loving pastors. That is a tall order, because it is not sufficient merely to suppose this need will be met by increased enrollment at our seminaries alone. Only God’s Holy Spirit can provide and shape pastors of this kind.

“*Pray* to the Lord of the harvest,” said Jesus, “to send out workers into His harvest field” (Matthew 9:38). I myself pray this way time and again. I beg of you all to join me in that praying, both in your private devotions at home, and regularly at the altars of your churches on Sundays. Pray that God will open your eyes to see prospective candidates for the ministry right there in front of you in your own home church. Pray that He’d give you the right words to say to encourage them to open their eyes to the prospect of giving their lives to Christ in this way. The most effective primary recruiters of new pastors, I am persuaded, are their own pastors and members of their churches. They often know who has the mind and the temperament for this calling. They are aware of people the seminaries and Synod offices would never think of. Begin with sincere, sustained prayers to Christ in this matter. You see, after you pray for a given need over time, you start caring about what you pray for. And what you care about over time, you start trying to do something about. Pray for recruitment. That’s the best way for you as an individual to start caring about recruitment, so that the stage is set for you and me together to do something about recruitment.

The Staff and I

I mentioned earlier in this report that the Synod does not have a large staff when one considers the waterfront of things we ought to be doing and keeping up with. I, too, am in precisely that situation. I dearly love the people God has placed around me in that office building on Portage Avenue in Winnipeg. It is a struggle for all of us to attend to all the details and to have developed expertise for all the questions that the church ideally has a right to expect. Finances have dictated that we must function with a very lean roster for what we are asked to do. To be quite personal about it, I don’t have the benefit of a Dr. Bill Buller or a Dr. Ian Adnams on site the way my predecessors, President Lehman and President Mayan had.

In my own case, the result of this is that insufficient attention has been given to certain administrative details, the development of exhaustive and updated policies to cover every contingency, and the like. I

feel considerable regret over that as I come close to the end of my tenure, though frankly I am not at all certain how I would have done much differently in light of the time, finances and staff resources available.

Each servant holding this office is going to bring with him a singular set of strengths and weaknesses. I hope I may have contributed some strengths; and I ask your forgiveness and patience for the weaknesses, of which I am keenly aware.

On this score, St. Paul once wrote to his friends, “*I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed I do not even judge myself... it is the Lord Who judges me*” (1 Corinthians 4:3-4). This was his apostolic way of telling us that it’s not other people’s opinions of us that ultimately matter, nor even our opinions of ourselves. We may have our ways of viewing leadership, and of trying to measure performance. These all surely have a place. In the end, however, the real verdict will come from Christ.

On the one hand, that is liberating, to think that others’ views of me or even my views of myself are not the final measurement of worth or value. On the other hand, it is a profound reminder that each of us ought to work as diligently as we can in the Kingdom of God, since we work, not for ourselves or even just for other people, but for Christ, Who sees and knows all things.

I praise Him publicly today for the way He has sustained me in this presidential ministry, which has now entered its tenth year and which very soon will come to an end. And I ask Him publicly today to bring something good of what I was able to do, to minimize whatever damage I may have caused, and to make me into as much of an encouragement to the church as our beloved church has been to me.

To Christ be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Robert Bugbee, President
October 14, 2017

Response to the Presidential Election Rev. Timothy Teuscher

It has been just over a week since I reached that milestone year of 65. And, quite naturally, I suppose, a number of questions have been swirling around in my mind lately. Questions like: When should I retire? Should I retire? What would I do if I retired? Where would I live if I retired? Needless to say, spending my so-called retirement years serving as president of our synod and living in Winnipeg wasn't exactly one of the options. Not that I have anything against Winnipeg, having grown up as a young boy in a tiny village about 450 kilometers south of Winnipeg along the Red River where my late father served as pastor in the oldest Missouri Synod congregation in North Dakota.

It was the late Rev. Dr. Albin Stanfel of blessed memory, president of the Ontario District for many years, who advised me when I was just a young pastor to allow my name to stand if nominated for any position or office in the district or synod . . . and to let the church decide. Today, I wish I had not listened to his advice. For when the results of the election for president of Lutheran Church—Canada were announced, a number of other questions also began swirling around in my mind.

Questions like: why should I be the one to serve in this office when there are others far more qualified to do so than I am? . . . and when I am not even sure what the day-in and day-out duties of the synodical president are? President Ed Lehman, President Ralph Mayan, President Robert Bugbee – I cannot even hope to adequately follow in their footsteps, as they had far more First Article of the Creed gifts to bring to this office than I have.

Then, too, why would I want to serve in this position when the highest and most important office in the church is not – in spite of what many might think – that of synod president or district president (regional pastor as we are now going to call this office) or seminary president; but, rather, that of pastors who have been called to serve those entrusted to their care . . . no matter where or how large or how small the congregation might be . . . with the pure preaching and teaching of the Word of God and the administration of the holy Sacraments according to Christ's institution, and to thereby offer and bestow upon people the gifts that our Lord Jesus has earned and won for us on the cross and at the empty garden tomb – the gifts of "forgiveness of sins, life and salvation," to use the words from the Small Catechism . . . and which I have had the privilege and task of doing in various congregations here in Ontario for the past 37 years.

Furthermore, why would I even agree to serve in this office when the state of our synod isn't exactly what

we would call calm and peaceful and stable, when there are a number issues and concerns facing us? The list is legion; and, if we are going to be honest about it, we all know it:

- aging and declining congregations . . . and with that declining revenue for congregations, districts (or whatever we are now going to call them) and the synod;
- the turmoil in many congregations due to the financial collapse of the ABC District, the resulting law suits against many individuals and the synod itself, and, as such, the lack of trust in and support of district and synod offices and administrations;

- the uncertainty and questions regarding the restructuring of our synod that has consumed an inordinate amount of time and dollars over the past couple of years, and, no matter what we decide to do, is not going to be some panacea that will somehow fix all our problems, as the Reformer, Martin Luther, would remind us in his comments about order and structure in the church, "*To make laws is indeed a great, glorious, and important thing, but without God's Spirit nothing good will result from it. Therefore it is necessary to proceed with fear and humility before God and to observe these bounds: short and sweet, little and well, tender and always onward. After these things have become rooted, then more will be added as is necessary*";

- the fact that the so-called 'good old days' of the church (which weren't really all that 'good') are long past and only a distant memory for some of us, and that we are now living in an increasingly pagan environment and godless nation and anti-Christian society where, as the Head of the church and Lord of all has clearly told us, "*many will fall away, and many false prophets will arise and lead many astray, where lawlessness will be increased, and the love of many will grow cold*" (Matthew 24:10-11); and, coupled with and in light of all this,

- the temptation to thus ignore, forsake and abandon our priceless Lutheran heritage in an effort to supposedly be more relevant and appealing to people in our post-modern society and so build and grow the church . . . forgetting that, as the Augsburg Confession states, "*the Holy Spirit works faith, when and where He pleases, in those who hear the Gospel*" (AC V. 2), and that the charge and task our Lord has given us in these Last Days is, as He says in the letters to the seven churches in the book of Revelation, to simply "*be faithful unto death,*" to "*hold fast what you have until I come,*" to "*remember what you have received and heard, keep it and repent*" (Revelation 2:10, 25; 3:3).

And yet, in spite of all these questions and issues and concerns and reasons to decline to serve in this office, there stand the words of Dr. Stanfel – “let the church decide.” And so, it is with much hesitancy and reluctance, with a great deal of fear and trepidation . . . and after much prayer and seeking the advice and counsel of my long-suffering wife, of some of the dear and faithful lay men and women in our synod whom I have come to know and cherish over the years, and of my fellow brothers in the office of the holy ministry . . . that I humbly bow to the will and decision of the convention and accept my election to serve as president of our synod.

Governance, structure, corporate board meetings, bylaws – those are words, quite frankly, that leave me rather cold. On the other hand, that familiar Reformation triad – “grace alone, faith alone, scripture alone” and all that those ‘solas’ entail; well, that’s a different matter. And if, as President Bugbee – my dear brother and friend and former classmate at the seminary in St. Louis – stated when he was first elected to this office that he faced a steep learning curve, mine will probably be more like trying to climb a mountain . . . and even more so what with changes in our synod’s structure that will make the next few years a time of transition and a work in progress. And so, I would ask for your patience and prayers, your understanding and support, your counsel and advice.

I am especially humbled and thankful for all the words of congratulations and condolences – condolences being the operative word here; not only from those here in the East District who I have known for many years, but also from many pastors and lay people in the Central and ABC Districts . . . and I look forward to getting to know you. As the synod office in Winnipeg will soon be nearly empty . . . what with the soon-to-be vacancies in the positions of mission executive and communications manager, I will especially be thankful for the continued presence of Dwayne Cleaves, Marlene Mohr, and Iris Barta who, as I said to her yesterday, “Just tell me what to do.”

I would also request your prayers for my wife, Paula, as we prepare to embark on this new and unexpected chapter in our life together. It was just this past Thursday that we observed our 43rd wedding anniversary . . . and although I did not give her a gift at that time to mark the occasion, I can now give her a one-way ticket to Winnipeg. I would also ask that you remember in your prayers the members of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church in Stratford who I have had the privilege of serving for the past 21 years or so and who must shortly begin the process of calling a new pastor.

Now, as we are celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation throughout this year of 2017 and, fittingly, here at this convention; I would close by sharing with you the following words of the founding father and

first president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Dr. C.F.W. Walther, from his opening address at the synod’s convention that was held on Reformation Day, October 31st, in the year 1866. So Walther says:

“I am today compelled to call out to you: Do not forget, we do not owe our blessings to our wisdom, much less to our worthiness and zeal, but by God’s grace to this fact alone that, despairing of our wisdom and will and ability, we returned as obedient children of the old Lutheran Church to this mother of ours, that is, to its doctrine and practice.

“What do we now want to do and what must we do? Shall we strike out on a new path from today on? Has the time perhaps arrived in which we have come of age and have become the peers of the church in our time that searches for what is new?”

“God forbid! It is true, we have been sons and pupils of none other than Luther and the church bearing his name, but only in the sense that we allowed ourselves to be led by them into Scripture, this one fountain of Israel, this exclusive norm of faith and life, and this sole judge in all questions regarding the heavenly teaching. Blessed are we if we continue in this sense! The moment, however, that we are ashamed to be mere pupils and seek the glory of being masters and creating something new, and want to do homage to progress and reform the Reformation – from that moment the Lord will depart from us with His blessing and then show us in His wrath what was the cause of our former blessing; namely, nothing but our desire to be nothing ourselves except preservers of what has been entrusted to us Lutherans.

“Let us permit nothing to entice us away from our secure fortress. Let us remain under the old flag under which the Lord of the church has led us. Let us remain at the fountains opened for us by our fathers, from which we have drawn truth, certainty, grace, comfort, life, and strength, and from which we have refreshed many a thirsty soul.

“Let other churches, therefore, have the fame of not being the children but the fathers of the church of the past. Let theirs be the glory of not having inherited the truth but of having done independent research and having acquired the truth for themselves. Let them have the zeal to transform the church of the Reformation in accordance with the demands of a new and more enlightened age, to enrich it with newly discovered truths, to guide it toward a nobler consummation, to reconcile it with the spirit of the times, and to thus speed ahead of us and leave us far behind. We will stay on our good old path! For on this day of October 31st Luther made his motto not ‘Forward!’ but ‘Backward!’; namely, by returning to the apostolic church. Even so, let us this day, on the anniversary of our Lutheran Zion, pledge to each other: We want to return to

Luther and with him to the church of the apostles and prophets, to their doctrine and practice.

“For just as there is only one sun that has through all the ages shone in both the West and the East, so there is only one truth; and just as that one old sun still has the same power today as in years past to draw pleasant fruits from the earth, so the same truth will produce the fruit of the one holy apostolic-catholic Christian church today, as it has for hundreds and thousands of years.”

To that end may God bless us and our poor, little Lutheran Church—Canada. Amen.

**CHRIST ALONE, CHRIST FOREVER
LUTHERAN CHURCH – CANADA
11TH CONVENTION
CONVENTION MINUTES**

**Friday, October 13, 2017
Session 1**

The Chairman called the first session to order at 4:00 p.m. EST and the convention chaplain, Rev. Ken Maher, opened with Morning Suffrages.

The Chairman installed the delegates and opened the convention.

The Chairman welcomed the delegates and guests and made several introductions of Synodical and District officials and others.

Rev. Paul Zabel, president of the East District, welcomed the convention to the East District and the Crowne Plaza, Kitchener.

Convention Orientation followed.

Special Standing Rules were announced.

MOTION:

To adopt the Special Standing Rules.

ACTION: Adopted

MOTION:

To adopt the Proposed Agenda.

ACTION: Adopted

Robert Granke, Director of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), brought greetings. He highlighted the plight in South Sudan/Uganda; schooling in Jordan; hospital work in Jerusalem; and the ongoing work in Nicaragua that CLWR is doing.

Mathew Block, LCC Communications Director, shared a few details regarding the Convention.

The convention session closed with prayer by the convention chaplain at 5:00pm EST.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2017
SESSION 2**

Devotion

Rev. Ken Mahar, Convention Chaplain, opened the session with prayer.

Bible Study – Rev. Esko Murto, professor of CLTS, led the Bible Study based on Psalm 46.

Registration Committee Report

Delegates: Voting: 97

Advisory: 46

Registered Visitors: 16

Guests: 11

Total 170

President's Report, Part 2

The President's Report to the Convention (Part 2) is attached to these Minutes.

Board of Directors Report

Appeal (Workbook Supplement G. 7-9.)

Dr. Dennis Kendel, author of the appeal, spoke to the matter. He also pleaded that moving forward the emails of lay delegates be shared prior to the Convention.

Chair rules that the remedies asked in the appeal (G.9) have been met.

The Rev. Dr. Hans-Jörg Voigt, Bishop of the Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche (SELK) brought greetings to the Convention.

The Rev. Dr. Curtis Leins, President of the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) brought greetings to the Convention.

Resolutions Committee #3 was called forward.

MOTION: To Adopt Resolution 17.03.01: To Decline Overture 3.06

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections Committee

MOTION: To Amend the slate of President to Add the name of Rev. Ron Mohr

ACTION: ADOPTED

Resolutions Committee #1 was called forward.

The Convention decided to spend some time discussing the topic of restructuring before formally voting on it.

Rev. Bill Ney, Chair of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS), took some time to outline the process of bringing the proposed restructuring to the Convention.

Rev. Nolan Astley, 1st Vice-President, gave a brief history of the need for restructuring. To meet the need for restructuring, the Synod has three documents that need amending: the Statutory Bylaws (corporate structure); the Constitution (theological structure); the Synodical Bylaws (ecclesiastical structure). He walked us through an example of a substantive change of the proposed restructuring: removal of Chapter 6 from the Synodical Bylaws and moving to Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with our two seminaries.

Nominations/Elections #1 - President

The Convention Chaplain prayed for God's blessing on the election before the ballots were distributed.

Resolutions Committee #1 was called back.

Discussion on restructuring ensued.

Nominations/Elections #1 - President

The first ballot was spoiled (1 extra vote). Another ballot was distributed. This time one ballot was short. So another ballot will need to be produced.

Discussion on restructuring continued.

Nominations/Elections #1 - President

Another ballot was distributed.

Mathew Block brought some announcements.

The Convention Chaplain led the assembly in prayer.

Lunch Break

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2017
SESSION 3**

The Convention Chaplain opened the session with prayers.

Nominations/Elections #1 - President

Results: Rev. Tim Teuscher – 37

Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer – 32

Rev. Ron Mohr – 28

Rev. Ron Mohr's name is dropped from the next ballot which was distributed.

Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman, President Emeritus, brought greetings.

Resolutions Committee #1 was called back.

Discussion continued on the subject of restructuring.

Nominations/Elections #1 - President

Results: Rev. Tim Teuscher – 60

Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer – 35

Rev. Tim Teuscher is elected President of LCC.

The Convention rose to sing the Doxology.

**RESOLUTION 17.1.01 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE STATUTORY
BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA**

(Ref. Overture 1.18)

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada throughout its entire history has seen the need for restructuring beginning with the 1993 Taskforce Report; and

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in Convention has from time to time modified its structure to meet the challenges it faces; and

WHEREAS the three Districts in Convention spoke in unison asking that the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS) examine the current structure of Lutheran Church-Canada and propose recommendations for restructuring to the 2017 Synod Convention; and

WHEREAS the CCMS over the last 24 months has vigorously worked toward fulfilling this mandate from the three Districts; and

WHEREAS the people of Lutheran Church-Canada have spoken in clear terms about what changes in structure they would like enacted; and

WHEREAS the CCMS has listened to the concerns of the people of Lutheran Church-Canada and together with representatives from the Board of Directors and Synod legal counsel in a small Working Group have taken these concerns and amended the Statutory Bylaws of Lutheran Church-Canada to reflect these concerns; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt the following changes to its Statutory Bylaws (additions in red and deletions in blue):
(FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.17)

MOTION: To Adopt The Proposed Changes To The Statutory Bylaws Of Lutheran Church-Canada

MOTION TO AMEND: To Delete Article 14.01

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE

ACTION: PASSED

ACTION: DEFEATED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

11.02 – the President and Vice-president shall be advisory members of the Board of Directors and shall not have a vote.

ACTION: DEFEATED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

12.01 – “managed” to “overseen”

ACTION: DEFEATED

Resolutions Committee #2 was called.

RESOLUTION 17.2.09 TO THANK GOD FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE/LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY AND FOR THE LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE – CANADA AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

(Ref. Report 19 and Report 20)

- WHEREAS the International Lutheran Laymen's League/Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) and the Lutheran Laymen's League – Canada (LLL-C) serve as a recognized grass root auxiliary of Lutheran Church – Canada; and
- WHEREAS LHM and LLL-C focus their energies and resources on Bringing Christ to the Nations and the Nations to the Church; and
- WHEREAS working in conjunction with the LLL-C, LHM proclaims the Gospel throughout Canada by creating, distributing, and promoting resources through various media while also equipping Christians in Canada for outreach; and
- WHEREAS the need to proclaim the love of Christ is as great as ever in Canada and around the world and the Lord has placed LHM and LLL-C in a unique position to respond as a leader in sharing the Gospel through media and technological means;
- Therefore be it
- RESOLVED that we thank God for all the Lutheran Hour Speakers, the Board members, the staff, supporters, volunteers, and members of LHM and the LLL-C who have served in Canada and/or internationally; and be it further
- RESOLVED that God's people continue to pray for, and financially support, the international and national outreach efforts of LHM and the LLL-C and be it further,
- RESOLVED that members of Lutheran Church – Canada congregations be encouraged to be supporters, volunteers, and members of LHM and LLL-C; and be it further,
- RESOLVED congregations and church workers avail themselves of the training and evangelistic resources created and promoted by LHM and LLL-C and be it finally,
- RESOLVED that the delegates thank God for the International Lutheran League's League/Lutheran Ministries and for the Lutheran Laymen's League -- Canada by rising and singing the "Doxology."

MOTION: TO THANK GOD FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE/LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY AND FOR THE LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE – CANADA AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY
ACTION: ADOPTED

The Convention rose to sing the Doxology.

Kurt Bucholtz, President of the International Lutheran Laymen's League, and Stephen Klinck, Managing Director of the Lutheran Laymen's League-Canada, brought greetings.

Recess until 3:30pm.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2017
SESSION 3 - Continued

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

16.01 – "eight" to "three" geographical areas...

MOTION: To Amend the Amendment...

16.01 – "eight" to "at least three" geographical

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

16.01 – "eight" to "at least three" geographical areas...

MOTION: To Amend the Amendment...

16.01 - The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least three geographic areas. **Each Member Congregation shall belong to a region. The boundary of a region is established by the Board of Directors in consultation with member congregations in that geographical area.**

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

16.01 - The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least three geographic areas. **Each Member Congregation shall belong to a region. The boundary of a region is established by the Board of Directors in consultation with member congregations in that geographical area.**

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

11.02 - ...eight individuals, **three** of whom must be pastors and **five** of whom must be lay persons.

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change...

8.01 - ... each Member Congregation shall appoint **one individual, either a pastor or a layperson**, as its delegate to represent the Member Congregation at the Convention.

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: DEFEATED

MOTION: To limit the pending debate to two more speakers

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

10.04 - The president and vice president are required to abstain from voting on a resolution to suspend the power of either or both of them.

ACTION: DEFEATED

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: To Substitute Pending Resolution with Overture 1.16 (F16 and Following)

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

LINE 45 – that every congregation *or parish* and her called pastor...

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE ON AMENDMENT

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE ON THE SUBSTITUTE MOTION

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: DEFEATED

MOTION: To Vote On Resolution 17.1.01 By Written Ballot

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections #2 – Resolution 17.1.01

The Convention Chaplain led the Convention in prayer.

Mathew Block shared some more announcements.
President Bugbee led the Convention in prayer for our supper meal.
The ballots were distributed.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017
SESSION 4**

The session opened with a hymn.

Registration Committee gave a brief update: please let the committee know if you, as a delegate, are leaving early.

Opening worship offering: \$3036.10

Resolutions Committee #1 was called to the stage.

Results of Vote on Resolution 17.1.01

**For: 75 (77.3%)
Against: 22 (22.6%)**

Resolution 17.1.01 is adopted.

**RESOLUTION 17.1.06 TO REPLACE THE CURRENT STATUTORY BYLAWS AND ALL
AMENDMENTS SINCE ADOPTED IN 2002 WITH A CONSOLIDATED FORM
OF STATUTORY BYLAWS
(Ref. Overture 1.23)**

WHEREAS the Statutory Bylaws have undergone a number of amendments since they were adopted in 2002,
including extensive amendments at this convention; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to replace the current Statutory Bylaws and all subsequent amendments with a single
consolidated text; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt, as a replacement to the current Statutory Bylaws and all subsequent
amendments thereto, the form of the Statutory Bylaws submitted by the Commission on Constitutional
Matters and Structure to this Convention.

FOR ACTUAL TEXT REFER TO AMENDED ATTACHMENT AS HANDED OUT

**MOTION: TO REPLACE THE CURRENT STATUTORY BYLAWS AND ALL AMENDMENTS SINCE
ADOPTED IN 2002 WITH A CONSOLIDATED FORM OF STATUTORY BYLAWS**

MOTION TO AMEND: To Change 16.01 To Read...

16.01 – The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least
three geographic regions, the number and boundaries of which must be established by the
Board. Each Member Congregation shall be assigned by the Board to a region. Before
changing the boundaries of a region the Board must consult with any congregation affected by
the change.

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections Committee

The slate for Vice-president (Page D.3):

ABC – Rev, David Bode, Rev. Tom Kruesel, Rev. Roland Kubke, Rev. Lee Loveridge

Central – Rev. Ted Geise, Rev. Alex Klages, Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye
 East – Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

The amended slate was adopted.

Resolutions Committee #1 returned to the stage.

RESOLUTION 17.1.02 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
 (Ref. Overture 1.19)

WHEREAS the reasons for needed change to Lutheran Church-Canada’s structure have already been cited in Overture 1.18 and changes to the Constitution will further the restructuring process; and

WHEREAS the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada is an ecclesiastical document and its title should reflect this; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada be renamed the Synodical Constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church–Canada adopt the following changes to the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada. (additions in red and deletions in blue):

FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.35

MOTION: TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA

Nominations/Elections Committee

The Convention Chaplain led the Convention in prayer before the ballots for Vice-president were distributed.

MOTION TO AMEND: Remove Article V.4.

ACTION: DEFEATED

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan, President Emeritus, brought greetings.

Nominations/Elections #3 – Vice-president

Results: ABC	Rev. David Bode	–	13
	Rev. Tom Kruesel	–	29
	Rev. Roland Kubke	–	10
	Rev. Lee Loveridge	–	6
Central	Rev. Ted Geise	–	14
	Rev. Alex Klages	–	6
	Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye	–	3
East	Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	–	12
<hr/>			
Total Votes Cast			93

The four receiving the fewest votes are removed from the second ballot: Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye, Rev. Alex Klages, Rev. Lee Loveridge, and Rev. Roland Kubke.

The second ballot for Vice-president was distributed.

MOTION: Postpone Definitely Consideration of Resolution 17.1.02 Until Committee #1 Returns

ACTION: ADOPTED

Rev. Dr. Albert Collver, LC-MS President Harrison’s Assistant for Church Relations, brought greeting.

Resolutions Committee #2 was called to the stage.

RESOLUTION 17.2.08 **TO DECLARE ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP WITH THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN MISSION DIOCESE OF FINLAND**
(Ref: Overture 2.09)

WHEREAS discussions have taken place between representatives of Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland (ELMDF); and

WHEREAS these discussions have revealed a clear unity about the doctrine of the Gospel and 9 the right administration of the sacraments (AC VII); and

WHEREAS the LCC Commission on Theology and Church Relations has reviewed the minutes of these discussion and has concurred with this full agreement; and

WHEREAS the Commission on Theology and Church Relations views the benefits of fellowship to be a blessing from the Lord of the Church to both church bodies; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada in convention declare Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland.

**MOTION: TO DECLARE ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP WITH THE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN MISSION DIOCESE OF FINLAND**

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.01 **TO DIRECT THE SYNOD BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO IMPLEMENT
RESOLUTION 11.2.03**
(Ref. Overture 2.01)

WHEREAS The Synod in convention (2011) passed resolution 11.2.03; and

WHEREAS Resolution 11.2.03 reads ‘that the Board of Directors affirm the recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force, including the development and implementation of a synodical system of subsidizing vicarages whereby congregations, by a yearly assessment, contribute to a “Vicarage Placement Fund.”; and

WHEREAS such an assessment and fund would allow for more beneficial placement of vicars; and

WHEREAS the Board reported to the 2014 convention that ‘11.2.03 To Implement the Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report required further work to develop a funding model’; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Church in convention direct the Board of Directors to expedite the implementation of Resolution 11.2.03.

MOTION: TO DIRECT THE SYNOD BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO IMPLEMENT RESOLUTION 11.2.03

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.02 **TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR MORE ORDAINED PASTORS**
(Ref. Overture 2.02)

WHEREAS our Lord nourishes His people through Word and Sacrament Ministry; and

WHEREAS congregations are increasingly finding it more difficult to have a resident pastor serve them due to distance, shortage of pastors, inability to pay a full-time pastor, and so on; and

WHEREAS individual congregations may experience decline or stagnation without regular pastoral care; and

WHEREAS there are godly men who could serve as pastors in their respective congregation and who for various reasons (e.g. financial, family, lack of Bachelor degree, etc.) may not be able to enroll in the current seminary programs in Edmonton or St. Catharines; and

WHEREAS the Council 1 of Presidents is responsible for overseeing the Pastors with Alternate Training program; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents be encouraged to work with the seminaries to either further develop and expand who can enroll in the Pastors with Alternate Training program, or adopt a program like the Specific Ministry Program developed by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that instructs and ordains men for a specific ministry context, or develop a broader distance education program; be it further

RESOLVED that congregations be encouraged to identify candidates to serve as pastors.

MOTION: TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR MORE ORDAINED PASTORS

MOTION TO AMEND: Remove from 1st Resolved - “or adopt a program like the Specific Ministry Program developed by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that instructs and ordains men for a specific ministry context,”

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections #3 – Vice-president (2nd Ballot)

Results:	ABC	Rev. David Bode	–	16
		Rev. Tom Kruesel	–	44
	Central	Rev. Ted Geise	–	14
	East	Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	–	17
	<hr/>			
	Total Votes Cast			91

Rev. Ted Geise’s name is removed from the next ballot which was distributed.

RESOLUTION 17.2.03 TO ENSURE THE CONTINUATION OF A DIACONAL TRAINING PROGRAM
(Ref. Overture 2.03, Report 17, Report 18)

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in convention recognized the need “for a Church work program in addition to the pastoral and teacher Church work programs already in existence”. (Resolution 90:2.11 “*To Encourage Concordia College to Develop Church Work Program*”); and

WHEREAS The “Task Force to Study Diaconal Ministry” reported to the 1996 Lutheran Church-Canada Convention “*The time would appear to be ripe for this young church to introduce the office of the diaconate... the diaconate can also serve as an impetus to renewed commitment to the ministry of love and service that is so necessary in the current society. Reaching out in love to those around will undoubtedly sow seeds for evangelism, the telling of the good news, which, more than anything else, must be the task of the Christian church as she reaches out to the world at the turn of the millennium.*”; and

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in convention adopted Resolution 99:2.01 “To Establish an Order of Diaconal Ministry” and directed that Concordia University College of Alberta provide a training program for this ministry, and

WHEREAS The diaconate has faithfully served, strengthening and enriching the mission and ministry of our congregations and synod, and

WHEREAS Concordia University College of Alberta (now Concordia University of Edmonton) no longer offers a program to train the diaconate, and

WHEREAS Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, has indicated a willingness to offer a program for training the diaconate and has a tentative program in place;

WHEREAS Our two seminaries are committed to working with one another, as expressed in the MOU; Therefore be it

RESOLVED That the Council of Presidents coordinate plans with Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines to establish a diaconal training program, and be it further

RESOLVED That the Council of Presidents work with the seminaries to recommend a funding plan for the diaconal training program.

MOTION: TO ENSURE THE CONTINUATION OF A DIACONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: To Substitute Pending Resolution 17.2.03 with Overture 2.03 (F21)

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE ON BOTH THE PENDING AND SUBSTITUTE

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: DEFEATED

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections #3 – Vice-president (3rd Ballot)

Results:	ABC	Rev. David Bode	–	13
		Rev. Tom Kruesel	–	57
	East	Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	–	22
	Total Votes Cast			92

Rev. Tom Kreusel is elected Vice-president of Lutheran Church-Canada.

Mathew Block shared some announcements.

The Convention sang Mathew “Happy Birthday.”

The Convention Chaplain led the Convention in prayer.

Lunch break.

SESSION 4 - Continued

The Convention Chaplain opened the session.

Bible Study – Rev. Esko Murto, professor of CLTS, led the Bible Study based on Romans 3:19-28.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017
SESSION 5**

Resolutions Committee #3 was called forward.

RESOLUTION 17.03.02 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.03 (TO DEAL WITH THE UNFUNDED LIABILITIES IN THE LCC PENSION PLAN)
(Ref: Overture 3.03)

WHEREAS The Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada, with the guidance of the Board of Managers and its Pension Plan Actuary, have already diligently studied the Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plan funding deficit and taken significant actions to address it, such as

- Redesigning the LCC Pension Plan, which resulted in the majority of enrolled DB plan members’ credited service being frozen as of December 31, 2012. These members were subsequently transitioned to a Defined Contribution Pension Plan for all future employment service effective January 1, 2013.
- The defined benefit pension plan was closed to all new hires effective January 1, 2012.

- Special going concern pension contributions have been made and will continue to be made into the DB plan to deal with the funding deficit. Approximately 62% of the pension contributions currently being collected from employers are going into the DB pension plan to address the deficit.
- Implementing de-risking strategies which includes the recent purchase of an annuity contract from a large insurance carrier which covers approximately 25% of the DB pension plan liabilities. And

WHEREAS The Board of Managers is already regularly providing updates on the funded status of the DB Pension Plan along with other relevant worker benefit plan information to both members and employers through the distribution of a comprehensive Annual Report; and

WHEREAS The Board of Managers is already planning extensive communications with congregations in 2018 which will include detailed information to Employers regarding their respective funding obligations to the DB pension plan. Therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overture 3.03 is respectfully declined

MOTION: TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.03 (TO DEAL WITH THE UNFUNDED LIABILITIES IN THE LCC PENSION PLAN)

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.05 TO CHANGE GUIDELINES FOR SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEES
(Ref: Overture 3.04)

WHEREAS it has happened that the voice of some has not been heard at conventions because either their overtures never made it out of the floor committee or were significantly changed by the committee; and

WHEREAS The East District addressed this concern by putting in place guidelines 7.22.A and 7.22.B in their Regulations for its resolution committees; and

WHEREAS this was done in order to encourage grass roots participation and to give congregations the confidence that their voice will be heard; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Synod adopt the following wording and practice for Resolutions Committees of LCC:

1. In order to expedite the transaction of business, the President shall refer all overtures submitted, with the exception of those listed in Synodical Bylaw 2.19c to the convention to Resolutions Committees. The purpose of the Resolutions Committees is to organize the overtures received and present them as resolutions to the convention. It is not the purpose of the Resolutions Committees to change the intent of the overtures submitted. They can, however, combine overtures on a similar topic into one resolution. They can also recommend to decline an overture.
2. The Resolutions Committees shall not create or present resolutions that do not originate from properly submitted reports and overtures.

MOTION: TO CHANGE GUIDELINES FOR SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEES

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.06 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.07 (TO COMMUNICATE ON CEF DETAILS and PROVIDE VERBAL DISCUSSION TIME)
(Ref: Overture 3.07)

WHEREAS all the relevant information on the proceedings for the ABC District CEF crisis are available on the website of the court-appointed monitor (http://www.insolvencies.deloitte.ca/en-ca/Pages/lutheran_church_canada_the_alberta_british_columbia_district_et_al.aspx); and

WHEREAS the ABC District is separately incorporated and Synod therefore does not have information beyond what is publicly available through the ABC District and the court-appointed monitor; and

WHEREAS the Court Appointed Monitor and the Chief Restructuring Officer would be the most appropriate entities to address a Question and Answer session; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overture 3.07 is respectfully declined.

MOTION: TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.07 (TO COMMUNICATE ON CEF DETAILS and PROVIDE VERBAL DISCUSSION TIME)

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION: To Substitute Pending Resolution 17.03.06 with Overture 3.07 (F28)
No Second; substitute motion fails.**

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.09 TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE MISSION LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. LEONARDO NEITZEL

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel has heeded the call of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20); and

WHEREAS our Lord worked in and through Rev. Dr. Neitzel to give exceptional leadership to Lutheran Church-Canada to fulfill her mandate to share the Gospel by expanding her presence in the mission fields around the world; and

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Neitzel has tirelessly used his gifts for the spreading of God's kingdom through his service to Lutheran Church-Canada; and

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Neitzel is retiring after serving as Mission Executive of Lutheran Church-Canada since 2009; therefore be it

RESOLVED the Lutheran Church-Canada give thanks to God for the rich blessings poured out upon this church body through the mission direction of Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel as mission executive; and commend Rev. Dr. Neitzel to the Lord's continued blessing and direction.

MOTION: TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE MISSION LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. LEONARDO NEITZEL

ACTION: ADOPTED

The Convention sang the Doxology.

RESOLUTION 17.03.09A TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. ROBERT BUGBEE

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee is joyfully received as a gift bestowed by the exalted Lord on His church for her good (Eph. 4:8, 11); and

WHEREAS our Lord worked in and through Rev. Dr. Bugbee to give exceptional leadership to Lutheran Church-Canada as she has grown in her role in Canadian and worldwide Lutheranism; and

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Bugbee has given unselfishly of his time and energy in fulfilling his duties; and

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Bugbee is accepting a call to be pastor of First Lutheran Church, Windsor, ON after serving three terms as president of Lutheran Church-Canada; therefore, be it

RESOLVED the Lutheran Church-Canada give thanks to God for the rich blessings poured out upon this church body through the leadership of Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee as pastor and president, and commend Rev. Dr. Bugbee to the Lord's continued blessing and direction; and be it

RESOLVED that Rev. Dr. Bugbee be granted the title Past President; and be it finally

RESOLVED that at such time as Rev. Dr. Bugbee retires, he receive the official designation President Emeritus.

MOTION: TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. ROBERT BUGBEE
ACTION: ADOPTED

Resolutions Committee #3 is excused.

Rev. Milton Winston Tejada Huatuco, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church-Peru, brought greetings.

Resolutions Committee #1 was called to the stage.

RESOLUTION 17.1.02 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
(Ref. Overture 1.19)

WHEREAS the reasons for needed change to Lutheran Church-Canada's structure have already been cited in Overture 1.18 and changes to the Constitution will further the restructuring process; and

WHEREAS the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada is an ecclesiastical document and its title should reflect this; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada be renamed the Synodical Constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt the following changes to the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada. (additions in red and deletions in blue):

FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.35

Rev. Bill Ney, Chairman of the CCMS, spoke regarding the CCMS' work.

MOTION: TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA

MOTION: TO TERMINATE DEBATE ON RESOLUTION 17.1.02

ACTION: ADOPTED

ACTION: ADOPTED by Standing Vote (92 For; 2 Against)

Mr. Arnold Drung, Chairman of the Board of Directors of LCC, shared the result of a Board motion that LCC be divided into three regions configured as such:

Region #1: British Columbia and Alberta

Region #2: Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northwestern Ontario

Region #3: Balance of Ontario and the eastern Canadian Provinces

Mrs. Iris Barta, President of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League Canada (LWMLC), brought greetings.

Resolutions Committee #2 Chair was called to the stage.

RESOLUTION 17.2.10 TO THANK GOD FOR THE LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE – CANADA (LWMLC) AS IT OBSERVES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE ITS FORMATION AS A WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AND FOR ITS 50 YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH THE LWML (USA) (Page I8)
(Ref. Report 21)

WHEREAS Lutheran Women's Missionary League – Canada (LWMLC) has been a recognized auxiliary of Lutheran Church – Canada for the past 25 years; and

- WHEREAS the women of the LWMLC were active in the LWML (USA) for the previous 25 years prior to the formation of LWMLC; and
- WHEREAS the Mission of the LWMLC is to “equip, motivate, and encourage women to grow in God’s Word; share God’s Son; and serve God’s people,” and
- WHEREAS members of LWMLC encourage Christian women in the study of God’s Word so they are passionate in sharing the Gospel through word and deed; and
- WHEREAS members of the LWMLC support the ministry and mission efforts of their local congregations; and
- WHEREAS the members of the LWMLC have supported mission projects in Canada and around the world through the collection of mites; and
- WHEREAS the prayer of the LWMLC is that they continue to trust in God’s wisdom and guidance as they answer His call to serve for many years to come; Therefore, be it
- RESOLVED that women in Lutheran Church – Canada congregations be encouraged to participate in the LWMLC; and be it further
- RESOLVED that God’s people pray for the ongoing work of the LWMLC and the mission projects supported by the LWMLC; and be it finally,
- RESOLVED that the delegates thank God for the LWMLC by rising and singing “Called to Serve.”
- MOTION: TO THANK GOD FOR THE LUTHERAN WOMEN’S MISSIONARY LEAGUE – CANADA (LWMLC) AS IT OBSERVES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE ITS FORMATION AS A WOMEN’S AUXILIARY AND FOR ITS 50 YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH THE LWML (USA)**
- ACTION: ADOPTED by the Convention Standing to Sing “Called to Serve”**

The Chair of the Convention recognized and gave thanks to the outgoing members of the Board of Directors: Rev. Nolan Astley, Rev. Rudy Pastucha, Rev. Mark L. Smith, Mr. Ronald Roller.

Nominations Committee was called to the stage.

The slate of the Board of Directors (under the new structure they will serve until January 15, 2018)

The following names were added from the floor: Mr. Don Paulus, Mr. John Cullen, Rev. Laverne Hautz.

Because of some confusion, the election of the Board of Directors was tabled.

Break.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017
SESSION 5 – Continued**

President Elect, Rev. Timothy Teuscher, addressed the Convention.

The Nominations Committee was called to the stage and gave the updated slate.

Mrs. Lisa Jackson, Concordia Lutheran Mission Society, brought greetings.

Resolutions Committee #1 was called to the stage.

RESOLUTION 17.1.03 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SYNODICAL BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA (Ref. Overture 1.20)

WHEREAS the reasons for needed change to Lutheran Church-Canada’s structure have already been cited in Overture 1.18 and changes to the Synodical Bylaws will further the restructuring process; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church–Canada adopt the following changes to its Synodical Bylaws (additions in red and deletions in blue):

FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.45

MOTION: TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SYNODICAL BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

Bylaw 2.19 a. 1.1) “...the business of LCC between Conventions and shall include all Memoranda of Understanding.”

ACTION: DEFEATED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

Bylaw 2.19 a.1.1) “...the business of LCC between Conventions and shall include all Memoranda of Understanding adopted since the previous Convention.”

ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections #4 – Board of Directors

The Convention Chaplain led the Convention in prayer before the ballot was distributed.

The amended slate is as follows:

Lay People: Ivan Boles
John Cullen
Arnold Drung
Shannon Dul
Kirsten Guggenmos
Grace Henderson
Don Paulus
Cam Pelzer
Doug Petersen
Cindy Sholdice

Clergy: Rev. Warren Hamp
Rev. Laverne Hautz
Rev. Alex Klages
Rev. Johannes Nieminen
Rev. Kurt Reinhardt
Rev. Paul Schallhorn
Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye

COMMON CONSENT: To Remove the Following Two Qualifications Wherever They Appear in the Synodical Bylaws

**iii) experience in organizational management,
iv) basic understanding of financial management.”**

ACTION: ADOPTED

MOTION TO AMEND: To Add...

Bylaw 2.55 “Individuals shall be elected at Convention with one appointment by the President to the following...”

ACTION: ADOPTED

The concern was raised about the lack of retired pastors being able to serve (i.e. Bylaw 2.521) as was our current practice

MOTION: Postpone Definitely Consideration of Resolution 17.1.03 Until Committee #1 Returns
ACTION: ADOPTED

Mr. Roberto José, Manager of Our LCC Mission in Nicaragua, and his wife, Maricela, brought greetings.

Rev. Torkild Masvie, President of the Lutheran Church of Norway, brought greetings.

Mathew Block brought further announcements.

The Convention Chaplain led the Convention in prayer.

MOTION: To Amend the Standing Rules to Waive the Reading of the Whereas Clauses Tomorrow
ACTION: ADOPTED

Nominations/Elections #4 – Board of Directors

Results:	Lay People:	Ivan Boles	-	32
		John Cullen	-	36
		Arnold Drung	-	67
		Shannon Dul	-	17
		Kirsten Guggenmos	-	37
		Grace Henderson	-	50
		Don Paulus	-	39
		Cam Pelzer	-	41
		Doug Petersen	-	30
		Cindy Sholdice	-	60
	Clergy:	Rev. Warren Hamp	-	52
		Rev. Laverne Hautz	-	38
		Rev. Alex Klages	-	48
		Rev. Johannes Nieminen	-	25
		Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	-	49
		Rev. Paul Schallhorn	-	40
		Rev. Dr. Harold Schoubye	-	19

The following people are elected to the Board of Directors of LCC: Deacon Susan Eberhard, Arnold Drung, Grace Henderson, Cindy Sholdice, Rev. Warren Hamp, Rev. Alex Klages, Rev. Kurt Reinhardt.

Shannon Dul will be removed from the next ballot.

Session closed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Paul Schallhorn, Secretary

ELECTIONS RESULTS

President

Rev. Timothy Teuscher

Vice-President

Rev. Thomas Kruesel

Board of Directors (BOD)

Arnold Drung, Cindy Sholdice, Grace Henderson, Cam Pelzer, Kirsten Guggenmos,
Deacon Suzanne Eberhard, Rev. Warren Hamp, Rev. Alex Klages, Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS)

Gary Gilmour, Mark Hersey, Arlene Kish, Rev. William Ney
(other spaces to be filled by appointment)

Commission on Adjudication

Rev. Dr. Kevin Fast, Rev. Jeremy Richert
(other spaces to be filled by appointment)

Commission for Nominations and Elections (CNE)

Milton Joneson, Rod Johnson, Sharon Schieman, Rev. Keith Hoveland, Rev. Lorne Reddemann,
Rev. Michael Meleg, Rev. Robert Morley, Rev. Paul Williams

Commission on Theology and Church Relations

(no election at adjournment; spaces to be filled by appointment)

For the Boards of Regents of the seminaries in Edmonton and St. Catharines, it was determined that LCC is not in a legal position to actually elect directors for those institutions, since the seminaries are in fact separately incorporated entities distinct from LCC. However, the seminaries understand themselves to be servants of the Synod. They have agreed that candidates chosen at the Synod Convention would be forwarded as nominees to the seminaries, which then would legally be able to appoint directors, guided by the ballot lists circulated at our LCC Convention.

Election Results

Ballot 1 President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Timothy Teuscher		
Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer		
Rev. Ron Mohr		

The first ballot was spoiled (1 extra vote).

Ballot 2 President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Tim Teuscher	37	
Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer	32	
Rev. Ron Mohr	28	

Ballot 3 President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Tim Teuscher	60	Elected
Rev. Dr. Glenn Schaeffer	35	

Ballot 1 Vice President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Thomas Kruesel	29	
Rev. David Bode	13	
Rev. Roland Kubke	10	
Rev. Lee Loveridge	6	
Rev. Ted Giese	14	
Rev. Alex Klages	6	
Rev. Dr. Harald Schoubye	3	
Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	12	

Ballot 2 Vice President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. David Bode	16	
Rev. Tom Kruesel	44	
Rev. Ted Giese	14	
Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	17	

Ballot 3 Vice President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. David Bode	13	
Rev. Tom Kruesel	57	Elected
Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	22	

Ballot 1 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
Ivan Boles	19	
John Cullen	23	
Kirsten Guggenmos	36	
Don Paulus	28	
Cam Pelzer	32	
Doug Petersen	29	

Ballot 2 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
John Cullen	25	
Kirsten Guggenmos	52	Elected
Don Paulus	26	
Cam Pelzer	37	
Doug Petersen	36	

Ballot 3 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
Don Paulus	21	
Cam Pelzer	41	
Doug Petersen	27	

Ballot 4 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
Cam Pelzer	57	Elected
Doug Petersen	25	

Ballot 1 Commission on Adjudication	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Jonathan Asmus	13	
Rev. Mark Chiang	18	
Rev. Jeremy Richert	40	
Rev. Nick Wasylowich	19	
Rev. Keith Blom	10	
Rev. Jeff Dul	7	
Rev. Robert Grout	5	
Rev. Todd Guggenmos	23	
Rev. John Rapp	34	
Rev. Glenn Worcester	11	
Rev. Dr. Kevin Fast	64	Elected
Rev. Greg Johnson	26	

Ballot 2 Commission on Adjudication	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Jeremy Richert	44	Elected
Rev. Nick Wasylowich	21	
Rev. Todd Guggenmos	22	
Rev. John Rapp	30	
Rev. Glenn Worcester	11	

Ballot 1 Commission on Theology and Church Relations	Votes Received	Result
Kelly Klages	38	
Shane Kelly	6	
Paul Walrath	39	

Ballot 1 Commission on Constitutional Matters & Structure	Votes Received	Result
Gary Gilmour	80	Elected
Mark Hersey	44	Elected
Arlene Kish	43	Elected
Raymond Lang	37	
Randy Priest	20	
Rev. Steven Brummett	10	
Rev. James Chimirri-Russell	10	
Deacon Jennifer Frim	39	
Rev. Greg Johnson	5	
Rev. Richard Juritsch	16	
Rev. Dr. Bryan King	10	
Rev. Kurt Lantz	14	
Rev. Edmund Mielke	13	
Rev. Bill Ney	47	Elected
Rev. Dr. Harold Ristau	14	
Rev. Paul Schallhorn	24	
Rev. Michael Schutz	35	

Ballot 1 Commission for Nominations & Elections	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Keith Hoveland	59	Elected
Rev. Lorne Reddemann	74	Elected
Rev. Michael Meleg	60	Elected
Rev. Robert Morley	69	Elected
Rev. Paul Williams	55	Elected
Milton Joneson	53	Elected
Rod Johnson	65	Elected
Mark Higenell	33	
Paul Otterman	41	
Sharon Schieman	48	Elected

Ballot 1 BoR CLS Edmonton	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Jeremy Richert	10	Elected to Adjudication
Rev. Robert Grout	6	
Rev. Randy Heide	10	
Rev. Clint Magnus	15	
Rev. Aaron Astley	22	
Rev. Perry Hart	8	
Rev. Kurt Lantz	14	
Brigitte Mueller	12	
Corinne Nowoczin	21	
Gerry Steinke	22	
Arlene Kish	23	Elected to CCMS
Wayne Timm	27	
Dr. Kenneth Currie	30	
Jeremy Drung	20	
Mark Hersey	12	

Ballot 1 BoR CLTS St. Catharines	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Jeremy Richert	4	Elected to Adjudication
Rev. Phil Washeim	8	
Rev. Nick Wasylowich	3	
Rev. Neil Stern	10	
Rev. David Habertstock	24	
Rev. Johannes Nieminen	6	
Rev. Robert Krestick	29	
Ivan Boles	25	
Jordan Wall	49	Elected
Norma Wynn	25	
Mark Hersey	29	Elected to CCMS
Anne Taylor	32	

RESOLUTIONS SUMMARY

- Resolution 17.01.01 to adopt the proposed changes to the statutory bylaws of Lutheran Church–Canada
ACTION: Adopted as amended
- Resolution 17.01.02 to adopt the proposed changes to the constitution of Lutheran Church–Canada
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.03 to adopt the proposed changes to the synodical bylaws of Lutheran Church-Canada
ACTION: Adopted as amended
- Resolution 17.01.04a to request the 2018 Conventions of the three District Corporations (the Alberta British-Columbia District, the Central District and the East District) of Lutheran Church-Canada to facilitate the nomination and election of Regional Pastors and Circuit Counselors for the balance of the 2017-2021 term
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.05 to discontinue working with the 3 district corporations (the Alberta-British Columbia District, the Central District and the East District), to separately deliver services to the members of LCC as of January 1, 2019
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.06 to replace the current statutory bylaws and all amendments since adopted in 2002 with a consolidated form of statutory bylaws
ACTION: Adopted as Amended
- Resolution 17.01.07 to replace the current synodical constitution and all amendments since adopted in 2002 with a consolidated form of synodical constitution
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.08 to replace the previous synodical bylaws and all amendments since adopted in 2002 with a consolidated form of synodical bylaws
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.09 to decline overtures 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 1.12 and 1.17
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.10 to decline overtures 1.07, 1.08, and 1.14
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.11 to decline overture 1.15
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.12 to decline overture 1.05
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.13 to decline overtures 1.06, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 and 1.16
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.14 to decline overture 1.09
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.01.15 to decline overture 1.26
ACTION: Adopted

- Resolution 17.01.16 NO RESOLUTION
- Resolution 17.01.17 to approve and forward nominees to the Boards of Regents, Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton AB and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, ON
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.01 to direct the synod board of directors to implement resolution 11.2.03
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.02 to address the need for more ordained pastors
ACTION: Adopted as amended
- Resolution 17.02.03 to ensure the continuation of a diaconal training program
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.04 to establish a policy concerning retired pastors
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.05a to establish unified procedures for calling pastors (revised)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.06 to request the council of presidents to provide standard forms and practices
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.07 to restate expectations regarding continuing education for all church workers
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.08 to declare altar and pulpit fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.09 to thank God for the International Lutheran Laymen's League/Lutheran Hour Ministries as it celebrates its 100th anniversary and for the Lutheran Laymen's League – Canada as it celebrates its 50th anniversary
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.02.10 to thank God for the Lutheran Women's Missionary League – Canada (LWMLC) as it observes its 25th anniversary since its formation as a women's auxiliary and for its 50 years of involvement with the LWML (USA)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.01 to decline Overture 3.06
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.02 to decline overture 3.03 (to deal with the unfunded liabilities in the LCC pension plan)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.03 to change method of electing circuit counsellors
NOT CONSIDERED DUE TO TIME RESTRAINTS
- Resolution 17.03.04 to change nomination procedures
NOT CONSIDERED DUE TO TIME RESTRAINTS
- Resolution 17.03.05 to change guidelines for Synodical Resolutions Committees
ACTION: Adopted

- Resolution 17.03.06 to decline overture 3.07 (to communicate on CEF details and provide verbal discussion time)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.07a to provide for verbal reports from Regional Pastors at Synod Conventions
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.08 NO RESOLUTION
- Resolution 17.03.09 to give thanks to God for the mission leadership of Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.09a to give thanks to God for the leadership of Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.10 to receive the LCC Quadrennial Work Program
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 17.03.11 to appoint auditors for Lutheran Church – Canada
ACTION: Adopted

RESOLUTION 17.1.01 **TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE
STATUTORY BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA**
(Ref. Overture 1.18)

- WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada throughout its entire history has seen the need for restructuring beginning with the 1993 Taskforce Report; and
- WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in Convention has from time to time modified its structure to meet the challenges it faces; and
- WHEREAS the three Districts in Convention spoke in unison asking that the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS) examine the current structure of Lutheran Church-Canada and propose recommendations for restructuring to the 2017 Synod Convention; and
- WHEREAS the CCMS over the last 24 months has vigorously worked toward fulfilling this mandate from the three Districts; and
- WHEREAS the people of Lutheran Church-Canada have spoken in clear terms about what changes in structure they would like enacted; and
- WHEREAS the CCMS has listened to the concerns of the people of Lutheran Church-Canada and together with representatives from the Board of Directors and Synod legal counsel in a small Working Group have taken these concerns and amended the Statutory Bylaws of Lutheran Church-Canada to reflect these concerns; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt the following changes to its Statutory Bylaws (additions in red and deletions in blue):

(FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.17)

AMEND: To Change...

16.01 – “eight” to “three” geographical areas...

MOTION: To Amend the Amendment...

16.01 – “eight” to “at least three” geographical

AMEND: To Change...

16.01 – “eight” to “at least three” geographical areas...

MOTION: To Amend the Amendment...

16.01 - The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least three geographic areas. **Each Member Congregation shall belong to a region. The boundary of a region is established by the Board of Directors in consultation with member congregations in that geographical area.**

AMEND: To Change...

16.01 - The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least three geographic areas. **Each Member Congregation shall belong to a region. The boundary of a region is established by the Board of Directors in consultation with member congregations in that geographical area.**

AMEND: To Change...

11.02 - ...eight individuals, **three** of whom must be pastors and **five** of whom must be lay persons.

MOTION: To Vote On Resolution 17.1.01 By Written Ballot

Results of Vote on Resolution 17.1.01

For: 75 (77.3%)

Against: 22 (22.6%)

ACTION: Resolution 17.1.01 is adopted.

RESOLUTION 17.1.02 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
(Ref. Overture 1.19)

WHEREAS the reasons for needed change to Lutheran Church-Canada's structure have already been cited in Overture 1.18 and changes to the Constitution will further the restructuring process; and

WHEREAS the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada is an ecclesiastical document and its title should reflect this; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada be renamed the Synodical Constitution; and be it further

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt the following changes to the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada. (additions in red and deletions in blue):

(FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.35)

ACTION: ADOPTED by Standing Vote (92 For; 2 Against)

Mr. Arnold Drung, Chairman of the Board of Directors of LCC, shared the result of a Board motion that LCC be divided into three regions configured as such:

Region #1: British Columbia and Alberta

Region #2: Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northwestern Ontario

Region #3: Balance of Ontario and the eastern Canadian Provinces

RESOLUTION 17.1.03 TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SYNODICAL BYLAWS OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
(Ref. Overture 1.20)

WHEREAS the reasons for needed change to Lutheran Church-Canada's structure have already been cited in Overture 1.18 and changes to the Synodical Bylaws will further the restructuring process; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt the following changes to its Synodical Bylaws (additions in red and deletions in blue):

FOR ACTUAL TEXT CHANGES REFER TO WORKBOOK SUPPLEMENT – G.45

AMEND: **To Add...**
Bylaw 2.19 a.1.1) **“...the business of LCC between Conventions and shall include all Memoranda of Understanding adopted since the previous Convention.”**

COMMON CONSENT: **To Remove the Following Two Qualifications Wherever They Appear in the Synodical Bylaws**
iii) experience in organizational management,
iv) basic understanding of financial management.”

AMEND: **To Add...**
Bylaw 2.55 **“Individuals shall be elected at Convention with one appointment by the President to the following...”**

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.04a **TO REQUEST THE 2018 CONVENTIONS OF THE THREE DISTRICT CORPORATIONS (THE ALBERTA BRITISH-COLUMBIA DISTRICT, THE CENTRAL DISTRICT AND THE EAST DISTRICT) OF LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA TO FACILITATE THE NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF REGIONAL PASTORS AND CIRCUIT COUNSELORS FOR THE BALANCE OF THE 2017-2021 TERM**

(Ref. Overture 1.21)

WHEREAS Lutheran Church—Canada has amended its Statutory Bylaws, Constitution and Synodical Bylaws to discontinue the practice of working with 3 separately district corporations to separately deliver services to the members of LCC; and

WHEREAS the number of ecclesiastical regions of Lutheran Church – Canada has been determined by the BOD of Synod; and

WHEREAS the boundaries of the ecclesiastical regions and circuits fall within the current areas in which the 3 District Corporations carry out their activities; and

WHEREAS it has not been possible in advance of this Convention to seek nominations for pastors to fill the roles of Regional Pastors and Circuit Counselors; and

WHEREAS the Districts Corporations are called upon to always serve the interests of Lutheran Church – Canada (2014 Constitution Article XII.15); therefore be it

RESOLVED that the 3 District Corporations be asked to assist the President and Secretary facilitate a process to identify and place into nomination the names of pastors willing and eligible to serve in the role of Regional Pastors; and be it further

RESOLVED that the 3 District Corporations be asked to assist the Secretary to identify and place into nomination a slate of pastors willing and eligible to serve in the role of Circuit Counselor; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Conventions of the 3 Districts Corporations be asked to facilitate the necessary elections for the positions of Regional Pastor and Circuit Counselor at their Conventions in 2018; and be it finally

RESOLVED that those pastors elected to serve as Regional Pastors and Circuit Counselors serve in the positions to which they have been elected until their replacements take office following the 2021 Convention of Lutheran Church – Canada.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.05 TO DISCONTINUE WORKING WITH THE 3 DISTRICT CORPORATIONS (THE ALBERTA-BRITISH COLUMBIA DISTRICT, THE CENTRAL DISTRICT AND THE EAST DISTRICT), TO SEPARATELY DELIVER SERVICES TO THE MEMBERS OF LCC AS OF JANUARY 1, 2019
(Ref. Overture 1.22)

WHEREAS Lutheran Church—Canada has amended its Statutory Bylaws, Constitution and Synodical Bylaws to discontinue the practice of working with 3 separate district Corporations to deliver services to the members of LCC; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church – Canada give thanks to God for the blessings bestowed upon our Synod by The Alberta-British Columbia District, The Central District and The East District; and be it further

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church – Canada give thanks for the countless individuals, past and present, who have served these district corporations; and be it finally

RESOLVED that as of January 1, 2019, Lutheran Church-Canada discontinue working with the 3 separate district corporations to deliver services to the members of LCC.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.06 TO REPLACE THE CURRENT STATUTORY BYLAWS AND ALL AMENDMENTS SINCE ADOPTED IN 2002 WITH A CONSOLIDATED FORM OF STATUTORY BYLAWS
(Ref. Overture 1.23)

WHEREAS the Statutory Bylaws have undergone a number of amendments since they were adopted in 2002, including extensive amendments at this convention; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to replace the current Statutory Bylaws and all subsequent amendments with a single consolidated text; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt, as a replacement to the current Statutory Bylaws and all subsequent amendments thereto, the form of the Statutory Bylaws submitted by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure to this Convention.

FOR ACTUAL TEXT REFER TO AMENDED ATTACHMENT AS HANDED OUT

AMEND: To Change 16.01 To Read...

16.01 – The area of Canada in which Member Congregations are located shall be divided into at least three geographic regions, the number and boundaries of which must be established by the Board. Each Member Congregation shall be assigned by the Board to a region. Before changing the boundaries of a region the Board must consult with any congregation affected by the change.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.07 TO REPLACE THE CURRENT SYNODICAL CONSTITUTION AND ALL AMENDMENTS SINCE ADOPTED IN 2002 WITH A CONSOLIDATED FORM OF SYNODICAL CONSTITUTION
(Ref. Overture 1.24)

WHEREAS the Synodical Constitution has undergone a number of amendments since it was adopted in 2002, including extensive amendments at this convention; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to replace the current Synodical Constitution and all subsequent amendments with a single consolidated text; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt, as a replacement to the current Constitution and all subsequent amendments thereto, the form of the Synodical Constitution submitted by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure to this Convention.

(FOR ACTUAL TEXT REFER TO HANDOUT)

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.08 TO REPLACE THE PREVIOUS SYNODICAL BYLAWS AND ALL AMENDMENTS SINCE ADOPTED IN 2002 WITH A CONSOLIDATED FORM OF SYNODICAL BYLAWS
(Ref. Overture 1.25)

WHEREAS the Synodical Bylaws have undergone a number of amendments since they were adopted in 2002, including extensive amendments at this convention; and

WHEREAS it is desirable to replace the current Synodical Bylaws and all subsequent amendments with a single consolidated text: therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada adopt, as a replacement to the current Synodical Bylaws and all subsequent amendments thereto, the form of the Synodical Bylaws submitted by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure to this Convention.

(ACTUAL TEXT WILL BE SHARED VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS)

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.09 TO DECLINE OVERTURES 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 1.12 and 1.17

(Ref. Overtures 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 1.12 and 1.17; Report of the Lutheran Church-Canada Board of Directors/CCMS Working Group, August 30, 2017)

- WHEREAS Resolutions 1.01, 1.02, and 1.03 include moving from a 3 year to a 4 year cycle of Synodical Conventions; and
- WHEREAS the same Resolutions also include having every congregation or parish of the Synod represented at Convention as opposed to having representatives from the Circuits; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Overtures, 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 1.12, and 1.17 be respectfully declined
- ACTION: ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION 17.1.10 TO DECLINE OVERTURES 1.07, 1.08, and 1.14

(Ref. Overtures 1.07, 1.08, 1.14; Report of the Lutheran Church-Canada Board of Directors/CCMS Working Group, August 30, 2017)

- WHEREAS Resolution 1.02 addresses concerns of retaining the Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Overtures, 1.07, 1.08, 1.14 be respectfully declined.
- ACTION: ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION 17.1.11 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 1.15

(Ref. Overtures 1.15; "Report of the Lutheran Church-Canada Board of Directors/CCMS Working Group, August 30, 2017")

- WHEREAS Resolution 1.01 addresses the corporate structure of Lutheran Church-Canada; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Overture, 1.15 be respectfully declined.
- ACTION: ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION 17.1.12 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 1.05

(Ref. Overture 1.05)

- WHEREAS the District Corporations are independent entities governed by their own Act or Articles of Incorporation and must act in accordance with those Acts or Articles; and
- WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada cannot direct the District corporations to dissolve or gift their assets to Lutheran Church—Canada; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that overture 1.05 be respectfully declined.
- ACTION: ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION 17.1.13 TO DECLINE OVERTURES 1.06, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 AND 1.16

(Ref. Overtures 1.06, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 and 1.16)

WHEREAS The Constitution of the 2014 Handbook has been retained in Resolution 17.1.02; and

WHEREAS great time and careful thought has gone into the restructuring proposals by the CCMS; and

WHEREAS the delegates have been given the proposed changes to the Synodical Constitution, Statutory Bylaws, and Synodical Bylaws, 30 days in advance of the convention; and

WHEREAS postponing the decision to adopt a new structure for LCC will result in lost cost savings and improved pastoral care of congregations and professional church workers; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overtures 1.06, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 and 1.16 be respectfully declined.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.14 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 1.09
(Ref. Overture 1.09)

WHEREAS the administrator is the employee of LCC, appointed by and responsible to the Board of Directors, as Resolution 1.01 outlines; therefore be it

RESOLVED that overture 1.09 be respectfully declined.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.15 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 1.26
(Ref. Overtures 1.26; Convention Draft; “Report of the Lutheran Church-Canada Board of Directors/CCMS Working Group, August 30, 2017”)

WHEREAS the text of the Convention Draft of LCC Act and Bylaws has been made available in the Convention Supplement; and

WHEREAS the CCMS has declared its unanimous support for the Working Group Proposal (“Report of the Lutheran Church-Canada Board of Directors/CCMS Working Group, August 30, 2017”); and

WHEREAS the CCMS has provided a comparison of existing and proposed changes to the Statutory Bylaws, Constitution of Lutheran Church-Canada, and Synodical Bylaws; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Overture 1.26 be respectfully declined.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.1.17 TO APPROVE AND FORWARD NOMINEES TO THE BOARDS OF REGENTS, CONCORDIA LUTHERAN SEMINARY, EDMONTON AB AND CONCORDIA LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, ST. CATHARINES, ON
(Ref. Overture 1.27)

WHEREAS Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines (the “Seminaries”) operate seminaries to recruit and train pastors, deacons, and other

professional Church Workers to meet the pastoral needs of congregations sharing the ecclesiastical bond (the “Synod”) with other entities who have accepted the principles, doctrines and religious standards of Lutheran Church-Canada as set out in the Constitution and Synodical Bylaws of LCC; and

WHEREAS the Seminaries have asked that the delegates attending the Convention nominate individuals to serve as the Regents of the Boards of Regents of the Seminaries; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that this Convention approve and forward to the Seminaries, as nominees to the Boards of Regents of the Seminaries, the following individuals:

Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton:
(names that were nominated)

Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines:
(names that were nominated)

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.01 TO DIRECT THE SYNOD BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO IMPLEMENT RESOLUTION 11.2.03
(Ref. Overture 2.01)

WHEREAS The Synod in convention (2011) passed resolution 11.2.03; and

WHEREAS Resolution 11.2.03 reads ‘that the Board of Directors affirm the recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force, including the development and implementation of a synodical system of subsidizing vicarages whereby congregations, by a yearly assessment, contribute to a “Vicarage Placement Fund.”; and

WHEREAS such an assessment and fund would allow for more beneficial placement of vicars; and

WHEREAS the Board reported to the 2014 convention that ‘11.2.03 To Implement the Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report required further work to develop a funding model’; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Church in convention direct the Board of Directors to expedite the implementation of Resolution 11.2.03.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.02 TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR MORE ORDAINED PASTORS
(Ref. Overture 2.02)

WHEREAS our Lord nourishes His people through Word and Sacrament Ministry; and

WHEREAS congregations are increasingly finding it more difficult to have a resident pastor serve them due to distance, shortage of pastors, inability to pay a full-time pastor, and so on; and

WHEREAS individual congregations may experience decline or stagnation without regular pastoral care; and

WHEREAS there are godly men who could serve as pastors in their respective congregation and who for various reasons (e.g. financial, family, lack of Bachelor degree, etc.) may not be able to enroll in the current seminary programs in Edmonton or St. Catharines; and

WHEREAS the Council 1 of Presidents is responsible for overseeing the Pastors with Alternate Training program; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents be encouraged to work with the seminaries to either further develop and expand who can enroll in the Pastors with Alternate Training program, ~~or adopt a program like the Specific Ministry Program developed by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod that instructs and ordains men for a specific ministry context,~~ or develop a broader distance education program; be it further

RESOLVED that congregations be encouraged to identify candidates to serve as pastors.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.03 TO ENSURE THE CONTINUATION OF A DIACONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

(Ref. Overture 2.03, Report 17, Report 18)

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in convention recognized the need “for a Church work program in addition to the pastoral and teacher Church work programs already in existence”. (Resolution 90:2.11 “*To Encourage Concordia College to Develop Church Work Program*”); and

WHEREAS The “Task Force to Study Diaconal Ministry” reported to the 1996 Lutheran Church-Canada Convention “*The time would appear to be ripe for this young church to introduce the office of the diaconate... the diaconate can also serve as an impetus to renewed commitment to the ministry of love and service that is so necessary in the current society. Reaching out in love to those around will undoubtedly sow seeds for evangelism, the telling of the good news, which, more than anything else, must be the task of the Christian church as she reaches out to the world at the turn of the millennium.*”; and

WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada in convention adopted Resolution 99:2.01 “To Establish an Order of Diaconal Ministry” and directed that Concordia University College of Alberta provide a training program for this ministry, and

WHEREAS The diaconate has faithfully served, strengthening and enriching the mission and ministry of our congregations and synod, and

WHEREAS Concordia University College of Alberta (now Concordia University of Edmonton) no longer offers a program to train the diaconate, and

WHEREAS Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, has indicated a willingness to offer a program for training the diaconate and has a tentative program in place;

WHEREAS Our two seminaries are committed to working with one another, as expressed in the MOU; Therefore be it

RESOLVED That the Council of Presidents coordinate plans with Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines to establish a diaconal training program, and be it further

RESOLVED That the Council of Presidents work with the seminaries to recommend a funding plan for the diaconal training program.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.04 TO ESTABLISH A POLICY CONCERNING RETIRED PASTORS
(Ref. Overture 2.04)

WHEREAS according to the Augsburg Confession, “*Our churches teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call.*” (Article XIV); and

WHEREAS retired clergy normally do not have a call to serve a specific congregation; and

WHEREAS the question has been raised from time to time as to the right of retired pastors to continue to preach and administer the sacraments; and

WHEREAS the Synodical Bylaw 5.45 only states: “*A pastor or deacon who has retired after reaching the age of 55 or for reasons of total and permanent disability shall be eligible for retention on the roster as emeritus. Any unusual case shall be decided by the Council of Presidents*”; and

WHEREAS there is no policy in place as to how this status is to be granted; or what rights, privileges or responsibilities it confers; or what are the requirements for remaining on the clergy roster as a retired pastor; and

WHEREAS the CTCR produced a report in 2008 entitled, “The Role of Retired Clergy in Lutheran Church-Canada,” as advice to the Council of Presidents, and which was subsequently published in the Lutheran Theological Review, Vol. 21; and

WHEREAS for the sake of unity of practice on the part of both clergy (whether actively serving or retired) and congregations, it would be most beneficial if such a policy was established; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents be directed to formulate a policy concerning retired pastors; and be it finally

RESOLVED that such policy be brought before the next convention of the Synod for approval.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.05a TO ESTABLISH UNIFIED PROCEDURES FOR CALLING PASTORS
(REVISED)
Ref. Overture 2.05

WHEREAS a congregation needs a pastor to be their shepherd and to fulfill all of the duties in service to our Lord for His flock; and

WHEREAS Scripture clearly teaches and instructs us regarding such a pastor as in 1 Tim. 2:11-14, 1 Cor. 14:33-40, and in other passages; and

WHEREAS the calling of a pastor is a solemn act into a solemn position; and

WHEREAS all our congregations are to be unified in both doctrine and practice; and

WHEREAS our congregations request guidelines for the calling of a pastor; and

WHEREAS our prayers, guidance, and direction in a calling process must be led by God, our Holy Spirit and not through the directions of man; and

Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents establish a procedure for the calling of a pastor to a congregation, seeking God's blessings, and unifying all congregations and pastors in the act of issuing a solemn call to a shepherd in service to them and to the Lord.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.06 TO REQUEST THE COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS TO PROVIDE STANDARD FORMS AND PRACTICES
(Ref: Overture 2.06)

WHEREAS there is a need to review, update, and standardize forms and practices in the Council of President's Manual and the Circuit Counselor's Manual so that there are standard forms and guidelines being used throughout Lutheran Church - Canada; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents conduct an ongoing review of these two manuals; and be it finally

RESOLVED that all districts, pastors, and congregations be encouraged to use such forms and suggested practices.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.07 TO RESTATE EXPECTATIONS REGARDING CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR ALL CHURCHWORKERS
(Ref. Overture 2.07 and Overture 2.08) (H28)

WHEREAS for many years there was a robust synod-wide program of continuing education for pastors and other professional church-workers, which was supported by parishes, pastors and deacons; and

WHEREAS the training of the Church's ordained and consecrated servants should be understood as an ongoing lifetime process, similar to the catechesis of all the baptised;

WHEREAS the many demands of pastoral and diaconal vocations require them to be engaged in lifelong education; and

WHEREAS church workers need regularly to recharge their batteries for a multi-faceted and complex ministry; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents be asked to restate its expectations in the matter of the continuing education of pastors and other church workers and to give appropriate guidance and counsel to the congregations, pastors, deacons, and seminaries of Synod.

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents present these expectations and recommendations to the next synodical convention for adoption and implementation.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.08 **TO DECLARE ALTAR AND PULPIT FELLOWSHIP WITH THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN MISSION DIOCESE OF FINLAND**
(Ref: Overture 2.09)

WHEREAS discussions have taken place between representatives of Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland (ELMDF); and

WHEREAS these discussions have revealed a clear unity about the doctrine of the Gospel and 9 the right administration of the sacraments (AC VII); and

WHEREAS the LCC Commission on Theology and Church Relations has reviewed the minutes of these discussion and has concurred with this full agreement; and

WHEREAS the Commission on Theology and Church Relations views the benefits of fellowship to be a blessing from the Lord of the Church to both church bodies; Therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada in convention declare Altar and Pulpit Fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.09 **TO THANK GOD FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN
LAYMEN’S LEAGUE/LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES AS IT
CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY AND FOR THE
LUTHERAN LAYMEN’S LEAGUE – CANADA AS IT CELEBRATES
ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY**
(Ref. Report 19 and Report 20)

WHEREAS the International Lutheran Laymen’s League/Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) and the Lutheran Laymen’s League – Canada (LLL-C) serve as a recognized grass root auxiliary of Lutheran Church – Canada; and

WHEREAS LHM and LLL-C focus their energies and resources on Bringing Christ to the Nations and the Nations to the Church; and

WHEREAS working in conjunction with the LLL-C, LHM proclaims the Gospel throughout Canada by creating, distributing, and promoting resources through various media while also equipping Christians in Canada for outreach; and

WHEREAS the need to proclaim the love of Christ is as great as ever in Canada and around the world and the Lord has placed LHM and LLL-C in a unique position to respond as a leader in sharing the Gospel through media and technological means;
Therefore be it

RESOLVED that we thank God for all the Lutheran Hour Speakers, the Board members, the staff, supporters, volunteers, and members of LHM and the LLL-C who have served in Canada and/or internationally; and be it further

RESOLVED that God’s people continue to pray for, and financially support, the international and national outreach efforts of LHM and the LLL-C and be it further,

RESOLVED that members of Lutheran Church – Canada congregations be encouraged to be supporters, volunteers, and members of LHM and LLL-C; and be it further,

RESOLVED congregations and church workers avail themselves of the training and evangelistic resources created and promoted by LHM and LLL-C and be it finally,

RESOLVED that the delegates thank God for the International Lutheran League's League/Lutheran Ministries and for the Lutheran Laymen's League -- Canada by rising and singing the "Doxology."

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.2.10 TO THANK GOD FOR THE LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE – CANADA (LWMLC) AS IT OBSERVES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE ITS FORMATION AS A WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AND FOR ITS 50 YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH THE LWML (USA) (Page I8)
(Ref. Report 21)

WHEREAS Lutheran Women's Missionary League – Canada (LWMLC) has been a recognized auxiliary of Lutheran Church – Canada for the past 25 years; and

WHEREAS the women of the LWMLC were active in the LWML (USA) for the previous 25 years prior to the formation of LWMLC; and

WHEREAS the Mission of the LWMLC is to "equip, motivate, and encourage women to grow in God's Word; share God's Son; and serve God's people," and

WHEREAS members of LWMLC encourage Christian women in the study of God's Word so they are passionate in sharing the Gospel through word and deed; and

WHEREAS members of the LWMLC support the ministry and mission efforts of their local congregations; and

WHEREAS the members of the LWMLC have supported mission projects in Canada and around the world through the collection of mites; and

WHEREAS the prayer of the LWMLC is that they continue to trust in God's wisdom and guidance as they answer His call to serve for many years to come; Therefore, be it

RESOLVED that women in Lutheran Church – Canada congregations be encouraged to participate in the LWMLC; and be it further

RESOLVED that God's people pray for the ongoing work of the LWMLC and the mission projects supported by the LWMLC; and be it finally,

RESOLVED that the delegates thank God for the LWMLC by rising and singing "Called to Serve."

ACTION: ADOPTED by the Convention Standing to Sing "Called to Serve"

Resolution 17.03.01 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.06 (TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN ABC DISTRICT LEADERS FROM HOLDING SYNODICAL OFFICE UNTIL 2021)
(Ref: Overture 3.06)

WHEREAS the effect of the ABC District financial crisis has no doubt left scars, personal hurts and animosity among members; and

WHEREAS to deny certain ABC District leaders from holding Synodical office diminishes the authority of the delegates of Synod; and

WHEREAS the Synod's elections are in themselves a process for selecting people suitable and eligible for office; and

WHEREAS we respect the work of the nominations committee on behalf of the members of synod in preparing the slate of candidates for election; and

WHEREAS the responsibility to assess the qualifications of candidates for office and the authority to elect rests in the delegates to synodical conventions; therefore be it

RESOLVED that overture 3.06 is respectfully declined.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.02 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.03 (TO DEAL WITH THE UNFUNDED LIABILITIES IN THE LCC PENSION PLAN)
(Ref: Overture 3.03)

WHEREAS The Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada, with the guidance of the Board of Managers and its Pension Plan Actuary, have already diligently studied the Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plan funding deficit and taken significant actions to address it, such as

- Redesigning the LCC Pension Plan, which resulted in the majority of enrolled DB plan members' credited service being frozen as of December 31, 2012. These members were subsequently transitioned to a Defined Contribution Pension Plan for all future employment service effective January 1, 2013.
- The defined benefit pension plan was closed to all new hires effective January 1, 2012.
- Special going concern pension contributions have been made and will continue to be made into the DB plan to deal with the funding deficit. Approximately 62% of the pension contributions currently being collected from employers are going into the DB pension plan to address the deficit.
- Implementing de-risking strategies which includes the recent purchase of an annuity contract from a large insurance carrier which covers approximately 25% of the DB pension plan liabilities. And

WHEREAS The Board of Managers is already regularly providing updates on the funded status of the DB Pension Plan along with other relevant worker benefit plan information to both members and employers through the distribution of a comprehensive Annual Report; and

WHEREAS The Board of Managers is already planning extensive communications with congregations in 2018 which will include detailed information to Employers regarding their respective funding obligations to the DB pension plan. Therefore be it

RESOLVED that overture 3.03 is respectfully declined

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.03 TO CHANGE THE METHOD OF ELECTING CIRCUIT COUNSELLORS
(Ref. Overture 3.01)

WHEREAS the current method of nominating and electing circuit counsellors does not initially allow the pastors of the circuit to participate in the nomination process, and

WHEREAS the current method of nominating and electing circuit counsellors does not permit pastors, other than parish and retired pastors on the clergy roster of the Synod within the circuit to be eligible to serve as circuit counsellors; therefore be it

RESOLVED That Article 4.11 of the Synodical Bylaws be amended to read: “The Circuit Counsellor shall be elected at conventions of the district by the pastor and lay delegates from each circuit congregation or parish. All pastors of congregations in the circuit or retired pastors or other members on the clergy roster of the Synod who hold membership in one of the congregations of the circuit are eligible for election. The district convention shall then ratify such elections of circuit counsellors. The district president shall fill any vacancies for circuit counsellor.”

ACTION: Not Considered due to Time Restraints

RESOLUTION 17.03.04 TO CHANGE NOMINATION PROCEDURES
(Ref. Overture 3.02)

WHEREAS the nomination of individuals for elected offices, aside from the President and Vice-Presidents, is actually made by the Synodical Committee on Convention Nominations and not by each voting congregation and each of its called Pastors; and

WHEREAS the Synodical Committee on Convention Nominations only solicits from congregations and pastors names of potential candidates for various offices, other than President and Vice-Presidents, and secures their consent to let their name stand for such offices; and

WHEREAS such consent, however, does not constitute being nominated for an office since it is the Synodical Committee on Convention Nominations and not the congregations and Pastors who do the actual nominating and the placing before the delegates of a synodical convention of at least two candidates for each position; and

WHEREAS under our present procedure consenting to let one’s name stand in nomination for an office does not mean that the individual will even appear on the slate since the Synodical Committee on Convention Nominations is the entity that decides who will be on the ballot, regardless of the number of nominations an individual may have received; and

WHEREAS the current procedure removes the right to nominate from the very members of the Synod, the Districts, the congregations and Pastors, and places this right in the hands of a committee of six persons; and

WHEREAS the real and final authority of the Synod, including the election of individuals to various offices, is to be vested in the voting delegates of a convention and not decided by a committee which may place before the voting delegates only two candidates for each position; and

WHEREAS such a nomination procedure as currently exists can be abused and misused and is prone to party spirit and personal agendas; and

WHEREAS one or two districts names could be excluded in such nomination by the Synodical Committee on Convention Nominations; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Bylaw 2.525 be amended as follows:

- a. The secretary of the Synod shall solicit from ~~congregations~~ district presidents, district boards of directors, circuit counsellors, and other likely sources names of persons who are regarded

as suitable candidates for election to the various offices and board of the Synod and shall list briefly the requirements of various positions. Qualifications of each candidate suggested are to be submitted together with the names. The secretary shall begin such solicitation of names 12 months before the Convention and shall present his work and submissions to the Committee for Convention Nominations at its first meeting. The secretary shall not serve as a member of the Committee, but he shall convene the initial meeting of the Committee and be available, upon call, for consultation.

- b. Each voting congregation and each of its called pastors who are members of Synod may nominate, and not simply propose for nomination, one candidate for each elected office. The slate of candidates for all offices shall consist of all who are eligible and consent to their nomination.
- c. All nominations and information for consideration by the Committee for Convention Nominations shall be submitted to the Committee no later than eight months prior to the Convention.

And be it finally

RESOLVED that the Bylaw 2.527 c, d, and e, of the Synod Handbook be amended as follows:

- c. The Committee ~~shall~~ may nominate additional candidates for all elective offices, boards, and commissions except the president and vice-presidents.
- d. At least two candidates shall be nominated for each position.
- e. At least five months prior to the Convention, the Committee shall determine its complete list of candidates and alternatives, obtain the consent of the persons ~~it proposes to nominate~~ nominated, and transmit its final report to the secretary of the Synod in ample time for its publication in the official periodicals of the Synod before the convention and also in the official convention book of reports and overtures (convention workbook). This report shall contain pertinent information concerning each candidate, such as age, occupation or profession, district affiliation, residence, specific experience and qualifications for the office in question.

ACTION: Not considered due to Time Restraints

RESOLUTION 17.03.05 TO CHANGE GUIDELINES FOR SYNODICAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEES
(Ref: Overture 3.04)

WHEREAS it has happened that the voice of some has not been heard at conventions because either their overtures never made it out of the floor committee or were significantly changed by the committee; and

WHEREAS The East District addressed this concern by putting in place guidelines 7.22.A and 7.22.B in their Regulations for its resolution committees; and

WHEREAS this was done in order to encourage grass roots participation and to give congregations the confidence that their voice will be heard; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Synod adopt the following wording and practice for Resolutions Committees of LCC:

1. In order to expedite the transaction of business, the President shall refer all overtures submitted, with the exception of those listed in Synodical Bylaw 2.19c to the convention to Resolutions Committees. The purpose of the Resolutions Committees is to organize the overtures received and present them as resolutions to the convention. It is not the purpose of the Resolutions Committees

to change the intent of the overtures submitted. They can, however, combine overtures on a similar topic into one resolution. They can also recommend to decline an overture.

2. The Resolutions Committees shall not create or present resolutions that do not originate from properly submitted reports and overtures.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.06 TO DECLINE OVERTURE 3.07 (TO COMMUNICATE ON CEF DETAILS and PROVIDE VERBAL DISCUSSION TIME)
(Ref. Overture 3.07)

WHEREAS all the relevant information on the proceedings for the ABC District CEF crisis are available on the website of the court-appointed monitor (http://www.insolvencies.deloitte.ca/en-ca/Pages/lutheran_church_canada_the_alberta_british_columbia_district_et_al.aspx); and

WHEREAS the ABC District is separately incorporated and Synod therefore does not have information beyond what is publicly available through the ABC District and the court-appointed monitor; and

WHEREAS the Court Appointed Monitor and the Chief Restructuring Officer would be the most appropriate entities to address a Question and Answer session; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overture 3.07 is respectfully declined.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.07a TO PROVIDE FOR VERBAL REPORTS FROM REGIONAL PASTORS AT SYNOD CONVENTIONS
(Ref: Overture 3.05)

WHEREAS the Synod is divided into Regions; and

WHEREAS the Synod at large may have questions for a given Region; and

WHEREAS a time at convention for the Regional Pastors to give a report regarding the work carried out in their respective Regions would be beneficial to promoting a sense of unity of purpose; and

WHEREAS the delegates from across Synod may have questions regarding such work within the Regions; therefore be it

RESOLVED that, at the direction of the Synodical President, the Regional Pastors give verbal reports at convention; and be it further

RESOLVED that opportunity be provided for the delegates to ask questions of the Regional Pastors.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.09 TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE MISSION LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. LEONARDO NEITZEL

- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel has heeded the call of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20); and
- WHEREAS our Lord worked in and through Rev. Dr. Neitzel to give exceptional leadership to Lutheran Church-Canada to fulfill her mandate to share the Gospel by expanding her presence in the mission fields around the world; and
- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Neitzel has tirelessly used his gifts for the spreading of God's kingdom through his service to Lutheran Church-Canada; and
- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Neitzel is retiring after serving as Mission Executive of Lutheran Church-Canada since 2009; therefore be it
- RESOLVED the Lutheran Church-Canada give thanks to God for the rich blessings poured out upon this church body through the mission direction of Rev. Dr. Leonardo Neitzel as mission executive; and commend Rev. Dr. Neitzel to the Lord's continued blessing and direction.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.09a TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF REV. DR. ROBERT BUGBEE

- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee is joyfully received as a gift bestowed by the exalted Lord on His church for her good (Eph. 4:8, 11); and
- WHEREAS our Lord worked in and through Rev. Dr. Bugbee to give exceptional leadership to Lutheran Church-Canada as she as grown in her role in Canadian and worldwide Lutheranism; and
- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Bugbee has given unselfishly of his time and energy in fulfilling his duties; and
- WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Bugbee is accepting a call to be pastor of First Lutheran Church, Windsor, ON after serving three terms as president of Lutheran Church-Canada; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED the Lutheran Church-Canada give thanks to God for the rich blessings poured out upon this church body through the leadership of Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee as pastor and president, and commend Rev. Dr. Bugbee to the Lord's continued blessing and direction; and be it
- RESOLVED that Rev. Dr. Bugbee be granted the title Past President; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that at such time as Rev. Dr. Bugbee retires, he receive the official designation President Emeritus.
- ACTION: ADOPTED**

RESOLUTION 17.03.10 TO RECEIVE THE LCC QUADRENNIAL WORK PROGRAM (Ref. H.36)

- WHEREAS the treasurer and Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada have prepared a proposed four year work program for the years 2018-2021; and
- WHEREAS this work program can only be implemented by the cooperation and action of congregations, regions, and the solicitation and receipt of necessary funds; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada assembled in Convention receive this work program for information, study, and action by the Board of Directors.

ACTION: ADOPTED

RESOLUTION 17.03.11 TO APPOINT AUDITORS FOR LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA

WHEREAS the delegates present at Convention appoint an auditor for auditing the financial statements of LCC; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that KPMG be appointed auditors of LCC and hold office until the next Convention.

ACTION: ADOPTED

A delegate asked for an abbreviated summary of major decisions made at the Convention with regard to restructuring to take back to their circuits. Rev. Bill Ney, Chair of CCMS, responded that this is in the works with the assistance of the Board of Directors.

A delegate questioned how to coordinate the financial implications/costs to provide transitional funding. The chair responded that we will need to work together as a church to determine procedure to ensure we work together.

ACTION: ADOPTED

Opening Service Friday, October 13 Sermon

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee

“CHRIST, FIRST IN EVERYTHING”

Colossians 1:15-2

Historic St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Kitchener, Ontario

Treasured brothers and sisters,

When the apostles went out into the world to announce the marvelous grace of a forgiving God, they did not do what religious people are often tempted to do. They did not peddle some new system of rules and regulations by which human beings can fix themselves and the broken world around them. They were not satisfied to focus on mere concepts like acceptance and justice and inclusivity, even though such things do have a place. They did not start by unveiling their strategic plan or by inviting their listeners to brainstorm about how it could all be implemented in their communities.

No, the book of Acts puts it like this: **DAY AFTER DAY, IN THE TEMPLE COURTS AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, THEY NEVER STOPPED TEACHING AND PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST.**

Drop to the bottom line, and that’s what Luther’s Reformation was about, too. This is why we, at a Synodical Convention falling literally days before the 500th Anniversary of that event, have set the tone for our gathering in the simple words “*Christ Alone – Christ Forever.*” The text we have before us from Colossians is pushing the same kind of thing which I would like to unpack for you under the theme,

CHRIST, FIRST IN EVERYTHING

- I. *Christ is First over all creation;*
- II. *Christ is First in His beloved church;*
- III. *Christ is First for your faith and our mission.*

I. Remember what Jesus told that Samaritan woman He got talking to one day by a well? **GOD IS SPIRIT.** The Bible later on tells you what that means, [HE] **LIVES IN UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT, WHOM NO ONE HAS SEEN OR CAN SEE.** You probably remember the old hymn verse that says the same thing in poetic form:

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible, hid from our eyes. (LSB 802:1)*

That’s right, said St. John. **NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN GOD ... BUT ... THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, WHO IS AT THE FATHER’S SIDE, HAS MADE HIM KNOWN.** That’s what this text tells you about Jesus Christ: **HE IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD.** You won’t find the true God apart from the image He has given you to do it, His Son. You only find rescue if you are brought to God, and to come to God you must come to Christ, because He is God’s image. You cannot separate God from His image, and

will never find Him except through this image.

Our father Martin Luther had such a delightful earthy way of explaining this. “You want to see God? Go stick your nose in the manger for a while ... Go stand in front of the cross

for a while.” That’s where it becomes clear Who God really is, where God is really found, and what He has thirsted to do for you.

[CHRIST] IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, THE FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION. FOR BY HIM ALL THINGS WERE CREATED: THINGS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE, WHETHER THRONES OR POWERS OR RULERS OR AUTHORITIES; ALL THINGS WERE CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM.

In the old Jewish Bible world, you did not just use the term “firstborn” to describe sequence, as if to say, “Joe is my firstborn” and “Tina is my fifth born.”

The firstborn was not merely a number in a line-up; the firstborn was ranked above other children, sort of the way our monarchy works; it’s not like the firstborn is king for a while, then the second one gets his turn, then the third, and so on. No, the firstborn is king and stays in a class by himself all his life through.

The entire created world came into being through Christ, the Firstborn. **THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE,** the Bible says; visible things in the heavens, like the stars and the planets; visible things on earth, like human beings, animals and plant life; invisible things in the heavens, like the holy angels; and invisible things in the world, like the wind that never seems to stop blowing in Winnipeg, where I live.

ALL THINGS WERE CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM. It’s not just that Christ had a hand in calling all these things into being at the start. But all these things were created to be His possession; to serve Him; to do His will; to find rescue in Christ, and to reach their greatness in the end by glorifying Him. Psalm 148 sings about it: **PRAISE HIM, ALL HIS ANGELS, PRAISE HIM, ALL HIS HEAVENLY HOSTS; PRAISE HIM, SUN AND MOON, PRAISE HIM, ALL YOU SHINING STARS... PRAISE THE LORD FROM THE EARTH, YOU GREAT SEA CREATURES AND ALL OCEAN DEPTHS, LIGHTING AND HAIL, SNOW AND CLOUDS, STORMY WINDS THAT DO HIS BIDDING. LET THEM PRAISE**

THE NAME OF THE LORD ... HIS SPLENDOUR IS ABOVE THE EARTH AND THE HEAVENS.

In this text St. Paul reaches even deeper to proclaim Christ first in everything. Christ, the Firstborn over all creation, is the active Preserver of all creation. **HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS, Paul writes, AND IN HIM ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER.** For some strange reason, this verse always makes me think of omelets. You've got this frypan full of chopped up pieces of green pepper and onion and cubed ham, or whatever you've got in the fridge. But it doesn't hold together until you beat the eggs and pour them in. They make it all cohere. They hold it together.

Christ holds creation together. Scripture is crystal clear about that: **THE SON UPHOLDS ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER.** Christ the Preserver gives command to the forces of nature and the universe to hold them together. This is also true, dear friend, for your personal life and your calling. Christ holds all things together for you. He is the great preserving force that breathes meaning and purpose into your marriage, your family life, your professional life at the place where you work, your associations with friends and colleagues. Christ holds all things together for you; your past, covering by His pardon the sins you cannot go back and undo; your present, where He can give stamina to carry whatever load you're shouldering right now; your future, including all those things you cannot yet know and could never perfectly prepare for by yourself. He takes those chopped up little pieces and holds them together so that your life coheres under Him and through Him.

There's comfort here if you have the heart to take it in, to know that you are hooked up to the true God when you cling to Christ, Who holds in His hand the power of the universe and uses that power to hold the world and every piece of your life together in love.

II. Paul goes on: HE IS THE HEAD OF HIS BODY, THE CHURCH; HE IS THE BEGINNING, FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD, IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT BECOME FIRST IN EVERYTHING.

Christ is Lord of all creation. But He does not have exactly the same tie to all parts of creation. He has a totally unique relationship with you and me and with all the believing sons and daughters who are together in His beloved church. Jesus is Head of the church and the beginning of the church. It's not like creative human beings formed the church like some club, and then hired Him to be their Head. No, He said, **I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH.** He founded it. It would never have come to be without Him. It's why the ancients spoke of the church as a mother, who gave us birth because she is the bride of Christ, the Bridegroom.

Christ has become your Head, dear friend, by giving Himself to be your Saviour. This is very personal.

Like the head which gives guidance and direction to the parts of your body, He speaks to you; He listens when you cry out to Him; He delivers the energy and impulses you need. **I KNOW MY SHEEP, AND MY SHEEP KNOW ME.** He not only knows you – which is not surprising – but He permits you to know Him; to know how He feels toward you, to know what He has done for you, and the way He unfailingly comes to you by speaking His words to you and giving you a place at His holy Table.

He's the Firstborn from the dead. Jesus said, **AS I LIVE, YOU SHALL LIVE ALSO.** His resurrection is the launching pad for your resurrection. It's like that first big ripe tomato my Grandpa Stratton used to bring in out of the garden every summer. He'd set it on a table on the back porch and we were not permitted to eat it right away. No, we were expected to adore it for a day or two, as if it were pointing back out to the garden to say, "There's more where this came from." Jesus' victory over death has opened the door through which you also will stride victorious in God's appointed time. The Risen Christ, Who won that victory and walked out of the cemetery, alive and well, is on the march and will subdue all things to Himself. Every human heart He lays hold of and leads to faith by the sounding of His Good News is one more hurdle He has moved aside.

III. All this says something about your faith and about the mission of the congregations we have come here to serve. GOD WAS PLEASSED TO HAVE ALL THE FULLNESS RESIDE IN HIM – in Christ – AND THROUGH HIM TO RECONCILE ALL THINGS TO HIMSELF, WHETHER THINGS OF EARTH OR THE THINGS OF HEAVEN, HAVING MADE PEACE THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS.

All who have God's peace, whether you're talking about people in the world or the angels of heaven in their concern about what happens to human beings, gain that peace only because of the death Christ died and the blood He shed. The Colossians, the first to receive this letter from Paul, were mixed up about that. Some of them imagined there's a new mystical secret which really brings you close to God. They supposed that you come closer to Him by submitting to new and more stringent regulations. That discipline, concocted by religious human beings, reminds me of the situation in

the established church in the days of Martin Luther. It's a temptation to place Jesus, Who is First in everything, behind other religious powers that always end up trying to do an end-run around His cross.

That cross must stand front and centre for you, dear friend. That cross shows the depths of your sin, which you can never overcome by your efforts, no matter how disciplined and well-meaning you think you are. That cross also shows how much the true God was aching to have you and just how much He was willing to give up

to buy you back again. **GOD WAS PLEASED TO HAVE ALL THE FULLNESS RESIDE IN HIM**, in Christ the Crucified, everything you need to belong to God now, everything you need to bring you into God's presence forever.

This gives direction for the mission of our local churches, whether they're large or small, rural or urban, in eastern Canada or in the west. It is tempting to pull the focus away from Christ and His cross and to shift to other things that seem ever so much more relevant. I receive e-mail news updates practically every week from a big Lutheran organization with affiliates all over the world. They are constantly reporting on the plight of refugees, on issues of gender justice, inter-religious dialogue, and many things ... but there's never anything about the cross of Christ or about the church's mission to proclaim forgiveness of sins through the blood He spilled.

This is not just a temptation for other people, however. Congregations like our own can develop strategic plans and programs for growth. They can set

up self-chosen priorities and imagine that what *we* have devised will make things work if we just implement it right. The apostles placed the spotlight where it always belongs: **WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED**, they said.

Even at this historic moment, when we commemorate our Reformation heritage and may make fundamental shifts in our Synodical structure, every bit of those things will be hollow and aimless without focus on Christ, Who is first in everything.

When St. Paul wrote to the Colossians, he was addressing people who lived in a different time, spoke a different language, and were perhaps struggling with certain challenges different from ours. But the healing he offered them is meant for us, too. He's holding the church's gaze on the death of Jesus. He tells us to measure what we have there, and nowhere else. I cannot help but come back to a lovely old German Lenten hymn nobody ever put in our hymnals, but which goes like this:

Sunday, October 15, 2017 Sermon
Rev. Kenneth Maher
“Grace and Peace for Those Who Struggle”
Text: Galatians 1:1-12

Our congregations are struggling. Our people have lost their love, misplaced their trust. They live with constant fears that sap their joy and drain their desire to stand firm in their Gospel calling. So St. Paul wrote bluntly to the dear Christians of the province of Galatia. And I am sure that it was not any more pleasant for Paul to write than it was for them to hear. But sometimes you just have to be willing to say it. Sometimes you have to be open to hearing it.

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel-- 7not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

Certain teachers, trouble makers, had come to the churches of Galatia with a message that spoke to the fearful fallen human heart. They called for appeasement and pious works. Circumcision, they said, would appease God and go a long way to pleasing certain Jews. Why? Because too narrow a Gospel is no good news at all, they said. Bend a little! Better to be a little less Christian if you want to make more Christians. Pay God part of the price and He will complete your accounting favourably. Meet the world part way and they will come to you.

Paul had some thoughts on that: *10 For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

And we do well to hear all of this again. For just like the Galatians, we are struggling. I will say it! Will you hear it? We Lutherans have lost our focus and loving the thought of having our best life now, we have rested on our laurels and lived in ease and entitlement. Fearing the repercussions of standing apart from our culture, standing apart from other denominations, we have taught ourselves to be ashamed of our distinctive Gospel calling. Trusting that which is not God we have chosen cheap counterfeits to the clear but difficult truth and teaching of our Lord and Saviour. We have looked for quick fixes and easy solutions to everything that ails us.

And we wonder why we struggle – with money, with retaining members, with bureaucracy and stagnant outreach, and plain old lack of gumption. And we wonder why every time we treat one of the symptoms the underlying illness still doesn't go away or even gets more pronounced. There is no man-made

structure, new or old that can supersede the work of the Holy Spirit in calling, gathering, and keeping His Holy Church on earth. There is no spreadsheet formula that will get the work done if Christian hearts are not so moved by God. There is no clever sign, no flashy VBS, no special activity that will appease this secular world and draw in unbelievers like moths to a flame. There is no pastor who can make the young people miraculously appear in your churches when they are not being catechized in your homes. And all too often we church workers will not do the hard work of truly preaching, teaching, and visiting both in firmness of conviction AND compassion of love. We can be too quick to appease – to let things slide by unsaid, or too callous in truth-telling – seeming to not care for the consequences in people's lives. Yes, dear brothers and sisters in Christ ... we are struggling.

But don't think you are special in this, it has always been this way. The church militant has always struggled. And it will for as long as Jesus delays His glorious return. That struggle is the very reason that Martin Luther brought reform to a medieval church that was burdened with the same misplaced fear, love, and trust mankind has always struggled with. And the great jewel of that Reformation, the precious treasure brought out into the light by Luther and the reformers? The very same that Paul preached to the Galatian Christians: Jesus brings grace and peace to all who struggle!

Real and lasting peace cannot be had through any work of our hands or intention of our hearts, for each of us is corrupted by sin down to the core. It only comes by Christ's nail-scarred hands and spear-pierced heart. Peace can't be gained through the workings of this world or of any governing structure for they are just as fallible as the sinners who make them up. No amount of appeasement will guarantee it. Only the holy and righteous Lord of heaven and earth rules with such promise. Peace can't be earned before God. It must be given as a gift – a grace.

As Luther wrote: Grace and peace—these two words embrace the whole of Christianity. Grace forgives sin, and peace stills the conscience ... These two words, “grace” and “peace,” contain a summary of all of Christianity. Grace contains the forgiveness of sins, a joyful peace, and a quiet conscience. But peace is impossible unless sin has first been forgiven, for the Law accuses and terrifies the conscience on account of sin. And the sin that the conscience feels cannot be removed by pilgrimages, vigils, labors, efforts, vows, or any other works; in fact, sin is increased by works. The more we work and sweat to

extricate ourselves from sin, the worse off we are. For there is no way to remove sin except by grace. This deserves careful notice. For the words are easy; but in temptation it is the hardest thing possible to be surely persuaded in our hearts that we have the forgiveness of sins and peace with God by grace alone, entirely apart from any other means in heaven or on earth.¹

The words are easy but the temptation never lessens. Knowing how much our sinful hearts fight against this grace, St. Paul lays it all out in these profoundly plain and powerful words: *3Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

And yet, we may ask, Where are the churches of Galatia today? How many times have the ecclesiastical maps been drawn and redrawn since the days of the Reformation. In this life the Bride of Christ will always struggle. And while the churches of Galatia may no longer be here as they once were, those Galatian Christians are with Paul and the Lord Jesus even now. While Lutheranism has waxed and waned in various countries and at various times, the Gospel those reformers proclaimed – the Gospel which is from no man but is from God alone – stands bright and victorious to this day. And no amount of darkness will ever overcome it. What is in store for your struggling congregation, or for our beloved Lutheran Church Canada? Only God Himself knows. But I do know this, it is never a bad thing to struggle, for there we see in sharpest focus, just how gracious and merciful our God has always been. There we understand

His heart the clearest and most fully. There we learn to cling to Jesus Christ alone and the grace and peace that only He can bring.

For true Grace and Peace come to us sinners only through Jesus' death and resurrection. Through His innocent suffering and death our sins are paid for and -----

¹Luther, M. (1999, c1963). *Vol. 26: Luther's works, vol. 26 : Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1-4* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T.

burden of works is released. The fear of failure is removed. Love is once again given its proper focus. Through Christ's glorious resurrection and ascension we are delivered from this present evil age, given the hope of everlasting life and a guaranteed place in

heaven – despite all our works or lack thereof. And all of this is not based on what we have managed to do nor on what we promise to do, but simply by the will of the Father and for His glory. Salvation is yours because Christ won it, the Father grants it, and the Spirit gives you the faith to cling to that promise no matter what has been or what will come.

And that is a message no Christian or Christian Denomination should be ashamed to live and die for. It is a grace and a peace this world needs now more than ever. It is the heart of our reformation identity and it remains our sacred calling these 500 years after the reformation began. To proclaim God's Peace to those who struggle a peace that is by Grace alone, through Faith alone, in Christ Jesus alone and forever! AMEN.

Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (Ga 1:3). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

*Who is faith's abiding stay,
Giving comfort on life's way,
Who from sin and guilt sets free,
And obtains God's grace for me?
Jesus Christ, the Crucified.*

*Who from sin has made me whole,
Life restored to heart and soul,
Who can make me strong and true,
Stirring me God's will to do?
Jesus Christ, the Crucified.*

May this Christ, First in everything, be your heart's delight this night and our ever-present Helper through the days we will spend here together. Amen.

**CLOSING SERMON LCC Convention
October 16, 2017**

Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman

Psalm 46 "God is our Refuge and Strength"

It's safe to say that the convention now drawing to a close has been unlike any other we have ever attended. Only once before have we made such far-reaching decisions, and that was, of course, at our constituting convention not quite 30 years ago.

To compare the two conventions is to contrast them. While there was some anxiety about the steps we took back in 1988, it was something like the anxiety a young couple faces on the eve of their wedding day. They're about to take a big step, and the consequences will be far reaching. But they are confident of what they are about to do, and look forward to their new lives together.

And now, 10 conventions later, the anxiety is there again, but without the confidence. The simple truth is that we've never had a synodical convention which was preceded by so much controversy, division, and struggle. It would be very easy to just throw up our hands, and go home.

Five hundred years ago the Christian church entered a time of struggle that forever changed its structure, its confession and its character. How Martin Luther, the central figure in that

struggle, found strength and courage to persevere provides a lesson for all of us in these uncertain times.

Luther's comfort came, of course, from the Bible. From where, specifically? Romans and Galatians may have been the "red meat" that nourished Luther's newly emerging theological insights. But the Psalms were his "comfort food" for times when things looked really bad. And that's why I've chosen a psalm, Psalm 46, to guide and comfort us today, as we now seek to bind up the wounds that we may have accumulated, and find strength to face the days to come.

Psalm 46 was, of course, Martin Luther's favorite, and the inspiration for his best known hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God." As far as we can tell, he wrote this hymn – both words and music – in 1527 or soon thereafter, a time of great anxiety and danger for Luther. That was ten years or so after the posting of the 95 Theses. In the meantime he had been declared an outlaw, which meant that anyone could

kill him and there would be no consequences. Western Europe was caught in power struggles between popes and emperors, while Muslim forces were preparing to lay siege to Vienna. Another wave of the plague was about to sweep across the continent, and thousands would die. Even the ultimate outcome of the reformation was by no means certain,

and was at risk of being overtaken by radicals who would throw out the baby with the bath water.

But this psalm gave Luther comfort and confidence. That assurance is depicted so powerfully throughout Luther's hymn. Who cannot appreciate the simplicity in the way the third verse ends? It begins with *"though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us"* and ends with, *"one little word shall fell him."* One little word. Not all the wisdom of the philosophers, not the encyclicals of popes, not the decrees of councils, not the might of the emperor's armies could withstand the onslaughts of the devil. But one little word can do what human strength cannot, when that little word is God's word. Think of how true that statement is: During His temptations in the wilderness, Jesus overcame Satan with the simple, *"it is written"* -- in the Greek, one word, *gegraptai*. On the cross, as Jesus completed payment for the sins of the world, He gathered up His last strength to utter one little word, *tetelestai* -- *"it is finished."* On Easter Sunday morning, as Jesus revealed himself to the first human being to see the risen Lord, He only had to say one little word, *"Mary"*, and later that evening, as Jesus walked through the locked doors of the upper room, only one little word, *"Shalom"*, brought comfort to His frightened disciples. How the devil must have hated those little words. With each one of them he got another kick in the teeth, or, if we can use the earthy language Luther might have used, a kick in the you-know-where. (Perhaps that's why the devil is always roaming about, because it hurts too much when he tries to sit down!)

But while the 46th psalm can aptly be applied to conditions and events of the reformation era, its application is more far reaching than that. It speaks of the trials and the crises that this world and everything in it continues to suffer. *"We will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling."* In short, the whole world is falling apart! God never intended that His perfect creation would be subject to such calamities, but they are the consequences of mankind's sin. Every disaster, natural or man-made, is a reminder that we, along with all creation, are living under the curse that has fallen upon us. God will not stop these calamities from coming until He eventually fashions a new heaven and a new earth. But in the meantime, *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."* He provides us with a place in which we can hide. His love shields us. His power protects us.

The second part of the psalm deals with the evil that we commit against one another. *"The nations rage, the kingdoms totter."* This includes everything from global conflicts to tyrannical governments, senseless killings, conflicts in families, in congregations, and even in our own synod. Here God's response is both temporary and final. *"He makes wars cease to the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear. He burns the chariots with fire."* God's love is infinitely stronger than man's wickedness. *He disarms Satan and those who follow him.* Just picture God breaking the bow across His knee, rendering it useless. Watch Him catch a spear in mid-flight and crush it in His bare hand.

Diplomats and ambassadors may try to bring peace to the world. Conventions and church presidents, and regional pastors and circuit counsellors can meet and work around the clock to restore harmony in the church. But their efforts are never sufficient. Only God has the ultimate answer. *"There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God."* Ah...., there is a river! Amidst all the fuss and fury, the clash of arms and the noise of battle, amidst all the anger and bitterness, the gently flowing river is a symbol of peace and calm. There is a river, not an ocean, for it is too dangerous, not a lake for it is too deep and the water might not be clean, but a river which flows gently and predictably onward, bringing fresh water for all who draw from it. How can we not think of those words from the last chapter in the Bible, where John describes his vision of heaven, the new Jerusalem? *"Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, through the middle of the street of the city, also, on either side of the river, the tree of life...(Rev. 22: 1-2)."*

This psalm, then, is for us, as we contemplate what we've done, and what it might mean for our synod as we go forward. Whether or not we think we've made good decisions, is ultimately not that important. The lesson of this psalm is clear: God is in control. He takes whatever we do and uses it to accomplish His purpose. And the fact is, we have done very little. We have elected a president, but God has to make the president. We've passed resolutions, but God ultimately determines what they will accomplish.

In God's good time, the struggling, demoralized clusters of God's people will join together in the great gathering of the saints in heaven, as the church militant becomes the church triumphant. Even creation will no longer be groaning in pain, and its violent outbursts will end, as God creates all things new.

And the same God, who was our refuge and strength during the storms and trials of life, will be there for us to see face to face, as we join the countless other saints and delight in His presence forever.

Now, that will really be a convention like no other! Amen.

Saturday, October 14, 2017 & Monday, October 16, 2017

PSALM 46

Rev. Esko Murto

In the years preceding the nailing of the ninety-five theses, Luther was most occupied with two books of the bible during his service in the lecture halls of Wittenberg University: the Book of Romans and the Book of Psalms.

Romans was filled with theology; Psalms with encouragement. Romans taught Luther what is true, and Psalms made him bold to proclaim it. Psalm 46 especially was a dear psalm to him, and serves as the background of the “Battle Hymn of the Reformation”, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. Yet this psalm is not just about the might of fortresses. It’s actually composed of three parts, which could be characterized thus: God’s protective power against the turmoil (verses 1-3), The presence of God in his church (4-7), and The eschatological hope of peace (8-11).

God’s powerful protection

God is our Refuge. A question here would be of where do you put the emphasis in your reading. God is our *refuge* certainly is a good way to see it. But you could also read it: *GOD* is our refuge. Charles Spurgeon: *All creatures have their places of refuge. As for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies. All men also have their places of refuge, though some are “refuges of lies.” But God is our refuge and strength.* This resonates well with the explanation of the first commandment Luther gives in the Large Catechism: God is the one from whom one expects all good, and to whom one puts one’s faith in the times of trouble. Every man has some kind of a refuge – some may have better than others, but everyone has something. The Psalmist here directs us to sing not merely that we have ‘a refuge’, but that our refuge is GOD of Israel. He, and not others, is our refuge.

He is very present help in trouble. He certainly is *present*, as we know: “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Yet being present is not enough – he is very present *help* in trouble. Christ tells us that we are worth much more than sparrows, and every hair of our head is counted. He is speaking in that passage about persecution that falls on his church when they confess Christ’s name. It is not ‘also’ but rather ‘especially’ during the time of trouble that God’s presence in the life of his people intensifies.

Therefore we will not fear through the earth gives way...the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though it’s waters roar...though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

This seems like a description of a cataclysm: earthquake shatters the mountains and the world crumbles into the abyss. But perhaps more nuanced disaster is described here?

The choice of mountains as the things that crumble is fitting to the theme of God as our refuge. Mountains are the natural place where one would set up a defensive position, a fortress. So the Psalmist directs us to see that the earthly fortifications, be they in any area of our life, are never absolute. They can shatter and fail. Only God remains.

Especially OT speaks of the surrounding gentile nations through the imagery of sea. Israelites never were a seafaring nation, they were land-dwellers. The sea was the direction from where the enemy would come. The hostile nations are described as a unreliable, destructive sea, always moving, always restless, always dangerous. The idea of the earth being swallowed by the bottomless sea might not mean just any kind of catastrophe, but, to an Israelite reader especially, a catastrophe of national and religious nature.

To us today perhaps we could ask: what would you do if our earthly societies would fall? Or, as many perhaps rightly are seeing, they are not dramatically collapsing but rather eroding into the sea of paganism.

Or what would you think if the church as we see her now, as a visible, tangible, people of God, would be scattered? What if the mountain fortresses of Lutheran Church Canada would be crumbled to the sea? Even then God would be the refuge and strength for the remnant. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s “Life Together”, written in 1939, states in the middle of a crisis in the church that the visible fellowship with other Christians is a great gift of God, but not one which we can automatically assume.

The promise of *GOD* as our refuge does not mean that we have the same kind of fortresses as everyone else, except ours are way better. It means that our refuge is of a different kind. Jesus says that he will leave his peace to his church – not the kind of peace

the world gives. The peace that comes from Christ, the refuge of God, is not just quantitatively, but especially qualitatively different. Meaning: it is not just 'more', but it is 'different' than the peace of this world.

God in his Church

Verses 4-5 lead the Psalm into a theme which runs throughout the Scripture: the image of a stream of living water.

The geography of the Paradise in Genesis 1-2 is described very little, but one thing is mentioned: it gives beginning to four streams. The image is clear: Paradise is the centre of creation and life, and from it flow rivers that bring this life into the world around. The fall into sin bars the man from Paradise, and drought enters the world, both physically and spiritually. Therefore when the prophets speak of the coming salvation, they often speak with images of fresh water. (Zechariah 14 and Ezekiel 47) Ezekiel 47 adds to the image a vision of the Temple as the source of this water: the river turns out to be something that gushes out from under the temple's foundation, and spreads out from the city; giving life and making the Dead Sea's salty waters teem with fish.

When Jesus says to the Samaritan woman on the well "I will give you living water", or when he stands up in the feast of the booths to cry out "if anyone is thirsty, let him come to me!", he is not making up a new figure to describe God's salvation – he is using the strong OT imagery we also encounter in this psalm: God's city as the place where water flows out. What Jesus does differently is that he places the source of that water into *himself*, showing that in his person the city of Jerusalem, the nation of Israel and the Temple of God are contained in single being. Jesus gives a promise: the water he gives will become a fountain of water in us. How is this possible? Through the miracle of baptism! When the side of the crucified Christ was pierced, out flowed water which brings to us all the merit and fruit of Christ's work in our baptism. Even more, it brings to us Christ himself, or brings us into Christ. He who is THE fountain of living water resides in us and we in him, and when he pours into Christians the gift of the Holy Spirit, that Spirit, God himself, becomes a fountain of life in them. In the gift of baptism we see a wonderful marriage between objective and subjective – that which was done completely outside of us and completely apart from us, the work of Christ, is made completely our own, completely part of us, when God through this sacrament unites us with Jesus Christ.

Finally the water-theme intensifies in the conclusion of Revelation 22 where we, through John, are led to a vision of the New Jerusalem, where the river of life flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the stream of life grows the tree of life (in this point the Greek is a bit tricky and some translations give you an impression that the tree or trees are growing on the banks of the stream. It seems actually that the tree is in the midst of the river, but its branches reach to the sides) that gives healing to the nations.

In Greek there are two words to use for tree: ξύλον and δένδρον. *Dendron* means a living tree, a fruit-bearing tree. *Xylon* sometimes is used also for a living tree, but rarely, since it properly translates as 'wood' or a 'piece of wood', a wooden club, staff or a post. And through gospels, acts and epistles, *xylon* is widely used for the *cross of Christ*. "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a *Xylon*", writes Paul to Galatians (Gal 3:13) and "He himself bore our sins in his body on the *xylon*" says Peter (1 Peter 2:24). The rich, deep imagery of "river of life" exists throughout the Scripture. It is a stream that makes unclean things clean, and brings life and prosperity where there is death and sickness. But Psalm 46 adds another aspect which we should not forget. "(They) make glad the city of God." The Good News are 'glad tidings', they are a joyful message. C.S. Lewis: "I did not become a Christian in order to be happy. I always knew a bottle of port would do that." And in some sense Lewis is correct – feeling good about yourself and your life certainly is not any reason to believe this or that. But while gladness might not be the reason to become a Christian, joy certainly should be a consequence of that. The promises of God, his love and mercy, are given also with the purpose of making us glad.

Surely Christian's life in this earth is not just endless cheer. When Paul writes: "Rejoice always in the Lord", I don't think he assumed Christians would never again feel sadness, regret or fear. To Rejoice Always is not possible as a human psychological state. But it is possible as a theological mood. Christ leaves his peace to his church, not the kind of peace this world gives. He also gladdens his bride. This is 'alien joy' that flows into Christians from outside of them. It is the stream itself that makes Jerusalem joyful, not their own comprehension or experience of God's goodness.

Eschatological peace

The final third of the Psalm looks into the future that God is preparing. Some commentators say the psalm is written with the siege of Jerusalem in mind, when the angel of the lord went through the enemy camp

and slew 180 000 men, leaving the invading army ruined. It might be the memory of that then guides the psalmist to sing: "Come, behold the works of the Lord", as if something that already has taken place. Still the main view of the psalm points to the future which already is dawning but not yet fully here. "He makes wars cease...he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, burns the chariots with fire." God will bring final peace on the world, but it will not come with the consent of the tyrants and war-mongers of this world. Breaking, shattering and burning will take place at the end of this world, because this world will not voluntarily welcome God's reign.

The command of God "Be still" resonates with the words of Moses on the banks of the Red Sea – with the pharaoh's war host behind them and the seemingly impassable waters in front of them. The Lord will fight for you, and you be quiet – said Moses. And so he did.

In a deeper sense destroying the weapons of war points to the final triumph God has against the enemies not of flesh and blood, but those spiritual foes that bring death to soul as well as body. The first part of Lord's Prayer is deeply eschatological in its sense. To pray "your name be hallowed, your kingdom come, your will be done on Earth" – what else can this ultimately mean than praying what Christians always have prayed with short words: *maranatha*, Come soon Lord Jesus! Luther well points out that God's name is hallowed, his kingdom is established and his will takes place even without our prayer, but we pray here that all these things would, so to say, break forth and come into fullness here on earth among us. God's will is done in heaven. Now we ask that it would be also on earth. Every time we pray these things we are praying for the final third of Psalm 46 to unfold. This world with its hateful unbelief, the devil and death, war against the holiness of God's name, his kingdom in the church especially, and hinders his will. One day God will change all that. "Know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations!"

Romans 3:19-28

Today's epistle from Romans speaks strongly about the joyful news of justification through faith alone. But the gospel of justification is accompanied by the confession of sin. So we hear also in Romans: "*whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.*" It is part of the harsh, unapologizing, almost (it seems to us) cruel love of God, that we sinners are confronted with the shocking truth about our situation. Every mouth is to be stopped, and the whole world be held accountable to God!

In what sense is every mouth stopped here? It stops the vain boasting of proud people. Law reveals that they are not as good as they think. It silences the Young Ruler who came to Jesus, claiming he had indeed fulfilled every requirement of the law.

It puts an end to comparisons. Law condemns everyone. Sure enough, for different reasons and individually, but the end result is the same for everyone. It throws out of the temple the Pharisee who was telling everyone how much better he was compared to the sinful publican.

In this sense Law even puts an end to the comparisons of piety. Luther well writes in Schmalkald Articles how the Law of God comes to crush every individual – either because they have been unrepentant of their sins, or because their repentance has been insufficient. We can think of what kind of an image we see when we think of Pharisee and Publican in the temple. It might actually be that there is a small, withered, old man in the front who bows down low, wrinkles of sadness around his eyes, dressed in plain clothes and eyes closed in fervent prayer. And perhaps in the back row we see a publican who still smells of wine from last evening's excellent banquet, his clothes pure silk and satin, oil in his beard and ruddy complexion on his young, handsome face. But their hearts are different. Pharisee's heart is filled with pride over his own repentant piety. Publican is truly empty of any works, even the work of proper repentance.

Law puts an end to every accusation against God. Already the Scriptures record in many many places that same question we ponder today: why bad things happen to good people. Why God allows evil people to flourish? The answer is the same Jesus gives when he spoke of the people who died when the tower in Siloah fell on them: you too will perish unless you repent. Everyone will perish. There are no 'good people' and 'bad people' when you really start setting records straight. No one has room for complaining: "this is not what I deserved!"

Law also puts an end to the scandal of exclusivity of Gospel. Or the fact that only Christ is the way to salvation. Human reason and morals begin to crumble: what about all those other people, who don't know Jesus as their saviour but are still living decent lives and surely earn heaven better than many bad Christians? The Law puts a stop to that. There is no merit. Everyone is condemned.

In the Lutheran reformation, the Christian Church rediscovered not only the Biblical doctrine of justification, but also the truth about the gravity of sin. Neither the Roman Catholic theologians nor the humanistic philosophers of that age dared to confess the utter corruption of human being with such honesty and clarity as the reformers did. Both truths

come from the same God: he condemns everyone, so that he might show mercy to all people. Where the mercy of God is not grasped in its totality, there excuses and cover-ups for sin start to appear.

In a way, there is hope and comfort even in the harsh words of the Law and the way it reveals the bondage of not only our actions but also our repentance and even our faith, making us completely and utterly dependant on God's grace alone in our salvation. Luther confessed this same thing by writing: *"If there were any way it could happen, I would not wish to have free will given to me or that there would be anything left under my own control - - - for my conscience is never going to be certain and confident whether I would have done enough for God. But now, since God has removed my salvation from my will and has taken it up into his will - - because of his grace and mercy - - I am confident and certain that he is trustworthy - - and powerful [enough] that no demon and no vexatious powers can defeat him or tear me away from him."*

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But this sobering reminder is meant to lead us to something much better. For Paul also writes: *The righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law – the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*

These are familiar words to us, but do not let their familiarity downplay the greatness of the message proclaimed here.

Martin Luther, like many before him and after him, wrestled with the concept of 'righteousness of God'. We too, share the same understanding, that a king or a judge is righteous when he deals justice impartially, rewarding those who do good, and punishing those who do evil. An outcry is heard whenever we think some court has released anyone who rightly – so we say – should have been put to jail. If this is true even with human magistrates, certainly more so with God who knows all things and can judge perfectly. So therefore, Luther concluded, 'the righteousness of God' meant that God is just, and he rewards those who lead good lives, and punishes those who do evil things. Now on the outset this sounds the way it should be, but it is certainly bad news to us if we also hold true what Paul writes: "all have sinned". So that means, all should be punished, you and me included. The Gospel the Christian church preaches can never mean that your sins aren't such a big deal. And sometimes it just might be that we speak in a sloppy way about forgiveness which leads us to think that God's forgiveness means basically that he says "don't worry about it, these things happen you see".

Nor can we simply say that God forgives you your sins as long as you believe. As if he was some sort of a corrupt judge, who lends his ear to flattery, like some heavenly Godfather who gathers around his throne a group of personal favourites whom he then treats differently than others. This is the caricature this unbelieving world paints of Gospel, imagining that as long as you keep saying nice things to God, he withholds his judgment, and just turns on the heat in the lake of fire for all those people who didn't get on his good side in time.

The Gospel is not gospel, without Christ, and his atoning death and resurrection. So Paul writes that this forgiveness of sins comes through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; that his blood is the propitiation that frees us from all our sins.

The *vicarious satisfaction* means that Christ 'took our place', acted 'on our behalf', was 'vicar' to us, and suffered the punishment for the sins of the whole world.

Now what does that mean? It has been spoken in two ways which are both just two viewpoints into the same thing. Common way of speaking: "God laid our sins on Jesus" is certainly true, but it can equally be said that "Jesus took our place." What is being said is the same thing, but from a different angle. Christ took upon himself the punishment meant for all mankind. As Luther says, He became the chief sinner, the greatest sinner of all, by taking upon himself our sins, suffering the punishment for them and winning us righteousness before God.

In lecture of Galatians Luther writes: "God has laid on him the iniquity of us all. These words must not be diluted but must be left in their precise and serious sense. For God is not joking in the words of the prophet: he is speaking seriously and out of great love, namely, that this Lamb Of God, Christ, should bear the iniquity of us all. But what does it mean to bear? The sophists reply: to be punished. Good. But why is Christ punished? Is it not because he has sin and bears sin? That Christ has sin is the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the psalms. Thus in Ps 40:12 we read "My iniquities have overtaken me" in Ps 41:4 "O Lord be gracious to me, heal me, for I have sinned against thee." // In these psalms the Holy Spirit is speaking in the Person of Christ and testifying in clear words that he has sinned or has sins. // They are words of the suffering Christ who undertook to bear the person of all sinners and therefore was made guilty of the sins of the entire world."

We must not try to soften or lessen what Paul says about Christ having been 'made sin' for our sake. Christ truly is, as Luther puts it, "solus peccator", the 'only sinne'r because on him is laid now the whole sin of the world and he assumes the identity of every sinner.

So strictly speaking, God does not forgive sins, he forgives *sinner*s. All sins are punished in the cross of Christ, nothing is overlooked.

This is, as we sometimes say, alien righteousness – meaning that while it is given to us not just theoretically but truly, it is nonetheless something we cannot fully grasp with our minds or our hearts. It has to be believed, grasped in faith, trusting that Christ speaks the truth when he promises that he gives his life as a ransom to atone our sins. So the righteousness of God opens in a whole different meaning now – it is not the righteousness that demands us to be condemned according to our sins, but which demands us to be forgiven according to the work of Christ.

John 8:31-36

The eighth chapter of the Gospel of John describes a long discussion Jesus has with Jews in the Temple of Jerusalem. By just quickly glancing through the chapter it looks like a classic case of things starting with a wrong foot, and just gradually getting worse: his hearers begin by not understanding his words, then move on to rejecting them, and conclude by trying to kill Jesus.

However, with closer inspection there is a peculiar midsection in this story, which is introduced by John mentioning: “As he was saying these things, many believed in him.” So there is a point in this debate where some of his hearers actually laid down their arms and started to listen what Christ had to say.

31: If you abide...you are my disciples. These words are said to the Jews who already believed in him. It is as if there emerges a difference between merely believing and actually becoming a disciple, and that difference comes from *abiding* in Christ’s word. To believe can be something that happens in an instant and disappears just as quickly again – a mere fancy or a fleeting opinion, like in this case we see. To be truly a disciple of Christ means not to just agree with him momentarily, but to abide in his word for ages to come.

To abide, μένω, is a word John’s gospel uses in every turn. In most cases it means the same as ‘dwelling’, staying in some place and finding shelter and rest there. In this sense abiding in Christ’s word is not the same as just believing what he said. It means dwelling there. Making your home in his word. Becoming a member of the household.

It is pointing to the grand opening chapter of John: the word became flesh and dwelt among us. Now the

disciple is called to dwell and abide in that word. External belief is called to change into internal relationship. To “believe God” is to change into “Believe IN God”, to use Augustine’s phrase.

32: Truth will set you free. Truth in John is not merely an abstract thing, not even a quality in a person. Truth IS a person. Christ the Logos from Heaven is “full of grace and truth”. He is “the way, the truth and the life”. The Helper he sends is the Spirit of Truth.

35 Slave does not remain in the house forever? Does not mean that sin will eventually loosen its grip, but rather refers to the fact that slaves are kept only as long as they are useful, and then discarded. House does not commit itself to the slave like it does to the son. To serve sin with the idea that sin will bring lasting happiness, security and love, is an illusion. Sin will always betray at the end. It promises but will not deliver. Slave of sin will not remain in the house of sin forever, but will be cast out and betrayed by sin.

Few Words about Freedom

Through this preaching Christ calls the Jews who hear him to become his disciples in order that they might be truly free. And this is the point where things start to go wrong. Because you see, people don’t like to be told that they are not free.

Before we go further, we should perhaps make a distinction between two things: on one hand, the human *experience* of being free, and on the other hand, *the reality* of actually being free. And the problem is that in order to achieve the latter, you need to be ready to give up the former. To become truly free, one must first sacrifice the false experience of *feeling free*. And this is where the opposition against Jesus starts to immediately rise. Out comes the power of denial: “What is this talk about being freed? We have never been enslaved to anyone!” The perception, or shall we say, illusion of freedom is so strong and also so dear, that these people cannot allow it to die. The lies that support this imagined freedom are preferred over the painful truth that would set them free.

In general the Big Lie, the chief error behind all smaller falsehoods, argues that lies, deceptions or (for example) oppressive ideologies always have to be *forced upon us* against our will. We think we are

somehow naturally resistant to them, and that they can be held up only through constant effort and coercion. Falling into this biggest of lies, we consider falsehood to be something alien and unnatural to us, and consequently, we believe that when such lies are presented, we should easily recognize them in order to repel and renounce them as lies. But actually the opposite is more correct. Lie in many cases is something we don't recognize as a lie, but rather consider to be true. Maybe even self-evident! And most lies are not forced upon us, but rather, we willingly accept them and even crave for them.

So to become free does not begin by simply casting off some arbitrary, imposed deceptions, as if pushing down already shaky facades. Or to muster your strength against a tyrannical power that you so clearly see oppressing you. Rather, to start the process of liberation means entering into a thought we previously considered impossible, even absurd. That means, we are led into the idea that we were bound by lie so thoroughly that rather than being rebellious slaves, we became obedient lackeys to it.

To be led into this truth is almost a violent process, where we are torn away from the whole fibre of thinking, feeling and existing in the way we previously considered natural. In the case of the Jews in today's lesson, it would mean leaving behind the whole meticulously constructed ethnic and spiritual identity and source of their pride: the fact that they were true sons of Abraham. It seemed to them that to be free in the sense Jesus meant it would not be a gain, but rather a loss – loss of identity and being. To become free would mean admitting that they had been enslaved by sin before.

This applies to all sorts of lies, but especially spiritual lies. That is why Christ says: *If the SON sets you free, you will be free indeed.* What is implied here is that YOU cannot liberate yourselves. Someone else has to do it for you. Sleeper cannot wake himself up. Someone else has to intervene in your life, to draw you out, to drag you into the reality of this liberating truth.

Even human experience teaches us that “real” and “free” are not synonyms to “happy” and “pleasant”. Partly to reflect this, the Scriptures use the strongest possible language when talking about conversion. It's not all just joy and happiness. In becoming a disciple

of Christ, all your spiritual achievements must be thrown away as trash, your chest has to be opened and your old heart cut out, you will be drowned, put to death on the cross and killed. The lie and slavery is so deeply ingrained in everything you are and do, that your old life is beyond repair. It has to be put down, to die, so that a new man, a free man can be born.

The slavery Christ talks about in today's gospel is tied to sin. He says that anyone who practices sin is enslaved to sin. This relationship goes against what unrepentant people think. They consider sin to be something they do and in a way, produce; they are the acting force, and sin is a consequence of their actions. But Christ turns it other way round. He says that anyone who practices sin (and that includes all humans) is enslaved to sin. The roles between the agent (one who does) and the act (what is being done) are reversed. You not only practice sin, but in a way, sin practices you. Sin enslaves you, and sin uses you to do what is sinful. And hence Christ says: you are enslaved to sin. An unrepentant person might at times feel guilty about what they do, but they nonetheless retain the illusion that they are, deep down, in control of things, free to do good or evil. But now that illusion has to go, Jesus says. You must face the truth of your enslavement, or else you will never be free.

The well-known Russian author, thinker and dissident during the communist era, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, a man who went through the Siberian gulags, said: “Someone that you have deprived of everything is no longer in your power. He is once again entirely free.” What Solzhenitsyn understood about the earthly hell of prison camps is even truer in the spiritual life. As long as we buy into the big lie behind all lies, that we can somehow control sin, bargain with it, tame it and bend it to serve us – as long as we keep living in this illusion, the sin keeps reigning over us. But when the Holy Spirit reveals to us the truth about our state, showing that we have no hope of winning the fight against sin on our own, that is the point where sin loses its tyrannical rule over our souls. When we are deprived of every notion of personal merit or holiness and rely on Christ alone for our salvation, we are no longer in its power. We leave the house of sin, and set our dwelling place in the Word of Christ, who is full of grace and truth. We die through the law, and are born anew through the

Spirit and the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is the truth that sets us truly free. He is the Son who remains in his Father's house forever, and in him, we remain as well. It is through following him that we find, not only peace with God, but also true freedom in this life as well. For in Christ, who is not only the true Son of the Heavenly Father, but also true man, in him, human life is manifest in the way God intended it to be. And joined in him, we are already now connected to the source of our life and the creator of our nature. In him, we find true freedom to be what we are created to be.

Rev. Esko Murto
Professor CLTS St. Catharines

Greetings brought to LCC Convention Rev. Edwin Lehman

Thank you very much for this opportunity to bring a few words of greeting to this convention. As was just mentioned, I was unable to be present three years ago, because I had recently come out of the hospital following major surgery. No wonder then, that so many of you have been kind enough to ask about my health and, in general, how I was doing. There was merit to the questions of course, because people noticed that I was present, reasonably mobile, and somewhat conscious. As I thought how I might respond to those inquiries, I recalled how I often faced similar questions in the early years of our synod's autonomy. "How are things going in LCC?" was the way it was usually put. My initial response was always, "Not as well as they should be, but better than we deserve." And I give the same answer now. Even though it sounds flippant, it is not intended to be so. Things in our personal well-being or in that of the church, are never as good as they should be. But they are always better than we deserve. For though we deserve only God's righteous judgment, we continue to receive His undeserved grace.

This convention marks another time of transition for our synod as we will be electing our fourth president to serve in this office. The question in my mind is "why, Dr. Bugbee, would you choose to leave this office now... now, when we are having so much fun and excitement?" But then I figured it out. It's in the hair. Just look at his hair. Black as midnight. Like Justin Trudeau. But consider the tradition that has prevailed ever since our autonomy. All of your predecessors – all both of them – came into office black and went out grey. Perhaps President Mayan was a little overzealous, because after his hair turned grey it just kept on disappearing. But in your case, Dr. Bugbee, it seems you are either unable or unwilling to maintain this tradition, so you're just leaving. We noticed, though that you've delegated Rev. Nolan Astley, your first vice president, as the one to fulfill your obligation.

Seriously, President Bugbee, we all owe you a deep debt of gratitude for the way in which you have served us during your tenure. I don't think any of us, at least if we are of sound mind, would have wanted to fill your shoes during these last few years. You have faithfully led us though the most trying times that our synod has ever faced, and, we pray God that these days will prove to be the worst we will ever face.

We are also still in the dark as to who our new president will be. Naturally, there is some anxiety, but let me offer

this word of counsel. It is the Lord who chooses who is to serve our synod in this office, even as it is the Lord who chooses pastors to serve congregations. We go through the process of praying and balloting, but the Lord uses whatever we give him. All of us, even our leaders, are fallible. We each have our gifts and our limitations, but God has His own ways of making something out of what we give Him.

When LCC was formed nearly 30 years ago, I had the opportunity to address the convention as we began our journey together. I used the illustration of Israel finally crossing the Jordan river and entering the promised land. I was not suggesting that the new synod was the ecclesiastical promised land but that this step was for us, and for the ancient Israelites, a venture of faith. I quoted the admonition Joshua gave the Israelites as they prepared for this new venture. He said, "*Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.*" He had previously organized the army and the tribes, decided how the priests would carry the ark, how the people would gather together on this side of the river and again on the other side. All those details had been taken care of. But, ultimately, when all the rest was done, the most important instruction was, "Consecrate yourselves." The success of this venture would not depend on organization, plans or strategies, for this was a spiritual venture, not a military exercise. So it is for us too. We can talk about structure and bylaws, but unless we "consecrate ourselves," that is, humble ourselves before God, seek forgiveness for our personal and corporate failures, and rely solely on the undeserved mercy of our gracious God, we cannot expect our personal efforts to meet with God's favor.

In the early days of our synod's history we often used a certain collect that seemed fitting for our new venture. We prayed it at our constituting convention, when we commissioned our first foreign missionaries to Ukraine (Rev. Roland Syens, Rev. Keith Haberstock and his wife, Barb), when we dedicated our new office building and on other occasions. It was the same prayer which our chaplain used in our devotion earlier this weekend. I think it is appropriate that we recall these words now as we go about the business at hand: "*Lord, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go forth with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*"

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan
President Emeritus of Lutheran Church - Canada

President Bugbee, delegates to this 11th synodical convention, Distinguished International Guests, My brothers and sisters in Christ.

I greet you with these words of encouragement and direction recorded in scripture and first spoken by some Greek travelers to the disciple Philip. They said, “Sir we wish to see Jesus!”

Thank you President Bugbee for the privilege of bringing greetings to this convention and for the opportunity to share a few words of encouragement.

But first a word of thanks. I thank God and you for your prayers. It was shortly before the last LCC convention in Vancouver that I was diagnosed with a serious bone marrow disorder, since that convention, there have been congregations and individuals throughout the church who have been remembering me in their prayers. If you remember, the theme of that convention was **“Come to Him who answers prayer.”** Well God answered those prayers as He does all prayers. In my case, He answered with a yes. He has provided me with competent medical personnel and stabilized my medical condition. While He has not restored me to my youth (I’ll have to wait for heaven for that), He has given me the necessary strength to do that which He places before me to do, to continue to serve the church as the Pastoral Advisor for our auxiliary, Concordia Lutheran Mission Society, a society worthy of your support, as well as serve a vacancy in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. God is good! Thank you for your prayers.

“Christ Alone, Christ Forever!” That’s the theme for this convention as we join together in celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Our national magazine, the Canadian Lutheran, and now our speakers and devotional leaders have directed our attention to Martin Luther and the Reformers; they have accented the doctrine at the centre of our confession and proclamation – that we are “justified, that is, declared righteous, by God’s grace through faith on account of Jesus Christ.” It’s all about Christ! It’s Christ Crucified! Christ alone; Christ forever.

It’s as if these reformers had heard the request, the prayer of those Greek travelers, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus” and they answered it as they committed themselves to proclaim the Gospel in all its truth and purity; as they shared the message of

Jesus Christ, as they pointed to His life and death and resurrection and the blessings that He brings, forgiveness and life and salvation. It’s for you, they said; It’s Christ – for you!

That request, “Sir we wish to see Jesus” gives direction to us. It reminds us that our primary focus, indeed the very reason for our existence as a church, is to be answering that request. It’s to be leading people to see Jesus; It’s to be proclaiming Christ, Christ Alone and Christ Forever in our congregations and in our Synod.

It also gives us direction for this convention. Much time has and will be spent on matters relating to organizational structure and strategies and other like matters. These are important for our church to discuss and shouldn’t just be dismissed. Yet on the other hand I believe it is important that we are reminded of what should guide our discussion and decision making. It’s to answer the request “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Will the decisions we make help us do this? Will they help us to lead people to see Jesus? Will they point them to Jesus; give us the resources to do this – all so that those who have not heard or yet come to believe will hear the message of Christ, of Christ Alone and Christ Forever? Lutheran Church-Canada, we wish to see Jesus!

May God bless this convention and the decisions we make. May God bless our retiring president. President Bugbee, I thank God and you for your service to Christ and His Church during a difficult time in the history of our Synod. You have been a blessing to us and we pray God’s blessing as you return to congregational ministry. I personally thank you for your friendship and for your phone calls every once in a while and for our friendly chats just to stay in the loop. God has truly blessed our church and I thank Him for the collegiality that has always existed between past and present leaders. I have no reason to think that this spirit will not continue into the future.

And that is what God is laying out for us these days in convention. Through His church, He has chosen a new president for our Synod. President-elect Teuscher, I congratulate you on your election and I pray that God may bless you with all wisdom and with every spiritual gift necessary as you take up the mantel of service as our president at this challenging time in our history. My dear brother, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus!” God bless! Thank you.

Mr. Roberto Jose Zepeda
Iglesia Luterana – Synod of Nicaragua
Transcribed from his greetings to the Convention

Message from the Lutheran Church - Synod of Nicaragua, to our brothers and sisters in Christ of the Lutheran Church of Canada

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Let me greet you with the same words of Paul to the Philippians, words of joy and love: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." Philippians 1:2-5

First of all, I want to thank God for the opportunity that He gives me (and my wife) to be able to participate as observers in the convention of LC-C under the theme: ***Christ Alone, Christ Forever.***

Many years ago the LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CANADA was formed and today it is celebrating its 11th Convention. No doubt this day is of great joy. With the help of God, the Lutheran Church of Canada is fulfilling God's divine mandate to go to all nations to proclaim the gospel of salvation through Christ Jesus.

Now because God's work through you in many parts of the world the salvation of mankind through Christ is being proclaimed. We thank God that now there are different places in the world of public worship to our Triune God. We rejoice that the presence of God is manifested in all those places including my native land, Nicaragua. God is pleased at the gathering of the saints and the saints are delighted to be in the house of the Lord.

The Lutheran Church of Canada was formed to be a "home" for the family of God where Christ is reflected in our lives and creates an atmosphere of peace for those in need. The purpose of this Church was to proclaim the Gospel of Salvation to all and to be instrumental in the development of the Christian character of its members; where they are urged to "...be doers of the word, and not hearers only," and practice the true religion. We need to continue preaching the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus Christ and remind to the Christians that we are just passing through this world, and that our dwelling is not on hearth but in heaven together with Christ.

As visitors from the Lutheran Church of Nicaragua we have brought a gift to you, a bit of our land, our folklore, and our customs, which consists of small keyrings with figures of our beautiful country. As you will see, they come linked with 3 colors of ribbons, which represent the following: The blue and white represent our flag. White and red - its banner linked together, symbolizing the

bonds of friendship, love, and unity between the two churches (Our Mother Church LCC and daughter church, Lutheran Church of Nicaragua). In addition

the three colors symbolize also: the red: the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the white: the glorious Resurrection and the blue: the beautiful sky which is our eternal life.

We also want to give to the current president of LC-C Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee and the new president elect: Timothy Teuscher (Toy-sher) a parchment carved in leather, with some symbols, which have some images painted representing our folklore, and customs. Among them: the national flower: Zacuanjoche); the national bird: the Guardabarranco; the guitar, the marimba, the sandals, the sugar cane represented by the figure of a beer, etc. We are sending this with much love.

And along with the parchment we also bring to you a stole that symbolizes, **the sheep that the good shepherd carries on His shoulders.** It was made with a lot of love and patience for both of you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the different Lutheran organization for their support in the different programs and projects of our congregations in Nicaragua. We thank them for their dedication, cooperation and love toward the Lutheran Church in Nicaragua: Especially we acknowledge and thanks:

The Marvin Schwan Foundation.
St. Catherine Lutheran Seminario
L.W.M.L.: Lutheran Women Missionary League
C.L.M.S.: Concordia Lutheran Mission Society
C.L.W.R.: Canadian Lutheran World Relief.
Lutheran Laymen's League

And to all the congregations of the Lutheran Church - Canada, for their willingness, dedication and support to the work carried out in the different communities and missions in Nicaragua.

As representatives of the Christian Mission in Nicaragua of the Lutheran Church of Canada, we offer the most sincere thanks to all who had participated in the proclamation of the Gospel in Nicaragua. We will continue to pray for you and for the new authorities whom you have elected. We will pray to our Lord for you, that you love each other, gives you patience, wisdom, health, strength and sustains your faith in Christ Jesus our Savior.

God bless you. Thanks for your great love toward the congregations of the Lutheran Church in Nicaragua.

Sincerely Lic. Roberto José Zepeda
Iglesia Luterana – Sínodo de Nicaragua

Bishop Torkild Masvie
The Lutheran Church in Norway (LCN)

"Dear president Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, dear president elect Rev. Timothy Teuscher, and dear convention delegates and guests.

I greet you from The Lutheran Church in Norway, a small, young Lutheran church with a big name. We have currently 5 pastors, 5 congregations and a pastor training program. The congregation members have been predominantly young and in their 20s. Our growth is much due to the Liberal theological development in Church of Norway.

Our church is as your church member of International Lutheran Council, and has declared church fellowship with the LCMS and a number of other similar churches. Our hope is to develop closer church relationship also to your church.

It has been a joy to be at this convention. I am impressed as how you have had such a good convention knowing that the issues that were brought up had caused strong feelings. President Bugbee has grown in my eyes as a role model when I see how he has lead the meetings.

On this day, and on the year of the celebration of the Reformation I would like to greet you with a word from

Paul: **16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who

believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Rom 1:16-17 ESV)

We believe that the gospel is Gods power of salvation for us, - and for the Jewish people.

I was a missionary in Jerusalem for 10 years. I urge you not to forget to give the gospel to the Jewish people. No church is so poor it cannot pray for the salvation for the Jews. No church is so poor it cannot pray God to ask where they fit in to Gods plan in giving the gospel to the distant relatives of Jesus.

Perhaps your church and our church could cooperate in this area, or you find other partners in doing what you need to do.

When we do this we are reminded that God has not given up the Jewish people, and that is why we dear to believe that He has not given up us and our children.

The gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and then for the Canadian and then for the Norwegian."

Rev. Milton Winston Tejeda Huatuco
President, Peru Lutheran Church
Transcribed from his greetings to the convention on Sunday, October 16

Good afternoon.
President Robert Bugbee, president elect Timothy Teuscher, brothers and sisters in Christ. It is an honor to be with you these days at this convention. I bring many greetings to you from the Lutheran Church in Peru.

Last Thursday at noon I arrived at the Toronto airport. It is the first time I am in Canada, and I feel very well received. The day I arrived at the airport, very kindly I was picked up by a couple who speak Spanish, Bernardo and Ruth. On the way down the road driving to Kitchener, I could read my names, first I saw a sign with very large letters that said WINSTON, after a few minutes later there was another sign with very large letters too it it said MILTON. I said to myself: Wow, here in Canada they know how to welcome people very well.

By the Grace of God, my name is Milton Winston Tejeda Huatuco. I am pastor and president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Peru. And with pleasure, I briefly present to you something about the work in Peru. But first I introduce to you my family. I am married and have two children. My wife's name is Liliana, she is a primary school teacher and a teacher of children in the church. My

oldest son is Johann, he is 10 years old. And my youngest daughter's name is Leri Luz, she is 8 years old.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Peru, is the fruit of the work of God through the Lutheran Mission of Norway who began missionary work in the southern Peru in 1978, with the purpose of forming a Lutheran national church. So, in 1995 the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Peru is established. As a Lutheran national church we are members of the International Lutheran Council, and we are close and in good relations with the Missouri Synod.

Currently we do missionary work in the southern part of Peru. We have 40 local churches distributed in the area of the coast and the mountain. The people speak Spanish, Quechua and Aymara. The Lutheran church who speak Quechua is located at 4400 meters above sea level. It is very cold there. Together this afternoon we can learn a few words in Quechua. These are important word. Repeat after me: Manan Intintiquichu. Again: Manan Intintiquichu. This mean: I understand nothing.

We have also 2 schools with 500 students each. One school is in the city of Juliana-Puno, the name of the

school is Martin Luther. The second school is in the city of Arequipa, its name is Diego Thomson. Both schools are instruments to reach out parents and children.

One of the challenges we have as a national church is to be self-sufficient economically. The Lutheran Mission Church from Norway has helped us for several years to pay our pastors. But this help came to an end 4 years ago. We knew that this was going to happen. So as a national church we had to prepare ourselves through a strategic plan.

Sometimes changes are often accompanied by fear. And one of the great fears we had is that maybe we were going to run out of pastors that they would leave. However, thank God, after 4 years the salary of the pastors are paid by their own congregation. No pastor has left, on the contrary we have more pastors.

Also our national church is supportive to others in need, trying to respond quickly to disaster situations, helping people in need.

So, in the social part, we have our right hand of the church which is the project of development and family strengthening. Through this project, we focus on the society in general as students from various schools, teachers of the state or private schools to prevent cases such as family violence, violence against women and children, prevention of sexual abuse against minors, etc. We work together with other government organizations or private institutions, if we see that someone needs some special help.

I have presented to you these points briefly. If anyone wants to visit us. You are welcome. We are going to write your name on a sign with big letters at the entrance of the city. If you come to Peru you can also take advantage visiting Machupicchu, the land of the Incas.

Before I go, I brought a gift from Peru church to President Bugbee.

Thank you.

Rev. Milton Winston Tejeda Huatuco
President- Peru Lutheran Church