



Come to Him
who answers prayer

Psalm 65:2

LUTHERAN CHURCH–CANADA
Tenth Convention
June 6-9, 2014
Vancouver, British Columbia
CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS



FOREWORD

The official *Proceedings* to the Synod of the Tenth 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 regarding the theological positions of the Synod and the directions to be taken in the future ministry of the Synod as they have been adopted.

The theme of the Tenth Convention of Lutheran Church-Canada was “**Come to Him who answers prayer**” (Psalm 65:2) building on the theme of the last convention “**In Your Light, we see Light**” (Psalm 36:9). The Synod met in convention June 6-9, 2014 in Vancouver, B.C. on the beautiful campus of the University of British Columbia. As a first for Lutheran Church-Canada, both essayists were home-grown. Rev. Kurt Reinhardt, pastor of Trinity, Gowanstown, ON., delivered his essay in three parts centering on the theme of prayer based on Psalm 65:2. Deacon Jennifer Shack, Candidate, DPS, part time distance teacher, CUCA, Edmonton, AB who is pursuing Ph.D. studies at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, outlined the history and biblical foundation of the diaconate in Lutheran Church-Canada, and the role of its members in our church body today. We thank both of them for their timely presentations. Rev. Paul Roggow opened and closed each session with prayer and served as convention chaplain.

The convention met on Friday, June 6 before the Opening Service of The Sacrament to instruct and welcome the delegates. This seemed to work well since the convention was then able to begin in earnest on Saturday. Rev. President Robert Bugbee was elected to his third term by acclamation. There were changes in the Vice-presidents as a new V.P. was elected from the Central District. The convention was privileged to have both Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman and Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan, Presidents Emeritii address the assembly – Rev. Dr. Lehman via letter as he continues his recuperation at home, and Rev. Dr. Mayan in person. The convention was saddened to hear that Rev. Dr. Mayan was recently diagnosed with cancer and immediately took

time to “Come to Him *who answers prayer*” on behalf the entire Mayan family. Rather than highlighting or delineating the decisions of the convention – which were numerous – I encourage you to visit the convention website (in addition to these *Proceedings*) as there is a wealth of information to be gleaned and a visual record of what transpired. You can access it at:

<http://synod2014.lutheranchurch.ca/>

I would like take this opportunity to thank the members of the convention staff who so ably assisted me: Iris Barta and Cheryll Matthes who put together *Today's Business* incorporating the minutes for each business session; Rev. Bill Ney who once again served as assistant to the secretary and proofread the minutes of each session to correct errors and keep everything coherent; and last but not least, Iris Barta again and Jodie Hyde and those who have prepared these *Proceedings* for their prompt work in getting the convention's information to you.

Since I was a secretarial rookie these past three years, I would also like to thank the Board of Directors and the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure of Synod for their kind patience with me. As Lutheran Church-Canada goes forward may the blessing of Him who answers prayer rest on all those who were elected to offices, boards, and commissions of the Synod. May God continue to guide us in carrying out those decisions that have been adopted and see them through to their completion.

Knowing that, as Rev. Reinhardt reminded us, we are a speaking family, we pray that our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit would continue to speak to and strengthen Lutheran Church-Canada through Word and Sacrament so that we can continue to speak His Gospel to a world so desperately in need; that at the final day, we will be enabled to “**Come to Him who answers prayer.**”

Think of God Loving You,



Rev. Paul Schallhorn
Secretary

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 CONVENTION DELEGATES

Alberta British Columbia District
Clergy

Amison	Brian	Lethbridge
Avery	James	Edmonton
Barr	Dan	Stony Plain
Boehm	Curtis	Calgary
Chiang	Mark	Vancouver
Fritsche	James	Stony Plain
Hautz	Laverne	Fraser Valley
Hennig	Don	Wetaskiwin
Hennig	Mark	Edmonton
Hilderman	David	Fraser Valley
Howard	Russ	Wetaskiwin
Loveridge	Lee	Okanagan
Magnus	Clint	Cariboo
Morton	David	Kootenay
Platz	Kevin	Vancouver Island
Ruf	Mark	Calgary
Schneider	Tim	Calgary
Schutz	Michael	Okanagan
Haycock	John	Peace River
Smith	Mark D.	Elk Island
Stern	Neil	Wetaskiwin
<i>Lay</i>		
Belden	Deborah	Okanagan
Boivin	Susanne	Calgary
Canfield	Katherine	Lethbridge
Burghardt	Ed	Wetaskiwin
Giese	Lynn	Edmonton
Haberstock	Don	Edmonton
Hennig	Brent	Stony Plain
Koberstein	Ed	Wetaskiwin
Kubke	Willem	Stony Plain
Lagimodiere	Arthur	Elk Island
Marzke	Betty	Kootenay
Mostad	Ralph	Peace River
Oliver	Ian	Vancouver
Otke	Richard	Okanagan
Reese	Harry	Calgary
Schoenroth	Kevin	Fraser Valley
Stadnick	Ken	Vancouver Island
Von Hahn	Charles	Cariboo
Walter	Larry	Calgary
Williams	Corrine	Fraser Valley

Advisory

Kuhn	Melanie	district BOD advisory
Ruf	Janice	district office advisory
Haberstock	Harold	district clergy advisory
Adam	Luke	district diaconate advisory
Winstanley	Miriam	district diaconate advisory
Robak	Benjamin	district youth advisory
Kumar	Alex Prem	district youth advisory

Central District
Clergy

Andersen	Gerald	Qu'Appelle
Beinert	Richard	Red River
Blom	Keith	Ontario
Borchardt	Harold	Red River
Chimirri-Russel	James	Wascana
Dennis	Lowell	Katepwa
Dul	Jeff	Assiniboine
Quast	Jacob	Ontario
Rapp	John	Northland
Smith	Mark L.	Portage
Swem	Jeremy	Wascana
Taylor	Doug	Saskatoon
Wood	Barry	Assiniboine
<i>Lay</i>		
Casper	Brian	Katepwa
Kraushaar	Ron	Qu'Appelle
Gust	Wayne	Southland
Haas	Todd	Assiniboine
Hintz	Mark	Assiniboine
Rogers	Carl	Ontario
Lutomske	James	Red River
McLean	Chris	Northland
Niemi	Sam	Ontario
Popp	Randy	Red River
Schultz	Devin	Saskatoon
Tondevoid	Jerry	Wascana
Turner	Allen	Portage
Wright	Vince	Wascana
Turner	Eileen	district BOD advisory
Maher	Raymond	district clergy advisory
Quinlan	Alyx	district diaconate advisory

East District**Clergy**

Bublitz	Marvin	Stratford
Abraham	Dan	London
Danielson	Mark	Hamilton
de Azevedo	Gilvan	Windsor
Dunlop	Brian	Hanover
Flohr	Larry	Toronto
Frey	Rick	Kitchener
Habermas	Matthew	Toronto
Heinbuch	Jim	Kitchener
Koehler	Mark	Hamilton
Korsch	Rob	Kitchener
Lantz	Kurt	Niagara
Ritter	Larry	Niagara
Schieman	Donald A.	London
Smilek	David	Ottawa
Stanfel	Bill	Ottawa
Teuscher	Timothy	Stratford

Lay

Cantrup	Rolf	Niagara
Famme	Howard	Stratford
Gerber	James	Kitchener
Griffin	Tony	Toronto
Kitsch	Jennifer	Stratford
Hogg	John	Hanover
Keller	Roger	London
Kuhl	Tim	Ottawa
Macdonald	Bruce	Niagara
McFarlane	John	Hamilton
Millard	Don	Hamilton
Naujoks	Roland	Toronto
Schallhorn	Trevor	Windsor
Schroeder	Derick	Ottawa
Walrath	Paul	Kitchener
Wilson	Robert	London
Witzke	Karl	Kitchener

Advisory

Mohr	Ron	district BOD advisory
Shack	Jennifer	district diaconate advisory
Morley	Robert	district clergy advisory
Mundt	William	district clergy advisory
Gallas	Juliana	district youth advisory
Teich	Bianca	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. Donald Schiemann

Board of Directors

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, Rev. Nolan Astley,
Rev. Thomas Kruesel, Rev. Rudy Pastucha, Dwayne Cleave
Rev. Paul Schallhorn, Rev. Karl Keller,
Arnold Drung, Lorne Wirth, Anne Taylor, Ronald Roller,
Grace Henderson, Cameron Pelzer

Committee for Communication and Technology

Grace Henderson

Committee for Cultural Property and Archives

Lorne Wirth

Committee for Mission and Social Ministry Services

Rev. Dr. Karl Keller

Commission on Adjudication

Rev. Neil Stern

Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, Herb Doering, Rev. Paul Schallhorn,
Rev. John Trembulak III, Rev. Dr. Stephen Chambers,
Gary Gilmore

Commission on Theology and Church Relations

Rev. William Ney, Rev. Warren Hamp

Lutheran Church–Canada Financial Ministries

Mr. Allen Schellenberg

Board of Managers-Worker Benefits

Rev. Mark Hennig

Board of Regents - CUCA, Edmonton AB

Dr. Gerald Krispin, Jonathan Strand

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. Brian Dunlop

CONVENTION APPOINTMENTS
Convention Manager

Dr. Ian Adnams

Local Arrangements

Dr. Ian Adnams, Rev. Fred Rink
Fraser Valley and Vancouver Circuits

Assistant to the Secretary

Rev. William Ney

Worship Committee

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan (chair), Rev. Fred Rink,
Rev. Paul Roggow

Convention Chaplain

Rev. Paul Roggow

Convention Parliamentarian

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan

Committee on Registrations

Grace Henderson (chair)

Committee on Nominations (as elected by districts)

Walter Heinneman (chair); Rev. Harold Borchardt,
(secretary); Rev. Marvin Bublitz; Anna Fierling;
Dr. Lynn Gergens; Deacon Monica Shultz

Committee on Elections

Rev. Mark Hennig (chair), Eileen Turner,
Rev. Robert S. Morley

Resolutions Committee 1 (Faith & Witness/Parish Services)

Rev. Paul Zabel (chair), Rev. Clint Magnus, Mr. Randy Popp,
Mr. Larry Walter, Rev. Mark L. Smith, Deacon Jennifer
Shack

*Resolutions Committee 2**(Higher Education)*

Rev. Thomas Prachar (chair), Deacon Miriam Winstanley,
Mr. Howard Famme, Rev. Brian Amison, Mr. Todd Haas,
Rev. Ron Mohr

*Resolutions Committee 3**(Constitution and Administrative/Financial Matters)*

Rev. Donald Schiemann (chair), Mr. Roland Naujoks,
Rev. Jeremy Swem, Mr. Richard Otke,
Deacon Alyx Quinlan., Rev. Larry Flohr

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Part 2

In your *Convention Workbook* on Pages E.1-E.9, Part 1 of the President's Report went out from our office in March. It is not my plan to review individually all the points in that document, although I will emphasize a few things that have special importance. I shall also highlight an area or two where there have been updates since Part 1 was published.

Let me begin with an update to the list of church leaders who are joining us at this Convention. In Part 1 I reported on the ongoing dialogues involving us and representatives of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), which will continue later this month in Winnipeg. We are delighted that Dr. David Wendel, an assistant to NALC Bishop John Bradosky and the ecumenical officer of that church, arrives midday today and will be in attendance for a portion of our Convention. I will ask Dr. Wendel to bring greetings later, and I do hope you will welcome him warmly and ask about his work. There are significant areas where we and the NALC see things differently, and neither of our churches tries to silence that fact. At the same time, these are people who have endured a great deal in recent years in their former churches for their faithful confession of Christ. I honour them for that, and thank God we are able to meet and talk and even wrestle together in a brotherly way.

In addition, we learned last week rather unexpectedly that The Rev. Dr. Chul-Hwan Kim, President of the Lutheran Church of Korea was able to stop here in Vancouver on his way home after consultations in the United States. I am delighted that he can work us into his very busy schedule.

That may be an appropriate bridge to go into the area of church relations in general, and to update a few matters covered in my original report in the *Workbook*. We have experienced new and encouraging contacts with representatives of the Roman Catholic Church. On Page E.5 I already mentioned my visit to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity last November in Rome as a representative of the International Lutheran Council. Cardinal Kurt Koch of that Council met with me and my ILC colleagues, and is supportive of various regional dialogues happening in addition to the world-wide one the ILC is now planning. In addition to the LCC-Roman Catholic conversations already in progress in eastern Canada, a western Canadian conversation has begun more recently

through the initiative of the Catholic Archbishop of Edmonton. Dr. Gerald Krispin of Concordia University College of Alberta organized a three-man LCC team, which had a first get acquainted meeting recently with their Catholic counterparts.

Since the publication of Part 1, I was able to visit our partner church in Brazil for its Convention in early May near Aracruz on the Atlantic coast. This church is a good bit larger than ours. What really amazes is the level of enthusiasm and "family spirit" when they come together. Though Brazil is enormous in its land area, even non-delegates came long distances on buses to simply spend time with their brothers and sisters and to participate in the worship. Something like 5000 people were in attendance at the closing Holy Communion service of that gathering. The Brazilian church is also now ready to support in a large way the missionary work in the African country of Mozambique which was initiated years ago by LCC Pastor Joseph Alfazema. Details are still being worked out, and there are considerable visa challenges for any Brazilian missionary hoping to live in Mozambique, but for a time the Brazilians seem eager to support pastoral training with short-term visits of Lutheran pastors and professors, much as LCC has done in Nicaragua, southeast Asia and Ukraine. I met last week with Pastor Joseph Alfazema and his wife, Perpetua, in Edmonton on these matters, and wish to acknowledge the financial support and encouragement this effort receives from the Kapasseni Project, an independent mission society with ties to our Synod.

Let me tell you the latest I know from Ukraine: Since my earlier report in the *Workbook*, the Russian government and its supporters on the Crimean peninsula succeeded in detaching that province from mainland Ukraine. They have established an armed border between them. Bishop Viktor Gräfenstein of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (SELCU), as an EU-citizen, is prevented from visiting the five congregations there without a costly Russian visa. There have been further disturbances caused by Russian separatist movements in eastern Ukraine, and also around Odessa, where our seminary is located. Although the Ukrainian government arranged for a new national election on May 25, this effort was being undermined in the aforementioned regions even before it took place, so it's difficult to know whether it will contribute to any

kind of stability over the long term. We are leaning on the governing council of the SELCU church to advise us whether theological education could resume this September at the Odessa seminary, and whether it will even work for me to attend their Synod convention in November. As of this writing the resumption of the seminary this fall seems doubtful. A number of church members and even one SELCU pastor have been drafted into the Ukrainian army.

On Page E.9 at the close of my earlier report, we provided the list of rostered workers who entered into rest since our 2011 Convention. Since then, the Lord also summoned Pastor Lester Gierach of Edmonton to Himself on April 7, 2014. He was a real fixture in the ABC District, having come to Canada as a St. Louis Seminary graduate in 1946, devoting the rest of his life to the Lord's work here. Not only known because of his longevity, Pastor Gierach was for many years a district executive; I saw him as recently as February at the installation of the new Edmonton seminary president. We will include his name again on the list in the *Convention Workbook* of 2017, but I didn't want to neglect mentioning our thanks to God for this faithful servant along with those already listed. We pray with the ancients: *"Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord; and may perpetual light shine upon him."*

I want to underline a concern I already discussed in detail in Part 1 of my report, but it bears repeating on this first full Convention day as we begin our work together. Many times those who love the church express a similar lament, whether it's in a local congregation, a circuit, in a district, or even on the synodical level. We would like to see new faces in leadership, and especially from the rising generation. If that is really true, then we need to do some thinking, and some concrete homework. This will not happen automatically. First of all, when we're considering choosing delegates for a gathering like this in the future, let's pray to the Lord that He would bring people to mind, and also that He would begin to put it into the hearts of able people to consider serving Christ in this way. If you and I come to meetings of an electoral circuit and give the matter little thought until the moment comes to choose delegates, it's far too easy to plug the hole by resorting time and again to the same names we used in the past. I do not want to be misunderstood in this! We need people of maturity and experience for our tasks; God has given us a number of them. But we also need to introduce new people into the decision-making process of the Synod and its districts to serve alongside the experienced ones, so that they can be

mentored, and so that new energy and longtime wisdom can work hand-in-hand to help us.

The same is true of seeking candidates to serve with boards and commissions of the church. The Lord has given us able young adults and also very faithful and articulate women who could make a real contribution to the body of Christ. Such people need to loom larger in our life together. We can begin already at this Convention to be on the lookout for them and to give them an opportunity to serve as the Lord moves you. I have never favoured the introduction of "quota systems" when it comes to involving certain groups or classes of people in the governing structures of the church. That is the way of the Law, in my view. However, it does make sense for us to cultivate a mindset and an eye to be aware of how the Lord may be ready to use new brothers and sisters in our leadership. I ask you to be prayerfully mindful of such things, both during these days in Vancouver, next year as we move toward the district conventions, and in the years to come.

We are repeating at this gathering the basic time schedule we first used three years ago in Hamilton. We've structured these recent Conventions to be shorter. Yes, we're prompted by stewardship considerations, because it makes sense to house and feed people for a briefer period of time if that is possible. It's also clear that, if we want to involve more young and working-age participants, it's more likely to happen if they have to ask for less time away from their regular jobs. A brief Convention requires a certain discipline, however. Please come promptly to our sessions. Please don't absent yourselves from the discussions unless you're with a resolutions committee or have a compelling need to be away. Please resist the temptation to make lengthy speeches, especially if the point you represent has already been made very nicely by someone else before you. And please don't give way to a weakness I saw when I attended my own first Synod convention back in 1983 when we were still with mother Missouri; to tie up time with amendments that may not really be substantial, just because the wording that came down from the resolutions committee wasn't your preferred way of phrasing things in every detail. I have confidence in this assembly as a whole that God will help us know how to preserve the balance between rushing things through uncritically and nit-picking in a way that is not really constructive.

I'd like to encourage you who are first-time delegates especially to not let yourselves get "spooked" by the old crocks – I think that means me – you see hanging

around here. Ask questions when you need to. If you want help navigating a certain discussion, or making a useful motion, and all the rest, just say so, and we'll do what we can to help you. We operate with parliamentary procedure to protect everybody's rights and interests, but underneath it all, friends, this is a "family meeting." Family members don't always have to see everything in precisely the same way, but I hope the family character of this gathering will saturate the atmosphere so that it will even sweeten our wrestling over a given question, if indeed wrestling is needed.

Permit me now to say some things about the theme of this Tenth Convention, and how it ties in with the focus of our last assembly three years ago. I have never thought of myself as an expert in marketing. When it comes time to select themes for conventions, words of Scripture seem like a far better focus than anything I would concoct. So we met in 2011 under the word of Psalm 36:9, "*In Your light, we see light.*" We were talking, not so much about the doctrine of Scripture, its inspiration, authority, and the like. But we focused on the practical use of God's Word, questions of Biblical literacy, and so forth. I remain greatly concerned that we have a long way to go in this matter. Many of our active Lutheran church people simply do not live in the Word of God, and have very little knowledge of its message. If we dare to wonder why we struggle at times with stewardship weakness, lack of eyes and hearts for outreach, discord within congregations (sometimes over very petty things), and an inability for individual believers to diagnose the mindset of the world around them so as to make a faithful response in their own thoughts and conduct, the reasons should not be hard to find. Every major weakness with which we struggle can somehow be traced to a neglect of God's Word, in my estimation.

But reading and studying Scripture must never become merely an academic effort, where people master facts and talk *about* divine things as though Christian living primarily consisted in theoretical discussions on religious topics. Word and prayer go together. So at this Tenth Convention we highlight David's words in Psalm 65:2, "*O You Who hear prayer, to You all men will come.*" The God and Father of Jesus Christ is always more ready to listen than we often have been to speak to Him. As our local congregations become more and more assemblies of the faithful where people are rooted each day in the words that proceed from the mouth of God; and as those congregations are places marked by rich prayers of penitence, thanksgiving, and intercession, both in public services and in the private

devotional lives of their members, they will be the sort of seedbed where believers will be nurtured. And they will breathe the kind of authenticity the Lord uses to draw new people to Christ. The challenges of following Jesus Christ in this society are deep and complex. You and I shall have to aim deep to meet them. Marketing strategies alone will never accomplish this. It will take nothing less than living by Word and prayer.

Just in the past few weeks, my good friend Dr. Ian Adnams shared with me an article published by the Canadian Bible Forum and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. LCC has observer status with that latter organization. Under the title *Confidence, Conversation and Community*, it reported the results of a Bible engagement study carried out in Canada in 2013. On the one hand, the findings in the report are rather chilling: Only 14% of Canadian Christians (I'm not speaking of Canadians in general, but of Canadian Christians) bother to read Scripture on even a once-weekly basis. Weekly Scripture reading among Christians in this country has fallen by half since 1996. Hand-in-hand with this neglect there is a sharp decline in faithful worship attendance, and a startling decline even in the number of self-identified Christian people who believe that Christianity can make distinctive truth claims in comparison with other religious systems. Sobering as all of that is, there is encouragement in it if one flips the coin over to the positive side, where indications are these: People who read and meditate on the Word, and who also talk about it with others, remain remarkably confident in the teachings of the Christian faith, and far more faithful in their commitment to worship. In other words, you and I don't have to dream up magic new recipes of our own invention to revitalize the church. The deeper cure was already recorded by Moses long ago: "*These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up*" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

For the second time in a row, I have traveled to a Synod Convention in a van all the way from Winnipeg. This has one practical side, compared to shipping all our office supplies in containers. When we were packing the vehicle last Monday morning, we could include last minute items more easily. But I treasure these long road trips for other reasons. They give me opportunity as we travel to prepare a bit more for our days together, to pray and reflect. Canadian highways are a great teacher. They remind you just how far-flung this land of ours is, and in just what isolation many of our pastors, deacons and

congregations have to do their work. When my friend, Dwayne Cleave, and I pass one of our own church buildings along the way, it does me good to actually picture yet another house of God and a community which I have only known as a name in a directory up to now, in some cases.

Even outside the business sessions of this Convention, I hope you will take time to enter into the worlds of other people you meet here, whether they are long-lost acquaintances or friends you're meeting for the first time. Do everything you can to take an interest in their lives and work, to pray with them as you have opportunity, and to see to it that this gathering is used for comfort and encouragement, not just for legislating.

I take this opportunity to thank the members of the Synod for their intercessory prayers on my behalf, and for all the things you have said and done to support me since I came to office in 2008. For every way I have not kept up with the work which has been expected of me, and for any way in which I may have disappointed and grieved you, I ask your forgiveness and patience. If the Lord keeps me in this role I shall try to do better. In the meantime, I call upon Him, the Father of Jesus Christ, to bless and guide our thinking, speaking and listening for these days we now have as a gracious gift.

Robert Bugbee, President
June 7, 2014

**Come to Him Who Answers Prayer
Lutheran Church–Canada
Tenth Convention
Convention Minutes**

**Friday, June 6, 2014
Session 1**

The chairman, President Bugbee, called the first session to order at 4:30 p.m., and opened with prayer.

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. Don Schiemann, president of the ABC District, welcomed the convention to the ABC District and UBC, BC.

Convention orientation followed.

Special Standing Rules were announced.

Motion: To adopt the Special Standing Rules.

Action: Adopted

Motion: To adopt the amended Agenda.

Action: Adopted

The convention session closed with prayer by the convention chaplain.

**Saturday, June 7, 2014
Session 2**

Devotion

Pastor Paul Roggow, Vancouver, BC, opened the session with prayer and led the opening devotion based on Romans 8:22-23.

Essay (I) – Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

His essay was based on the theme passage from Psalm 65:2, and can be found in the Proceedings.

Registration Committee Report

Delegates:	Voting:	99
	Advisory:	39
	<u>Guests and Registered Visitors:</u>	<u>51</u>
	Total	189

Nominations/Elections #1

The name of Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee was placed into nomination for the office of President of Lutheran Church–Canada.

There were no other nominations brought forward.

Ballot Election of President

WHEREAS: Through the nomination procedure no nomination has been received and accepted other than the nomination of the current president, and

WHEREAS: 2.5.05a of the Bylaws of the Handbook provides that Voting Delegates are entitled to vote for one

RESOLVED: of the Candidates for President, therefore be it That all voting delegates waive their entitlement to vote for a Candidate for President of Lutheran Church-Canada and acclaim the Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee as President of Lutheran Church-Canada for the 2014-2017 term of office.

Motion: to acclaim the Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee as President of Lutheran Church-Canada for the 2014-2017 term of office.

Action: **Adopted**

The Rev. Nolan Astley, acting chair, declared the Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee elected President of Lutheran Church-Canada.

President's Report, Part 2

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

The Nominations Committee was called forward and put forth the following names for the office of Vice President of Lutheran Church-Canada:

East:

Rev. Nolan Astley

Central:

Rev. Rudy Pastucha

Rev. Mark L. Smith

ABC:

Rev. David Bode

Rev. Thomas Kruesel

The slate will be prepared for voting.

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Kurt Buchholz, President of the International Lutheran Laymen's League.

Rev. Cliff Haberstock, Concordia Lutheran Mission Society

The ballot for Vice-President was presented.

Treasurer Dwayne Cleave addressed the convention and reminded the delegates that any resolutions brought forward that involve Synodical expense must have the estimated cost and revenue plan attached. He also explained the convention expense voucher given to the delegates.

Resolutions Committee 2 was called forward.

Resolution 14.2.01A To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)

Motion: **To Adopt Resolution 14.2.01A To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)**

Action:

The Elections Committee brought in the report on the election of Vice Presidents:

ABC:	David Bode	37
	Thomas Kruesel	58
CENTRAL:	Rudy Pastucha	40
	Mark L. Smith	55
EAST:	Nolan Astley	94

The Chairman declared Thomas Kruesel (ABC), Mark L. Smith (Central) and Nolan Astley (East) to be elected Vice

Presidents of LCC.

The ranking ballot for 1st Vice President was distributed.

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Robert Granke, Executive Director Canadian Lutheran World Relief

The Elections Committee brought in the report on the election of 1st Vice President.

ABC:	Thomas Kruesel	24
CENTRAL:	Mark L. Smith	16
EAST:	Nolan Astley	56

The Chairman declared Nolan Astley (East) to be elected 1st Vice President of LCC.

The noonday prayer was given by the Chaplain.

Information Sessions:

The Saturday afternoon sessions were the following information sessions:

1. Theology and Church Relations
2. Prayer
3. Bible Reading
4. Intercultural Ministry
5. LCC Missions
6. Finding and Sustaining Funding
7. Congregational Outreach

SESSION 3

The ranking ballot for 2nd Vice-President was distributed.

The Nominations Committee was called forward and put forth the following names for the Board of Directors of Lutheran Church-Canada.

Board of Directors (Amended)

Required: 3 lay people-1 Central District (nominate 2), 2 East District (nominate 4); 1 pastor at large (nominate 2)

Clergy: Rev. Mark Danielson, Rev. Dr. Kevin Fast (East), Rev. David Milette (East), Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

Lay: Arnold Drung (East), Herb Wildeman (Central), Cindy Scholdice (Central), Alan Schmitt (East)

Motion: Add Rev. Mark Danielson

Action: Adopted

Motion: Add Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

Action: Adopted

Resolutions Committee 1 was called forward.

Resolution 14.1.01 To Grant Auxiliary Status to the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.1.01 To Grant Auxiliary Status to the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada

Action: Adopted

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Stephen Klinck, Director of the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada.

Resolution 14.1.05 Response to Recent RCMP Tragedy in Moncton

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.1.05 LCC Response to Recent RCMP Tragedy In Moncton

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.02 To Review our Present Call Procedure

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.1.02 to Review our Present Call Procedure

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.03 To Respectfully Decline Overture 1.03

Motion: To Substitute the original overture 1.03

Action: Defeated

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.1.03 To Respectfully Decline Overture 1.03

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.04a To Encourage Deeper Teaching and Pastoral Care on Issues of Human Sexuality

Motion: To add "*the official positions of other church bodies and*" to the 2nd whereas

Motion: To Substitute Original Overture 1.04

Action: Defeated

Action: Adopted

Motion: To Add a Final Resolved "that Lutheran Church Canada prepare a response."

Action: Defeated

Motion: To Adopt Amended Resolution 14.1.04a to Encourage Deeper Teaching and Pastoral Care on Issues of Human Sexuality

Action: Adopted

The Elections Committee reported on the second ballot for the ranking of V.P.s

Rev. Thomas Kruesel 52

Rev. Mark L. Smith 36

The Chairman declared Rev. Thomas Kruesel to be the second vice president of LCC and Rev. Mark L. Smith as 3rd vice president of LCC.

The ballot for LCC Board of Directors was distributed.

Resolutions Committee #3 was called forward.

Resolution 14.3.16 To Receive the Three Year Work Program. Years ending January 31, 2015, January 31, 2016, and January 31, 2017

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.16 To Receive the Three Year Work Program- Years Ending January 31, 2015, January 31, 2016, and January 31, 2017

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.12 To Provide for Diaconal Service on Synod Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Motion: To Adopt Amended Resolution 14.3.12 To Provide for Diaconal Service on Synod Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Motion: To amend the resolution with "two rostered workers at least one of whom must be a

pastor” instead of “one pastor and one deacon”

Action: Adopted

Motion: To call the question.

Action: Adopted

Action: Adopted

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Rev. David Altus, District President, Lutheran Church of Australia

The Dinner Prayer was given by the Chaplain.

SESSION 4

The Elections Committee brought in the report on the election of Board of Directors of LCC.

Clergy:	Rev. Mark Danielson	25
	Rev. Kevin Fast	7
	Rev. David Milette	13
	Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	46
Lay:	Arnold Drung	89
	Herb Wildeman	25
	Cindy Sholdice	68
	Alan Schmitt	85

The Chairman declared Cindy Scholdice (Central), Arnold Drung (East), Alan Schmitt (East) to be elected members of the Board of Directors of LCC.

The second ballot for clergy representation on the Board of Directors of LCC was distributed.

Commission on Adjudication

Required: 1 lay person ABC (nominate 2), 1 pastor Central (nominate 2), 1 pastor East (nominate 2)

Clergy: Rev. Harold Borchardt (Central), Rev. Richard Frey (East)

Deacon: Monica Schultz (ABC)

Motion: The delegates will waive their right to vote and declare elected those nominated on the slate.

Action: Adopted

The Chairman declared Rev. Harold Borchardt (Central), Rev. Richard Frey (East) and Deacon Monica Schultz (ABC) as members of the Board of Adjudication for LCC.

Resolutions Committee #3 was called forward.

Resolution 14.3.01 To Provide for Alternate Means of Transmitting Nomination Ballots

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.01 To Provide for Alternate Means of Transmitting Nomination Ballots

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.02 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for the Synodical Planning Council

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.02 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for the Synodical Planning

Council**Motion: To Strike “every six years” and return to “triennially”****Action: Defeated****Action: Adopted****The Elections Committee brought in the report on the election of Board of Directors of LCC.**

Clergy: Rev. Mark Danielson 34

Rev. Kurt Reinhardt 61

The Chairman declared Rev. Kurt Reinhardt as member of the Board of Directors of LCC.**Resolution 14.3.03 a To Amend the LCC Constitution To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*****Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.03 a To Amend the LCC Constitution To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*****Action: Adopted****Resolution 14.3.03 b To Amend the LCC Bylaws To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*****Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.03b To Amend the LCC Bylaws To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*****Action: Adopted****Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and Commissions****Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and Commissions****Motion: Remove 2nd Resolved****Action:****Action:****Motion: To Refer Resolution 14.3.04a back to Resolution Committee #3****Action: Adopted****Resolution 14.3.05 To Streamline the Colloquy Process****Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.05 To Streamline the Colloquy Process****Action: Adopted****The Elections Committee****Commission on Theology and Church Relations**

Required: 2 rostered workers of which one must be a pastor (nominate 4), 1 lay person (nominate 2)

Rostered Worker: Rev. Joel Kuhl (East), Rev. Colin Liske (ABC) (withdrawn), Rev. James Heinbuch (East), Deacon Jennifer Shack (East), Deacon David Farber (East)

Lay: Cliff Pyle (Central)

Motion: To amend the slate to include Cliff Pyle and Rev. James Heinbuch**Action: Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)

Motion: To Substitute Overture 3.07

Motion: To Amend Substitute Overture 3.07 To Permit Rostered Workers To Nominate Circuit Counsellors

Action: Defeated

Action: Defeated

Motion: To Refer Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors) to Resolutions Committee #3

Action: Defeated

Motion: To Postpone Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors) until committee has had time to consult.

Action: Adopted

Vice-President Rudy Pastucha shared a note from President Emeritus Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman.

The Convention Chaplain closed the session with prayer.

**Sunday, June 8, 2014
SESSION 5**

The Convention Chaplain opened the session with prayer.

The ballot for representation on the CTCR was distributed.

East:

Rostered Worker: Deacon David Faerber, Rev. Jim Heinbuch, Rev. Joel Kuhl, Deacon Jennifer Shack

Central:

Lay Person: Cliff Pyle

The nominations committee provided the following slate for Board of Regents, CLS.

Board of Regents – (CLS) Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alta.

Required: 2 rostered workers of which one must be a pastor and 1 lay person in which two from ABC and one from Central are required.

Rostered Worker: Rev. Daryl Solie (Central), Rev. Scott Lyons (ABC), Rev. Peter Van Katwyk (ABC)

Lay: Ian Lande (ABC), Natalie Keith (Central)

The nominations committee provided the following slate for Board of Regents, CLTS.

Board of Regents – (CLTS) Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ont.

Required: 2 rostered workers of which one must be a pastor and 1 lay person in which one from Central and two from East are required.

Rostered Worker: Rev. Cameron Schnarr (Central), Rev. David Saar (East) *Rev Dan Abraham (East)*

Lay: Andrew Jackson (East), *Doris Schaeffer (East), Bruno Korst (East)*

Motion: To amend the slate with the following names – Rev. Dan Abraham (East), Doris Schaeffer (East), Bruno Korst (East)

Action: Adopted

ESSAY – Deacon Jennifer Shack

Deacon Jennifer Shack shared about the creation of the LCC diaconate, biblical support for the diaconate, and the contributions of the diaconate for the church. Her presentation can be found in the Proceedings.

The election committee shared the following results:

East:		
Rostered Worker:	Deacon David Faerber	11
	Rev. Jim Heinbuch	56
	Rev. Joel Kuhl	67
	Deacon Jennifer Shack	50
Central:		
Lay Person:	Cliff Pyle	88

The Chairman declared Rev. Joel Kuhl, Rev. James Heinbuch, and Cliff Pyle as members of the CTCR.

The ballot for Board of Regents, CLS, was distributed.

Motion: To extend the time to carry out the next ballot.

Action: Adopted

The ballot for Board of Regents, CLTS, was distributed.

The Convention Chaplain closed the session with prayer.

SESSION 6

The Convention Chaplain opened the session with prayer.

The elections committee reported the following results:

Board of Regents – (CLS) Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alta.		
Rostered Worker:	Rev. Daryl Solie	72
	Rev. Scott Lyons	65
	Rev. Peter Van Katwyk	55
Lay:	Ian Lande	51
	Natalie Keith	46

The chairman declared Rev. Daryl Solie, Rev. Scott Lyons, and Ian Lande as members of the Board of Regents of CLS.

The elections committee reported the following results:

Board of Regents – (CLTS) Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ont.		
Rostered Worker:	Rev. Cameron Schnarr	86
	Rev. David Saar	50
	Rev Dan Abraham	56
Lay:	Andrew Jackson	19
	Doris Schaeffer	22
	Bruno Korst	55

The chairman declared Rev. Cameron Schnarr, Rev. Dan Abraham, and Bruno Korst as members of the Board of

Regents of CLTS.

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, President of the LCMS.

Resolutions Committee #2 was called forward.

Resolution 14.2.01a To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)

Motion: to Adopt Resolution 14.2.01a To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)

Minor editorial change was made deleting original “j.” and adding “2 of whom shall be LCC Lutherans,” to the former “k,” which now becomes the new “j.”.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.03a To Include the “Pastors With Alternate Training” (PAT) Program in the Synodical Handbook

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.03a To Include The “Pastors With Alternate Training” (PAT) Program In The Synodical Handbook

The chair declared, with convention approval, to remove from 5.137.c. “: *Catechist, Lector, Deacon, and Vicar.*”

Motion: To amend 5.135.c. to read “Upon completing the interview, the district president will make a recommendation to the COP regarding the granting of PAT site status to the congregation/community of faith.”

Motion: To amend the amendment “To amend 5.135.c. to read “Upon completing the interview, the district president will make a recommendation to the COP regarding the granting of PAT site status. ~~to the congregation/community of faith.~~”

Action: Adopted

Motion: To amend 5.135.2. to read “*Transcripts of the candidate’s secondary and post-secondary training and a description of non-credit academic work done by the candidate; and*”

Action: Defeated

The chairman declared that the mover of the original amendment to the Motion accepted the amendment to his amendment as the final form of the Motion.

Action: The Original Motion with the amendment to the amendment was adopted

The chairman recognized additions to the Board of Directors - Arnold Drung, Rev. Paul Schallhorn, and Grace Henderson. He also recognized the out-going Board of Directors members: Rev. Karl Keller, Anne Taylor, Lorne Wirth, and Frank Belden.

Resolution 14.2.06 To Clarify the Vision and Direction of the Church Work Programs at Concordia University College of Alberta

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.06 To Clarify the Vision and Direction of the Church Work Programs at Concordia University College of Alberta.

Motion: To amend the final resolved to read “that the Convention direct the Board of Directors to allocate a ~~minimum of 25%~~ *portion* of its higher education budget to church work programs at CUCA.”

Action: Defeated

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.07 To Support the Chaplaincy Program at Concordia University College of Alberta

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.07 To Support the Chaplaincy Program at Concordia University College of Alberta

Motion: to amend the final resolved to read “that the convention encourage CUCA to seek out a cost-sharing relationship with the Districts and the Synod Board of Directors.”

Action: Adopted

Action: Adopted

Resolutions Committee #3 was called forward.

Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)

Motion: To table Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and Commissions

Motion: to adopt Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and Commissions

Motion: To remove the 2nd resolved.

Action: Defeated

Action: Defeated

Resolution 14.3.14b To Study and Provide For Diaconal Voting At Synod and District Conventions

Motion: to adopt Resolution 14.3.14b To Study and Provide For Diaconal Voting At Synod and District Conventions

Motion: to add a 2nd resolved between the existing resolveds ”that the CTCR have opportunity to have input on this issue to the CCMS;”

Action: Adopted

Action: Adopted

The chairman acknowledged the help and presence of Synod President Emeritus Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan.

Greetings

Greetings were brought by:

Rev. Dr. Ralph Mayan, Synod President Emeritus, LCC

Rev. Dr. David Wendell, Assistant to Bishop, NALC

Rev. Dr. James Gimbel, President of CLS

Rev. Dr. Thomas Winger, President of CLTS

Paul Rainford, FaithLife Financial

Remarks

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, Synod President, LCC

The Convention Chaplain closed the session with prayer.

**Monday, June 9, 2014
SESSION 7**

Devotion

Pastor Paul Roggow, Vancouver, BC, led the opening devotion for the session. Bishop Altus from the LCA gave the homily based on John 3:16-21.

The nominations and elections committees were brought forward and recognized by the Convention.

Essay (III) – Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

His essay continued on the theme passage from Psalm 65:2, and can be found in the Proceedings.

Greetings

Rev. Vanarith, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cambodia
Iris Barta, President of Lutheran Women’s Missionary League–Canada

Motion: To destroy our ballots.

Action: Adopted

Resolutions Committee #2 was called to the floor.

Resolution 14.2.05a To Amend Various Provisions of Synodical Bylaws, Section VI

Motion: To Adopt Resolution 14.2.05a To Amend Various Provisions of Synodical Bylaws, Section VI

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.08 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS), Edmonton and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS), St. Catharines

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.08 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS), Edmonton and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS), St. Catharines

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.02 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia University College of Alberta

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.02 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia University College of Alberta

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.04 To Decline Overture 2.04, “To Close our LCC Seminaries”

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.2.04 to Decline Overture 2.04, “To Close our LCC Seminaries”

Action: Adopted

Resolutions Committee #2 was dismissed with thanks.

Resolutions Committee #3 was called to the floor.

Resolution 14.3.15a To Amend the LCC Constitution Regarding Voting Rights For Parishes

Motion: To adopt Resolution 14.3.15a To Amend the LCC Constitution Regarding Voting Rights For Parishes

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.08 To Use More Consistent Terminology Relating to Rostered Workers

Motion: to adopt Resolution 14.3.08 To Use More Consistent Terminology Relating to Rostered

Action: **Workers
Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.09 **To Clarify the Circuit Counsellor’s Relationship to Deacons in His Circuit**

Motion: **to adopt Resolution 14.3.09 To Clarify the Circuit Counsellor’s Relationship to Deacons in his Circuit**

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.10 **To Amend Bylaw Provisions for Diaconal Training**

Motion: **to adopt Resolution 14.3.10 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for Diaconal Training**

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.11 **To Decline Overture 3.12 (To Recognize Diaconal Service in Schools as well as Parishes)**

Motion: **to adopt Resolution 14.3.11 to decline Overture 3.12 (To Recognize Diaconal Service in Schools as well as Parishes)**

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.13 **To Develop Ways Other than an Assessment for Implementing Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report**

Motion: **to adopt Resolution 14.3.13 To Develop Ways Other than an Assessment for Implementing Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report**

Motion: to substitute the following:

To start the work of the Vicarage Placement fund

Whereas **Resolution 11.2.03 of the 2011 Lutheran Church-Canada (To Implement the Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force) was adopted as presented to said Convention, and**

Whereas **Resolution 11.2.03 tasked the LCC Board of Directors with “the development and implementation of a synodical system of subsidizing vicarages” by the creation of a Vicarage Placement Fund, fed yearly by assessment of LCC congregations; and**

Whereas **congregations receiving vicars from our two seminaries (as well as from the seminaries of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod), to this date, continue to bear the bulk of the program’s costs, sometimes at detriment to their own finances; therefore be it**

Resolved **that the Board of Directors again be tasked with the development and implementation of the Vicarage Placement Fund, both by yearly assessment and by specific fundraising efforts, with the intent of lowering said assessments for all congregations.**

Action: **Defeated**

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.07 **To Amend Bylaw Provisions Governing Frequency of Circuit Forums**

Motion: **to adopt Resolution 14.3.07 To Amend Bylaw Provisions Governing Frequency of Circuit Forums**

Action: **Adopted**

Resolutions Committee #3 was dismissed with thanks.

Resolutions Committee #1 was dismissed with thanks.

Registration Committee Report

Delegates:	Voting:	99
	Advisory:	43 (+4)
	<u>Guests and Registered Visitors:</u>	<u>63 (+12)</u>
	Total	205

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the first 6 sessions of the Convention.

Action: Adopted

Thanks was given to the convention workers.

The Convention Chaplain closed the session with prayer.

The Chairman offered some final comments.

The Convention sang a closing hymn.

Motion: to adjourn the Convention.

Action: Adopted

The Chairman declared the Convention closed in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Paul Schallhorn

Summary of Elections

President

Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee

Vice-Presidents

First Vice-President	Rev. Nolan Astley
Second Vice-President	Rev. Thomas Kruesel
Third Vice-President	Rev. Mark L. Smith

Board of Directors

Arnold Drung
Cindy Scholdice
Alan Schmitt
Kurt Reinhardt

Board of Regents, Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta

Ian Lande
Scott Lyons
Daryl Solie

Board of Regents, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario

Dan Abraham
Bruno Korst
Cameron Schnarr

Commission on Adjudication

Harold Borchardt
Richard Frey
Monica Schultz

Commission on Theology and Church Relations

James Heinbuch
Joel Kuhl
Cliff Pyle

Election Results

Ballot 1 Vice President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. David Bode	37	
Rev. Thomas Kruesel	58	Elected
Rev. Mark L. Smith	55	Elected
Rev. Rudy Pastucha	40	
Rev. Nolan Astley	94	Elected

Ballot 2 Vice President	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Thomas Kruesel	24	
Rev. Mark L. Smith	16	
Nolan Astley	56	Elected 1 st Vice President

Ballot 1 Ranking of V.P	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Thomas Kruesel	52	Elected 2 nd Vice President
Rev. Mark L. Smith	36	Elected 3 rd Vice President

Ballot 1 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
Mark Danielson	25	
Kevin Fast	7	
David Milette	13	
Kurt Reinhardt	46	
Arnold Drung (East)	89	Elected
Herb Wildeman	25	
Cindy Sholdice (Central)	68	Elected
Alan Schmitt (East)	85	Elected

Ballot 2 Board of Directors	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Mark Danielson	34	
Rev. Kurt Reinhardt	61	Elected

Ballot 1 Commission on Adjudication	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Harold Borchardt (Central)		Elected
Rev. Richard Frey (East)		Elected
Monica Schultz (ABC)		Elected

Ballot 1 Commission on Theology and Church Relations	Votes Received	Result
Deacon David Faerber	11	
Rev. Jim Heinbuch	56	Elected
Rev. Joel Kuhl	67	Elected
Deacon Jennifer Shack	50	
Cliff Pyle	88	Elected

Ballot 1 BoR CLS Edmonton	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Daryl Solie	72	Elected
Rev. Scott Lyons	65	Elected
Rev. Peter Van Katwyk	55	
Ian Lande	51	Elected
Natalie Keith	46	

Ballot 1 BoR CLTS St. Catharines	Votes Received	Result
Rev. Cameron Schnarr	86	Elected
Rev. David Saar	50	
Rev. Dan Abraham	56	Elected
Andrew Jackson	19	
Doris Schaeffer	22	
Bruno Korst	55	Elected

Summary of Resolutions

- Resolution 14.1.01 To Grant Auxiliary Status to the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.1.02 To Review our Present Call Procedure
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.1.03 To Respectfully Decline Overture 1.03
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.1.04a To Encourage Deeper Teaching and Pastoral Care on Issues of Human Sexuality
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.01a To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.02 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia University College of Alberta
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.03a To Include the "Pastors with Alternate Training" (PAT) Program in the Synodical Handbook
ACTION: The Original Motion with the Amendment to the Amendment was Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.04 To Decline Overture 2.04, "To Close our LCC Seminaries"
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.05a To Amend Various Provisions of Synodical Bylaws, Section VI
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.06 To Clarify the Vision and Direction of the Church Work Programs at Concordia University College of Alberta
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.07 To Support the Chaplaincy Program at Concordia University College of Alberta
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.2.08 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS), Edmonton and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS), St. Catharines
ACTION: Adopted

- Resolution 14.3.01 To Provide for Alternate Means of Transmitting Nomination Ballots
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.02 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for the Synodical Planning Council
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.03a To Amend the LCC Constitution To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized
in Electronic and Print Editions of The Canadian Lutheran
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.03 b To Amend the LCC Bylaws To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized
in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and
Commissions
ACTION: Defeated
- Resolution 14.3.05 To Streamline the Colloquy Process
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.07 To Amend Bylaw Provisions Governing Frequency of Circuit Forums
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.08 To Use More Consistent Terminology Relating to Rostered Workers
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.09 To Clarify the Circuit Counsellor's Relationship to Deacons in His Circuit
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.10 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for Diaconal Training
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.11 To Decline Overture 3.12 (To Recognize Diaconal Service in Schools as well as
Parishes)
ACTION: Adopted
- Resolution 14.3.12 To Provide for Diaconal Service on Synod Boards, Commissions, and Committees
ACTION: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.13 To Develop Ways Other than an Assessment for Implementing Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report

ACTION: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.14b To Study and Provide For Diaconal Voting At Synod and District Conventions

ACTION: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.15a To Amend the LCC Constitution Regarding Voting Rights For Parishes

ACTION: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.16 To Receive the Three Year Work Program-Years Ending January 31, 2015, January 31, 2015, January 31, 2016, and January 31, 2017

ACTION: Adopted

Resolutions

Resolution 14.1.01 To Grant Auxiliary Status to the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada

Reference: Overture 1.01

- WHEREAS the International Lutheran Laymen's League is an official auxiliary of LCC but the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada is not; and
- WHEREAS it is only fitting that the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada be granted the same status in LCC; and
- WHEREAS the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada has petitioned the Board of Directors of LCC for auxiliary status in LCC;
- WHEREAS The Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada meets the requirements for auxiliary status in Lutheran Church Canada as stated on p. 87, Section XIII, subsection 13.01 of the Synod Handbook; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Synod in convention grant the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada auxiliary status in LCC; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that LCC give thanks to God for the ongoing work of the Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.02 To Review our Present Call Procedure

Reference: Overture 1.02

- WHEREAS Congregations have requested that LCC initiate actions to review the current information provided to calling congregations regarding pastors and deacons; and
- WHEREAS the information provided to congregations has been found to be, in some cases, out of date, inaccurate, and ambiguous; and
- WHEREAS in some cases the theological and practical natures of the divine call and the diaconal call are not adequately presented to and reviewed with our calling congregations; and
- WHEREAS the district presidents and/or their representatives have an active role in the call process; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that district presidents encourage pastors and deacons in their districts to keep their Pastoral and Diaconal Information and Self-Evaluation Forms current; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the district presidents and/or their representatives provide and present materials to assist congregations in understanding the nature of the divine call and the diaconal call.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.03 To Respectfully Decline Overture 1.03

Reference: Overture 1.03

- WHEREAS licenses are available to reproduce material contained in Lutheran Worship for a reasonable fee; and
- WHEREAS CPH is following standard practice in the publishing industry; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that we respectfully decline Overture 1.03

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.1.04a To Encourage Deeper Teaching and Pastoral Care on Issues of Human Sexuality

Reference: Overture 1.04

- WHEREAS World Pride 2014 in Toronto, along with other similar events, continue to trouble and dishearten Christians who are committed to the Scripture's clear message on marriage and human sexuality; and
- WHEREAS This is not a one-time challenge confined to a single place, but is part of a larger ongoing decay in Christian values and mindset in Canadian society, as evidenced also in *the official positions of other church bodies and* institutions of public education and the media; and
- WHEREAS Young people and others in our congregations can be easily confused and poorly equipped to respond to these developments, even in their own minds and personal conduct; and
- WHEREAS In addition to the Synod's positions affirming traditional marriage and the Bible's teaching on human sexuality, there is need also for support and guidance to be offered those who struggle with sexual temptation and sin and yet want to live a faithful life in accordance with God's Word; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that the Synod encourage its pastors and congregations to provide ongoing preaching and teaching to point out ways in which a number of current societal trends represent a rejection of God's revealed will, and to issue a constant call to repentance so that they receive the assurance of the forgiveness of Christ; and be it further
- RESOLVED that pastors and congregations be implored to provide responsible pastoral care for people who may struggle with sexual temptation and sin of many kinds, but who need strength and support to live a Biblically faithful life in these matters; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents assume leadership in equipping pastors and congregations of the Synod with tangible resources toward a needed, ongoing and comprehensive approach to proclaiming God's Word and will in our difficult times.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.01a To Clarify Membership on the Board of Governors, Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)

Reference: Overture 2.01

- WHEREAS Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA) is a public post-secondary institution , established by Lutheran Church-Canada and incorporated in the Province of Alberta under the —CUCA Act, 1978” as a public post-secondary institution being designated by law as an —Independent Academic Institution,” and
- WHEREAS the CUCA Act authorizes the Board of Concordia University College to determine its composition and appoint its members, and
- WHEREAS the current Handbook of Lutheran Church Canada does not reflect the current governance structure of CUCA; therefore be it
- RESOLVED Synodical Bylaw 6.01. b and d be removed from the Synodical Bylaws; and be it further
- RESOLVED that Chapter VI of the Handbook be divided into 2 sections: Section 1 to deal with the seminaries established by Lutheran Church-Canada and to include all the current content of chapter VI, except 6.01 b and d; and Section 2 to deal with CUCA; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the following be placed into the Handbook as Section 2 of Chapter VI:

Concordia University College of Alberta

- a. CUCA is a public post-secondary institution, established by Lutheran Church – Canada and incorporated in the Province of Alberta under the —Concordia University College of Alberta Act” (CUCA Act) as a public post-secondary institution being designated by law as an —Independent Academic Institution.”
- b. The CUCA Act authorizes the Board of Concordia University College to determine its composition and appoint its members.
- c. The CUCA Act empowers the board to approve, amend or repeal its corporate bylaws

6.103 Board of Governors

The ecclesiastical bond that exists between CUCA and LCC means a voluntary association between Concordia University College of Alberta, Lutheran Church-Canada and other entities that have accepted the doctrines, principles and religious standards of Synod, and seek to uphold a common confessional position.

The Board of Governors of CUCA shall consist of the following members appointed by the board:

- a. Chair of the Board
- b. Chancellor
- c. President & Vice Chancellor
- d. 2 CUCA Alumni nominated by the Concordia Alumni Association
- e. 1 Academic Staff Member who is a member of and nominated by the Faculty Association
- f. President of the Concordia Students' Association and one additional student nominated by the Concordia Students' Association
- g. President of the Graduate Students' Association of CUCA
- h. One member of the non-academic staff nominated by the non-academic staff
- i. The President of the Alberta-British Columbia District of the Synod of LCC
- j. Not more than nine members representative of the general public, *2 of whom shall be LCC Lutherans*, in addition to the chair, appointed by the Board, with due consideration given to the appointment of individuals who will uphold CUCA's ecclesiastical bond with the Synod

6.105 Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the following responsibilities:

- a. To exercise all powers necessary to meet the statutory objects of the institution, to fulfill its obligations to the people of Alberta, and to identify and comply with all legal, financial and governance obligations required of the Board of a publicly funded university college of the Independent Academic Institution sector of Alberta Post-Secondary Education.
- b. Uphold CUCA's ecclesiastical bond with Lutheran Church-Canada and with other entities which have accepted the principles, doctrines and religious standards of the Synod as set out in its Constitution and Synodical Bylaws.
- c. Ensure the institution's long-term independence, success, viability and welfare.
- d. Appoint, support and assess the performance of the President.
- e. Ensure fiscal integrity, preserve institutional assets, provide fiduciary oversight, monitor performance, borrow money, ensure adequate financial controls and reporting engage with auditors, review audit results, approve financial statements and identify and manage institutional risks.
- f. Establish and maintain a principled culture and Christian standards of ethics and conduct.

Minor editorial change was made deleting original ~~–j–~~ and adding ~~–2–~~ of whom shall be LCC Lutherans," to the former ~~–k–~~ which now becomes the new ~~–j–~~.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.02 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia University College of Alberta

Reference: Overture 2.02

- WHEREAS the faculty and staff of Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA) have been consistently serving CUCA, the church, Alberta, Canada and their students with the highest standards of excellence in education, spiritual care, research, and service to the community over the years; and
- WHEREAS surveys have consistently indicated that CUCA's graduates continue to have high levels of satisfaction and would be willing to recommend CUCA to anyone; and
- WHEREAS nationally, both the *Maclean's University Survey* and the *Globe and Mail University Report* have ranked CUCA among the top small universities in Canada; and

- WHEREAS CUCA has been gaining increasing international recognition and respect as represented by partnerships with universities in Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Mexico, Portugal and Russia; and
- WHEREAS all these achievements and more would not be possible without the continued blessing of God and the faithful service and dedication of CUCA's faculty and staff, all of which are well known to CUCA's Board of Governors and to a growing number of people in the church and international community; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED that Lutheran Church–Canada thank God for His many blessings given to CUCA and to the church; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that Lutheran Church–Canada express its thanks to the faculty and staff of CUCA for their dedication to the University College's mission and the high-quality contributions they are making in keeping with that mission.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.03a To Include the “Pastors with Alternate Training” (PAT) Program in the Synodical Handbook

Ref. Overture 2.03

- WHEREAS Lutheran Church–Canada in convention has ratified the program of Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT); and
- WHEREAS the program has already been implemented; and
- WHEREAS the program has not been included in the *Handbook*; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Chapter V of the *Handbook* be amended as follows:

5.21 Prerequisites for Ordination

- a. A candidate for the office of the pastoral ministry in Lutheran Church-Canada may be ordained when the following prerequisites have been met:
1. He shall have completed the prescribed courses of study and have received a diploma from one of the Synod's seminaries, or have fulfilled the requisites for colloquy according to the Synodical Handbook, bylaws 5.71 to 5.91, *or have completed all requisites for the PAT program according to 5.137.*
 2. He shall have received endorsement by the proper faculty or the Colloquy Committee, *or the COP with regard to PAT candidates* for the Pastoral Office and in every respect have been declared qualified by them for the office of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church.

G. ADMISSION TO THE PASTORAL MINISTRY THROUGH PASTORS WITH ALTERNATE TRAINING (PAT) PROGRAM

5.131 Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT) Committee

The Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT) program is under the responsibility and administration of the Council of Presidents (COP) of the Synod. The PAT Committee is composed of four members who serve two year terms: the PAT Coordinator, a member appointed by the COP, and one member appointed by each seminary. The chairman of the COP serves in an advisory capacity.

5.133 Functions

The PAT Committee shall:

- a. *Review and update the curriculum and the course outlines;*
- b. *Supervise the academic program for each PAT student approved by the COP;*
- c. *Appoint mentors and instructors for each student;*
- d. *Supervise and provide academic evaluation of each student;*
- e. *Provide regular progress reports to the COP and seminaries about a student's progress;*
- f. *Plan and organize intensive educational sessions;*
- g. *Archive documentation of the entire program;*
- h. *Arrange interviews of the student with the seminaries and the student's respective district president;*
- i. *Upon successful completion of all requirements recommend students to the COP for acceptance into the pastoral ministry of the Synod for service in his site specific pastoral ministry.*

5.135 Application and Eligibility for Admission

- a. *Application for admission to be a PAT site shall be directed to the president of the district where the application originates.*
- b. *The district president on receipt of application shall arrange to meet with the congregational leadership who are requesting to be a PAT site.*
- c. *Upon completing the interview, the district president will make a recommendation to the COP that the congregation/community of faith be granted PAT site status.*
- d. *Upon ratification by the COP, the congregation/community of faith presents a candidate for the PAT program. The district president will process and evaluate the proposed candidate.*

The application shall be accompanied by the following documents:

1. *An autobiographical statement by the candidate, setting forth clearly his background and his reason for wishing to qualify for the pastoral ministry in the Synod;*
 2. *Transcripts of the candidate's secondary and post-secondary training and a description of non-credit academic work done by the candidate; and*
 3. *Testimonials as to Christian character and life, personality, ability and service in his congregation/community of faith from no fewer than three competent references who have known and observed the applicant for at least two recent years.*
- e. *The district president will submit his evaluation and the accompanying documentation of the candidate to the COP for acceptance into the program.*

5.137 Program of Instruction

- a. *The PAT Committee shall determine the course of study for each candidate based on his needs and his ecclesiastical background. In general, the course of study will follow the current curriculum which includes classes in the major areas of theology with a focus on personal and spiritual formation and capacity for pastoral leadership.*
- b. *The program includes onsite training under the tutelage of a local mentoring pastor. Regular interviews will be conducted with the PAT student by district presidents, seminary representatives, and the supervisor of the program.*
- c. *The program is normally four years in duration consisting of four stages of progression: Catechist, Lector, Deacon, and Vicar.*
- d. *In consultation with the PAT Committee, the supervisor shall administer the appropriate qualifying program and, when all requirements have been met, the PAT Committee will recommend the student to the COP for certification.*

5.139 Certificate of Eligibility

Candidates who have satisfactorily completed all requirements and have been ratified by the COP shall be given a certificate of eligibility and theological diploma.

5.141 Placement/Ordination

Every candidate whom the COP declares qualified for pastoral ministry shall be assigned his first site-specific placement by the COP acting as the Board of Assignments. Having received his placement, a date for ordination shall be set.

G. H. OFFICIAL CONFERENCES OF PASTORS AND DEACONS

Action: The Original Motion with the Amendment to the Amendment was Adopted

Resolution 14.2.04 To Decline Overture 2.04, “To Close our LCC Seminaries”

Reference: Overture 2.04; CW, Report 41: Seminary Joint MOU Committee

WHEREAS our seminaries in Edmonton and St. Catharines have implemented many of the recommendations developed in a ~~Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement~~” (MOU) since 2011; and

WHEREAS our seminaries continue to work toward sustainable, cost-efficient seminary training in Canada utilizing the existing two seminaries at their current sites; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overture 2.04, ~~“To Close Our LCC Seminaries,”~~ be respectfully declined.

Action: Adopted

RESOLUTION 14.2.05A TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF SYNODICAL BYLAWS, SECTION VI

Ref. Overture 2.05

WHEREAS Chapter VI of the Synodical Bylaws contains a number of provisions that have become outdated and

WHEREAS certain other provisions of Chapter VI are no longer necessary; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Chapter VI of the Synodical Bylaws be amended as follows:

VI. COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES-HIGHER EDUCATION**A. BOARDS OF REGENTS Section 1. Seminaries****6.01 Membership**

Each college and seminary established by Lutheran Church–Canada shall be separately incorporated and governed, subject to the Synodical Bylaws, by a board of regents.

a. The theological seminary Boards of Regents shall consist of the following board members:

1. Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton: six members elected by the Convention in such a way that one is from the East District, two are from the Central District, and three are from the Alberta-British Columbia District; three are to be pastors and three are to be deacons or laypersons; the president or his designate; the president of the Alberta-British Columbia District;
2. Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines: six board members elected by the Convention in such a way that one is from the Alberta-British Columbia District, two are from the Central District, and three are from the East District; three are to be pastors and three are to be deacons or laypersons; the president or his designate; the president of the East District.

~~b. The Board of Regents of Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton shall consist of the following board members:~~

- ~~1. three pastors, and three laypersons elected by the Convention;~~

- ~~2. one deacon or layperson, and two laypersons from the Alberta British Columbia District elected by the district;~~
- ~~3. one layperson from the Central District elected by the district;~~
- ~~4. the president, or a vice president as his standing representative, of the Alberta British Columbia and of the Central Districts.~~

~~In addition, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors, the Board of Regents is authorized to expand its composition by:~~

- ~~5. appointing as voting members three persons who are communicant members of congregations that are members of Lutheran Church Canada to serve for terms of three years;~~
 - ~~6. appointing as a voting member a member of the faculty nominated by the faculty who is an active member of a Christian congregation to serve for a term of one year. This faculty member shall not serve on any executive position of the board.~~
 - ~~7. appointing a student nominated by the student body to serve as an advisory member for a term of one year. The student advisor shall be entitled to attend open sessions of board meetings and to provide advice to the board during such meetings.~~
- e.b. All members of a Board of Regents must hold membership in a member congregation of the Synod, and not more than two of the elected members shall be members of the same congregation. There shall be at least one representative from each district. Members of a Board of Regents shall not be on the salaried staff of an educational institution established by Lutheran Church-Canada or enter into any gainful business, contracts, or transactions with the institution.
- d. ~~Bylaw 2.56 and 6.01e shall not apply to a member of the faculty appointed to the Board of Regents of Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton.~~

6.03 Functions

In exercising its commitment to the Synod as set forth elsewhere in these Bylaws, the Board of Regents of each institution shall:

- a. make certain that the work of the institution is carried on effectively and to that end require reports from the president as its executive officer and through him from other officers and staff members;
- b. be responsible for the educational programs of the institution;
- c. be responsible for the general welfare of the instructional staff members and other employees, adopt regulations governing off-campus activities, develop policies regarding salary and wage scales, promotion, vacations, health examinations, leaves, dismissal, retirement, pension, and other employee welfare benefit provisions;
- d. be responsible for the general welfare of the students, their housing and board facilities, health services, appropriateness of co-curricular and off-campus activities, and employment;
- e. exercise its responsibility for the efficient business management of its institution through a business officer appointed by it on recommendation of the president of the institution and responsible to him; ~~under its supervision the business officer shall keep accurate accounts of all moneys and other assets, regularly deposit all moneys in banks designated by the board, submit his books for inspection and audit, and, at the Synod's expense, furnish appropriate bond for the faithful performance of his duties.~~
- f. be responsible for the physical property, grounds, buildings, and equipment and keep them in good repair;
- g. supervise the collection and disbursements of all funds raised by the students for student activities;
- h. operate and manage the institution as required by law. All matters which according to synodical regulation require the attention of any board, agency, or officer of the Synod shall be submitted to the Board of Directors for referral to the appropriate recipient;
- i. be the governing body corporate of the institution and be vested with all powers which its members may exercise in law either as directors, trustees, or members of the body corporate, unless in conflict with the laws of the domicile of the institution or its articles of incorporation; in such event the Board of Regents shall have power to perform such acts as may be required by law to effect the corporate existence of the institution.
- j. receive all gifts either by deed or will or otherwise made to the institution ~~and deliver same promptly to the treasurer of the Synod or such other person as may be designated by the Board of Directors. If delivery is precluded by law or the terms of the gift, the Board of Regents shall hold and administer the same, in accordance with the terms of the instrument creating such gift and in accordance with the policies of the Board of Directors;~~
- k. acquire, maintain, and sell property under policies established in consultation with the Board of Directors and with the approval of the Board of Directors;

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- l. determine that the charter, articles of incorporation, constitution, and bylaws of each institution conform to and are consistent with those of the Synod; changes therein shall receive the prior consent of the Board of Directors, and where applicable in property and financial matters, of the Board of Directors;
 - m. have no power to close its institution or to sell all or any part of the property which constitutes the main campus;
 - n. recognize that the responsibility of the Board of Regents resides in the Board as a whole.
 - ~~o. The Board of Regents shall~~ delegate the application of its policies and execution of its resolutions to the president of the institution as its executive officer;
 - ~~o.p.~~ designate a faculty member of the institution as acting president in case of the president's absence, his temporary incapacity, or a vacancy in the office.

B. PRESIDENTS

6.11 Election

- a. The Board of Regents having first consulted with the Board of Directors shall issue in the official periodical of the Synod a call for the nomination of candidates for the presidency of the institution. The call for nominations shall describe the office and qualifications desired to fill it.
- b. Candidates may be nominated by member congregations of the Synod, the Board of Directors, the Board of Regents, and the faculty of the institution.
- c. All nominations must be filed with the secretary of the Board of Regents within 90 days of the date of its published request unless the request sets a later date. The secretary of the Board of Regents shall thereupon publish the names of the nominees in an official periodical of the Synod, stating also the date on which the election is to be held, which shall be not less than six weeks after the date of the publication of the names of the nominees. Copies of the submitted notice shall at the same time be sent to the president of the Synod and the Board of Directors.
- d. All recommendations, statements of qualifications of any nominees, or objections to any nominee with reasons therefore, must be filed with the Board of Regents before the time fixed for the election. If a charge of false doctrine or offensive life is registered, the electors shall investigate and reach a decision on such charge before proceeding with the election.
- e. A search committee composed of up to three faculty members elected by the faculty and of two members of the Board of Regents elected by the Board of Regents shall make a careful analysis of the needs of the institution, the requirements of the Synod, and the academic and personal qualifications of the nominees. To this end the secretary of the Board of Regents shall make available to this committee all information, recommendations, and objections which he shall receive. On the basis of these studies this committee shall submit to the elector's evaluations and pertinent recommendations regarding the candidates who have been proposed.
- f. At a meeting of the Board of Regents held to elect a president, there shall be present and voting as electors: the members of the Board of Regents as a group with one vote (the district president not voting with the Board); the district president or his designate with one vote; the president or his designate with one vote; and the chairman of the Board of Directors or his designate with one vote.
- g. The election shall be held on the day designated in the notice published in the official periodical of the Synod or as soon thereafter as feasible. The electors shall give due consideration to the recommendations and statements of qualifications and objections submitted on behalf of all nominees. A majority of the electors, with the members of the Board of Regents now voting as individuals, may add names to any preferred list supplied by the search committee after consultation with the search committee. If the electors are unable to complete the election, they may postpone the election and request the Board of Regents to issue a new call for nominations.
- h. The Board of Regents shall extend the formal call promptly after the election and submit its action to an official periodical of the Synod for publication.
- i. Whenever a call is declined, the chairman shall promptly call another meeting of the electors, at which meeting the call may be reissued or another person be elected from among the remaining candidates, or the Board of Regents may be requested to issue a new call for candidates.

6.13 Functions

The president of the institution shall be the executive officer of the Board of Regents and as such serve as the spiritual, academic, and administrative head thereof. He shall--

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- a. represent the institution in its relations to the Synod and its officers and boards;
 - b. supervise, direct, and administer the affairs of the institution and all its departments, pursuant to the resolutions of the Convention, and the policies of the Board of Regents;
 - c. bring to the attention of the Board of Regents matters which require consideration or decision and make pertinent recommendations;
 - d. be the academic head of the faculty, preside at its meetings, and be an ex-officio member of all standing committees of the faculty and its departments with the exception of the standing hearings committee or of another standing committee to which the functions of such a committee have been assigned;
 - e. periodically visit or cause to be visited the classes of professors and instructors, and in general secure conformity in teaching efficiency and subject matter to the standards and policies prescribed by the Board of Regents and recommendations of the Convention through the Board of Directors;
 - f. advise and admonish in a fraternal spirit any member of the faculty found dilatory, neglectful, or exhibiting problems in his teaching. Should this action prove ineffective, he shall request selected members of the faculty privately to engage their colleague in further fraternal discussion. If this results in failure to correct or improve the situation, the president shall report the matter to the Board of Regents with his recommendations for action;
 - g. delegate or reassign one or more of his functions to a member of the faculty or staff, although standing administrative assignments shall be made by the Board of Regents on his recommendation;
 - h. be responsible for the provision of spiritual care and nurture for every student;
 - i. carefully watch over the spiritual welfare, personal life, conduct, educational progress, and physical condition of the students and in general exercise such Christian discipline, instruction, and supervision as may be expected at a Christian educational institution;
 - j. be responsible for the employment, direction, and supervision of all employees of the institution;
 - k. be responsible for the business management of the school and for the proper operation and maintenance of grounds, buildings, and equipment;
 - l. make periodic and special financial reports to the Board of Regents.

C. FACULTIES

6.21 Members of Faculty

- a. The faculty of each synodical institution shall consist of its president, its administrative officers holding instructional rank, and its regular instructional staff members.
- b. Special lecturers and substitute teachers shall hold advisory membership on the faculty.
- c. Administrative positions may be created, modified, abolished, or have functions assigned to them by the Board of Regents on recommendation by the president of the institution. Such offices are to be those made necessary by the functions assigned to the institution and appropriate to its size and internal organization. Appointments to these offices are to be for renewable terms. Ordinarily administrative officers are also to carry a partial teaching load.
- d. Administrative appointments shall be made by the Board of Regents on recommendation by the president of the institution. The Board of Directors shall periodically review the internal administrative organization of the Synod's institutions.

6.23 Appointment of Members of Faculty

- a. The Board of Regents on recommendation of the president of the institution shall appoint the members of the faculty.
- b. Initial appointments to a theological seminary shall require the prior approval of the majority of its electors. Appointments shall ordinarily be for terms of one to four years.
- c. The Board of Directors at its discretion may offer a report prior to the Board of Regents' action in any contract renewal. The final decision on the renewal of appointment shall be the sole prerogative of the Board of Regents.
- d. The terms and conditions of every appointment shall be stated in writing and be in the possession of both the institution and the prospective faculty member before the appointment is consummated. Limitations of academic freedom because of the religious and confessional nature and aims of the institution shall be stated in writing at the time of the appointment and conveyed to the person being appointed.

- e. The Advisory Council shall review and recommend to the Board of Directors policy statements on academic, professional, theological, ministerial, and other criteria for the appointment and advancement of faculty members. (Note: The Advisory Council consists of the three educational institutional presidents plus one member appointed by and from the Board of Directors.)

6.27 Ranking of Members of Faculty

- a. The Board of Regents shall determine the assignment and rank of members of the faculty and of the administrative officers.
- b. The approved nomenclature for the ranks of faculty members is: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor.
- c. The descriptive prefixes "visiting" or "guest" may be used, when appropriate, with the designation of any rank. The descriptive suffix "emeritus" may be used, when appropriate, with the designation for any rank, by special resolution of the Board of Regents in the case of each person to be so designated.
- d. Persons appointed with designation "graduate assistant" shall not be voting members of the faculty but may be granted other faculty privileges and benefits as determined by the Board of Regents.

6.29 Salary Ranges

The salary ranges of all institutional faculty shall be established by the Board of Regents in consultation with the Advisory Council.

6.31 Faculty Organization and Meetings

- a. Instructional staff size or special synodical responsibilities may lead to the organization of a faculty senate.
- b. Faculty and faculty senate meetings shall be held at regular intervals.
- c. Special meetings of the faculty or of the faculty senate may be called by the president.
- d. In the president's absence the designated acting president shall preside at regular and special meetings.
- e. The faculty shall elect a secretary and provide for the election of committees, consisting of faculty members or of faculty members and other persons, who shall study, evaluate, and report to the faculty on policy matters affecting the activity of the institution, the activity and welfare of the members of the faculty, and the life and welfare of the students.
- f. The faculty shall elect a standing hearings committee or assign the functions of such a committee to another standing committee.

6.35 Institutional Educational Policies

- a. Each faculty shall adopt rules and regulations for the admission, transfer, dismissal, or withdrawal of students, fix the standards of scholarship to be maintained by the students, determine criteria for their promotion, graduation, or failure, act on recommendations in the matter of granting certificates, diplomas, and such academic or honorary degrees as may lawfully be conferred by the institution.
- b. Each faculty shall develop and construct curricula implementing the recognized and established purposes of the institution and designed to attain the synodically approved objectives of training for professional church workers. Each faculty shall pursue the improvement of teaching and learning and the evaluation of their effectiveness in every segment of the institution and its curriculum.
- c. Each faculty shall develop policies, standards, and programs for the out-of-class life and activity of its students so that the co-curricular and off-campus activities of the student contribute to the attainment of the educational objectives of the institution. The faculty shall draw up such standards, criteria, and regulations as will be conducive to the cultivation of a Christian deportment on the part of all students, will stimulate the creation of a cultured and academically challenging atmosphere on and about the whole campus, and will make a spiritually wholesome community life possible.
- d. Each faculty shall develop policies, standards, and regulations that will contribute to the maintenance of wholesome conditions of instructional staff service and welfare.
- e. The faculty of each institution which trains professional workers directly for service in the Synod shall conform its placement policies to the synodical provisions for the distribution of candidates and workers through the Board of Assignments.

6.37 Institutional Policy Formation

- a. The regulations, standards, criteria, policies, programs, and curricula developed and adopted by each synodical faculty shall be submitted for approval to the respective Board of Regents.
- b. After approval, these regulations, standards, criteria, policies, programs, and curricula shall be administered and applied by the administrative officers of the institution.
- c. The Board of Directors shall periodically review the institutional policies, programs, and curricula to determine whether they are consistent with the stated objectives of the Synod. ~~s educational system and its institutions.~~

6.39 Evangelical Discipline and the Right of Appeal

- a. Each faculty shall develop policies worthy of the Christian faith for personal conduct and community life applicable to student, faculty, and staff members, and other employees while on the campus.
- b. Each Board of Regents, on recommendation of the faculty, shall adopt a comprehensive policy statement committing the school to the principles of Christian discipline, evangelical dealing, and good order governing the students individually and collectively.
- c. Each student shall be informed regarding the disciplinary policy and procedure and under what conditions and to whom an appeal from a disciplinary decision may be made. There shall be no right of appeal under the provisions of bylaw 8.01 ff.

6.41 Controversies Among Faculty Members

Controversies and disagreements among members of the faculty (other than those set forth in bylaw 6.43) shall be submitted to the president of the institution for mediation. If this proves unsuccessful, he shall report the matter to the Board of Regents for arbitration. After hearing the parties the Board will render its decision, which shall be final, without the right of appeal under the provisions of bylaw 8.01 ff. A record of the proceedings shall be filed with the Board of Directors.

6.43 Removal from Office

- a. The Board of Regents may decline to renew the appointment of a faculty member in accordance with the terms and conditions of the appointment.
- b. No member of the faculty at times other than the expiration of the term of his appointment shall be removed from the faculty either by ecclesiastical authority or by the Board of Regents except for causes hereinafter enumerated and by procedures of the employing institution.
- c. The only causes for which members of a faculty may be removed from office (within the definitions of "a" and "b" above) ~~other than honourable retirement or reduction in force~~ are:
 1. incapacity;
 2. incompetence;
 3. ~~neglect~~ dereliction of duty;
 4. failure to ~~develop to~~ meet job requirements through professional development; ~~dereliction of duty~~
 5. blatant disregard of Christian practice;
 6. adherence to false doctrine (Constitution, Article II) or failure to honour and uphold the doctrinal position of the Synod as defined further in bylaw 1.03c.

6.45 Board Supervision

- a. Subject to the appeals procedures of the Synod, the Board of Regents shall have the sole prerogative to make ultimate decisions regarding any non-renewal of faculty appointments due to incapacity, incompetence, ~~neglect~~ dereliction of duty and failure to ~~develop to~~ meet job requirements through professional development.
- b. Through procedures hereinafter set forth and subject to the appeals procedures of the Synod, the Board of Regents shall also have the ultimate responsibility for decisions regarding charges of blatant disregard of Christian practice and adherence to false doctrine (Constitution Article II), or failure to honour and uphold the doctrinal position of the Synod.

6.47 Procedures for Exercising Board Supervision

- a. When the Board of Regents or the president of an educational institution of the Synod receives a charge against any member of that institution's faculty, in the spirit of Christian love the complainant shall be advised to communicate directly with the person against whom he has a complaint and attempt to find a peaceful and amicable resolution to the matter.
If subsequently the complainant desires to pursue the matter, he shall so notify the Board of Regents and present the charge in writing, formulated with reasonable definiteness, and the evidence. The Board of Regents shall then direct the president of the institution to attempt to deal with it to the satisfaction of all concerned. Charges against the president of the institution shall be dealt with by the chairman of the Board of Regents.
- b. If in such a given case the Board decides that the charge is serious enough and of a nature that it is deemed to be in the best interest of the institution that he not continue to perform his duties as a member of the faculty, the Board may suspend the faculty member from his teaching and/or administrative duties; contractual obligations of the institution, however, shall continue until the charge is resolved.
If the complainant does not notify the Board of Regents that such initial efforts have failed and does not resubmit the charge in writing together with substantive evidence within 60 days from the initial receipt of the charge by the Board of Regents, the Board of Regents may rule that the matter has been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.
- c. If the Board fails to initiate further action within 60 days, and if the complainant is dissatisfied and the charge involves conduct unbecoming a Christian or advocacy of false doctrine (Constitution, Article II), the complainant may take his complaint to the district president. If he finds the action of the district president unacceptable, he may take his complaint to the president under the pertinent provisions of bylaw 6.49.
- d. If the Board should decide to proceed, and if the charge is of a theological nature, the Board may submit the theological question at issue to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations for an advisory theological opinion.
- e. Furthermore, if the Board of Regents has decided to proceed, it shall also direct an ad hoc hearings committee to hold a hearing with respect to the validity of the charge that has been made. The hearing committee shall consist of three faculty members selected by the faculty and two other persons selected by the Board of Regents. Where necessary, current adjunct professors who have served a minimum of two years shall be eligible to serve on this committee. The committee shall hold its first hearing no later than eight weeks after the Board of Regents has served notice that the committee is to be constituted. The goal shall be that a decision shall be rendered within three months of the time that the Board of Regents has determined that there shall be a hearings committee. The notification of the hearing, approved and issued by the Board through the president of the institution at least four weeks in advance and sent to the chairman of the committee, to the complainant, and to the accused, shall contain (1) a statement of the charge or charges, (2) a summary of the evidence on which the charges are based, (3) a statement that the hearings committee will conduct a hearing and that the time and the place thereof shall be determined by the hearings committee, (4) a formal invitation to the complainant and the accused to attend the hearing, (5) a statement to the complainant and the accused that they are entitled to counsel, and (6) the opinion of the Commission of Theology and Church Relations if a theological issue is involved.
- f. No less than two weeks prior to a suitable date set for the hearing, the accused shall submit to the president, the hearings committee, and the complainant his written answer to the charge, or he shall state that he desires no hearing to be held.
- g. If the accused fails to answer the statement of charges or declares that he desires no hearing to be held, the hearings committee shall consider whether the grounds stated constitute adequate cause for removal from office and, in its discretion, may independently investigate the truth of the charge.
- h. If a hearing is held, each party shall have the right to select not more than two advisers (bylaw 8.51i). The hearing shall be private. However, the president or his representative and the complainant, the accused, and their advisers, shall have the right to be present at the hearing at all times. Opportunity for cross-examination and for presenting testimony by competent witnesses shall be afforded.
- i. The hearings committee shall forward its findings to the complainant, the accused, the president, and the Board of Regents.
- j. After the findings of the hearings committee have been conveyed to the Board of Regents, the Board, after hearing whatever additional witnesses it may desire to hear and considering all pertinent evidence, including, if it is a theological issue, the opinion of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, shall render a decision.

The decision shall in no case be rendered without having given the complainant and the accused an opportunity to appear before the Board of Regents.

- k. If the decision of the Board of Regents is that the accused is to be removed from the faculty, the Board of Regents shall notify the accused in writing that his appointment to the faculty is being terminated and shall specify the effective date of the termination.
- l. If the charge sustained against an individual is of such a nature that it could disqualify him from further membership in the Synod under Article XIII, the district president of the accused shall be so notified and a transcript of the proceeding shall be forwarded to the district president. The district president shall then proceed in the manner prescribed in the Constitution and these Bylaws.
- m. If the faculty member has lost his membership in the Synod through the ecclesiastical route (bylaw 6.49), he shall automatically forfeit his membership on the faculty after the appeals procedure has been applied, or after he has failed to file an intent to appeal within 30 days and the appeal itself within a second 30 day period. During the period allowed for appeal and during the appeals procedure, if an appeal is made, the Board of Regents shall suspend him from teaching activity, but shall continue to meet its contractual obligations.
- n. Bylaw 8.51 shall apply also to these procedures.

6.49 Ecclesiastical Supervision

A faculty member who is on a roster of the Synod is under the ecclesiastical supervision of the Synod. In cases in which such a faculty member is charged with false doctrine or conduct unbecoming a Christian, and in which the complainant finds unacceptable the decision of the Board of Regents not to pursue the charge, he may be dealt with by the district president or the president and be removed from the membership of the Synod and therefore from the office in harmony with the provision of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod (e.g., Constitution, Article III 8-9; VI; XI, B; XII, 6-9; XIII; Bylaws 1.17, 1.21, 2.101, 3.73, 3.77, 6.47c, and chapter VIII). The written decisions of the Commission on Adjudication required under bylaw 8.67, including the finding of fact, the conclusions, and the reasons for such conclusions, shall be conveyed in writing to the Board of Regents of the faculty member involved.

6.51 Review

A party may apply to the Commission on Adjudication for a review of any decision with respect to cases under bylaws 6.43, 6.45, 6.47, and 6.49. These reviews shall be treated as requests to rehear the case and shall be governed by the rules and procedures specified or adopted under bylaws 8.51(n) and 8.69.

~~6.55 Grants for Advanced Study~~

~~The Board of Regents of the Synod's institutions shall recommend subsidies for advanced study by instructional and administrative personnel when such additional study is made mandatory or desirable by local circumstances beyond the control of the personnel involved (e.g., addition of courses, request to assist in library administration, guidance work, requirements of achieving or maintaining accreditation, modifications which the Synod requires the school to make in its program, etc.). Such recommendations are to become effective on review and approval of the Board of Directors.~~

6.57 Sabbatical Leave and Leave of Absence

- a. A Board of Regents may grant any member on the instructional staff who has served seven years at synodical institutions a sabbatical leave for one-half year with pay, or for an entire year with half pay, to pursue advanced studies in his special field of work or in any other acceptable program of experience or research, or to gain additional parish experience.
- b. A Board of Regents may grant any member of the instructional staff a leave of absence for a fixed period of time to pursue advanced studies in his special field of work, or to render particular service to the Synod or to its agencies. Time so spent on a special leave shall ordinarily not be charged against a subsequent sabbatical leave. Budgetary provisions shall be arranged in advance by the Board and agencies involved.

D. FINANCES

6.61 Uniform Accounting Methods

The Board of Directors shall ~~establish and prescribe uniform standards for accounting procedures, financial and internal controls, budgetary classifications, and allocations for operating income and expenses and for capital investments of each of the educational institutions established by Lutheran Church–Canada ensure that the accounting methods of educational institutions. These standards shall ensure that the accounting methods of the seminaries comply with generally accepted accounting principles, and education practice and be structured in comparative formats for all of the educational institutions~~ the financial statements are structured in comparable formats.

6.63 Budget Adjustments

- a. The Board of Directors shall determine the level of subsidy provided to the educational institutions established by Lutheran Church–Canada.
- b. The Board of Regents may, on recommendation of the president of the school, make necessary internal transfers of current budget funds from one classification or account to another within the institution's budget. ~~Notification of this internal transfer of current funds is to be conveyed to the Board of Directors for review and comment.~~

6.65 Budget for Capital Improvements

~~On a regular basis, the schedule to be determined by the Board of Directors,~~ The Board of Regents shall submit to the Board of Directors proposals for major repairs, capital improvements, and purchase of equipment ~~for review and comment~~ over \$250,000 for review and approval.

6.67 Objections to or Changes in Budget

The Board of Directors shall may advise the respective Board of Regents of any objection to, or of a proposed change in, the budget (either operating or capital-investment) submitted by such board and shall, upon request, give a hearing to such board with reference to such advice.

6.69 Contracts for Capital Improvements

Each Board of Regents shall make all contracts for major repairs, capital improvements, and expansion of the physical plant and equipment of its institution ~~on the authority of the Board of Directors of the Synod, and shall supervise and control the execution thereof on behalf of and by order of the Board of Directors.~~

6.71 Business Management

- a. The Board of Regents, on recommendation of the president, shall appoint an executive officer whose duties may include advising the president in the area of financial and administrative services, proper management of the financial resources of the educational institution, supervision and maintenance of the accounting records in compliance with the standards established by the Board of Directors, audit, tax and legal matters, insurance and risk management programs, banking relations, preparing strategic long range financial plans, integrity of the computerized records, preparation of annual budgets, and such other duties as may be assigned by the president.
- b. The Board of Regents is responsible for the supervision and management of student affairs, of the finances and budgets of student organizations, ventures, and services, and of properties used or acquired by student enterprises and organizations. The policies governing each student organization and its enterprises are to be submitted to the Board of Regents for its review and approval.
- ~~c. All surplus institutional funds above an adequate working capital shall be forwarded to Lutheran Church–Canada in trust for investment by the treasurer.~~

E. SPECIAL REGULATIONS

6.81 ~~Special Academic Programs~~

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- a. ~~The educational institutions of the synod may be authorized by the Board of Directors to conduct summer schools under the direction of the respective Board of Regents and faculty for regular and special students for the in service education of pastors and deacons.~~
 - b. ~~The terminal institutions of the Synod may be authorized by the Board of Directors to conduct schools for graduate studies or correspondence schools under the direction of the respective Boards of Regents and faculties for regular and special students and for the in service education of pastors and deacons.~~

6.83 ~~The Transfer Student~~

~~A qualified student applying for admission to an educational institution of the Synod after previous attendance at another synodical institution or that of a partner church shall be admitted only after the admitting institution has received proper credentials, cumulative records, and a recommendation from the president of the synodical institution of the partner church where the student last attended.~~

6.85 Eligibility and Placement of Church Workers in the Synod

- a. Every regular student, special supply student, vicar, or graduate of an authorized synodical institution or approved synodical training program declared qualified for placement shall be assigned his first permanent placement in church service by the Council of Presidents, acting as the Board of Assignments.
- b. Students who have not completed their program of studies at the Synod's educational institutions or those of partner churches shall not be eligible for temporary or permanent engagement by congregations or other agencies within the Synod without the consent and approval of the respective faculty and district president. The faculties of the Synod's terminal schools shall consider applications for temporary supply work by their students only when such applications have received prior approval of the respective district president.
- c. A year of supervised fieldwork is required of all theological students before graduation. Ordinarily this experience is to be gained in the second year before graduation.
- d. Candidates eligible for calls are students who have completed the prescribed courses of studies, have received their diplomas from their respective institutions, and have in every respect been declared qualified by the faculties for their specific type of service in the church.
- e. Graduates of the deacon's colleges of affiliated church bodies or persons who have given satisfactory evidence of having met the minimum requirements of the Synod are eligible for teaching positions in the schools of the church and shall receive their teaching placement through the Board of Assignments.
- f. A graduate of one of the Synod's terminal schools who desires to continue his or her professional studies after he or she has completed the prescribed under-graduate curriculum or who for any other valid reason is not ready for first placement in the church shall continue to be eligible for unqualified recommendation for placement as long as he or she can be recommended by the faculty of the institution from which he or she has graduated. The respective faculty shall annually ascertain through personal interviews with the candidate or through satisfactory testimonials that each candidate so classified is still qualified for recommendation for regular placement in the church.

Section 2. Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA)

- d. CUCA is a public post-secondary institution , established by Lutheran Church – Canada and incorporated in the Province of Alberta under the —Concordia University College of Alberta Act” (CUCA Act) as a public post-secondary institution being designated by law as an —Independent Academic Institution.”
- e. The CUCA Act authorizes the Board of Concordia University College to determine its composition and appoint its members.
- f. The CUCA Act empowers the board to approve, amend or repeal its corporate bylaws

6.104 Board of Governors

The ecclesiastical bond that exists between CUCA and LCC means a voluntary association between Concordia University College of Alberta, Lutheran Church-Canada and other entities that have accepted the doctrines, principles and religious standards of Synod, and seek to uphold a common confessional position.

The Board of Governors of CUCA shall consist of the following members appointed by the board:

- k. Chair of the Board
- l. Chancellor
- m. President & Vice Chancellor
- n. 2 CUCA Alumni nominated by the Concordia Alumni Association
- o. 1 Academic Staff Member who is a member of and nominated by the Faculty Association
- p. President of the Concordia Students' Association and one additional student nominated by the Concordia Students' Association
- q. President of the Graduate Students' Association of CUCA
- r. One member of the non-academic staff nominated by the non-academic staff
- s. The President of the Alberta-British Columbia District of the Synod of LCC
- t. Not more than nine members representative of the general public, two of whom shall be members of a Lutheran Church-Canada congregation, in addition to the chair, appointed by the Board, with due consideration given to the appointment of individuals who will uphold CUCA's ecclesiastical bond with the Synod.

6.106 Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has the following responsibilities:

- g. To exercise all powers necessary to meet the statutory objects of the institution, to fulfill its obligations to the people of Alberta, and to identify and comply with all legal, financial and governance obligations required of the Board of a publicly funded university college of the Independent Academic Institution sector of Alberta Post-Secondary Education.
- h. Uphold CUCA's ecclesiastical bond with Lutheran Church-Canada and with other entities which have accepted the principles, doctrines and religious standards of the Synod as set out in its Constitution and Synodical Bylaws.
- i. Ensure the institution's long-term independence, success, viability and welfare.
- j. Appoint, support and assess the performance of the President.
- k. Ensure fiscal integrity, preserve institutional assets, provide fiduciary oversight, monitor performance, borrow money, ensure adequate financial controls and reporting engage with auditors, review audit results, approve financial statements and identify and manage institutional risks.
- l. Establish and maintain a principled culture and Christian standards of ethics and conduct.

Resolution 14.2.06 To Clarify the Vision and Direction of the Church Work Programs at Concordia University College of Alberta

Reference: Overture 2.06

- WHEREAS Lutheran Church-Canada exists, in part, to provide for the training and support of our church workers (pastors and deacons); and
- WHEREAS God continues to call and raise up men and women of faith to serve Him and His Church in full-time ministry; and
- WHEREAS CUCA has served and continues to serve the church faithfully in preparing candidates for our Lutheran diaconal ministry, namely Directors of Parish Services (DPS) and Lutheran school teachers, as well as offering a Youth Ministry Certificate, and a Church Music Certificate; and
- WHEREAS CUCA has been and continues to be active in preparing young men for our seminaries with its pre-seminary program; and

- WHEREAS the men and women prepared, or impacted by these ministries have been a blessing to many in the church and world; and
- WHEREAS financial limitations have led to fears that the programs may not be sustainable; and
- WHEREAS budget constraints have led to CUCA being able to hire only a part-time —Cordinator of Applied Religion” (the Director for the church work programs); and
- WHEREAS this has led to difficulty in recruiting new students for the various church work programs; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that the Convention direct the Synod’s Board of Directors, in cooperation with CUCA’s Board of Governors, to clarify a vision and direction for the church work programs; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the Convention direct the Synod’s Board of Directors, in cooperation with CUCA’s Board of Governors, to identify and/or designate leadership and funds for the enactment of this vision; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the Convention direct the Board of Directors to allocate a minimum of 25% of its higher education budget to church work programs at CUCA.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.07 To Support the Chaplaincy Program at Concordia University College of Alberta

Reference: Overture 2.07; CW, Report 19: Concordia University College of Alberta

- WHEREAS the chaplaincy program at CUCA has impacted the lives of many, both faculty and students, both Christian and non-Christian in a positive way; and
- WHEREAS budget constraints have negatively affected the chaplaincy program at CUCA; and
- WHEREAS the chaplaincy program is an essential part of the Lutheran identity of a synodical school; and
- WHEREAS there is a need to educate our congregations regarding the value of the role of the CUCA chaplain; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that the convention recognize and give thanks for the efforts that CUCA has made to maintain the presence of a chaplain on a part time/volunteer basis in the face of budget constraints; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the convention recommend that the LCC Manager of Communications focus attention in our synodical publications on the role of campus ministry, the value of chaplaincy to the CUCA community, and the cost of providing this ministry; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the convention encourage LCC congregations and individual members to support the chaplaincy at CUCA with their prayers and donations; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the convention encourage CUCA to seek out a cost-sharing relationship with the ABC District and/or the Synod Board of Directors.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.2.08 To Give Thanks to God for the Faculty and Staff of Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS), Edmonton and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS), St. Catharines

Reference: CW, Report 41: Seminary Joint MOU Committee

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- WHEREAS since the adoption of the ~~Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement~~” (MOU) on April 14, 2011 ~~the~~ atmosphere between the seminaries themselves and between the seminaries and the Synod has become stronger, and there is a greater sense of common purpose” (Report 41, p. E.96); and
- WHEREAS today more classes are being taught to students at each institution via the internet, as faculty and staff participate in training events in order to familiarize themselves with the technology; and
- WHEREAS both institutions are exhibiting ~~a~~ common sense of purpose, mutual respect and a clear shared focus on pastoral formation” (Report 41, p. E.96); and
- WHEREAS both seminaries finished the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 fiscal years with a surplus; and
- WHEREAS God has recently blessed CLTS with unexpected funds that allow them to completely pay off their operating debt; and
- WHEREAS since 2009 the Lutheran Foundation has identified \$4.3 million in future gifts for the seminaries, with approximately 75% of that total being designated for CLS; and
- WHEREAS renewed recruitment efforts have been undertaken through articles in *The Canadian Lutheran*, a new recruitment website, and seminary presence at the 2013 National Youth Gathering; and
- WHEREAS the Boards of Regents of the seminaries continue to meet together annually; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Lutheran Church-Canada, gathered in convention, thank our gracious God in prayer and song for the miracles He continues to perform at and through our seminaries; and be it further
- RESOLVED that all convention delegates and attendees return to their congregations and circuits with the news of how our Lord continues to answer prayer with the rich blessings He has showered on our seminaries; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents make it a priority in the next triennium to develop and implement recruitment strategies that will encourage congregational members, pastors and deacons to be personally involved in the recruitment of church workers.

Action: Adopted**Resolution 14.3.01 To Provide for Alternate Means of Transmitting Nomination Ballots**

Reference: Overture 3.02

- WHEREAS The secretary of Synod is limited by Synodical Bylaws 2.501b and 2.511b (2011 Handbook p.33, 34) to providing nominating ballots for president and vice presidents via postal mail only; and
- WHEREAS sending ballots via electronic means would speed up the process and save the Synod money at the same time; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Synodical Bylaws 2.501.b and 2.511.b be amended to read:
- b. the secretary of the Synod shall mail via post or electronic means to each voting congregation of the Synod ballots for nominating these candidates.

Action: Adopted**Resolution 14.3.02 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for the Synodical Planning Council**

Reference: Overture 3.03

- WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 2.303 (2011 *Handbook* p.32) requires the convening of a Planning Council every three years and prescribes who should attend; and
- WHEREAS for financial and other reasons these gatherings have been held less frequently; and
- WHEREAS the Planning Council has typically been unable to implement all of its goals in a single triennium; and
- WHEREAS adopting a 6-year cycle and granting the President of Synod the discretion to decide who should participate would reduce the cost of the Planning Council;
- WHEREAS the current wording in the Handbook is needlessly detailed and specific; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Synodical Bylaw 2.303 be amended to read:

The members of the Board of Directors and of the Council of Presidents shall serve as the Planning Council of the Synod under the chairmanship of the president. All principal staff persons shall function in an advisory capacity.

The Planning Council shall:

- a. recommend planning, programming, and budgeting systems encompassing short-, mid-, and long-range plans; ~~to serve as a basis for program and budget formulation, allocation of resources, financial planning, review, and reporting for the Synod and its districts; such systems to provide for the sharing of the work and needs of the Synod and its districts;~~
- b. convene at least ~~triennially~~ every six years a planning conference of the members of the Planning Council ~~together with district staff, senior staff of the national office, and college and seminary presidents to plan programs for carrying out Canadian and world missions, supplying adequate support for synodical colleges and seminaries, and supporting other approved programs;~~ and other participants invited at the discretion of the president;
- c. recommend ~~operating budgets, short range plans~~ short, mid and long-range plans at the national church body program level based on proposals and analysis made by the administrative officer through the office of the president; and report ~~the budgets, plans, and performance to the Convention. Such budgets and plans shall be prepared in accordance with Chapter VII of the bylaws~~ such to the Convention.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.03 a To Amend the LCC Constitution To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*

Ref. overture 3.01

- WHEREAS The LCC Constitution and Bylaws require the publication of official notices in the official periodical of the Synod; and
- WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 11.21.a (2011 *Handbook* p.86) designates *The Canadian Lutheran* as the official periodical of the Synod; and
- WHEREAS it has become standard practice to disseminate information to and throughout the Synod via the electronic edition of *The Canadian Lutheran*, accessible through LCC's website, as well as in print; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that official notices will henceforth be distributed via both the print and the electronic editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*, and be it further
- RESOLVED that both editions of *The Canadian Lutheran* be designated "official periodicals;" and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the LCC constitution reflect this change in the following areas:

Article XIV.3. After adoption by the Convention such amendments shall be reported to the congregations in ~~the two subsequent issues~~ the official periodicals of the Synod.

Article XIV.4. (2011 *Handbook* p.14)

Proposed amendments to the Constitution adopted by a Convention shall be submitted directly to each congregation that is a member of the Synod on an official ballot, and the congregations shall by official action express their affirmative or negative vote and indicate the same to the secretary of Lutheran Church-Canada on this official ballot. The proposed amendment shall become effective at the expiration of six months from the date on which the amendment was adopted by a Convention, provided a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by congregations within that period shall have favored the amendment. At the end of the six-month period the secretary of Lutheran Church-Canada shall announce the outcome of the voting by districts in the official periodicals of the Synod.

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.03 b To Amend the LCC Bylaws To Permit Official Notices to be Publicized in Electronic and Print Editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*

Ref. overture 3.01

- WHEREAS The LCC Constitution and Bylaws require the publication of official notices in the official periodical of the Synod; and
- WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 11.21.a (2011 *Handbook* p.86) designates *The Canadian Lutheran* as the official periodical of the Synod; and
- WHEREAS it has become standard practice to disseminate information to and throughout the Synod via the electronic edition of *The Canadian Lutheran*, accessible through LCC's website, as well as in print; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that official notices will henceforth be distributed via both the print and the electronic editions of *The Canadian Lutheran*, and be it further
- RESOLVED that both editions of *The Canadian Lutheran* be designated "official periodicals;" and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the LCC Bylaws reflect this change in the following areas:

Bylaw 1.03.c.6 (2011 *Handbook* p. 15)

ratified and operative if a two-thirds majority of the members which are congregations which respond within six months registers an affirmative vote on a ballot supplied by the synodical secretary for that purpose. Failure to ratify makes the statement inoperative, and this fact shall be reported by the secretary to the members through an announcement in ~~an~~ the official periodicals of the Synod.

Bylaw 2.19.f (2011 *Handbook* p. 21)

All reports and overtures accepted by the president in accordance with the foregoing paragraphs shall be referred by him to convention committees appointed by him in the name of the Convention from among the voting delegates (bylaw 2.03), advisory delegates (bylaw 2.09), and advisory representatives (bylaw 2.13). Pastors, deacons (to the extent possible), and laymen shall be represented on all committees. The president shall notify committee members of their appointment and of the time and place of their first meeting no later than 12 weeks before the start of the Convention. The committee rosters shall be published in the official periodicals of the Synod, at least one of which must appear no less than 10 weeks before the convention.

Bylaw 2.401.c. (2011 *Handbook* p. 32)

When an executive staff position is to be filled, a list of nominees shall be gathered through placing an announcement in the official periodicals of the

Synod and through other methods. The president of the Synod shall select at least two persons as preferred nominees. The president and two members designated by the Board of Directors shall act as a screening committee, which shall interview such preferred nominees and make appropriate recommendations to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors, with the approval of the president, shall make the selection and extend the appointment. The Board or commission may ask for additional nominees from the screening committee or for additional names from the field for the regular procedure outlined above.

Bylaw 2.527.e. (2011 Handbook p. 36)

At least five months prior to the Convention, the Committee shall determine its complete list of candidates and alternates, obtain the consent of the persons it proposes to nominate, and transmit its final report to the secretary of the Synod in ample time to provide 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.

Bylaw 5.53 (2011 Handbook p. 36)

All applications for reinstatement to the clergy or diaconal roster of the Synod shall be addressed to the president of the district in which the applicant last held membership. The president of the district shall review the matter and report it to the Council of Presidents, with or without recommendation. The Council of Presidents shall decide the issue by means of a written ballot. If the applicant is reinstated, the district president shall announce this fact in the official periodicals of the Synod.

Bylaw 5.79 (2011 Handbook p. 54)

After the district president has furnished the Colloquy Committee with the required documents and the committee has assured itself that the applicant qualifies for the colloquy program, the committee shall publish the request of the applicant in the official periodicals of the Synod. If no valid objection is filed within four weeks after the notice of the application has been published in the print edition, the committee shall proceed with the colloquy program.

Bylaw 5.109 (2011 Handbook p. 56)

After the Diaconal Colloquy Committee has received an application as provided in bylaw 5.107, the Committee shall publish notice of the application in the official periodicals of the Synod. If no valid objection to the application is received by the Diaconal Colloquy Committee within four weeks after the publication of such notice in the print edition, the applicant shall be accepted into the program. The Committee, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection is valid. Its decision shall not be subject to any appeal.

Bylaw 5.113 (2011 Handbook p. 57)

The Diaconal Colloquy Committee shall publish in the official periodicals of the Synod the names of those declared eligible for the diaconal ministry.

Bylaw 6.11.a (2011 Handbook p. 60)

The Board of Regents having first consulted with the Board of Directors, shall issue in the official periodicals of the Synod a call for the nomination of candidates for the presidency of the institution. The call for nominations shall describe the office and qualifications desired to fill it.

Bylaw 6.11.c (2011 Handbook p. 60)

All nominations must be filed with the secretary of the Board of Regents within 90 days of the date of its published request unless the request sets a later date. The secretary of the Board of Regents shall thereupon publish the names of the nominees in the official periodicals of the Synod, stating also the date on which the election is to be held, which shall be not less than six weeks after the date of the publication of the names of the nominees. Copies of the submitted notice shall at the same time be sent to the president of the Synod and the Board of Directors.

Bylaw 6.11.g (2011 Handbook p. 60)

The election shall be held on the day designated in the notice published in the official periodicals of the Synod or as soon thereafter as feasible. The electors shall give due consideration to the recommendations and statements of qualifications and objections submitted on behalf of all nominees. A majority of the electors, with the members of the Board of Regents now voting as individuals, may add names to any preferred list supplied by the search committee after consultation with the search committee. If the electors are unable to complete the election, they may postpone the election and request the Board of Regents to issue a new call for nominations.

Bylaw 6.11.h (2011 Handbook p. 60)

The Board of Regents shall extend the formal call promptly after the election and submit its action to the official periodicals of the Synod for publication.

Bylaw 8.47.c (2011 Handbook p. 78)

The secretary of LCC shall distribute the Rules of Procedure, and any revisions to the Rules of Procedure, without delay to the president, all district presidents, and all reconciliation committees. Notice of their availability shall be published in the official periodicals of the Synod.

Bylaw 8.55.g.i (2011 Handbook p. 81)

Resignation from LCC within 15 Days

The suspended member may resign from membership in LCC at any time within the 15-day period which began on the effective date of his suspension, in which case the district president shall inform the president and shall notify the Synod through the official periodicals of the Synod and the matter shall be ended.

Bylaw 11.21.a. (2011 Handbook p. 86)

Both the print and the electronic editions of *The Canadian Lutheran* shall be the official periodicals of the Synod.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.04a To Expand the Eligibility of Pastors Emeriti for Service in Synodical Boards and Commissions

Ref. Overture 3.06

WHEREAS It is the desire of the East District that the eligibility of pastors emeriti for service in Synodical boards and commissions be expanded, and

WHEREAS the 2012 East District convention, observing the requirement for advance notice (Statutory Bylaw, Article XXI, Section 21.01) approved submission of an overture to make changes to the Statutory and Synodical Bylaws of LCC to provide for this eligibility; and

WHEREAS LCC is blessed with many retired pastors who have served faithfully in the church for years; and

- WHEREAS these men have amassed a valuable wealth of experience in life and ministry; and
- WHEREAS LCC will be experiencing an increase in retirements over the next three decades; and
- WHEREAS LCC *Handbook*, Statutory By-Laws, Article XI (Board of Directors) 11.02 states, —Directors shall be elected at Conventions in accordance with the Synodical Bylaws, and shall include twelve (12) members, namely:
- the president
 - the three (3) vice-presidents;
 - six (6) individuals, two (2) from the confirmed members of congregations in each district, provided that such individuals are not pastors and further provided that not more than one (1) of such individuals may be a deacon; and
 - two (2) pastors serving congregation(s) elected-at-large; and
- WHEREAS the requirement of the Constitution and Bylaws of Synod that pastors elected to these and other positions must be currently serving in a called position in a congregation eliminates the possibility of tapping into this wealth of experience in these critical positions of leadership; and
- WHEREAS Article XXI of the aforementioned LCC Statutory By-laws requires that written notice of any repeal or change in bylaws must ~~be~~ given to all members of Lutheran Church–Canada not less than thirty (30) days before the Convention enclosing the bylaw or a summary specifying the nature of such bylaw”; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that we thank God for the work and ministry of our pastors emeriti and their willingness to continue to serve Him and His church; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the Statutory Bylaws of LCC be changed as follows:

Article XI Board of Directors

11.02 Directors shall be elected at Conventions in accordance with the Synodical Bylaws, and shall include twelve (12) members namely:

- two (2) pastors serving congregations or pastors emeriti elected at-large. (2011 *Handbook*, page 5); and be it finally

- RESOLVED that the Synodical Bylaws of LCC be changed as follows:

2.105 Membership

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations shall consist of seven voting members, to be selected as follows:

- a. The Convention shall elect two pastors serving congregations or pastors emeriti and two laypersons. (2011 *Handbook*, page 28)

Action: Defeated

Resolution 14.3.05 To Streamline the Colloquy Process

Reference: Overture 3.04

- WHEREAS the colloquy procedures outlined in the LCC *Handbook* largely reflect what was inherited from The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and have required adaptation to the circumstances of LCC over the past decades; and
- WHEREAS the *Handbook* section relating to pastoral and diaconal colloquy prescribes a process which has become difficult for applicants to comply with, to the point of making entrance into Lutheran Church-Canada via colloquy virtually impossible in many cases; and
- WHEREAS specific circumstances regularly arise in the colloquy process which were never envisioned by the current *Handbook* provisions; therefore be it

RESOLVED that 5.21.a.1. (2011 *Handbook*, p. 48) be amended to read bylaws 5.71-5.87 and be it further

RESOLVED that the Convention approve the additional changes recommended below to the LCC *Handbook*.

E. ADMISSION TO THE PASTORAL MINISTRY BY COLLOQUY

5.71 Pastoral Colloquy Committee

The Pastoral Colloquy Committee (the Committee) shall consist of a vice-president of the Synod, appointed by the president, and the presidents of the theological seminaries at Edmonton and St. Catharines. The vice-president shall be chairman of the Committee.

5.73 Functions

The Committee shall—

- a. direct the synodical activity in matters of colloquy according to regulations adopted by the Synod;
- b. render a full report on its activities to each convention of the Synod.
- c. establish and monitor academic and theological standards for admission to and completion of the colloquy program for the pastoral ministry;
- d. approve for admission to the colloquy program those applicants whom it recommends and to which no valid objection is made and shall communicate its decision to the applicant, the applicant's ecclesiastical supervisor, and the president of the district in which the applicant resides; and
- e. certify applicants for the pastoral ministry of the Synod, commending them to the Council of Presidents as eligible for a call.

5.75 Eligibility

Only such applicants shall be considered eligible for admission to the pastoral colloquy program as are:

- a. ministers, or candidates for the ministry, who are in good standing in other Christian church bodies and are graduates of established theological seminaries; or
- b. men who have completed an undergraduate degree whose names appear on the roster of the Synod as deacon, and who have had at least 10 years of successful experience as a deacon and are in good standing in a congregation of the Synod; or
- c. members in good standing of synodical congregations who are graduates of an established non-synodical seminary; or
- d. members in good standing of a synodical congregation who belong to a special ethnic or linguistic group, who have a college-level education, and who have had considerable experience in church work.

5.77 Application for Admission

- a. Applications for admission to the pastoral colloquy program shall be directed to the president of the district where the application originates.
- b. The district president shall assure the Committee of his sponsorship of the applicant before the Committee can act favourably on the application.

5.79 Publication of Application

After the district president has furnished the Committee with the required documents the Committee shall publish the request of the applicant in the official periodical(s) of the Synod. Within a reasonable amount of time the Committee shall either accept or deny the application based on the information it receives in the application process. Its decision shall not be subject to any appeal.

5.81 Program of Instruction

- a. The Committee shall determine the course of study and length of supervised ministry for each candidate on the basis of his needs and ecclesiastical background.
- b. The criteria by which the Committee shall judge an applicant's progress are as follows:
 1. The applicant shall demonstrate readiness for admission to the office according to standards established by the Committee.
 2. He shall give evidence that he fully understands and accepts the doctrinal standards of the

Synod, is acquainted with its practices, and has the ability and intention to teach, preach, and practice in conformity with these standards.

5.83 Applicants from Affiliated Church Bodies

Applications from pastors, candidates of theology, who are members of an affiliated church body and have previously given satisfactory evidence of their qualifications may be received without examination of the applicant.

5.85 Certificate of Eligibility

Applicants who have satisfactorily passed their examination shall be given a certificate of eligibility by the Colloquy Committee. The Committee shall publish the names of certified candidates in the official periodical(s) of the Synod.

5.87 Placement

Every applicant whom the Committee declares qualified for the pastoral ministry shall be eligible to be placed on call lists by District presidents, congregations or schools of Synod. When a call is received, the candidate shall be placed by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments.

F. ADMISSION TO THE DIACONATE BY COLLOQUY

5.101 Diaconal Colloquy Committee

The Diaconal Colloquy Committee (the Committee) shall consist of a vice-president of the Synod, appointed by the president, the presidents of the theological seminaries at Edmonton and St. Catharines, and the president of Concordia University College of Alberta or his designate. The vice-president shall be chairman of the committee.

5.103 Functions

The Committee shall—

- a. direct the synodical activity in matters of colloquy according to regulations adopted by the Synod;
- b. render a full report on its activities to each convention of the Synod;
- c. establish and monitor academic and theological standards for admission to and completion of the colloquy program for the diaconate;
- d. approve for admission to the colloquy program those applicants whom it recommends and to which no valid objection is made and shall communicate its decision to the applicant, the applicant's ecclesiastical supervisor, and the president of the district in which the applicant resides; and
- e. certify applicants for the diaconate of the Synod, commending them to the Council of Presidents as eligible for a call.

5.105 Eligibility for Admission

Applicants for admission to the diaconate by colloquy shall be expected to have completed post-secondary education at an accredited institution culminating in a bachelor's degree. Teacher applicants must hold teacher certification in one of the Canadian provinces.

5.107 Application for Admission

- a. Applications for admission to the diaconal colloquy program shall be directed to the president of the district where the application originates.
- b. The district president shall assure the Colloquy Committee of his sponsorship of the applicant before the committee can act favourably on the application.

5.109 Publication of Notice

After the district president has furnished the Committee with the required documents the committee shall publish the request of the applicant in the official periodical(s) of the Synod. Within a reasonable amount of time the Committee shall either accept or deny the application based on the information it receives in the application process. Its decision shall not be subject to any appeal.

5.111 Program of Instruction

The Committee shall determine the course of study for each candidate on the basis of his or her needs and ecclesiastical background.

5.113 Applicants from Affiliated Church Bodies

Applications from deacons who are members of an affiliated church body and have previously given satisfactory evidence of their qualifications may be received without examination of the applicant.

5.115 Certificate of Eligibility

Applicants who have satisfactorily passed their examination shall be given a certificate of eligibility by the Colloquy Committee. The Committee shall publish the names of certified candidates in the official periodical(s) of the Synod.

5.117 Placement

Every applicant whom the Committee declares qualified for the diaconate shall be eligible to be placed on call lists by District presidents, congregations or schools of synod. When a call is received, the candidate shall be placed by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.06a To Decline Overture 3.07 (To Permit Rostered Workers to Nominate Circuit Counsellors)

Ref. Overture 3.07

WHEREAS Nominations for President, Vice Presidents, and District Presidents are made by congregations alone; and

WHEREAS The office of Circuit Counsellor assists the District President in his responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision (see Bylaw 4.15 **Relation to District President**); therefore be it

RESOLVED that Overture 3.07 be respectfully declined.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.07 To Amend Bylaw Provisions Governing Frequency of Circuit Forums

Reference: Overture 3.08

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 4.31(2011 *Handbook* p.45) requires circuit forums to meet at least twice a year; and

WHEREAS anecdotal evidence suggests that circuit forum attendance has been decreasing over time; and
WHEREAS the business that circuit forums deal with is often confined to issues related to conventions such as electing delegates and submitting overtures; and

WHEREAS a recent survey of circuit counsellors by members of the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS) suggests that many circuit forums are convened only to fulfill these particular requirements of Synodical Bylaw 4.31; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Synodical Bylaw 4.31(2011 *Handbook* p.45) be amended to read: “The circuit forum will meet at least twice a year triennially or more frequently at the discretion of the circuit counsellor.”

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.08 To Use More Consistent Terminology Relating to Rostered Workers

Reference: Overture 3.09

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 5.41 (2011 *Handbook* p.50) defines the process by which pastors and deacons are placed on the clergy and diaconal rosters, respectively, of the Synod; and

WHEREAS other Synodical Bylaws, including 2.231 (2011 *Handbook* p.31) employ the term ~~“rostered workers”~~ to refer to those pastors and deacons who, being listed on their respective rosters, are members of the Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Synodical Bylaw 2.521.a (2011 *Handbook* p.35) be amended to reflect this preferred terminology, as follows:

~~Each district shall elect through its regular election procedures at the district convention one professional church worker who is a member of the Synod~~ rostered worker and one lay person to the Committee for Convention Nominations plus ~~alternatives~~ alternates"; therefore be it finally

RESOLVED that consistent efforts be employed throughout the Synod to refer to pastors and deacons together, wherever this can appropriately be done, as ~~rostered workers.~~"

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.09 To Clarify the Circuit Counsellor's Relationship to Deacons in His Circuit

Reference: Overture 3.10

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaws 4.11 through 4.25 (2011 *Handbook* pages 43-44) describe the circuit counsellor's duties and relationships to various parties; and

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 4.23 is the only section within this description that mentions deacons within the context of the circuit counsellor's work; and

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaw 4.23 focuses exclusively on the circuit counsellor's caring relationship with ~~the~~ teachers, principals, and schools in his circuit"; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Synodical Bylaw 4.23 (2011 *Handbook* p.44) be amended to recognize that many deacons do not serve in schools, but rather congregations, as follows:

~~The circuit counsellor shall officially visit the teachers, principals, and schools~~ the deacons in his circuit. ~~He shall give his attention especially to:~~

a. In the case of deacons serving congregations, he shall give his attention especially to their teaching, visiting, and administration.

b. In the case of deacons serving schools, he shall give his attention especially to:

[the points presently enumerated as ~~α~~" through ~~ε~~" would change to 1-6].

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.10 To Amend Bylaw Provisions for Diaconal Training

Reference: Overture 3.11

WHEREAS Synodical Bylaws 5.25.a.1 and 5.25.b (2011 *Handbook* p. 48-49) state that Concordia University College of Alberta is the only institution from which prospective diaconal candidates can receive an appropriate credential; therefore be it

RESOLVED that these Bylaws be amended as follows:

5.25.a: ~~A~~ candidate for the position of deacon in Lutheran Church—Canada may be consecrated when the following prerequisites have been met:

1. *The candidate* ~~he~~ shall have completed the prescribed courses of study and have received a diploma from Concordia University College of Alberta or *a synodically recognized program of higher education...*"

2. *The candidate* ~~he~~ shall have received endorsement...

3. *The candidate* ~~he~~ shall have indicated complete dedication to the diaconal ministry and the readiness to accept a call extended to him/*her* ...

4. *The candidate* ~~he~~ shall have received and accepted a call...

5. *The candidate* ~~he~~ shall have received and accepted a call...

6. *The candidate* shall have made application for membership in Synod...

5.25.b: ~~Graduates of Concordia University College of Alberta or a synodically approved institution of higher education who have fulfilled the prerequisites stated in a.1-4 and also wish to continue their professional studies shall be assigned and consecrated upon their request under the following conditions...~~"

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.11 To Decline Overture 3.12 (To Recognize Diaconal Service in Schools as well as Parishes)

Reference: Overture 3.12

WHEREAS diaconal service is already recognized in schools as well as parishes in bylaw 5.43 (2011 Handbook p.50); therefore be it
RESOLVED that overture 3.12 be respectfully declined.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.12 To Provide for Diaconal Service on Synod Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Reference: Overture 3.13

WHEREAS Within the structure of LCC, it is clear that deacons are not laypeople, and
WHEREAS conversely, deacons are members of Synod, along with pastors and congregations Statutory Bylaw 7.02 (2011 Handbook p.2); and
WHEREAS deacons, along with pastors, are rostered workers of the Synod according to Synodical Bylaw 5.41 (2011 Handbook p.50); and
WHEREAS deacons, despite being members of Synod, are not presently eligible to serve on many Synod boards, commissions, and committees; and
WHEREAS LCC is consequently deprived of the service that could be rendered by deacons; and
WHEREAS deacons are similarly deprived of the joy and benefit of serving the wider church in this way; therefore be it
RESOLVED that deacons become eligible for service on Synodical boards, commissions, and committees; and
RESOLVED that the following Synodical bylaws be changed to reflect this principle:

2.101 (Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure, 2011 Handbook p.27): ~~The Board of Directors shall appoint two pastors~~ *two rostered workers, at least one of whom must be a pastor, and two laypersons, for six-year terms, renewable once.*"

2.105 (Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 2011 Handbook p.28): ~~The Convention shall elect two pastors~~ *two rostered workers serving congregations, at least one of whom must be a pastor, and two laypersons.*"

8.37.a (Commission on Adjudication, 2011 *Handbook* p.77) Election and Appointment
~~The Commission shall have nine members. Six of the members shall be elected by the Convention. One member from each district shall be appointed by the respective district president. Of those elected at the Convention, two people, one a pastor and one a layperson or a deacon, shall be elected from the communicant members of congregations in each district. Of the elected members, at least one (but not more than two) shall be a lawyer. The Convention shall elect one pastor and one deacon from each district, a lay person shall be appointed by each district president. Of the appointed members at least one (but not more than two) shall be a lawyer.~~”

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.13 To Develop Ways Other than an Assessment for Implementing Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report

Reference: Overture 3.16

WHEREAS LCC Resolution 11.2.03 (“*To Implement the Recommendations of the Vicarage Task Force Report*”), in addition to acknowledging the merits of the task force report, also approved —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 the estimated cost to implement the task force recommendations was \$160,000 a year; and

WHEREAS members of LCC congregations give their mission offerings which are passed on to the congregations to the District to fund the work in our Districts (home missions, ecclesiastical supervision, parish and school services, administration, care of church workers, etc.). A portion of the district income is further passed on to the Synod to fund the work we do together as a national church (foreign missions, theological education, church relations, etc.); and

WHEREAS while we do, in fact, assess congregations for the cost of church worker conferences, as well as Synod and District conventions, it should be noted that these are actually mandated in the *Handbook* to which all members of Synod literally —sig on” when they become members of LCC; and

WHEREAS there are presently congregations which cannot pay the current assessments for conferences or conventions; thus other congregations are faced with higher overall assessments to fund the required conferences and conventions. This situation can be expected with an additional vicarage program assessment; and

WHEREAS in times of decreasing income, it is tempting to look at other means of funding the work of District and Synod. In such situations the Synod (and perhaps also its Districts) may be tempted to consider assessments to fund other Synodical services. Consequently, a spirit of compulsion rather than of joyous mission giving would prevail. As a result, there would probably be far less funding and support available for the work of Synod than we have now; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Synod develop and promote materials to fund the recommendations made by the vicarage task force, apart from assessment, and which encourage congregations to support the work of District and Synod through ongoing support of missions; and be it further

RESOLVED that LCC refrain from using new assessments to fund Synod or District programs and services; and be it finally

RESOLVED that these materials promote Christian stewardship at the individual and congregational level as the free and joyous response of faith, which trusts in the work of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who has redeemed us to be His new creation.

Action: **Adopted**

Resolution 14.3.14b To Study and Provide For Diaconal Voting At Synod and District Conventions

Ref. Overtures 3.14, 3.15

-
- WHEREAS voting membership of synod is limited to congregations who exercise that right according to Article XII. 11 of the Constitution of Synod; and
- WHEREAS two principles govern our current voting structure for district and synod conventions.
- 1) Equal representation from parishes regardless of size;
 - 2) equal pastor and lay representation (one lay and one pastor delegate from each parish);
- and
- WHEREAS the current structure excludes voting by the diaconate in called positions (Bylaw 1.19); therefore be it
- RESOLVED that we respectfully decline Overtures 3.14 and 3.15; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the CCMS prepare an interim report to the Synod Board of Directors and a final report to the 2017 Synod Convention which would provide recommendations for changes to the Synod Handbook, which changes would seek to preserve our fundamental principles of governance and polity while providing voting privileges for deacons.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.15a To Amend the LCC Constitution Regarding Voting Rights For Parishes

Reference: Overtures 3.05

- WHEREAS two principles govern our current voting structure for district and synod conventions. 1) Equal representation from parishes regardless of size 2) equal pastor and lay representation (one lay and one pastor delegate from each parish); therefore be it
- RESOLVED that we respectfully decline overture 3.05.

Action: Adopted

Resolution 14.3.16 To Receive the Three Year Work Program-Years Ending January 31, 2015, January 31, 2015, January 31, 2016, and January 31, 2017

Reference: Overture 3.17

- WHEREAS the treasurer and Board of Directors of Lutheran Church—Canada have prepared a proposed work program for the years 2015-2017; and
- WHEREAS this work program can only be implemented by the cooperation and action of congregations, districts, 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

Convention Essay

Prayer AD 2014 – Part 1 by Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

Part 1 - God's family is a speaking family

A. God's Family Conversation

Just about everybody knows that family life and speaking go hand in hand. At the moment my wife and I usually have four children sitting around the table at the evening meal. Although there is a lot of eating that goes on (You don't want to leave your hand over the meat plate for too long in my house ... there are days when you could lose it), there is also a fair amount of chatter. It might get a little out of hand sometimes as some family members get a little overexcited but generally, it is a happy sound. These are joyful times for a father when I think about it - times that I should probably treasure more than I do because I know it won't be long before they will be gone.

There are other times, though, in family life, when there is not so much happy hubbub. These quiet moments normally come when someone has gotten into trouble or someone isn't getting along with someone else, or even when someone is in a bad mood. Thankfully these occasions are fairly rare in our house, although as in any home they are there now and again. The silence in these times tells you that something is wrong. You can feel it in the air. It is uncomfortable. Although not every family keeps up a constant banter over their evening meal, absolute silence normally suggests some problem in family life. Families talk. If they don't, they tend to be in trouble.

Family and conversation go hand in hand. In many ways speaking is born of family life. If a man and a woman are going to spend their life together, there has to be some talking ... some kind of conversation ... at least to get things started. There has to be some sharing back and forth of feelings and interest, or it's not likely that anyone will end up with a ring on their finger. He may not be the greatest talker in their life together, but the husband-to-be has to pop the question at some point (or at least to be ready to say "yes" when she finally puts it to him.) Life as a couple begins with speaking and, as even the world knows, talking needs to continue for it to be happy and healthy.

The gift of children to a husband and wife shows all the more how family and conversation go hand in hand. Parents speak to their children right from the beginning. The first communication might not be Nobel prize-winning material, but the tender words

and noises that a mother or father make into their child's ears are the first beginnings of the speaking that will carry on for a lifetime. We learn to talk on our parent's knee. Certainly other people in our lives help out here, and it can develop in many ways, but life's usual pattern is that family life is the seedbed of our conversation. In the home we learn to say our first words and to express ourselves, even if it is just bickering with our brothers and sisters. Where would our politicians be without such essential training?

1) God's eternal conversation

Prayer, when it comes right down to it, is a conversation - a particular kind of conversation - but a conversation nonetheless. This speaking also finds its origins in family life. Not just any family, of course, but the First Family, from which all families receive their name and being - the family of God (Ephesians 3:14-15). This family is the source of all other families, as well as being the Image in which they all are made. God's family has existed from eternity, sharing One Life of perfect love together. It is a perfect Union in Communion. One God in Three Persons. One Family Life with Three Persons who share it - the Father, His Only Begotten Son and the Spirit who proceeds from them. From eternity the Father has been a Father, and so eternally has had a Son. The Son from eternity has been a Son, and so eternally has had a Father. The Spirit, who from eternity has been the Spirit of God, and so eternally has proceeded from God. As there have always been Three Persons in this One Family, so there has also always been a family conversation.

In the beginning was the Word (John 1:1-2). From eternity there was talking within the family of the Trinity. As St. John so beautifully reveals the identity of the Second Person of the Trinity as the eternal Word, He uncovers for us the mystery that speaking lies at the heart of God's eternal being. The eternal Word testifies to the truth that there has never been a wordless moment between the three Divine Persons. To be silent within Himself would cause God to cease to be - an impossibility for the eternal "I AM". Although at times sinful man may experience God's apparent silence (which arguably is due more to our trouble with hearing rather than God's speaking (Job 33:14), God within Himself is never quiet.

Although many a husband may earn the silent treatment from his wife, the persons of the Trinity

would never say anything dumb enough to be at the receiving end of what we husbands well earn from time to time. The only moment when we see such silence from heaven would be at that exceptional hour when the Son of God as man takes on our sin in all of its fullness on the Cross, and so lives in the true horror of our broken relationship with God. If you can grasp, even to the smallest degree, the depths of the communion between the Father and the Son lived out in their eternal speaking and hearing of one another, then you can begin to hear the true depths of the pain and suffering in Christ's heart-rending cry, "Eli Eli lema sabachthani" (Matthew 27:46). Although as God the Word Christ could never experience such unimaginable trauma, as man He can and truly does go through it for our sake.

2) God's knowing conversation that creates

Father, Son and Holy Spirit are ever talking with one another, but not so that they can get better acquainted or share unknown information. The Father doesn't need to ask the Son, "So what happened in your day?" As the Three-in-One, the Three Persons know one another as none other is known (John 17:25). From eternity They have known each other as One. As their communion is eternal, so too their knowledge of each other is eternal. There's nothing that They don't get about each other. As one God They're fully aware of what each Person has done, is doing, and will do. Such knowing of another is an idea that quite simply is hard for us to grasp - although many a couple might long for it with one another. Our lives are so fundamentally shaped by our inability to fully know others and be known to them that we can only imagine what such understanding of a husband ... a wife ... a child ... a parent ... a friend would be like.

Unlike our speaking, the eternal conversation of the Trinity doesn't reveal the heart of one of its Persons to another, but is born of the heart They share together. They don't speak to be known, but being known They speak. They don't speak to share a life, but sharing a life They speak. In our lives in this world we have to speak so that others can get what we're thinking. We cannot know or be known without revealing ourselves to each other. Such communication is not necessary in the Three-in-One, since the Son knows the heart of the Father from eternity (John 10:15) and the Spirit knows the mind of God (Romans 8:27) from before the beginning of time. Father, Son and Holy Spirit know each other to the very depths of the being that They share as one God. There were no "How do you do?"s within the eternal "I AM" or any "You'd never guess what happened today?"s either.

In our lives we still see glimpses of such knowing-based speaking. We do talk with people that we don't know so that we might get to know them. This is how we make new friends at school, in our neighborhoods, at work, or in our churches. But there are also people that we are well acquainted with, whom we speak with because we know them. Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends, neighbours etc. talk because of the relationship that they have with each other. Although their communication may continue to reveal new things about each other, their speaking together flows from the fact that they know one another. The conversation of a husband and wife is born of their intimate knowledge of each other. They speak in a knowing way because of the one life that they share.

Another essential truth about God's speaking is that it is never a fruitless one. Father, Son and Holy Spirit don't use any empty words. There is no mindless babbling in the heart of the Trinity. There are no nervous talkers amongst the Three-in-One. None of Them ever just tries to fill empty space. There are no awkward silences to fill, after all. Every word has a purpose. Every word says something. Every word does something (Isaiah 55:11). The Word of God is always an active, creating Word. For us as Lutherans this truth has always been very important for our lives in the Church. We hold firmly to the truth that God's Word does what it says when it comes to such things as Baptism, Absolution, and the Lord's Supper, as well as the living and active proclaimed Word of the Law and the Gospel (Hebrews 4:12). The speaking in the heart of the Trinity is a speaking of love that is ever creating Their life together. This active speaking within the heart of the Trinity is what God sent out to create all that was made (John 1:3).

B. Created to be in Conversation

In the beginning as God created us in His own image (Genesis 1:26), He made us as speaking beings. As the Trinity engages in an eternal conversation, we too were made to be in conversation with our Creator and one another. As we were born out of the eternal speaking of God, we were created to be a part of His ongoing communication. God spoke to create us. As we were spoken to that we might be, we were made to speak. The ongoing chatter of creation testifies to this truth. The early morning song of the birds, the whale's sonic boom, the call of the loon, the cry of the wolf, the dance of the bee all testify to the foundational speaking that brought them into being, even as they echo it in their ongoing existence. Although God has set man over His creation, our

shared gift of communication points to our shared beginnings in the heart of God, brought into being through His Word by His Spirit.

As God created man as both one and many in a mirror image of His own being, He created us as knowing and being known. As He created us as male and female united in the one-fleshness of husband and wife, He created us to know each other even as He knows Himself (Genesis 1:27). The speaking between Adam and Eve was a beautiful reflection of the ongoing conversation of the Three Persons within the Trinity. Their conversation was born of a full and complete knowledge of one another. They didn't speak so that they could get to know each other, but being known to each other they spoke. Such an existence is hard for us to imagine as we live under the effects of sin. Even the best of marriages is fraught with misunderstanding and conflict born of miscommunication between husband and wife. In the beginning no such misspeaking and mishearing existed. Adam and Eve knew and understood each other as a mirror image of God's own knowing of Himself.

As man and woman were created reflecting God's own perfection, they were made to share in His life. Although man would never know God as the Lord eternally knows Himself, he was created to know Him and be known by Him in time. He was not in on the original conversation of the Three Persons, but He was made to be a part of their ongoing speaking. As God created man out of His eternal divine conversation, He created us to be a part of it. God spoke to us that we might speak to Him. He began us with His Word, that we might live in that Word. As it was an eternal Word, it was intended to be an eternal conversation. Man was not equal to God. He had a beginning in time. His knowledge of God and His conversation would always be limited by this beginning; but as the true image of God he was made to speak and be spoken to forever.

As God made us out of His own active speaking, He made us to be a part of it. The image of God's fruitful speaking can still be glimpsed in human life, even under the brokenness of sin. Human speaking still has power to create. We do babel in ways that the Creator never intended. Our words are also often used to cause harm and give voice to the ugliness that has taken hold of our hearts in sin. Yet human speech has unquestionably created much beauty in poetry and prose. Great truths have been spoken and planted in people's hearts through human speech. Beautiful pictures are painted in the mind as well as on canvas through the speaking of the human heart.

Our speech has also made beautiful music for our souls with the primal language of sound.

Of course, this creative power of human speech is seen at its clearest closer to home in the family life I mentioned earlier. The life of love between a man and woman is brought into being and maintained through our speaking with one another. God establishes the human home through the creative "I do's" that husband and wife speak to each other. From this creative word a new life is formed as the two are joined into one, so that according to God's will, they may give birth to new life in the gift of children. The life of love with these children is also born of the creative speaking of the heart from parent to child and child to parent. Our own children come into being through the speaking of one heart to another, and they are brought into being to be spoken to and to speak their own creating word.

To recap then: the Trinity is a family that speaks. God made us in His speaking image. We were created through His Word to share in His conversation. We were made to speak with Him and one another, just as we were spoken to in the beginning. This conversation that we were made to be a part of wasn't a mindless one, but a beautiful one intended to fill the creation with life.

1) Man leaves behind God's conversation

None can know the depths of grief that welled up in the heart of God when we chose to stop speaking to Him. As Adam and Eve chose to believe Satan's lies about God and His heart for them in Eden, they hopelessly flawed their knowledge of Him and so brought to an end the beautiful conversation that He created them in. Having forsaken the true knowledge of God, the intimacy of the knowing conversation came to an end. God became a stranger to man, though God remained a Father to him. God did not stop speaking to man. He continued to speak His creating Word that brought man into existence and preserved him in it, but man closed his ears to God and ceased speaking to Him. And so we see God searching for Adam and Adam hiding from God (Genesis 3:8-11).

As man chose to forget his beginning and aspire to be his own god, he cut off his conversation with his Creator. Having been created in communion with God, he turned his back on Him to try to carry on a conversation of his own. Yet as true knowing can only come from the One who knows all (Psalm 36:9), any conversation undertaken apart from God will be hopelessly flawed. Disconnected from God, man can no longer truly know anyone - not even himself.

Without true knowing there can be no true sharing of the heart. Having abandoned the speaking that he was created in, man lost its reflection within himself as well. A mirror can only show the image of the one that it is facing. Turn a mirror away from a face and it will no longer reflect it. As man seeks his own speech apart from God, he loses his ability to truly speak. A ghost of the image remains, but man miscommunicates far more than he communicates and misunderstands far more than he understands. Although a shadow yet remains, true knowing is lost, and so, true communication is lost with it.

This reality is the one that we live in as sinners. Procreated in the image of Adam, we are doomed to seek out our own conversation which can never live up to its forsaken origins. As sinners who insist on standing on our own apart from God, ever striving to be what we can never be, we can have no meaningful conversation with God. We don't truly know Him and so we can't truly know one another. We no longer understand Him and so we no longer understand each other. Although husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends and neighbours can all more or less get to know each other, and can speak based on that knowledge, life in the world whether it is in the home, workplace or neighbourhood is ever troubled by our imperfect communication. At the root of most problems between people is almost always a failure to speak and hear rightly. We may all speak the same language and yet still live in a babbling world.

Family life under sin bears out this truth. You don't have to be married long to learn that our communication skills no longer reflect the image of God. A husband stands dumbfounded as his wife bursts into tears over his insensitivity. He's not sure if the trouble was what he said or how he said it (it was probably both). A wife tries to get her husband to talk but his true feelings remain as much of a mystery to her as they probably are to him. Parents believe that they have spoken clearly with their children and yet time and again the message seems to get lost in translation. They might as well have been talking to the wall. Brothers and sisters can really get their point across at times, but it's not exactly the kind of speaking that draws them closer together - "You're such a dough head!" - not being the verbal communion we are going for here.

Our messed-up communication with God and one another comes to its ultimate end in sin's final consequences (Romans 6:23). Brought into being by God's speaking, we were created to speak as we were

spoken to that we might share our lives with God and one another. Destructive as sin can be on our daily interaction with one another, its concluding outcome is utterly devastating. Poorly as we may communicate with one another in life, death shuts down the conversation altogether. When sin gives us our final severance cheque, there's nothing left to talk about. The dead do not speak. The widow may whisper her tender words to her husband lying in the casket, but he answers no more. The deafening silence of the marital home screams out the loss as a wife longs to hear her husband's voice and forgetfully calls for him. The dead speak no more, either to man or to God, as the psalmist laments (Psalm 115:17).

Death's silence shows that miscommunication is not the root of all our troubles in our life with God and one another - the root cause is sin - yet a breakdown in communication is an unavoidable consequence of sin. The reason we do not communicate well is because in the beginning we turned away from the Word of God. Without the Word there can be no true speaking. Many believe that the troubles of our world would easily be solved if only we learned how to communicate better. The world rightly recognizes one of the symptoms but misses the disease. Although there can be benefits in treating the symptoms, the disease cannot be cured by such treatment. Our communication troubles with God and so with one another can only be cured with the curing of sin.

2) God restarts the conversation

From that terrible day in Eden when sin devastated God's glorious creation, the Lord committed Himself to restore it. Even as His image was shattered in us with Adam and Eve's sin, God in His mercy set in motion His plan for our healing. He set that plan in motion with the very word of promise that He would save us from the serpent's power (Genesis 3:15). Although salvation would not be accomplished for many years to come, the setting in place of the plan itself opened up the way for us to be returned to life with God. Here was a Word that revealed God's heart for us. Here was a Word that opened up our own hearts to the truth of who this God was who had created us. Here was a Word that began our re-introduction to God, that we might know Him once more as He had created us to know and be known.

This first Word was only the beginning of a long conversation that would be carried on over centuries, as the Lord would speak through His prophets to unfold His heart to the world. The Lord spoke through the prophets, so that we might come to know

Him, and in knowing Him be able to share in the knowing conversation that He had created us in and for in the beginning (Hebrews 1:1). All this time He was drawing man back to Himself, preparing for that day when He would reestablish our broken communion by sending His Son to become man. He continued to speak to us, and so we were able to speak to Him. Getting to know Him, we could call on His name and begin to speak to Him as One who is known to us. As we grew in our relationship with Him, He prepared us for the life He was planning for us in His Own Family.

When in the fullness of time the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, the fullness of God's heart was laid bare before us (John 3:16). The Son came that we might know the Father as He knows the Father (Matthew 11:27; John 14:7). The Son came that we might share His life as Children of God (John 3:1; 10:10, 14:18, Ephesians 1:3-5). The Son came that we might receive the Spirit, so that we might abide in God (Galatians 4:6). The Son came to renew our lives in the Family Life of the Holy Trinity. The Son came to overcome the lie about God that the serpent had whispered into our ears and that we have believed ever since. He came to show us that God was not a grasping, demanding, overbearing deity but a loving, gracious and devoted Father. He showed this truth in all of its fullness, when on account of the Father's love He went up on the cross to spread out His arms and save the world.

The Son took on Himself all that divided us from God to bind back together all that sin tore apart (Ephesians 2:14-18). With His own life He filled the great chasm that separated us from God and one another. The Lord Jesus Christ entered into our silence on the cross (Psalm 22:1-2). As the eternal Word spoken from eternity, He could not be silenced; yet as true man on Calvary He entered into the silence of death to set us free from it. As the Son of the Father He could not break fellowship with God; yet as man on the cross He was cut off for us that we might be reunited with Him. While as very God of very God the Son must forever enjoy His eternal conversation with the Father, hanging on the tree as man He is cursed by God's damning silence, to bring us back into heaven's conversation. The Second Person of the Trinity, according to His human nature, goes through the fullness of sin's awkward silence so that through Him we might know the joyful communion of God's Family Table.

3) God returns us to His conversation

God returns us to His Family through the new birth that He gives us in the waters of Holy Baptism. Here

God unites our lives with the life of Christ as He baptises us into Christ's death. As we are buried with Him in the water, we rise with Him from that watery grave to live a new life in Him (Romans 6:4). God clothes us with Christ so that through His Son we might be His children (Galatians 3:27). We are no longer strangers to Him in sin, but members of His own Family welcomed to His table and invited into His own conversation (John 14:23). God speaks His Word to us and welcomes us, even looking for our speaking in return. As children of God in Christ, the Father invites us in Christ to join in the intimate conversation of the Trinity.

As Christ makes His place our place in heaven (Ephesians 2:6), He also gives us His voice at the family table. The place Christ gives to us in the Father's own Family is not a servant's place. We are not brought in to stand behind God's chair in silence. We are invited in to take part in that intimate and active speaking that goes on in the heart of the Trinity. When the disciples ask the Lord Jesus to teach them to pray, He gives them His own prayer. Jesus gives them His part in the active speaking that goes on in the heavenly places. He gives them the prayer that He as the Son of God prays for us, and that as man He now also prays in our place (Hebrews 7:25). He invites us to speak with Him to His Abba as dear children speak to their dear father. He invites us to pray as He prays. He invites us to pray with Him.

Through baptism into Christ, the Lord's prayers become our prayers. We pray in His name and in His stead (John 15:16). His pleading for the world becomes our pleading. The point is not that Christ takes up our prayers according to our will. We are lifted up instead to the place where we get to take up Christ's prayers according to God's will. Here is true praying in Christ's name ... true praying in Christ's stead. The baptismal truth that God is our dear Father and that we are His dear children means that we are truly remade in His image. This means His will is now our will. His ways are now our ways. His heart is now our heart. His speaking now becomes our speaking. His goals are now our goals and His purposes are now our purposes. As God's true children we are being remade to think and act like our dear Father.

The speaking life that we are welcomed into in our prayers in Jesus is not about us imposing our will on God. Since we are true children of the Father, what God wants should be what we want. In our Baptism God rescued us from the abusive fatherhood of Satan and his ugly image. The devil's will is self-centred

and self-focused, looking to get all he can for himself. Satan as the adversary sets his will against God's will. In Christ, the Lord is setting us free from such a self-focused, self-centered will. The Lord is setting us free from such a rebellious will. In our new life as His dear children, the Father is renewing us in the truth of the goodness of His will for us. In our new life in Christ, the Spirit is schooling us in the truth that when it comes to God, Father really does know best. In the Christian life, our prayers are growing out of being ordered by how we see our needs, into how God sees them.

In the prayer that Jesus gives us to pray there's nothing about the million dollars so many confirmands want to know about when it comes to asking for things in Jesus' name. "Will I get it if I ask really believing?" There is also no request for the hamster that I so desperately wanted for my 5th birthday, and that I asked for with all my might day and night. I beat on the doors of heaven, willing and believing with all my childlike faith that it would be mine. What I got was a blue budgee that I named Jake. (Hamsters were seen to belong firmly in the rat family according to the upper management of my childhood home, and so were persona non grata.) Although the prayer that Jesus gives us does include our earthly needs, its overall tone rises above my youthful requests for a pet rodent.

Without question God heard my prayers and in love answered them in a way that blessed both my parents and me. Yet it was also God's will to draw me deeper into the prayer He gave me to pray. In the Our Father, Jesus invites us to join with Him in interceding for the life of the world. This prayer reveals the Trinity's family business as it addresses that business and engages in it. The Our Father shows us God's will for us and the world. As we pray for the hallowing of His name, for His kingdom to come and His will to be done ... as we pray for daily bread and for the work of His forgiveness in us and through us ... as we pray to be kept from temptation and delivered from evil, we are drawn into God's glorious plans for the world which reach so much further than what we would either think or dare to ask for according to our own will. For truly God has brought us back into His Family that we might be a part of His conversation, not so that we can make Him a part of ours. Since He is God, and it's His Family, He sets the topic for the family discussion. We get to talk about what He's talking about. Prayer is not about interrupting God with our more important ideas.

4) God brings us back into His own active speaking

As we join in Christ's speaking as dear children of the Father, we join in the active speaking of the Trinity. The words that we speak in Christ are not just spoken wishes or desires. They are words that do as they say. Through these words the Lord does His work in us and in the world, to fulfill His plans for all. When we take up these words in Christ, we speak them in and through Christ, which makes them power-filled words. This speaking then is not just a request or plea, but the very requesting and pleading is fulfilling what it is requesting and pleading for, according to God's own will. As our lips are opened with Christ by the Spirit to the Father, His name is hallowed, His kingdom comes and His will is done, just as the words themselves say. Their work begins in us as we pray them, and through us their work is being done in the world.

In this way, even the smallest child who takes up the Lord's word with Jesus gets more done in this world than the greatest and mightiest of men. Such a child does greater things than all the great heroes of human history. Even in the Church, we often tend to focus on or make much fuss about a person's gifts when it comes to speaking or preaching or praying, as if in some way the Word of God is more effective because a given person speaks more eloquently or more dynamically than someone else. As Lutherans, we have always understood that the power lies in the Word, and in the Word alone. I am nothing when it comes to the Word of God. The Word does what it says because it is God's Word. I add nothing to it. I cannot make it more effective. God does not need me to cry it out; He could raise up stones to say it far more effectively than I do (Luke 19:40). It's sad and dangerous when there's so much emphasis in the Church on the mere dust that speaks instead of on the Word.

In the life of prayer, our hope lies in the Word of God that the Lord has given us to pray as God's own dear children. Baptised into Christ, and so praying in Christ, we speak Christ's own word in the sure and certain promise that we will be heard as He is heard. Focused on the truth of our baptism that we are God's dear children, we need never doubt that our dear Father will hear us, and will answer us as we pray with His Son Jesus. What we pray for in Christ is God's own will. When we take up His own Word as our prayer, there can be no doubt that He will do what we ask, since what we will be asking for is His own will. When we pray with the Lord's Word according to His own will, we are brought into God's own work and life. In our sinfulness we can lose sight of what an honour and privilege this is for us as God's children. Lost in the lie of our own "divinity,"

we can somehow think that it would be so wonderful if God worked according to our will. We don't get the real wonder that the Lord of heaven and earth is ready to make us a part of His work as members of His own Family (John 14:12-13).

Praying the Lord's own Word in the Lord's will is like being a paint-by-number artist and having someone like Leonardo Da Vinci take your hand and guide it to add a few brush strokes on the canvas of the Mona Lisa. Praying according to our will is like being a paint-by-number artist but wanting to take hold of Da Vinci's hand to direct his painting on the canvas. In the one case we get to be a part of something beautiful; in the other we would only mess up the creation of a great artist. In repentance as God's children, we know that the Lord is God and that we have nothing to add to His wisdom that will make it better for us or for others. Humbly we take our place as His dear children, in the sure and certain truth that our heavenly Father loves His creation and especially His dear children, beyond anything that we can imagine. From a sinful point of view, the child's place is a lowly one. When you want to be your own god, being God's child is no big deal; but when you are in repentance before almighty God, there could be no greater honour than being numbered among His own dear children.

D. As God speaks to us we learn to speak

As God's children, we learn to pray just as every other child learns to speak in this world. Every now and then we hear some tragic stories of neglected children who are discovered after years of abuse. In some cases these children have been cut off from almost all human contact with the sad effect that they don't know how to speak. We learn to speak as we are spoken to. In this same way, our prayers are shaped and formed by God's speaking to us - by His Word. If He did not speak to us first, we would not be able to speak to Him. Without His speaking to us, we would not know who to speak to in our prayer (Romans 10:14). One of the notable events in the life of God's people in the Old Testament is the revelation of God's name to Moses (Exodus 3:13-15). Calling on the name of the Lord was only possible because God gave it to them to call upon. The Lord heard His people's cries from Egypt even without that name, but the revelation of His name brought them deeper into their relationship with Him, and so enriched and informed their prayers to Him.

As God's revelation continues throughout the life of His people, the conversation keeps on deepening and growing much as ours deepens and grows with our children in this world. There is a special moment in

life when a child no longer goes off to play with the other children after a meal but wants to stay to hear and share in the adult conversation. I remember when it happened for me, even as I'm now seeing it with my own growing children. As the Lord spoke to His people of old by the prophets, He was leading them and preparing for them for the last days when He would speak to them through His Son. He was preparing them for the day when in Christ He would draw them closer to Himself, to know His full mind and counsel and be able to take up a full voice in His conversation.

On a personal level, we too are being led by the Lord into a deeper understanding of His work and will for us and the world. He is working in us to draw us closer to His own mind and heart. Early in faith we speak like children, think like children, and reason like children, but the Lord is at work to mature us in faith (1 Corinthians 13:9-13). When I was little, I prayed for my hamster. The Lord heard my prayer and answered it in His wisdom with Jake my blue budgie. Yet as the Lord has spoken to me through the years, He has brought me to know His mind for me and the world in ever deepening ways. He has taught me to pray for even greater things. His Word has come to frame my prayers, as He in love has continued to speak it to me, enriching my own conversation with Him through that Word. The Lord has taught me that prayer is not simply about bringing my wants before the Father, but joining in the priestly work of Jesus for the life of the world.

As God's children, we grow into God's active speaking for the life of the world. This intimate conversation begins in the Word that God Himself speaks to us. Just as a child learns how to speak by hearing his parents, God's children learn how to share in heaven's conversation by hearing the Lord's own speaking. From the beginning, the Word of God and our prayer have gone hand in hand for this reason. We cannot know who to pray to or what to pray for without God's saying something first. We as children cannot take up our proper place within God's speaking without first listening to His conversation. Otherwise, we would add in words out of keeping with what God is talking about. Without first listening, we can't take an active and informed role in the speaking. Without listening first, we can be like those people who make odd comments because they've only come in on the middle of a conversation, like the pastor who overheard two other pastors praising the president last night. Interrupting them, he told them that he thought that this president was an utter disaster. The trouble, of course, is that

he thought they were talking about Obama, not our faithful Pastor Bugbee.

1) God's speaking keeps our joint speaking on topic

In the life of the Church, this essential relationship between our prayers and the Word of God is lived out in the Sunday morning service. The pattern handed down to us is that God's Word and prayer go hand in hand. We listen to what the Lord has to say, and then we speak back to Him based on that Word. Hearing from Him brings us into His conversation, where we get to reflect on what He is talking about, which then allows us to speak meaningfully with Him. His Word uncovers the needs of the world and sets forth God's answer to meet them. Hearing this Word allows us to speak of those needs and pray for them in accord with God's answer. The Church has never simply gathered to speak uninformed by the Word of God. Such a one-sided conversation would quickly get off track. Ask any pastor what happens when his confirmation class is allowed to simply follow the whim of its students. Very quickly you are talking about how Jane got into trouble at recess for calling Chloe bad names, how Julia's little brother got into trouble for belting his sister with his tow truck in the sandbox, and how Murray's parents had to sleep in on Sunday morning because they were at a party on Saturday night.

As the Church has gathered to pray, she has always listened as much as she has spoken; in fact, she has listened far more than she has spoken. As sinners we are like that person who can't help but want to control the conversation. They only listen so that they can say what they want to say, when really they often aren't listening at all. They are simply waiting for the other person to finish so that they can say what they have already decided to put out there. They figure they've got some gem that they just have to pass along, and so they stand there like a dog pulling on its chain, just waiting to get it out. Sometimes they aren't even polite enough to wait, but simply blurt out what they are thinking, speaking over other people. How sad it is when we are so filled with our own importance that we don't really listen, but simply have to make our own point. Here is no true conversation, but a proclaiming from on high to another. Once again, our old god complex rears its ugly head.

As God's dear children in repentance, we should know that this is not the way to speak with our God. If the Lord is God, then who are we to proclaim to Him the way that things should be or what He ought to know or do (Job 38:2)? In our speaking with Him, we can only know what to say and how to say it by

first listening to Him. In repentance, then, we know that what God has to share is far more important than anything we would have to say. In repentance, we would know that listening to Him should take up the bigger part of our conversation, because He has the important things to say to us and not the other way around. He has the wise things to reveal, not us. God wants us to speak. He invites us to speak. He even commands us to speak - otherwise what repentant person would dare to address the Almighty? Yet in repentance and in faith, we know that the Lord should be the one to lead the conversation, that wisdom is found first and foremost in listening, being quick to hear and slow to speak.

2) God's speaking keeps our private speaking on topic

In our private prayers then, there is a place to follow the pattern of the Church. The personal devotion, as well as the family devotion, is kept on point by first hearing the Word of God. Our prayers are kept on topic and within the will of God when we listen to God first, and then ask. His living Word, filled with His Spirit, opens our lips and teaches us to pray as we ought to pray. The Spirit in the Word brings our will into line with God's will. The Word opens our hearts to pray with confidence as God's dear children, by setting the truths of our baptism before us. The Word leaves us in no doubt of God's heart for us in Christ, and so teaches us to pray in faith that God's will is always the right answer for us.

Luther's daily prayer in the small Catechism follows this pattern. He instructs us to pray the invocation along with the sign of the cross as a reminder of our Baptism. The invocation is God's own name that He has given us as His children in Holy Baptism, so that we might be His own and so that we might call upon Him. This beginning is both a Word from the Lord as well as a Word that we speak. Here is a Word that God spoke to us first when we were baptised, that we might speak it back to Him. With His name, God has brought us into His family and so made us a part of the family conversation. Every time we call upon the name of the Lord, we live out the truth of God's baptismal Word to us. We live out our identity as His own dear children.

Although it is an action, the sign of the cross that Luther commends also sets a Word from God before us. We claim that word as our own when we do it. The sign of the cross is an action Word that sets before us the "for you" truth of the cross of Jesus. The sign of the cross testifies to the truth that Christ died, and as I make it over myself it proclaims that He died on the cross for me. As I begin my prayers

with this sign I am reminded of my baptism, when the benefits of the cross were made mine, and where Jesus said to me, "This is for you." Each time I make the sign of the cross, Jesus speaks that same word to me. As I trace the instrument of my salvation over my own flesh and blood, I am reminded by God that I am redeemed by Christ. As I cover my body with the cross, I am reminded of the truth that I have been baptized into Christ's death, and have risen out of the water clothed with Christ.

From the invocation, Luther then instructs us to confess the Apostles' Creed. Here also is God's Word that He speaks to us, that we may speak it back to Him. Here is the scriptural truth gathered together in all of its fullness for the children of God. Here is the testimony of all that the Trinity has done for me, is doing for me, and will do for me and the whole world. The creed is the ancient summary of the Christian faith, given that God's people might carry His Word around with them in their hearts and minds, that they might be able to confess it with their lips. When we confess the creed, God speaks His word to us that we might hold onto His truth and know His will for the world. From there, Luther has us go on to pray the prayer Jesus has given us, as well as the morning and evening prayers that He composed.

Now of course our life of prayer doesn't need to be limited to Luther's prayers, although they do beautifully lay out a godly way for us to pray, and are to be commended as a part of our prayer life with the Lord. We should be careful, though, not to look down on what has been laid out by someone else, thinking that we can somehow improve on it with all that we have to offer. The repentant heart does not think in this way, but humbly takes what it receives and rejoices in it, even though we may certainly add to that prayer by laying out our petitions in our own words. The prayers that our hearts compose, though, should not mistakenly be seen as being better in any way than the prayers that the Church has taught God's children to pray throughout the ages. Seeing prayer in this light would lead us to that sad place where some Christians have gone where even the Our Father is scorned. Prayer is not about what begins in us. We do not start the conversation. We are not God, despite what we might think in sin. The Lord began the whole conversation through His Word - that's who was there in the beginning. The child doesn't teach the parent to speak. Our life of prayer begins in God. He speaks that we might speak.

I remember a time as a child when I wanted to pray about the sunshine and butterflies. Somehow I'd

gotten the idea that this was better because if I talked about what I wanted to talk about, then I was treating God like He was really there and really listening. While we should pray as though God is really there and really listening, we don't have to make up words or focus the conversation on what we want to talk about for this to be true. In fact, since God is really there and listening, this is all the more reason why we should talk about what He wants us to talk about. When I wanted to talk about sunshine and puppy dogs, my father, the good German who says what he needs to say with as few words as possible, directed me back to the Lord's Prayer. He didn't shut down the sunshine and butterflies, but he did keep me on track with the glorious things that God had given me to pray for in this world. The time for sunshine and puppy dogs would come to an end, but the hallowing of God's name, the coming of His kingdom, His will being done and so on - that would carry on my whole life through.

Even as a four year old child, God had important work for me to do in this world. Even at four, I was His child. Even at four, I was one of the little ones, that Jesus did not despise, whose faith was to be used for big things. Even at four I was one of God's holy priests. Even at four, I was to share in Christ's work. Even at four, I was to be a part of God's people as they gathered on a Sunday morning to add my "amen" to their prayers, and join in them for the good of the world. As a shepherd boy and his sling taught us, God uses child soldiers to overcome His people's enemies. In fact, God specialises in using the weak and despised ones of the world to accomplish His great purposes in order to display the glory of His might (1 Corinthians 1:27-29). You only have to remember that God's greatest work began with a baby lying in a manger, and then finished with a bleeding dying man on a cross, to get refocused on how God works. As children of God we are never too small or too weak to join in the great works of God. It is just for this purpose that He has brought us into His family - to be about the Father's business.

E) As God's family we speak together

God's work in this world is a family business, and by His great grace through our baptism into Jesus He has made us all a part of it. In truth, as Christians we never pray alone. Baptised into Christ, we always pray with Jesus. Baptized with the Spirit, we always pray in the Spirit. For the Christian, prayers are never a one-sided conversation. They are not a monologue to God. Even as one speaks, others form a part of the conversation. Even as there is one voice, there is always more than one speaker - one in many - as it always is with the things of God. Even a solo in

Christian prayer is always a chorus. In fact, even when we do not open our lips the Son is interceding in us and through us even as He intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:25). When we do not know how to pray, the Spirit still prays within us with groans too deep for words (Romans 8:26-27). Our baptismal reality is that we are a part of God's family in unity with the Son in the life of the Spirit. This means that day in and day out we are part of the Trinity's ongoing conversation, even as God is at work to draw us ever deeper into it.

1) We speak for each other

Christian prayer is always family prayer, which is why we ask others to join us in our prayers. On Sunday mornings the Church gathers in one place to do her great work of interceding for the world. Yet she also continues to pray as each of the many members that form her one body lift up their voices in their individual pleas. As one of God's children, or a group of them, runs into a particular need, the Church takes up that need together. She asks the children of God to keep that need in their prayers. Together we bring those needs before the Father, making them a part of God's active speaking to provide the answers that are needed in Christ. Of course, God already knows what those needs are and will provide the answer that He knows is best, yet in great grace He wants to make us a part of His speaking work in the world. In this way He uses us to bring these needs into the Divine conversation. As God's family then, Christians ask one another to pray for each other, as Scripture clearly teaches us to do, inviting us to pray for one another that we might be healed (James 5:16).

We pray together that we might be one even as the Father and the Son are One (John 17:11). In praying together, we live out our communal life with one another. In praying together we live out the unity that God is recreating amongst us, as He overcomes the divisions of sin. In praying together we do not, however, gain more influence over God. We pray together because as God's children that is what we are called to do. Yet our heavenly Father listens to the cry of the poor lonely widow who weeps before Him in the dark hours of the night simply because she is His dear child and He is her dear Father. Contrary to what some believe, God is not moved to do what we ask because we get enough votes behind our petition. When tragedy strikes, we do not need to mobilise the prayer forces so that God will answer. What kind of dear Father would we have if He would only answer if we had enough popular vote? God doesn't take polls and certainly doesn't set heavenly

policy by them. As a dear Father He always does what is best for His dear children.

We do not gather to pray or ask others to pray on our behalf because the prayers of many are better heard than the prayers of one. Only the priests of Baal had to yell louder to heaven in hopes of waking Baal up or grabbing his attention while He was away on a trip or relieving himself on the toilet (1 Kings 18:20-40). The God of Israel heard and answered when only Elijah was left to lift up his voice to Him. He did not need to yell. He did not need to get the numbers behind him. He did not need to get God's attention. His dear Father in heaven heard him simply because Elijah was His dear child. We ask others to pray with us because we are a family, and so share our burdens together even as we share in our intercession. When others ask us to pray, God provides another opportunity for us to be drawn into His work for the world. Praying for others is a great honour and blessing for us. The trials and needs of others, in a very Christ-like way, then serve God's purpose of drawing us closer to Him. Their suffering draws us closer to God as it leads us to pray.

2) We speak together forever

Now if God's conversation is eternal, carrying on forever across all time and space, that means that as His child I will be a part of it even after Christ takes me to His Father's house. Even in heaven God will continue to involve me in His active speaking for the life and salvation of the world. What God begins in me in this world is fulfilled in heaven. The speaking won't come to an end it will become all the richer and fuller. Every Sunday we clearly say that with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we join in calling on the name of the Lord. God unites heaven and earth in His Word. In Jesus He undoes all that tears us apart. He joins heaven and earth as one; including their life of prayer. We pray together because in Jesus we are all a part of God's ongoing conversation. While the early Lutherans were rightly concerned about people being misdirected away from Jesus by being taught to pray to the saints, they granted that the saints in heaven pray for the Church on earth (Ap XXI, 8-9). The sad idea that you had to go to Jesus' Mom to get her to put in a good word with her somewhat testy and judgmental Son without question perverted the truth of the Gospel. Here was no real Saviour. Without a real Saviour, of course, there wasn't any dear Father in heaven eager to hear the cries of His dear children either. The early Lutherans granted that Mary, without question, prays for us (Ap XXI 27). She does it simply because she is one of God's dear

children. She too has been brought in through Jesus into God's active speaking for the life of the world. If we are blessed with being a part of that active speaking on earth, then how much more would we be blessed when that continues in heaven. The Lutherans argued that Mary doesn't need to be asked to pray in heaven because, set free from sin, she doesn't need to be prompted to do this but simply fulfills her calling as she is meant to do.

The Church, after all, is not made up of living saints on earth and dead ones in heaven (John 11:25). The calling we begin on earth is not ended but fulfilled when we enter into the fullness of God's presence. The saints in heaven enjoy and live in the reality of God's love as they abide in and fully live out God's will in heaven (Romans 8:38). As God's heart is turned toward the world, and its needs and salvation, there can be no question that the hearts of the saints are turned with His toward this world. The saints in heaven are not in a joy that forgets the need of all others, turned in on itself like some Buddhist Nirvana. They do have peace in the truth, though, that all is unfolding according to God's plan and under His control. They do not worry and fret like we do, because they fully know and live in faith's truth that the Lord is God. They care for us in our troubles, but they are not anxious about them. Heaven's great cloud of witnesses are alive in Christ (Hebrews 12:1). They are not cut off from us. We remain united in Jesus. Death has no dominion over Him or over any who abide in Him who is the resurrection and the life. We are one family. Our needs continue to be their needs. They pray for us because they continue to care for us. The early graffiti in the catacombs calling on Peter and Paul to pray for the Church no doubt were based on this truth.

When I was going through seminary, the only part of the Lutheran Confessions that I found more shocking than the fact that we said that Mary was the Mother of God was when I read the passage that said, "we do not forbid prayer for the dead (Ap XXIV 94)." "What?" I thought. "What's this all about? Why on earth would I want to pray for the dead? I can see how I could use their prayers, but what on earth would I pray for them for? Don't they have all that they need already?" At that point I still saw prayer as something I did to get God to do something He wasn't doing or wouldn't do. As if I noticed a problem that escaped His attention and I had to say, "Ahem. God I think you missed something here." I didn't get the idea that in prayer God was involving me in His work. I still saw it as mine. Now I must confess that I don't make use of the freedom to pray

for the dead that the Book of Concord allows me, other than to remember the saints that we remember throughout the Church Year. The early Lutherans allowed prayers for the dead without telling us we had to do it. Now of course they didn't mean that we could somehow pray people into heaven. Without question they knew that Jesus had that one covered. The allowance, rather, is built on the idea that even in heaven everything that we receive we receive by God's grace. When we get to heaven its not like we've earned something that is ours by right. The life God gives us there will ever flow to us, but not because God owes it to us. That life is never truly ours, but is a continual gift from our dear Father in heaven.

Again we must understand that prayer is not about getting God to do something that He wouldn't do on His own. Prayer does not force God's hand against His will. It's not some sort of arm-wrestling match that we do with folded hands. Prayer brings us into God's own work for the world. It makes us a part of His active speaking. Prayer joins us in His will for His dear children. The saints in heaven enjoy God's blessings because He wills to pour them out upon them. Asking Him to do that makes us a part of what He is doing according to His own will. As we pray for God's work to be done, we are reminded that He is doing it, even as we join in on it. Mary in heaven prays for us in accord with God's will, but she's not in heaven as though she made it on her own and now God owes her something. She enjoys God's blessings only by God's grace, and so, as we would pray for God's blessings on others, the confessors allowed that you could also ask God to bless her likewise. As heaven and earth pray together and for each other we see how beautifully God is bringing us all back together around His table to join in His eternal conversation.

F) A Dear Father hears His dear Children

When it comes right down to it, the way you see prayer is determined by the way that you see God. If you look on Him outside of Christ you can only see Him from the perspective of the law. Without Jesus you cannot see a dear heavenly Father. Your sin gets in the way. All you can see is a faraway God who is justifiably angered over your faults and failures. Outside of Christ you can only see God as an adversary, which shouldn't be a real shocker, since outside of Christ you can only see God from Satan's viewpoint. In Christ, though, you can see God from the perspective of the Gospel as a dear heavenly Father who delights to give good gifts to you. In Christ you can see a God who loves you, saves you and claims you as His own. In Christ you can see a

God who welcomes you into His own family, giving you a place and a voice at the family table.

When we view God outside of Christ, prayer becomes an appeal to a distant God to do something for our good. From the viewpoint of the law, God is someone that we have to get to do what we want by begging or bargaining or convincing or coercing. Our prayers interrupt Him in His conversation, intruding on His time and thoughts to get Him to pay attention to our needs or troubles. Our prayers get Him to be bothered with us and take some time out of His regular business to deal with us, like a two year old knocking on the door of the bathroom to get their Mom's attention. We wrestle with God to get Him to give us something that He wouldn't give us on His own. We have to bend Him to our will. If we didn't pray, He wouldn't look after us. If we didn't pray, He would simply let everything go hurtling out of control toward hell. If we didn't pray, God would not work anything for our good. God's involvement in our lives would all depend on our asking. His help would hinge on our request for it.

From the viewpoint of the Gospel, however, God is a dear heavenly Father who has made us to be His dear children. He is watching over us, ever attentive to our every need and trouble. He provides even before we want. He answers even before we ask. He helps even before we call. Our prayers do not interrupt His thoughts. They do not break in on His conversation. As His children our voices are welcomed into the family dialogue. As His dear children, He makes us a part of His active speaking for the life of the world. He invites us to join Him in addressing the needs of the world and their answer in Jesus. He speaks to us in His word, that we might come to know Him and so learn to speak like Him. As He draws us into His own speaking, He unites us as one family in His own voice. As the children of God, we speak together for each other over space and time - heaven and earth are united in one conversation, and in one voice.

When our eyes are fixed on our sin, then we can only see God as an angry deity who needs to be appeased and somehow motivated to act for us. When our eyes are fixed on our sin, we cannot know God or call on His name as dear children would call to their dear father. But with Jesus before our eyes, and the truth of our new birth in Holy Baptism, all that we can see is a God of love who is our dearest Father, who delights to hear His children and answer when they call. In the greatest act of grace, this dear Father welcomes us into His family, inviting us to call on His name. He opens our lips to join in His own speaking for the life of the world. Truly no man

could ever imagine what God had in mind for us in Jesus. What great grace is given to us that we should be called children of God, to be given such a voice at the Lord's own family table!

Convention Essay

Prayer AD 2014 – Part 2 by Rev. Kurt Reinhardt

PART II - Speaking Life in the Family of God A. God hears our speaking because we are His Children

At our supper table my children all take a part in the family conversation because they are members of the family. Each one has their own chair at the table - as they were born my Dad made them one. They have not earned these places. They are theirs by birth. As a father, I listen to them because they are my own dear children. They are all heard on this basis, whether it is the oldest teenager or the youngest kindergartener. I am thankful for this daily meal time together as it connects us and forms a major part of our family life. It is one of the few times that we are all together and get to live out our life together. Throughout the day we are all off at our various callings, but most evenings we gather to share our meal and our lives as we speak with each other.

Now I don't want to paint too idyllic a picture of life around the Reinhardt family table. At times I may have to refocus the conversation, or tone it down a bit or even a lot. There are other times when you have to drag the information out of some of the members. (I don't know how you can spend a whole day at school and do nothing.) Our family table is a sinners' table, and so it is far from perfect, but it does give a picture of what goes on in God's family conversation. It is an image of that conversation after all - a shattered image but an image nonetheless. As my children have a place at my table because they were born to me, and as I listen to them because I am their father, so too we have a place at God's table, and our heavenly Father listens to us simply because we are His baptized children (Titus 3:4-7).

1) Our Father does not hear us because of our holiness

Prayer's power lies firmly in the Word of God, as poor sinners' mouths are opened to pray it with God's Son. God does not hear us based on how good or bad we've been. Without question sin makes it harder to pray. Like any other kid who gets into trouble we can want to avoid our Father's gaze. Our sin gets in the way of seeing His love. This is why regularly receiving God's forgiveness is so important for a healthy prayer life. God's forgiveness turns our eyes away from ourselves and our sin to keep them fixed on God's love for us in Jesus. God will still hear your prayers when you've been bad, which is a very good thing because if we're going to take God's word for it we're not the best kids. Thankfully being

good or bad doesn't make you God's child. Being good or bad just makes you a good or bad kid. A bad kid is still a kid nonetheless. Our prayer is heard and answered not because of our own goodness, but according to God's goodness (Psalm 4:1; 69:13, 16). The prayers of the righteous are heard and answered not because of their own righteousness, but according to God's righteousness (Psalm 143:1-2). The power of all prayer lies in the Word of God, and not the person who speaks it. So too, we do believe that there are holier people in heaven or in our midst who will be heard better because of their holiness. The only holier One we bring our prayers to is Jesus, and He is the One who sets all of them before the Father.

St. James rightly says that the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective (James 5:16). Keeping in mind the truth that none is righteous, because we all like sheep have gone astray (Isaiah 53:6), we see that he can't be thinking about the personal righteousness of anyone but Jesus here. Jesus is the righteous One who was heard in His many cries (Hebrews 5:7) and is seated at the right hand of God to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25). In Christ we are God's children, and in the righteousness that He gives us and in His righteousness alone do we make our appeals to the Father. The righteousness that we receive by faith is the righteousness of Jesus (Romans 3:21-26). Faith in itself does not make us righteous. Our act of believing does not make us righteous in God's eyes. Faith to be faith has to be faith in something. Faith in faith is no faith at all. Saving faith is always faith in Jesus. Faith receives the goods, but it is not the goods. Christ is. Faith is essential. Without faith you can't hold on to the goods. Faith in Christ keeps us abiding in Christ. Faith has us standing in Christ and Christ alone. Through baptism into Christ we become God's children; or, as Luther said we become "little Christs" (Freedom of the Christian 1520 - this particular term was popularized in English by C.S. Lewis in his work *Mere Christianity*). Clothed in Christ, God hears us as His dear children because we pray in Christ's own righteousness. When it comes to holiness then, we are all heard based on the same holiness. We are all heard because of Jesus.

2) Our Father does not hear us because we pester him

As our own holiness will not move God's heart toward us in prayer, we also must understand that God's heart is not moved by constant pestering. Would a dear Father in heaven who opened up His

heart to give us His only begotten Son while we were yet sinners, be deaf to our cries until we bugged him enough to get the answer we want? Such pestering for success in prayer again sounds a bit like the taunts that Elijah made towards the prophets of Baal. We will not get God to do what we want by irritating Him to the point that He gives us what we want. When Jesus gives the example of the poor widow who pesters the unjust judge until she gets what she needs (Luke 18:1-8), He is not describing the way God works. Here is one of Christ's negative examples. If even the unjust judge will hear when the widow cries, how much more so will the Just Judge who is a dear Father hear and answer when His children cry to Him!

Jesus calls His disciples not to give up in prayer, but to continue in their requests to God in faith that He will answer out of His goodness. Jesus is encouraging His disciples to continue on in the family conversation of the Trinity that deals with the needs of the world. In the right moment and right way God will answer these needs according to His plans. As Jesus encourages us to continue to lay these needs before God, He is encouraging us to live out in repentance the truth that the Lord is God. Our tendency as sinners set on being our own gods is to try to pick up and carry God's own burdens. We take on things that are not ours to bear. In a recent conversation with someone worried and wearied with all the troubles in their family life, I told them "I've good some great news for you today! You know what? You're not the Lord. This is not something that you have to carry or fix. God, believe it or not, has got this covered."

As the Lord allows us to continue to lay the same burdens down before Him, He schools us in the way of repentance. Needs that remain from day to day show us that we are not the Lord. Having to ask for help repeatedly for the same need frees us from the idea that we can handle life on our own. The time God uses to unfold His answer to our prayers serves His good purpose of teaching us to cast our burdens upon Him. When you have to face the same problem over and over again, like St. Paul, you learn the sufficiency of God's grace for you (2 Corinthians 12:9). The problem that you cannot overcome teaches you your weakness, even as it turns your eyes toward heaven for help. We are allowed to repeatedly ask so that we can grow in asking, and so be made ready to receive. Repeat praying draws us deeper into the truth of faith that help can only be found in the Lord. Repeat prayer breaks down our own will, that we might learn to pray all the more according to God's will in faith and trust in Him.

Repeat prayer does not batter down the doors of heaven it batters down the doors of my own sinful heart.

3) Our dear Father does not hear us because of our commitment

The prayer of faith is not heard on account of my faith, where faith is my commitment to or belief in my own will. The prayer of faith is the prayer of trust which lets go of my own will and simply and wholly rests in God's will for my life and the life of others. I do not approach God believing with all my might that He will do what I want Him to do. My might will not bend God to my will. I am not my God's god, after all. In repentance I recognize that the Lord is God, and so faith in prayer is all about submitting my will to the Lord's will - resting in His might, and not trying to force my will upon Him. Sadly, many believe that faith in prayer is all about my personal commitment to my will, along the lines of: if I truly believe that God will do what I want, then He will do it; but if I am hesitant about this, or only halfway committed about that, then He won't hear me. I give good gifts to my children not because they really believe that they should have them, but because I believe that they will be good for them. Even though my oldest is completely committed to having endless hours on the X-Box, out of love for him the answer is one hour once a day. On the other hand, I don't demand that he prove that he really wants his supper (not that that's ever in question) before I put his food before him at the proper time (Luke 11:10-13).

Prayer is not some spiritualized form of the power of positive thinking - where if I really believe with all my heart then I'll get what I am asking for. God does not hear my prayer because of my commitment to it, or for that matter on account of my commitment to Him. God hears my prayer because of His commitment to me. He hears me because in Christ He has chosen me to be His child through my baptism. In the family relationship, a child's devotion to his parents may follow the parents' devotion to the child, but the parents' devotion always comes first. There would be no child without Mom and Dad's commitment to have a child in the first place. A parent's commitment to their child is about their love for that child, not the child's commitment to them. The commitment of God is what gives birth to my own commitment to Him. God loves me first in Christ and only through that love am I able to love Him back (1 John 4:19). As God chooses me in Christ, only then am I able to choose Him back. Only as God commits to me in Christ am I able to make a commitment back to Him.

God hears and answers me when I pray because He is committed to me. He has promised to hear and answer.

My promises do not move God's heart toward me in prayer. Kids may promise to clean up their rooms so that their parents will let them do what they want (in our house it normally involves staying up for the hockey game), but our heavenly Father doesn't look for such bribes and He certainly doesn't respond to them. If we had to clean up our lives before God would answer we'd be waiting an awfully long time. God simply responds to us according to His promise that when His children call He will answer (Isaiah 65:23-24). He has promised to hear us because we are His children. As the Father He can't do anything but hear His children. To not listen to us He would have to deny Himself as Father. Since we have been brought into God's own family, God could ignore our prayers as much as He could ignore the prayers of the Son or the Spirit. As He listens to them, He listens to us. In our Baptism we have been made one with the Son and we have received the Holy Spirit. When we pray in Jesus in the Spirit, the Father hears us with Them and hears Them in us. When His children pray according to His Word, God hears because He is true to Himself. He is true to His promise. He is true to His Word. God doesn't listen to you because of your promises, but on account of His promises, which is a very good thing, since poor sinners like you and me aren't very good at keeping our promises to God.

4) Our dear Father does not hear us because of our many words

The eloquence of the words does not make a prayer more effective either (Matthew 6:5-7). Beautiful prayers are truly beautiful because of the beauty of God's Word. While we may recognize the gifts that God gives someone for the poetry of words or clarity in speech, this does not make the prayers more effective. The most beautiful prayer that any Christian can pray is the prayer that Jesus Himself has given us. There is none more beautiful in the ears of the Father. Here there can be no question that we are praying the Lord's Word in accord with His will. These words and this will are without doubt the words and will of the Holy Trinity as the Son Himself has given them to us. Sadly, though, we can disdain this most perfect and beautiful of prayers while we focus on some words that we or someone else has chosen instead. This is not to say that there cannot be much beauty in other prayers, yet their true beauty lies not in what we bring to them but in the Word of God that they speak.

When my children announce that they are hungry and ask, "What's for supper?", they are not required to put it into Shakespearean poetry to get something to eat. They might be reminded of their manners, that they should say please and be patient while my wife or I get it ready for them. They may be told not to turn their nose up at what is put on their plate accompanied by the parental go-to story of starving children in Africa. They will be encouraged to ask for their daily bread with thanksgiving, but the reason why it will be put on the table is simply because my wife and I are their parents and it is our love-bound duty to provide for their needs. No matter how beautifully they were to put it, they would not get chocolate with their breakfast - unless of course you are our youngest daughter Sofia - and you bat your eyes and cock your head as you ask - but she doesn't count because we had her too late in life and we have already slipped into grandparenting mode with her. (She is God's special gift to my older children to save them from growing up under the tyranny of the idea that somehow life is fair.)

Now although my children do not make their requests for pizza in Shakespearean sonnets, they do make their requests in the language of the family home. There are certain ways that we speak to one another because of who we are as people and how our family works. In its own way each family has its own language and ways. When it comes to God's family the same is also true. Now of course God hears the prayers of all His children in Christ and will answer them. He will provide for them when they call because He is their dear heavenly Father. Our life with God, though, is not about bringing God into our family but about us being brought into God's family. Our life with God is not about teaching Him our language but about Him teaching us His language. My prayers are not heard better by God because they are said in beautiful prose or poetry just as they are not heard better because they are spoken really plainly or in rap. My prayers are heard because God is my dear heavenly father and I am his dear child. Yet there is a family language that the Lord is teaching us in His Word - a language shaped by repentance that humbly but boldly calls on the name of the Lord. We come as foreigners into God's house and as we by God's grace grow in the family life we do move from - "Hey God, toss me some bread" to "Dear Father, give us this day our daily bread."

5) Our dear Father does not hear us because of our feelings

Although this Word of God should be prayed as though we mean it and not simply rambled off without thought, our prayers are not heard because of

the emotions that are behind them. Prayers are not to be rambled off like some kind of spell or incantation. Prayers are to be offered in faith, but faith and feeling are not the same thing. While I may be aware of faith with my feelings, feelings should never be the proof test for faith. To say that I feel like I believe, therefore I believe is a lie that has robbed many of the life Christ has for them. Not feeling as they think they should feel, they assume that they have lost faith and so walk away from God. When it came to the question of faith, the Lutherans refused to turn people in on themselves to find proof of its existence in their feelings. They simply continued to point people to the Word where they knew faith was created. They directed people to God's promises in the Gospel and God's living out of those promises in their Baptism, Absolution and the Lord's Supper.

The Reformed teachers like Calvin wanting to find proof for lasting faith in themselves turned people in on their own emotions asking them to check out whether they were aware of faith and its fruits in themselves or not. Luther knew from his former life that no assurance of faith could be found within himself. He knew that his feelings were not to be trusted. We all know that feelings are notoriously unreliable. The newest term I heard lately to do with feelings is the word "Hangry". After much study science is now able to tell us that couples fight more when they're hungry - so the term "Hangry" You're angry simply because you're hungry. If the scientists had bothered to ask any parent, they probably could have told them about the "hangry" phenomena and saved them all the time and money. Any parent whether their child is two or sixteen would testify to the "hangry" phenomena. A piece of undigested meat can make us feel all kinds of things even as Dickens' Scrooge points out, it can even make us see ghosts.

Luther knew that he could only believe in God as His heavenly Father if the heart of that God was continuously held up before him in the Son that He gave to save him. Faith is never something that is possessed but something that needs to be continuously created and maintained. Faith needs the Gospel every moment of every day or it will die. Turning us in on ourselves tears faith away from its object and so kills it. Our eyes are no longer fixed on Jesus but on ourselves instead. Resting on our feelings about Jesus is not the same thing as resting on Jesus. As Lutherans we know that anything that we bring to table is going to make a mess of everything. When it comes to the life of faith, it has to be only and ever about Jesus. As sinful human

beings our feelings cannot be trusted. Sin has put them all out of sorts.

The prayer of faith is born of God's truths set before us in Jesus - that because of Christ we have been brought back into God's family. The prayer of faith is founded on the reality of our baptism. With our baptismal rebirth set firmly before us, there can be no question that we are speaking to our dear heavenly Father as His dear children. As in any other family, certainty of membership in the family is founded on the truth of birth or in some cases adoption. At times in our lives as children, we may feel like we don't belong to our families. We may have behaved badly and so feel like we don't deserve to belong. We may feel out of sync with our family because of their behaviour or our own. Yet our birth stands there testifying to the truth despite our feelings. So too in the life of faith and our place in God's family, our baptism speaks to the truth even when our feelings fail us.

The prayer of faith is the prayer that approaches God as our heavenly Father and we as His dear children simply because that is the truth whether we feel it or not or for that matter whether we believe it or not. Just as my belief in God does not make God God, neither does my belief that I am God's child make me His child. I am His child because of my baptism whether I believe it or not. The atheist's unbelief in God does not knock God off of His heavenly throne and overthrow the Divine Majesty. The atheist can sit and close his eyes and pretend that there is no God. Yet despite his personal beliefs, God exists. So too my belief that I am God's child does not make it true, neither does my unbelief make it untrue. My unbelief will rob me of my birthright's benefits. If I don't believe that I am God's child, I will not approach Him as a dear child approaches a dear Father or count on Him as one even though that is what He is and remains to me.

The prayer of faith, then, is not the same as the prayer of feeling. I may feel very deeply when I call on the name of the Lord but my prayers are not heard better because of how I am feeling. I may not feel much at all when I am praying and yet my prayers are still heard by God because He is my heavenly Father. The prayer of faith simply calls on God because of the truth of who He is to me through my baptism into Christ. I do not feed my children because they ask me for their food with feeling. I give them their food at the proper time simply because they are my children and it is my duty to give them their food as their father. The prayer of faith is prayed in the truth that God truly is my heavenly Father and He will

hear me because I am His child. What brings me to believe this is not my feelings but God's Word that proclaims this truth to me in the reality of my baptism (1 Peter 1:3-5).

6) God hears us because He is our dear Father

Will God hear me when I pray? Of course He will, because I am baptized. Will God answer me when I pray? Of course He will, because I am baptized. In faith I can even go so far as to say God must hear ... God must answer ... because He will always be true to Himself. I am not saying here that the Almighty isn't free to do whatever He wants, but God has shown us clearly in Christ what He has freely chosen to do for us. He has shown us in Christ that He has made us His children and so He has freely chosen to bind Himself to hearing and answering us. God has to hear and God has to answer because He has chosen to promise to do so and He is one who will not go back on His Word. Can He change His mind? As God of course He can, but He has chosen and promised not to. Even when we are faithless, He is and always will be faithful because He will always be true to Himself (2 Timothy 2:13).

The prayer of faith that God has promised to answer, then, is the prayer prayed according to God's word under God's will. The prayer of faith is the prayer that asks God to do what He will do. Learning to pray faithfully is all about being brought by God deeper into the truths of His Word and then asking Him to fulfill His purposes for us and others. From outside the family, prayer that simply asks God to do what He is going to do could seem like a bit of a cop-out. What's the point of that? If praying to God isn't about getting Him to do what you want Him to do, why bother? From outside the family you don't see God as a dear heavenly Father who will only ever do what is best for His children. You either see Him as some distant deity that you have to somehow finagle or butter up enough to get what you want, or you see Him as some rival that you have to overcome or persuade to your way of thinking.

From inside the family, though, we can come to know the truth of God's fatherly divine goodness and mercy toward us that does wonderful things for us without any merit or worthiness within us but simply because He is our dear Father and we are his dear children. Knowing and growing in the truth of our Father's goodness leads us to pray ever more for God's will to be done. Wrestling with the will of God gives way to a peaceful surrender to His plan for our lives and the lives of others whether we understand it or not. From the Word of God we learn to know our real needs and the needs of others and in

faith we grow in laying those needs before the Lord without prescribing to Him how He should provide for them. As dear children we learn from all that our dear Father has done for us in Christ to trust Him. As the Spirit teaches us through the Word to know our Saviour and the God who gave Him to us, He opens our lips to pray, "Not my will, but thy will be done."

For truly indeed the only prayers that are answered are those that are prayed in accord with God's Word and under His will. God's will is the only right will. His way is the only right way. Not because God is some overbearing parent who has to always have His way but because He truly is the Lord and knows what is best for us all. The Father answers all prayers offered in the name of Jesus but only prayers that are in accord with God's Word can be prayed in the Word's name. The Spirit will not take part in prayers prayed against the will of God. The Son will not take such prayers upon His lips before the Father's throne. The Father's will is one with the will of the Son and the Spirit. We must remember here that the Lord in mercy and grace is inviting us into His active speaking with our prayers. We are not bringing Him into our will but He is bringing us into His will. He gives us the privilege of bringing the needs of the world before Him that He might answer them.

As Luther repeatedly says in the small Catechism, God will do what He wants to do even without our prayers. God is not bound to our prayers. He as Lord does what He will when He wills according to His own good purposes. We do not alter God's will with our prayers or strong-arm Him into our way of thinking. There are without question times in Holy Scripture where God's people seem to be trying to sway God from His set path. These times, however, are not so much about changing God as they are about changing those who pray. As God moves people to intercede and draws out their intercession, He brings them closer to the mind of Christ. As Christ spurs the Canaanite woman on in faith by making reference to the fact that it is not right to feed the children's bread to the dogs (Matthew 15:21-28), so too God at times pushes people on to plead all the more for what He wants to give them. Here He leads them ever deeper into His own will for the world.

B. What our dear Father does through the prayers of His Children

Since the Lord is God and will do what is best for the world and us apart from our prayers, the question could be asked why pray at all? And if God is going to do what He wants anyway do my prayers do anything? Do they matter? These questions even though they are natural ones come from an

adversarial way of seeing God. In repentance and faith we need to be reminded that God is not the adversary; someone else has that job. When we see God adversarially we are seeing Him from the wrong side of our baptism. At that moment we're standing in someone else's shoes. Someone whose shoes Christ has saved us from standing in when He delivered us out of the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light. Our prayers are not about moving God but moving us to embrace and live in His will and His work all the more fully and deeply. Through our prayers God makes us a part of His work. He honours us with a place in the family salvation business. He treats us as His true children as He gives us a share in the Son's work. Why do we pray, then? As God's children we must be about our Father's business.

1) Our dear Father draws us deeper into His family

Now if God is going to do what He wants anyway, do our prayers do anything? First of all, without question the very act of praying does great things for us in our life of faith. Prayer is born of the life of faith but it also serves the life of faith. We pray because we believe but we also pray that we might believe. Prayer leads us deeper into our relationship with God. Just as communication in our human relationships deepens our bonds with one another, so our relationship with God is deepened through our communication with Him. As the Lord shares Himself with us through His Word, so too through our word we share ourselves with Him. He comes to us that we might come to Him. God could grant all that we ask without our speaking a word to Him, but He draws us deeper into our lives with Him by giving us the opportunity to share ourselves with Him. He draws us closer as He invites and enables us to bring all our needs to Him.

Although an infant has a relationship with his parents from the moment the child is born to them, that relationship deepens and grows as the child grows and learns to communicate with his parents. In the beginning they share all with him but through their speaking to him he learns also to share himself with them. They know him from the start but his knowledge of them grows through his communication with them. His relationship to them deepens as he learns to share himself with them. So too in our life with God, from the moment of our birth as His children in Holy Baptism we have a relationship with Him. He is our dear Father and we are His dear Children. As He shares Himself with us through His Word, He also teaches us to share ourselves with Him. As He speaks to us, He opens our lips that we might speak to Him.

In prayer we live out our relationship with our heavenly Father. As we encounter need in this world (our own need and the needs of others), the Lord opens our lips through faith to bring these needs to our heavenly Father. As these needs bring us to call upon the name of the Lord they lead us to live out our Father-child relationship with Him. We pray to Him because He has revealed Himself to us in His Son Jesus to be our dear Father in heaven. As we act in faith on this revelation we confess it and so are confirmed in it. I call out to God because He has shown me in Jesus that there is no other God who can save like Him. As I call out to Him in such faith I exercise that faith and it is built up and strengthened.

Here is the reason that God allows need in my life and why He doesn't always take it away immediately. Here is the reason why He allows suffering and trial in life. That I might learn to pray. He allows these needs to come upon me that I might be turned toward the Lord and call upon His name. He allows these needs to come upon those that I love that I might learn to spread out priestly hands with Jesus and intercede for them. He allows need to come upon the world that I might cry out to heaven for it. He allows people to persecute and hurt me that I might learn to pray "Father forgive them." The Lord could provide for all of my needs without my prayer as He does with the rain and the sun for the whole of creation. Yet by drawing me through need to call upon Him in prayer He leads me to live out the truth that He is my heavenly Father. God will grant whatever He wills to grant for me even without my prayers but by enabling me by His Spirit to ask for these things He draws me ever deeper into the truth that He is God.

2) Our dear Father involves us in His work

Now our prayers serve an invaluable role in our life of faith but they do also accomplish great things in the world. In them as I mentioned earlier we take part in God's active speaking in the world. God could without question accomplish His will without our prayers but He chooses out of His great grace to involve us in His work as His true children. Our prayers as they are prayed to the Father in the Spirit through the Son truly take up their place in the ongoing creative and active speaking of the Holy Trinity. God wills to do this out of love for us because we are His children. Through our prayers God wills to provide for the needs of others. He wills to keep evil at bay in the world. He wills to prosper His Gospel and expand and strengthen His Church. Through our prayers God wills to accomplish His good and gracious will for the world. As we pray

with Jesus in God's will, the Lord does some of His mightiest work through us.

If we were to fully grasp this truth we can see how quickly we would take up St. Paul's encouragement to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:16). In our sinful tendency to see ourselves standing on our own two feet independent of God we do tend to lean towards our own action when it comes to the needs we run into in the world. At times we treat prayer as a last resort when our own strength fails us. We treat prayer like little children who only cry out for their parents' help after trying to do something on their own until they finally break down in frustration and tears. I know I've caught myself saying, "Sometimes all that we can do is pray" as though prayer was the lesser of those things we can do as God's children instead of the greatest thing that we can do. At times God allows us to face such overwhelming trials and troubles just to leave us without anything but those most powerful words, "Lord have mercy."

When it comes to our lives as God's children we need to know that growing up does not mean growing out of our dependence on Him but growing into it. The life of faith is about becoming more child-like (Mark 10:15) not about being big and strong and independent. In school it's frowned upon when little Johnny shows up with his giant life-like erupting volcano to demonstrate the real time flow of lava to his fellow 4 year olds in kindergarten because it's clear Dad had a hand in little Johnny's work. Not so when it comes to our work as God's children. Our work as God's children is meant to have our Father's handprints are all over it. It's at its best when it does. We get to be a part of truly beautiful things when we fold our hands so that the Lord's hands might be at work in us and in the world. When our hands are busy mucking around we might be able to proudly say we did it on our own but the volcano is just a lump of grey plasticine with a hole in the middle and some shredded construction paper sticking out of the top. Yes we did it. All by ourselves. But it lacks the wow factor that's there with the one that Dad had a hand in.

The wow factor of the project we're invited to take a part in can be seen in John's vision of the multitude from every tribe and nation and tongue standing before the throne of the Lamb waving their palm branches and crying out their praises to the Son of David who has saved them (Revelation 7:9-12). The will of the Father is the salvation of the world. He does not desire the death of any sinner but that he repent and live (Ezekiel 18:23, 32). He wills that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him

should have eternal life and be raised up on the last day (John 6:40). He does not desire that any of His little ones should perish. God's will is to work all things for that good purpose - whether it's joys and blessings or a thorny crown and a cross. God wants to save us. God wants to save all. This is the will of God that is the ultimate goal of all our prayers - that the Lord would save the world (1 Timothy 2:1-6). This is the sum total of what is prayed for in the "Our Father." Christian prayer at its heart is always a mission prayer. The end goal is always the multitude with each one of you as a part of it.

As God's children born anew to Him from above in the waters of Holy Baptism we are being reshaped into His image. All that we will be is already conceived within us but its truth is being unfolded in our lives by the work of the Spirit. Although we might not be able to see it very often, as His true Children our Father's will is our will. Our old sinful man may struggle with that will on the outside, he may even rage and fight against it at times, but the new man in us embraces it with joy even if it means a cross for us. God in His wisdom knows what is best and we as His true children desire the same. With Jesus we learn to pray in hard times, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will (Matthew 26:39). I hold on to the truth that you are my dear Father and I can trust you to do what is best - what is best for me and others." Through the Spirit's work we can even be brought to the point of praying with Jesus that whatever is best for others is best for me even if it means a cross.

C. The Goal of the God's Family Conversation

As dear children of the Father, praying for the salvation of the world is what we are to be about. This does not exclude praying for all the things of life in the struggles and joys that we meet from one day to the next but it does mean being brought to see these needs in light of this ultimate and greatest goal. A good case in point would be our prayers for the sick. There's perhaps nothing that can move us to pray more than a diagnosis of cancer for ourselves or someone that we love. We are right to ask God's healing hand to be at work to restore this person to health, yet our ultimate goal is that they be eternally healed through faith in Christ. Christ's healing miracles in the Gospels after all are never end goals in themselves but signs that the kingdom of God has come near (Luke 10:9). They are there to point to the greater healing that the Son has come to bring. While we are right to pray for healing of the sick, our focus should be on their salvation. I know for myself this does not come naturally. I have no problem with

committing myself wholly behind a loved one's physical healing while their eternal salvation gets far less attention. Perversely I can even think that focusing on the person's eternal salvation shows a lack of commitment to their physical healing. As though my dear Father in heaven would only grant such healing if I was fully committed to it!

When it comes to physical healing, I have seen many things over my time serving Christ's people as a pastor. I have seen a widow in her seventies miraculously recover while a far younger man died of cancer. The older widow was all alone and ready to be with the Lord. The younger man had a large family that still needed him. There seemed to be no sense in what happened. But some years later the older widow married a man who got to hear the Gospel because she married him. The younger man who died ended up bringing hundreds of people to Church to hear the Gospel at His funeral. There would have been a far smaller crowd at the service had he followed the rest of his family in living into old age. If only one of those people is helped on their journey to heaven through his death I know he would be humbled and blessed by the honour of being a part of that. I have seen a young baby recover from certain death to bring her siblings and parents into the church while I've seen the death of a man in his fifties that without question has cemented his family's life in the Church. I have seen a man die from cancer far before his time but end up dying in faith because of it while before the illness he was convinced he was going to hell.

While we might have ideas about how we think the Lord should unfold His answer to the trials of our lives He alone knows how all the pieces fit together into His great plan for the world. He alone knows how each detail of my life is to be used for my good and the good of others. As God's children we need to understand that we truly have been invited into this great work of the Lord which in this world is normally accomplished through a cross. Through our baptism we have been united with Christ and so made a part of God's salvation plan for the world. God gave His Son to save His enemies. He has baptized us into that Son and so we are brought into that life of sacrifice. While I lay my needs before the Lord when they come upon me, the heart of my prayer as a Child of God is that He would use my life as His Child for the good of others whatever that may be. I may have my heart set on physical healing yet if my death were in any way to serve to help someone along their journey toward heaven that would be an honour and privilege far beyond what I deserve. If someone should stand before the Lamb in eternity because in

some small way God used my life or death to connect that person with Christ could there be any better way to spend my earthly life?

1) Our Joint Speaking for God's Great Goal

Through Baptism into Christ we are God's children and so are a Royal Priesthood, as St. Peter tells us (1 Peter 2:9). We are called into the sacrifice of Jesus, being asked to take up our crosses and follow Him for the sake of the world. We are also called into His intercession ... His pleading ... His active speaking for the life of the world. We do that both together and on our own. When we gather on Sunday mornings we come to the family table to share in the family meal and we join in the family conversation. We hear the Lord's Word and we join in its speaking with our prayers. As God through His law sets our needs and the needs of the world before us and in the Gospel reveals and gives the answer to those needs, we pray in the light of that answer for our needs and the needs of others. The pattern is set down by Jesus on the night when He was betrayed where as our great High Priest He prays for His disciples in those very hours where He gives the Church the heart and centre of her weekly meeting in the gift of His own presence in His body and blood.

At the family table we join in the family conversation. We join in God's active speaking for the world's salvation. Often in this place the pastor as the servant of Christ takes up the pleas for all and all speak through him as they join him with their amens and responses. Here we live out in figure the truth of how our prayers enter into the heart of the Trinity. We are only God's children through Christ and so we only enter the family conversation in Jesus. As the Pastor speaks to us for Christ, so through the Pastor together we speak to the Father through Christ. While God can and will do His will in this world even without our prayers, He in great mercy has chosen to work through our prayers to accomplish His good and gracious will. When the Children of God gather together to call on the name of the Lord, great things are happening. As I have already said these prayers do not have more value in being prayed together but in them we live out our family life together as Children of God. As we open our lips together we are reminded that we never pray alone as in faith we never stand alone but are ever a part of a great whole that the Lord is making one even as He is one.

Throughout her life the Church has had a rich life of prayer. As we are told in the book of Acts, from the beginning the disciples devoted themselves to the prayers which in all likelihood were the daily prayer

services at the Temple (Acts 2:42). In the freedom of the Gospel the Church has set hours for prayer laying out services where the Word of God is paired with praying. This custom has fallen out of practice for the most part in our midst. We have the services in our hymnal but the daily prayer services aren't for the most part prayed in our congregations on a daily basis. Our modern world leaves little room for such gathering and group praying. With a deeper understanding of what God does through our prayers there may be a place for our congregations to set some such times for joint praying. It may only be the pastor who can be there. He alone may be speaking for all but his praying for all in that hour accomplishes great good nonetheless and emphasizes for the whole congregation that truly this is the Father's business that we should be about. Could there be any greater blessing for the people of God than to look in the Church throughout the week and see their pastor on his knees before the altar praying for them?

As our churches are placed in our individual communities throughout this country that the light of Christ might shine in their midst in the good news preached from their pulpits, they are also placed in them that they might be a blessing to them in prayer. In recent years we have revived the custom at Trinity of tolling the church bell with each petition of the Lord's Prayer. As each toll of the bell rings out over the farms and fields around the congregation it announces the truth that in that moment the children of God are calling on the name of the Lord in the petitions of the "Our Father" for the good of our community. As the wind carries each resounding toll across the land the Spirit bears our pleas to the Father through the Son for the salvation of those all around us. In this we, as the Lord's children, are also reminded that our prayers are not just for our own good but for the good of all. We are reminded in this way that our prayers at this moment are joining us in the heart of the Father for all those around us. While without question we pray for the good of the whole world there is a truth that God places His children in specific places and callings that He may do His work in those specific places.

2) Our individual speaking for God's Great goal

As this is true for us a whole it is also true for us individually as well. God has placed each one of us in a particular place amongst particular people that He may do His good work there for those people. As we call on the name of the Lord for ourselves and our own needs God also invites us into His active speaking for the good of all those around us. Our vocations in this world give us those that God wants

to serve through us. One of the greatest ways that God does this is through our prayers. From childhood on we learn to pray for God's blessing upon our families. As we grow in years God gives us greater opportunity to pray for them as He opens up our eyes to their needs in new and greater ways. At the heart of our prayers as God's children naturally is the salvation of those that God has brought into our lives. We pray for His work through trials and troubles and blessings and joys to draw them closer to Him. At home, at work, at school, at Church God gives us all kinds of people to keep in prayer. Even in our trips to the grocery store or the mall there are people that God brings into our lives that we can ask for His mercy for them. Yes... you can even pray for the Police Officer who has pulled you over on the side of the road to give you a speeding ticket. These prayers do not need to be long drawn out affairs. Like the modern practice of texting they can simply be a plea for the Lord's grace for the person and His blessing upon them.

Now as we get to pray for others as we live with them or meet them in our day to day journeys we also have a special place as God's people to bring them with us to Church on Sunday. Obviously we would like to bring them physically with us to share in Christ's gifts yet we still can carry them with us even when they themselves don't come. Dr. John Kleinig has a beautiful way of applying the Gospel account where the four friends carry their paralyzed friend to Jesus (Mark 2:1-6) to our prayer life as God's children. In the account the four friends in faith carry the man to the house where Jesus is and when they can't get him in they make a hole in the roof and lower him down. Notably Jesus connects the friends' faith with the miracle. Just so Dr. Kleinig says we can carry our friends to Jesus when we come before Him on Sunday morning. They have no faith to bring them and so we in our faith carry them to the Lord and leave them with Him. Here is a place where we can especially bring all those in our lives who have known the Lord but have left behind the safety of the Father's house. As we come before Jesus as He stands in our midst in His flesh and blood we can carry these dear ones in our hearts and lay them down before Him there that He in grace might grant them to rise up and return home in repentance and faith.

3) Our enemies included in God's great goal

Both as a Church and as individual children of God we without question can never hear often enough our Lord's word to us to pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:44). In truth those who persecute us and hate us are in need of prayer far more than anyone else in our lives. If we were to divvy up our prayer time our

enemies probably should get far more attention than our friends. Although our dear Father of course doesn't hear our prayers on the basis of how much time we devote to them, the time we devote does reveal the direction of our hearts. Praying for our enemies is not something that we easily take up but it is the way of the Lord's heart - the way He has invited us into as His children. In our daily lives at any given time we may be at odds with someone. It may be in our families, at work, in our neighbourhood, in our schools, and even in our Church. Sometimes we can without question say that this person is our enemy. Other times we may want to shy away from that term even if we know that the relationship isn't all that it could be. In any case these are the people that need our prayers for their sake as well as our own. Now this praying of course is not the prayer that calls on God to straighten them out but the prayer for God's blessing upon them and a healing of the trouble. Praying for them in this way keeps us in God's heart for them and guards us against falling into sin's way of hate. The help for this person begins first and foremost in the healing of our own hearts toward them.

When it comes to life in the Church we especially need to hear our Lord's word about praying for our enemies (1 Timothy 2:8). In any congregation at any given time there will always be some that are having a hard time getting along with others. Sometimes these divisions can be quite severe while at other times they can be relatively minor. The Church is without question the family of God. The members of the Church are the Lord's own children - the brothers and sisters of Jesus and so brothers and sisters of one another. This family life is to be a life of love but the Church is also the place where the sinners gather. I tell people at home, "If you're looking for the good people don't come here. The good people don't need to be here. Only sinners come for what's given out in this place." God does great things amongst His people in the Church but they are still sinners and so they still sin against each other and though there ought not to be there can be divisions among them. They might not want to call someone their enemy but they do act like it toward them. Here again the Lord wants to draw us into His own heart. He calls and encourages us even as He through His own forgiving love enables us by His Spirit to pray for those within the Church that we struggle with. In praying for our enemies we should be especially cautious about coming to God with the answers that we think are needed in this situation - how He ought to straighten these people out. This is not a place to call down fire from heaven upon them - as James and John found out, Jesus isn't in to that kind of praying (Luke 9:54-

55). We are best in these places to call on the name of the Lord for their well-being and blessing as we ask the Lord to lead them in the same life of repentance that we seek from Him for ourselves.

When it comes to divisions in the Church our Lord's word to pray for our enemies without doubt needs to be heard and take root amongst us. Although we as a Synod have so much that unites us, there are without question some divisions amongst us. This is the way of sin after all and as each congregation is made up of sinners so is our Church body. As God's children I know we all lament these divisions and long for their healing. Sadly, even in the Church we can come to see others on one side of a debate or another as enemies or at least treat each other as such. Debate needs to happen in the Church. The Reformation showed us clearly the truth can never be taken for granted but must constantly be upheld and defended. Teaching and practice must ever be examined in light of the scriptures or it doesn't take long for us to get off track. Yet in this debate the enemy is ever crouching at the door waiting to take hold of our hearts and lead them away from love. How important it is then to take up the names of those that we see on the other side of such a debate and earnestly pray for their well-being and blessing that together in love we may work through these questions as children of God.

As we pray for those within our Church body that we don't exactly get along with we should also remember those outside our body that are lost in error whether it's those who are also seeking to follow the Lord or those who have embraced false gods altogether. As the Lord brings the nations to our front doors with all of our international immigrants we couldn't get a more Pentecost-like environment if we tried. Stepping out your front door these days brings you in contact with the whole world. Here again is a place for God's children to pray for those that don't know Christ. When the Jehovah's Witnesses come knocking and you're hiding in your house and pretending that no one is home here is a perfect time to pray for them. As you drive by the Mosque that sprang up on the street corner in your neighbourhood here again is another opportunity to call on the name of the Lord. As the CBC has yet another programme featuring someone who is pushing the LGBT agenda here is another time to pray for God's mercy on someone. When you see the depraved criminal on TV who just finished killing umpteen people in some school or workplace here again is a place to pray for mercy. And yes ... we can pray for a messed up young man who killed three men who devoted their lives to protect us, even as we

remember their families and fellow officers in their great grief.

If you're ever worried about not being useful in this world you only have to watch the evening news to know that God's got plenty of work to keep you busy. As God's children the Lord has wonderful things that He wants to do with our words. As our dear Father He is ready and willing to answer His dear children every time we call. We have the Lord's name not so that we can curse our enemies. We have the Lord's name that we might call upon it to save them. There is without question a lot to be angry about in our world. So many are turned against the Lord and His ways. The temptation is ever there to rise up in judgement against them. The temptation is ever there to run them down with our tongues but this is not the way for the dear children of the dear Father. He has much greater things for us to do.

D. The Family Conversation - the great work of our lives

As a child I prayed for my hamster and I got my budgie. I wanted to talk about sunshine and butterflies instead of asking for things that didn't seem to matter as much to me. Without question God delighted in my prayers. I was living out my life of faith in my simple way but God did have greater things in mind for me. He wanted to make me a part of His things. Greater things ... yes there are many greater things ... that God would have us be a part of ... in our world ... in our country ... in our communities ... yes ... even in our Church. I know you know the horrors that surround us out in the world and at home. I know you know how more and more are abandoning any kind of true morality to embrace whatever is right in their own eyes. I know that you know that people are being ever turned in on themselves and being overcome by hopelessness and despair. I know that you know how fewer and fewer hear the Word of the Lord and call on His name. I know that you know how many who once proclaimed the name of the Lord have abandoned the truth to proclaim the lie. I know you that know how the persecution of the faithful is on the rise in the world and even here at home. I know that you know that so many of our congregations are ageing and shrinking.

There is no question that there is a raging sea of need all around us. There are times when its towering waves and bottomless depths overwhelm me. There are times when I'd rather not face it or think about it. I feel so small and useless in the face of it all. These of course are the times when I forget that these troubles are not mine to solve or carry. These are the times when I am living out my own god-complex

instead of living in the truth of my Baptism. There is only one who can deal with all the wounded brokenness around us. God and God alone has the answer for our world. He knows what it needs and He knows how best to give it. I cannot and never will be the answer to anyone's needs but in His great grace my dear Father wants to make me a part of His answer. He wants to use my mouth and my voice to take up His Word and call on His name and be a part of His work in this world.

Dark times? Yes, we are living in very dark times. Times not unlike the first centuries of the Church. Are we oppressed? Yes. Of course we're oppressed. Christ is with us, after all, and we wouldn't expect the world to be for us, would we? Are these frightening times? Terrifying. Satan is having his way with so many around us. But God in His wisdom and the greatest of grace and mercy has honoured ... honoured you and me with the privilege of living in these days my friends. I know we tend to cry out in dismay at all the horror of our world and wring our hands over the sad state of affairs in the Church. I know when we look back to the glory days of the 1950's and 1960's of our Church body here in North America we might not see these days as a great time for God's people. But you and I have been granted the great privilege to stand with the few in these dark times that the Lord might show the surpassing greatness of His power and shine His glorious light into this dark night. In His mercy God has asked us few to stand with his Gideon against the overwhelming hordes that are rising against us.

The challenge is so great that it leaves us in no doubt that we have nothing in ourselves to win it. All we have are the trumpets of our voices and the name of the Lord. These may not look like much in the eyes of the world and sadly we too may despise them at times leaving them to lie in a corner while we try all kinds of other means to win the victory. In these dark days there is no question that the Lord wants to renew His people in the special place He has given them as His children to call on His name for the life of the world. He in great grace and mercy continues to give us more and more to pray about. These things are not allowed to come to pass that we might throw up our hands in the air in dismay but that the Holy Spirit might fold them together instead and teach us to pray. Are we being humbled in this time? Without question. But whatever humbles us is good for us as it takes us out of our pride to stand in the Lord and in the Lord alone. Like Jesus on the cross our hands and our feet are all being nailed down, my brothers and sisters. All that is being left free is our

tongues that we might cry out with Him for the life of the world.

Conclusion

Family life and speaking go hand in hand. As God's dear children born again in the waters of Holy Baptism the Lord has brought us into His own family that He might speak to us and we might speak to Him. He has made us a part of His family conversation. He speaks His word to us. We respond to that Word in our prayers. God involves us in His family speaking about the family business. This business as revealed so clearly to us in Jesus is the salvation of the world. As God involves us in this business through our prayers He hears us as His dear Children simply because He is our dear Father. As His children, our speaking becomes like His speaking. Speaking His word according to His will in Jesus, our speaking becomes an active speaking that does great things in the world. All of this depends on God and God alone and has nothing to do with any worthiness or merit in us. God simply does

this out His own fatherly divine goodness and mercy because He is our dear Father and we are His dear Children. The Lord hears and answers all His children young or old solely based on His Fatherly love for us in Jesus.

Our whole life long the Lord wants to draw us ever deeper into this truth that in the good news of the Gospel we would come to see God ever more as such a dear heavenly Father rather than as a distant God that we have to sway to our will. Learning in the good news of the Gospel to truly know Him we by grace can be matured into believing and praying in the truth that Father does know best. As Jesus told His disciples, the Lord has great works that He wants to do through us. He has honoured us as His dear children to be a part of the great unfolding of His salvation in the world in these dark days. May our dear Father in heaven be at work in our lives as individuals and as a Church to open our lips that we might call upon Him and so fulfill this great calling to the glory of His holy name.

Convention Essay

The History and Biblical Foundation of the Diaconate in Lutheran Church Canada by Jennifer Shack

Introduction

In 1999 Lutheran Church Canada (LCC) established something that we call the “office of deacon.” There was a lot of study and thought that went into its establishment and no doubt it was a topic that both pastors and lay-people in our districts had at least heard of during the 1993–1999 convention cycles. Though the topic of the diaconate has been present in some way in each convention since then, what we have not done is continued to educate and inform ourselves of what the deacons of our church are doing nor remind new pastors, delegates and lay-people of the history and care with which this office was established. My goal for today is that each of you would go away from this presentation with an appreciation for where this position came from and understand its biblical soundness and importance for our church and its future.

Part 1: Lutheran Church Canada’s History

Lutheran Church–Canada’s diaconate did not come about by a simple process nor by a short one. It was one hundred twenty-five years after the first Lutheran Teachers¹ and fifty years after the first congregational workers² began serving in Canada that the official diaconate was formed. This history shows that long before a convention created the LCC diaconate, it existed in an unofficial way. In order to fully understand the LCC diaconate, this history must be known.

Along with this history, it is also necessary to understand the actual administrative process which made the LCC diaconate official. An important part of this administrative process was the study of scripture, church history and the Lutheran Confessions.

Early Beginnings of Lutheran Teachers and Congregational Workers

The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), which would eventually become LCC in

our country, first appeared in Canada in 1854³ in Fisherville and Delhi, Ontario.⁴ From these two initial contacts, more congregations were formed throughout Ontario. In 1879 a Canada District of the Missouri Synod was formed which had fourteen pastors serving in Ontario.⁵ As the west opened, the Missouri Synod also spread to that part of the country, and by 1914 the Missouri Synod was the second largest Lutheran church body in western Canada.⁶

While the earliest church professionals in Canada were pastors, the Missouri Synod’s strong emphasis on parochial schools meant that Lutheran Teachers were not long in joining them. The first Lutheran Teachers arrived in Canada in 1874.⁷ Although most early teachers were men, women also had a role to play which grew as time went on. In the early days, women sometimes assisted the pastor (who often doubled as the school teacher) with classroom duties or acted as a substitute teacher.⁸ By the 1950s and 1960s, female teachers were quite common in Canada.

Prior to about 1950, it appears that the only professional church workers in the Missouri Synod within Canada were pastors and teachers. In the 1950s, this began to change. With the baby boom came a growing population of children and youth who needed to be taught the Gospel and mentored in their faith. Churches responded by hiring both male and female congregational workers of various kinds to assist them and their pastors in this task.⁹ These workers included Deaconesses, Parish Workers, Lay Workers, Youth Staffers, Lay Practitioners¹⁰ and eventually the first Director of Christian Education

³ Although Lutherans had a presence in Canada prior to this, it is in 1854 that the first Missouri Synod missionary arrived in Canada. Threinen, *Mosaic*, 46.

⁴ Threinen, *Mustard Seed*, 7.

⁵ Threinen, *Mosaic*, 65.

⁶ Threinen, *Mosaic*, 94.

⁷ Ontario District LCMS, *Grace and Blessing*, 52. Threinen, *Mustard Seed*, 18.

⁸ Cf. Threinen, *Leaven*, 31–32 and Ontario District LCMS, *Grace and Blessing*, 54, 63.

⁹ Griffin makes the connection between the baby boom and the increasing popularity of the DCE in the American LCMS churches. Griffin, “Profession,” 135.

¹⁰ This term is used to refer to lay people, without formal theological training, who functioned as congregational workers.

¹ Note that the term “Lutheran Teacher” is meant to denote those individuals who have been trained and certified by the LCMS (or LCC) to serve in their Lutheran schools.

² This term refers to those who serve congregations, rather than schools, but who are also not members of the clergy.

(DCE) in 1973.¹¹ In the 1980s even more “kinds” of congregational workers arrived in Canada. These included the Parish Assistant and the Director of Christian Outreach (DCO). With the exception of Lay Practitioners, each of these titles represents a certification available through either the LCMS, one of its post-secondary schools, or a post-secondary school of another Lutheran church body. Although the Synod may have kept records of those who had completed these various training programs, none of these congregational workers were rostered¹² or members of Synod¹³ prior to 1983.¹⁴ The fact that, across Canada, churches were using men and women of various training in addition to their pastors to carry on the work of the congregations speaks to the need for these kinds of workers within the church body.

The Church Identifies a Growing Need

To this point, all those who received official training to become either Lutheran Teachers or one of the various designations of congregational workers had to obtain their training in the United States. At its 1980 convention, the Alberta British Columbia (ABC) District of the Missouri Synod passed a resolution entitled “To develop training programs for creative roles of ministry” which identified the need for both Lutheran Teachers and congregational workers within the Canadian church and also expressed the need for training in these positions to be available in Canada.¹⁵ This resolution shows that there was both a desire to provide the church with more congregational workers and a desire to make training accessible in a Canadian context.

The vehicle through which Canadian training programs could be provided was Concordia

University College of Alberta (Concordia) in Edmonton.¹⁶ At the individual conventions of the ABC and ManSask Districts in 1982, Concordia made the following statement in its report:

During the next two years it is hoped that Concordia will begin to offer additional church-work programs, possibly including areas such as parish assistant, director of Christian education, and Christian elementary education. A major emphasis of all such programs, including the current pre-ministerial program will be preparing young men and women for service on a full-time or part-time basis for our church’s congregations here in Canada.¹⁷

That the convention delegates were also in favour of this is evident from a resolution entitled, “To Encourage the Training of Church Workers for a Variety of Ministries at Concordia College, Edmonton” which was adopted by the ManSask District Convention in the same year.¹⁸ That there was a need for the training of congregational workers in the first place is evident not only from these reports and resolutions¹⁹ but also from the increasing number of congregations which employed people to serve them in these capacities with or without any kind of certification.

In the years immediately following the 1982 conventions, Concordia worked to develop both a congregational worker and a Lutheran Teacher certification program, but neither was immediately implemented.²⁰ It was not until 1989 that the Board

¹¹ Threinen, *Leaven*, 163.

¹² To be “rostered” is to be added to the official list of trained and certified workers maintained by the Synod. Initially this roster only included pastors and teachers. In 1983, the LCMS added those DCEs who were not teacher-certified to the roster as well. Griffin, “Profession,” 142.

¹³ Members of Synod are those who have signed the constitution of the Synod to which they wish to belong (either LCMS or later, LCC) and by doing so declare themselves to be in agreement with this document and related bylaws and willing to adhere to them. Initially, congregations, pastors and teachers were the only members of Synod.

¹⁴ The one exception was any DCE who was also certified as a Lutheran Teacher, since the Lutheran Teacher was a rostered position. Initially, in order to train as a DCE, students also had to train as teachers.

¹⁵ Resolution R-80-03-02 in LCMS, *ABC 38th Convention Proceedings*, 8–9.

¹⁶ This was known as Concordia College until 1995. Schwabe, “Seventy-Five,” 8.

¹⁷ LCMS, *ABC 39th Convention Workbook*, 64. The Report to the ManSask District was identical. LCMS, *ManSask 38th Convention Workbook*, 93–96.

¹⁸ Resolution 82-09-03 in LCMS, *ManSask 38th Convention Proceedings*, 55–56. The ABC District had a nearly identical resolution ready to present but it was not brought to the floor. Resolution 82-04-04 in LCMS, *ABC 39th Convention Proceedings*, R-27.

¹⁹ Especially interesting is the following in the 1982 convention report of the Department of Youth Ministry of the ABC District: “Several congregations employ full-time staff in youth ministry or Christian education.” LCMS, *ABC 39th Convention Workbook*, 54.

²⁰ In 1982 Concordia struck a committee “to study the needs of the church for professional workers and to propose a program which Concordia College, Edmonton, could offer in response to the church.” Bauer et al., “Proposal,” 1. While it gave a report recommending the implementation of a “Coordinator

for Professional Education Services of the newly formed LCC approved a certification program for Lutheran Teachers at Concordia.²¹

In the same year (1989), Concordia hired Jeannette Lietzau to be its first Director of Church Work Programs.²² After much work, Concordia began offering its Director of Parish Services (DPS) program in the 1993–1994 academic year. This program was similar in scope to that of DCE training programs in the United States. It is important to note that although this program was endorsed by the church, its graduates would not be rostered and were not eligible to become members of Synod until after the formation of the diaconate in 1999.

Official Beginnings of a Canadian Diaconate

As the first DPS interns and candidates were being placed, LCC was making significant changes in its understanding of congregational workers. In late 1993, then LCC President Edwin Lehman appointed a task force to study diaconal ministry. This task force was to be responsible to the president of Synod who would bring its findings to both the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) and the Council of Presidents. The report and recommendations of this task force were to be finalized by September 1, 1995, presumably so that the findings would be ready to present at the LCC Convention in the spring of 1996.²³

The task force was made up of six people: one district president, one parish pastor, one “other” church worker, one “CTCR/seminary representative,”²⁴ and two lay people.²⁵ The group had five mandates which it was to fulfil on behalf of the church:

- To study the desirability of establishing a diaconate within Lutheran Church—Canada, in the light of the Synod’s present and future needs.

of Parish Ministries” program, it was not implemented at that time due to budgetary constraints. Orville Walz, letter to Rudy Block, 10 June 1985 (private collection).

²¹ Walz, “Teacher Education,” 4.

²² LCC, *2nd Convention Workbook*, F.66.

²³ Lehman, “Mandate,” G.61.

²⁴ Lehman, “Mandate,” G.61. From this wording, it is unclear whether the representative was to be from either of these two entities or an individual who could represent both. In the end, the person chosen to fill this role was a member of both groups. Winger et al., “Report,” G.58.

²⁵ Lehman, “Mandate,” G.61.

- To determine the scriptural/confessional implications of a diaconate,²⁶ with special attention to the relationship of the diaconate both to the ordained public ministry and to the laity of the church.
- To define the office of diaconate in a manner consistent with Scripture and the confessions, as well as the historical and ecumenical understanding of the office.
- To determine the feasibility of establishing such an office, and to set forth the steps that would need to be taken to do so.
- If deemed feasible, to determine, in preliminary form only:
 - The criteria and qualifications for the diaconate
 - The status of the diaconate within the structure of LCC (roster/how ordered, etc.)
 - Requirements and standards for admission to the diaconate.²⁷

In the process of fulfilling its mandates, this group was also to consult with personnel of the LCMS, representatives of other Lutheran church bodies, and representatives from Concordia.²⁸

At its first meeting in February of 1994, the group determined, based on its mandates, three areas which it would need to study. These were: “An historical review of the diaconate; the scriptural/confessional implications of a diaconate (Lutheran dogmatics), with an emphasis on the role of the diaconate relative to both clergy and laity; and how this relates to Lutheran Church—Canada in terms of ecclesiastical administration.”²⁹ In keeping with these goals, two study papers were prepared by individual members of the task force and discussed, revised and adopted by the task force as a whole. They are entitled: “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives on the [Re]Establishment of the Diaconate in Lutheran Church—Canada” and “A Proposal for the Ecclesiastical Administration of a Diaconal Ministry in Lutheran Church—Canada.”³⁰

²⁶ The meaning of “scriptural/confessional” will be explained below.

²⁷ Lehman, “Mandate,” G.61. Emphasis mine.

²⁸ Lehman, “Mandate,” G.61.

²⁹ Winger et al., “Report,” G.58.

³⁰ Winger et al., “Report,” G.59. These two documents outline how LCC ultimately would understand the diaconate and will be discussed in the next section. Note that “[Re]Establishment” is the

Based on the findings of these two documents, the task force concluded that LCC should officially establish a diaconate and give its members rostered status. By being rostered, these people would come under the administration of the Synod.³¹ It was further recommended that the matter of voting rights at conventions be examined in more detail with the hope that deacons could also be granted the right to vote.³² The task force also recommended that those already serving as “non-ordained professional church workers”³³ should be added to the diaconate based on years of experience and previous training. The task of delineating specific educational requirements for new members to the diaconate was delegated to “appropriate synodical entities.”³⁴

The 1996 LCC convention delegates commended the report and recommendations for “further study and response.”³⁵ Over the three years which followed, the circuits of LCC examined the documents and recommendations of the task force in preparation to take further action at the 1999 convention. Based on this discussion, LCC’s Board of Directors submitted an overture to the 1999 convention which resulted in a convention resolution to establish a diaconate in LCC.³⁶ Delegates passed the resolution and LCC’s diaconate was born. This new office would include all professional church workers, with the exception of pastors, who had been officially trained for their tasks such as Lutheran Teachers, DCEs, DPSs, Parish Assistants, and DCOs, among others. Notably, it did not include Lay Practitioners, as these individuals had not received any official training. At the same convention, delegates defeated a separate resolution which would

have given deacons rostered status.³⁷ Deacons were both rostered and made members of Synod at the 2002 convention,³⁸ however, the role of deacon still does not bring voting privileges. Interestingly, the issue of diaconal voting has been raised at every synodical convention since, including Resolution 14.3.14 at this convention.

Admission to the Diaconate

In order to serve as a deacon in LCC, individuals must undergo proper training. Although the task force did not outline the specifics of that training, they offered several suggestions which have been implemented by the church.³⁹ For those who train in Canada for the office of deacon, the normal course of study includes a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies from Concordia. In addition to the Religion Major, there are certain courses in certification which must be taken, but the required courses and the length of degree vary depending on whether the student intends to become a Lutheran Teacher or a DPS.⁴⁰ Director of Parish Services students are also expected to complete a year-long internship once their degree is concluded.⁴¹ Colloquy programs are available in both professions for those who have previously completed degrees. These programs include a core of theological and certification courses as well as oral examinations and, for DPS students, a possible internship placement.⁴² Education, however, is not the only requirement for certification, and completion of the necessary education does not always mean that individuals are received as deacons. Candidates must also be deemed suitable for the office and be recommended to it by either the educational institution from which they have graduated or by the Diaconal Colloquy Committee which evaluated them.⁴³

Upon the successful completion of the program of their choice, and receiving a

way the title appears in the report. Hereafter these two documents will be referred to as “Scriptural, Dogmatic and Historical Perspectives” and “Ecclesiastical Administration” respectively.

³¹ This rostering also carried with it the implication that deacons held an office of leadership with a certain amount of authority. It also carried an implied distinction from the laity, although deacons were not considered to be part of the clergy.

³² Winger et al., “Report,” G.59.

³³ This is the task force’s phrase to describe the various congregational workers who had official certifications and training. It notably excluded Lay Practitioners.

³⁴ Winger et al., “Report,” G.59.

³⁵ Resolution 96.2.03A in LCC, *4th Convention Proceedings*, 57–58.

³⁶ Resolution 99.2.01 in LCC, *5th Convention Proceedings*, 46–47.

³⁷ Resolution 99.3.06 in LCC, *5th Convention Proceedings*, 52.

³⁸ Resolution 02.3.02 in LCC, *6th Convention Proceedings*, 54.

³⁹ Winger et al., “Ecclesiastical Administration,” G.80.

⁴⁰ Those students wishing to become Lutheran Teachers are required to earn a three-year Bachelor of Arts, plus the usual education after-degree while those studying to be DPSs are required to earn a four-year Bachelor of Arts with an applied emphasis. See: CUCA, *Calendar*, 77–78.

⁴¹ CUCA, *Calendar*, 77.

⁴² CUCA, *Calendar*, 77–78.

⁴³ LCC Bylaws Section V A 5.25 a.2 in LCC, *2008 Handbook*, 48.

recommendation to the office, candidates for the office of deacon are assigned a congregation or school in which to begin their service. This placement is made by the Council of Presidents, acting as the Board of Assignments, in consultation with the placement officer of the student's educational institution.⁴⁴ Once a student accepts this position and makes the necessary applications, he or she will be consecrated and added to the deacon's roster.⁴⁵ New deacons are normally officially received into membership through the signing of the synodical constitution the next time either their district or the Synod meets for convention.⁴⁶

Understanding the Relationship between Office of Pastor and Office of Deacon

The Task Force for the Study of Diaconal Ministry also outlined the way in which the offices of pastor and deacon should be understood in relation to one another. This was primarily done through the study of scripture and while I will briefly summarize their findings in this section, I will delve into the topic more deeply in the next section.

The offices of pastor and deacon are by no means synonymous offices. LCC holds that the office of pastor was instituted by Jesus when he called the twelve apostles. It is suggested that the office of overseer-elder⁴⁷ was an extension of the office of

apostle. This connection is made because Peter (1 Pet 5:1) and the apostle John (2 John 1; 3 John 1) are explicitly linked with both offices and Paul implies that he also held both (a combination of 1 Tim 1:18 and 4:14).⁴⁸ On the same topic Walther states, "the divine institution of the holy ministry is evident from the fact that the holy apostles place themselves on an equal footing with the servants of the church who were called mediately as their co-laborers in the ministry."⁴⁹ This interpretation is also supported by information in *The Book of Concord*.⁵⁰

The office of deacon, in contrast, is not viewed as being directly instituted by Jesus while he was on earth, but rather something that he did through the church, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, after his ascension into heaven.⁵¹ The document "Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives" cites Acts 6:1–7, Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8–13 as support for the office of deacon being established by the New Testament church. Although the document discusses and acknowledges that opinions are divided as to whether the Seven in Acts

necessarily intended here. Therefore, the Greek word "πρεσβύτερος" will always be translated "elder."

⁴⁸ Winger et al., "Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives," G.66.

⁴⁹ Walther, *Church and Ministry*, 178. In addition to the texts concerning Peter and John, Walther cites Col 4:7, Phil 2:25 and the combined testimony of 1 Cor 1:1 and 4:1. Walther's *Theses on the Holy Ministry* were accepted by the Missouri Synod in 1851 and are considered to be a correct interpretation of both Holy Scripture and the Confessions although they are not in themselves normative. CTCR of LCMS, *Ministry*, 45. That they were also accepted by LCC is confirmed by resolutions passed at LCC conventions in both 1990 and 1999. See: Resolution 90:1.02 in LCC, *2nd Convention Proceedings*, 37–38; Resolution 99.1.03A in LCC, *5th Convention Proceedings*, 42; and Overture 1.03 in LCC, *5th Convention Workbook*, F2.

⁵⁰ "Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives" cites several references to *The Book of Concord*. The most significant one concerning the office of pastor being related to the call of the apostles is found in *The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, section 10. It states, "...the office of the ministry [pastor] proceeds from the general call of the apostles..." McCain et al., eds., *Lutheran Confessions*, 295. Cf. Winger et al., "Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives," G.67; Tappert, ed. *Book of Concord*, 321; Kolb and Wengert, eds., *Book of Concord*, 331.

⁵¹ Winger et al., "Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives," G.72.

⁴⁴ LCC Bylaws Section V A 5.11 in LCC, *2008 Handbook*, 47.

⁴⁵ LCC Bylaws Section V B 5.25 in LCC, *2008 Handbook*, 48.

⁴⁶ LCC Bylaws Section I B 1.11 and 1.13 in LCC, *2008 Handbook*, 16.

⁴⁷ The study document often uses the term "presbyter-bishop" to denote the same position. The terms ἐπίσκοπος, πρεσβύτερος and διάκονος are ecclesiastically "loaded" terms. Given that I have studied διάκονος in detail, I am convinced that using a translation of "deacon" in certain places is appropriate in this study. Where I do not think it is the best translation, I have chosen another term. I consciously choose not to use a translation of "bishop" for ἐπίσκοπος in this study because the word "bishop" may bring things to mind which this study does not intend. The English word "bishop" often means a kind of overarching supervisory position encompassing multiple locations and it seems clear that in the context of the passages studied here that ἐπίσκοπος, like διάκονος, is referring to a local leader. In order to avoid confusion with later ecclesiological meanings, the word ἐπίσκοπος in this study will always be translated "overseer." Likewise, the term "presbyter" for the Greek πρεσβύτερος may bring to mind a later ecclesiastical office which is not

6 represent the first deacons, it notes, “The call of the Seven in all likelihood supplied if not the actual source, at any rate the model for the creation of the diaconate.”⁵² The document then points to the evidence presented in Philippians and 1 Timothy as suggesting that the offices of overseer-elder and deacon were closely related, with the office of deacon being linked to overseer-elder in some kind of subordinate way.⁵³ For this reason, LCC accepts that the office of deacon flows out of the office of pastor.⁵⁴ This in no way demeans the importance of this secondary office. Walther states,

Every other public office in the church [such as the deacon] is part of the ministry of the Word or an auxiliary office that supports the ministry... Therefore, the offices of Christian day school teachers, almoners, sextons, precentors at public worship, and others are all to be regarded as ecclesiastical and sacred, for they take over a part of the one ministry of the Word and support the pastoral office.⁵⁵

Those who suggest that the office of deacon is not important or is somehow less worthy than that of the office of pastor do not properly understand LCC’s position on this.

Although the office of deacon is a dignified office, it is still under the supervision of the office of pastor. The document *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures and Nomenclature*, written by the CTCR of the LCMS notes the following, “Functions of the office of the public ministry [pastor] that are performed by others remain the responsibility of the

office of public ministry and must be supervised by it.”⁵⁶ It is for this reason that the Task Force for the Study of Diaconal Ministry noted that deacons serving in a local parish fall under the spiritual oversight of the local called pastor. In effect, these deacons are doing some of the work for which that pastor is normally responsible (whether or not he has the necessary gifts to carry it out) and thus he supervises them accordingly.⁵⁷

As the document moves from the evidence of the New Testament to that of church history, it makes two additional points which are worth noting. First, although no specific “office of deacon” was in existence in LCC at the time of the study, there was already “a *de facto* diaconate... alive and at work”⁵⁸ within the church. It also stated,

In acting to revive the official diaconate, the pastors and people of Lutheran Church—Canada would signify their esteem for those now working in auxiliary offices; they would make provision for the trans-parochial pastoral care and supervision of these workers; and they would make it possible for these men and women to participate in the decision-making and governance of the Synod.⁵⁹

These statements point out that the diaconate was essentially already in place within the church and that by making this office official, both the church and those who were serving it would benefit.

The second point which the document is careful to make is that the office of deacon is one which is open to women. Both when the document was written and currently, LCC holds that the office of pastor is one which should only be filled by men; however, women are able to be part of auxiliary offices in various ways and have been in these roles from very early in LCC’s history. In order to maintain its stance that scripture is the highest authority, LCC needed to show that the New Testament allows for the possibility of female deacons and that their presence in an LCC diaconate would not be only a matter of tradition. Two pieces of evidence are important in this discussion. First,

⁵² Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.72.

⁵³ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.72.

⁵⁴ Walther, *Church and Ministry*, 177, 289–90. It is important to note that this was not a perspective developed while LCC was studying the office of deacon in the 1990s. The idea that auxiliary offices flow from the office of pastor and are subordinate to it has long been held in the LCMS and LCC. Since the diaconate was comprised of these “auxiliary roles,” it fit into their previous model nicely.

⁵⁵ Walther, *Church and Ministry*, 289–90. An almoner is one who is in charge of dispensing money or food given for the aid of the poor. Sextons are those who assisted in a congregation by performing such duties as ringing the bells, digging graves and cleaning altar linens. Precentors are responsible for choral music within the congregation. See related entries in: Cross and Livingstone, eds., *Christian Church*, 44, 1492, 318 respectively.

⁵⁶ CTCR of LCMS, *Ministry*, 41.

⁵⁷ Winger et al., “Ecclesiastical Administration,” G.80. This also includes those deacons who serve as Lutheran Teachers at a Lutheran school since these schools are normally run by individual congregations which are served by pastors.

⁵⁸ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.73.

⁵⁹ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.73.

Rom 16:1 uses the word deacon (διάκονος) to describe a woman, Phoebe. Second, there is reason to believe that female deacons may also be in mind in 1 Tim 3:11. Both of these texts will be discussed in more detail below. Keeping these two possible references in mind, the document notes:

Mindfulness of the widespread seclusion of women in the first century (which would render female deacons indispensable agents of male pastors) and of the unlikelihood of deacons' wives being singled out for apostolic scrutiny while bishops' wives are overlooked tips the balance in favour of supposing that in these verses [1 Tim 3] St. Paul addresses the desired personal qualities of women deacons.⁶⁰

This, coupled with the fact that the early church appears to have had female deacons, shows that there is no evidence to suggest that women should be excluded from serving in this capacity.⁶¹

Part 2: The Biblical Foundation of LCC's Diaconate

Due to our high regard for scripture, it is important that the LCC diaconate be in keeping with the teachings of scripture. As noted above, one of the documents which the Task Force compiled dealt with this subject—though not in as much detail as it could have. This is not to slight the work of this committee; they had an enormous mandate to fulfil and they did it well. I seek to bolster their conclusions with further study of the New Testament.

Before the Task Force could proceed with their work they identified the sort of biblical evidence which would be helpful to discussion a biblical model of the diaconate. They studied models of ministry in the New Testament which were both geographically centered (similar to a congregation or parish) and on-going. Ministry positions which were itinerant or which disappeared with the apostolic age were not applicable to the discussion. Accordingly, the study document which the task force compiled begins by listing nine potential New Testament offices, based on several passages of scripture,⁶² and then pares the list down until only two offices are left: the deacon and the “presbyter-bishop” (overseer-elder). The following chart illustrates the verses used by the task force as well as others which I have added. It also lists the offices suggested by each verse.⁶³

⁶⁰ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.73.

⁶¹ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.73–74.

⁶² These verses are 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11; 1 Tim 3:1, 8–13; 5:9; Titus 1:5; and Phil 1:1.

⁶³ See discussion Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.64–G.65. I have added the Greek words for reference.

Chart of Potential New Testament Offices⁶⁴

Passage:	Acts 6?	Acts 13:1	Acts 20:17–28	1 Cor 12:28	Eph 4:11	Phil 1:1	1 Tim 3:2	1 Tim 3:8, 12–13	1 Tim 5:9	2 Tim 1:11	Tit 1:5–7	1 Pet 5:1–4	2 John 1	3 John 1
Apostle ἀπόστολος		*		1	♦								*	*
Prophet προφήτης				2	♦									
Teacher διδάσκαλος				3	♦		Able to teach							
Evangelist εὐαγγελιστής	* Philip, Stephen				♦					Herald of gospel				
Pastor/shepherd ποιμὴν					♦									
Bishop/overseer ἐπίσκοπος						♦								
Elder/presbyter πρεσβύτερος														
Deacon διάκονος						♦		♦						
Widow χήρα									♦					

⁶⁴ Key: Like colours of shading indicate positions are equated in the verse. Numerical values indicate positions are distinctly ordered in the verse. ♦ indicates all positions marked were mentioned in the verse as separate roles. * indicates that the link to this position is made through an individual name who is called by this title/given this role elsewhere.

This chart demonstrates that many of the positions mentioned in the New Testament are described in such a way that their roles and functions in some way overlap. For example, in this chart it is shown that the roles of apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, pastors/shepherds, bishops/oversees and elder/presbyters are at times described as the same thing, or as being done by the same people. Different from this is the role of deacon. Deacons may be linked to “evangelist” (if Philip and Stephen are considered to be deacons) but never to any of the other roles. Likewise, widows are something completely separate and are not to be understood as a distinct office in the New Testament church.⁶⁵ Thus we are left with a pastor/overseer/elder role and a deacon role.

Of these two remaining offices, the task force noted that the deacon is “fully distinct from all the foregoing offices...[and] is nowhere treated independently but always in relation to the office of presbyter-bishop [overseer-elder].”⁶⁶ By mentioning the deacon as “fully distinct” the study document is perhaps further asserting a link between all the other offices with the overseer-elder. The fact that the office of deacon is noted to always be mentioned in relation to that of overseer-elder is significant. This could indicate that the deacon cannot exist without the overseer-elder or at the least that the two offices are very closely linked.

The Task Force thus concluded that the offices of “overseer-elder” and deacon are the only ones which were “established for the ongoing governance, nurture and wellbeing of the Church.”⁶⁷ The document also noted that the overseer-elder and deacons are called by God through the church to serve in a specific geographical area. This observation is mirrored in the practice of LCC: pastors and deacons serve congregations/schools (a “geographic area”) who have extended them a call (invitation to serve) through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (God).

Digging Deeper: 1 Timothy, Philippians, Acts and Romans

The two clearest references to deacons as an office in the New Testament are found in 1 Tim 3:8–

⁶⁵ Some do interpret 1 Tim 5:9 as describing an order of widows, but in my opinion, this cannot be sustained. The order of widows developed later in ecclesiastical history and there is no evidence for it in the New Testament documents.

⁶⁶ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.65.

⁶⁷ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.65.

13 and Phil 1:1. Philippians includes only a passing reference to “ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους” (“overseers and deacons”) in the letter’s opening salutation. In contrast, 1 Tim 3:8–11 lists several qualifications for deacons and is preceded by a similar section on overseers. If we start with the most concrete references and move to the less-concrete ones, we can use the information in the clearer passage to illumine those which are foggy. Other significant passages include Acts 6:1–7 which may not explicitly name “deacons” but which describes the appointment of early apostle-assistants, and Rom 16:1 which explicitly describes Phoebe as a deacon in a specific geographic area.

An examination of the 1 Timothy passage and the Philippians passage will be the basis upon which a working definition of the role of “deacon” according to the New Testament is built. In order to create this definition, two key questions must be considered. The first of these questions is: Do these passages refer to an “office” of deacon or something else? Office can be defined as: “A position or place to which certain duties are attached, esp. one of a more or less public character” and “a position of trust, authority, or service under constituted authority.”⁶⁸ In order to determine whether Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8–13 describe an office, the use of διάκονος in each passage will be considered in light of these two definitions.

The second question to be answered in this chapter is: What do these passages say about deacons in the New Testament? In order to answer this question, careful consideration of social and literary contexts of the passages is important. This includes trying to get at the heart of how the original audience would have understood the passage. A working definition of “deacon” based on these two questions will be useful in determining where else in the New Testament deacons are found.

Philippians 1:1:

Philippians 1:1 can be translated as: “Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi with the overseers and deacons.”⁶⁹ This verse, together with Phil 1:2, makes up the opening of the letter which consists of the names of its senders and recipients and a short greeting. The letter’s opening describes the co-senders both as “slaves of Christ Jesus.” This places Paul and Timothy on the same level and brings to

⁶⁸ Murray et al., eds., *English Dictionary*, 80.

⁶⁹ My translation of: Παῦλος καὶ Τιμόθεος δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους.

mind their humility before Christ. Given that slavery was not an honourable position, an overall sense of humility is also felt. It brings across the sense that Paul and Timothy were “totally at the disposal of their Master”⁷⁰ (Christ) and that they owed their allegiance to him.⁷¹

The next three phrases introduce the letter’s recipients. The first two phrases, “πᾶσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ” (“To all the saints⁷² in Christ Jesus”) and “τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Φιλίπποις” (“who are in Philippi”), show the location of the letter’s recipients (the city of Philippi) and also that the whole community of believers were recipients of the letter. The third phrase of the letter’s opening is the one which is the most interesting for this study: “σὺν ἐπισκόποις⁷³ καὶ διακόνους” (“with the overseers and deacons”).

Some have disputed the originality of this phrase in the text because they think that there is no evidence of local leadership in the Pauline churches during this time period.⁷⁴ On the contrary, it is to be expected that some kind of local leadership did exist in the Pauline churches at a very early time. Witherington suggests that when Paul or his representatives were away from a congregation for a long period, the local leadership was forced to develop itself. He notes, “It is not true to say that local leadership developed only after Paul died. More likely it developed, was nurtured, and became more and more fully functional the further the distance in

time or space the apostle was from his converts.”⁷⁵ Johnson also notes that this kind of leadership would not have required much time to develop, citing sociological studies which show that “without strong boundaries, mechanism for decision making, and social control, survival beyond a few years is unlikely.”⁷⁶ It would not have been necessary, nor is it likely, that Christians waited long periods of time before developing local leadership and so this is not a convincing argument to support the later addition of “overseers and deacons” to the text of Phil 1.

Many agree that the terms themselves, apart from any ecclesiological meaning, were part of the language of the day.⁷⁷ If they were used to refer to positions which generally included oversight and service then it is not so surprising to find them here, in reference to the leadership of the Philippian Christian community. This fact further shows that it is unlikely that the phrase “ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους” was a later addition to the text.

How then should the above phrase be understood? Generally speaking, scholars agree that these two terms are in reference to church leaders who functioned as overseers and servants.⁷⁸ Fee goes as far as saying that the terms can be understood as titles.⁷⁹ Others are comfortable using the term “office” in connection with these words, but none intend to equate the offices described here with later ecclesiastical offices.⁸⁰

Based on the definition of office cited earlier, it is possible that in Philippians the phrase “overseers and deacons” is meant to be understood as referring to specific offices. An office is something of “public character,” and Paul alludes to the public character of this position when he greets these two groups of leaders. In some ways, a leader, by definition, has a public, or at least group-oriented, position. Leaders also tend to have a certain amount of authority, which is another descriptor of “office” previously mentioned. Finally, at times an “office” can be understood as a position of “service” and the word δίακονος/deacon has the idea of service bound up within it. What are missing from Phil 1:1 are the

⁷⁰ O’Brien, *Philippians*, 45.

⁷¹ Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 30–31. Cf. Silva, *Philippians*, 40.

⁷² The translation “saints” for the substantive “τοῖς ἁγίοις” is not in reference to those of particularly high morality, as if often thought of today in connection with the word, but rather, it refers to God’s holy people. Cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 65 and Martin, *Philippians*, 57.

⁷³ A variant reading of “συνεπισκόποις,” rather than “σὺν ἐπισκόποις” is found in verse 1 and can be translated “fellow-overseers.” This reading appears to be theologically motivated, “reflecting the ecclesiology of a later time.” Fee, *Philippians*, 60, footnote 8. Cf. O’Brien, *Philippians*, 43. The context of this letter and also Paul’s other uses of this preposition in letter openings suggest that σὺν should be read as a separate word.

⁷⁴ A question as to whether the text was included in a badly damaged section of the important P⁴⁶ manuscript is also raised, however, there is no specific reason to believe that this particular phrase was omitted. See: Skeat, “Bishops and Deacons?,” 15.

⁷⁵ Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 33. Cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 67.

⁷⁶ Johnson, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 75. Cf. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lxxxvii.

⁷⁷ Craddock, *Philippians*, 13.

⁷⁸ Grayston, *Philippians and Thessalonians*, 13; Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 31 and Martin, *Philippians*, 57.

⁷⁹ Fee, *Philippians*, 68.

⁸⁰ Fowl, *Philippians*, 20; O’Brien, *Philippians*, 48; Silva, *Philippians*, 41 and, somewhat reluctantly, Marshall, *Philippians*, 4.

duties these deacons perform and information concerning under whose authority they fall. It can thus be said that Philippians neither completely affirms nor denies the possibility of an office of deacon in the New Testament.

Beyond the fact that Phil 1:1 depicts these deacons as leaders in the Philippian Christian community, possibly fulfilling an office, little else can be gleaned from the use of these words in this salutation. Whatever the reason for this mention, it is significant that these two groups of leaders are mentioned together as this may suggest a relationship between the two positions. While the exact role of these overseers and deacons is somewhat mysterious, the titles themselves imply that the overseers were the main leaders and the deacons were in some kind of subordinate position.⁸¹ At the very least, the fact that there are two separate titles suggests that these positions were different in nature.⁸² Philippians 1:1 has shown that even at this early stage in the development of Christianity, at least one group of Christians had created for themselves local leaders. What was done in one community may well have been present elsewhere.

1 Timothy 3:8–13:

First Timothy 3:8–13 is the second text which clearly uses the noun διάκονος (deacon) to refer to a specific group of people and very possibly to refer to an office in the early church. This text is half of a larger section which encompasses 1 Tim 3:1–13 and discusses the qualifications for both overseers and deacons. The section from verses 8–13 is of greatest interest for this study and so this is where the focus of the section will be; however, at times, it will be necessary to look back at previous verses for comparison and clarification.

The text of 1 Tim 3:8–13 reads:

⁸Likewise, it is necessary for deacons to be dignified, not duplicitous, not in the habit of drinking too much wine, not greedy for money,⁹ and to hold to the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.¹⁰ First, they must be tested then let them serve if they are found to be blameless.¹¹ Likewise the women must be dignified, not slanderous, self controlled, and faithful in all things.¹² Deacons must be the husband of one wife, managing their children and own homes well,¹³ for the ones who serve well earn a

good standing and much confidence in their faith in Jesus Christ.⁸³

First, a deacon is required to be σεμνούς, a person of “respect/honor” or who is “noble, dignified, serious.”⁸⁴ According to Johnson, “in antiquity authority was positively correlated with dignity in bearing.”⁸⁵ This might indicate that the deacon, as a leader in the Christian community, held a certain amount of authority. This is interesting to contemplate, but caution must be taken so that too much is not made of these words.⁸⁶ This requirement is similar to the requirement of κόσμιον which is made of the overseer in verse 2.⁸⁷

The next qualification is listed in the negative: μη δυλόγους. This is the only place in the New Testament where this word is used and it is also infrequent in Greek outside of the New Testament. Because of this, settling on an appropriate translation is somewhat difficult. Suggestions include: “insincere”⁸⁸ “double-tongued,”⁸⁹ “duplicitous,”⁹⁰ “repetitious,” ‘gossips,’ ‘saying one thing and meaning another’ or ‘saying one thing to one person but another thing to another person.’⁹¹ In order to take in as much of the “double-tongued” meaning as possible, the word “duplicitous” is perhaps the best choice.

A second prohibition is: μη οἶνω πολλῷ προσέχοντας (“not in the habit of drinking too much wine”). The verb προσέχω⁹² suggests that it is the ongoing, continuous habit of consuming extensive

⁸³ My translation.

⁸⁴ BDAG, 919.

⁸⁵ Johnson, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 227.

⁸⁶ For example, Oden is going too far when he suggests from this single word that “Paul referred not merely to grave demeanor but to a thoughtful, realistic outlook, a bold and caring perspective on the actual needs and challenges at hand.” Oden, *Timothy and Titus*, 147. While these are certainly good qualities for a leader to have, there is no evidence that Paul meant this one word to carry so much meaning.

⁸⁷ The word κόσμιος means “respectable, honourable.” BDAG, 561. The words κόσμιος and σεμνός have similar semantic domains. L&N, 1:747.

⁸⁸ BDAG, 250 and Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 262.

⁸⁹ But cf. BDAG, 250 and Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 262.

⁹⁰ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 263 and Johnson, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 227.

⁹¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 199.

⁹² Meaning “to continue in close attention to someth., occupy oneself with, devote or apply oneself to.” BDAG, 880.

⁸¹ Fee, *Philippians*, 69 and Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 33.

⁸² Cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 69 and Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 33.

amounts of wine which Paul is forbidding.⁹³ This is something that would certainly get in the way of a person's ability to be an effective leader. A similar requirement is made of the overseers when they are forbidden to be *πάροινον*, which means "addicted to much wine."⁹⁴

The third and final prohibition in this verse is: *μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς*. In the New Testament this word is found only here and in Titus 1:7. It can be rendered as "shamelessly greedy for money, avaricious, fond of dishonest gain."⁹⁵ It is perhaps significant that in 1 Tim 6:9–10 Paul specifically speaks out against those who seek to be rich, and in the section from 6:5–10 he speaks of opponents and false teachers who would seek to use their leadership position for financial gain. While this is quite possibly the reason that Paul is careful to require that deacons do not seek after money, Towner notes, "The reference is general enough to encompass most kinds of financial misjudgment and abuse."⁹⁶ A general translation of "not greedy for money" is preferred as it keeps possibilities open. Again there is a similar requirement for the overseers who must be *ἀφιλάργυρον*, which in English is rendered "not loving money, not greedy."⁹⁷

Verse 9 once again makes positive statements concerning a deacon's qualifications: *ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει* ("hold to the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience"). Again, this implies a continuous habit. This qualification is asserting the deacon's commitment to the faith. This is significant in light of the difficulties that the Christian community in Ephesus encountered with false teachers and it is not surprising that one of the things Paul highlights in a new leader is that their commitment to the faith is strong.

Verse 10 changes the dynamics of the passage slightly. The first phrase in the verse is a command to test potential deacons: *καὶ οὗτοι δὲ δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον* ("first they must be tested"). Although it has been speculated that this test was a period of probation⁹⁸ or a comprehensive

background check,⁹⁹ the text itself does not specify how this test was done.¹⁰⁰

The second phrase, *εἴτα διακονεῖωσαν ἀνέγκλητοι ὄντες* ("then let them serve if they are found to be blameless"), describes the results of the testing. The command to let these people serve has conditions. The context suggests that the initiation of a deacon into service can only happen if they are found "blameless"¹⁰¹ and have successfully passed their test. A similar requirement of blamelessness is made of the overseers. The word used is *ἀνεπίλημpton* and it means "above reproach."¹⁰²

Verse 11 begins by shifting the subject from deacons to "women."¹⁰³ The word *γυναῖκας* is used, which can mean either women or wives, and this word causes the bulk of the debate surrounding this verse. Scholars are divided as to whether these women are the wives of the deacons or women who are themselves church leaders.

There is no question that coming to a conclusion on this issue is difficult. Neither a translation of "wives" nor "women" can be made with full assurance. Based on the evidence, however, a more general translation of "women" is better because it allows for possibilities to be left open.¹⁰⁴ These women, or some of them at least, may well also be the wives of deacons, and a translation of "women" allows for that possibility. It is, however, equally possible that these women were leaders in the Christian community in a role parallel to that of the overseers and deacons.¹⁰⁵

Following this introductory phrase is once again a series of requirements: *σεμνάς, μὴ διαβόλους, νηφαλίους, πιστὰς ἐν πᾶσιν* ("dignified, not slanderous, self controlled, and faithful in all

⁹³ This is due to its present tense and imperfective aspect. On imperfective aspect see Porter, *Idioms*, 20–21.

⁹⁴ BDAG, 780.

⁹⁵ BDAG, 29.

⁹⁶ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 263.

⁹⁷ BDAG, 157.

⁹⁸ Oden, *Timothy and Titus*, 148.

⁹⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 201 and Witherington, *Letter and Homilies 1*, 241.

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 228.

¹⁰¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 202.

¹⁰² BDAG, 77.

¹⁰³ Verse 11 begins as verse 8 did: accusative subject plus *ὡσαύτως*. Given this parallel construction, "δεῖ=... εἶναι" should be implied here as at verse 8. Witherington, *Letter and Homilies 1*, 241; Stiefel, "Women Deacons," 447–48 and Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 266, footnote 28.

¹⁰⁴ A translation of "deaconess" is not advisable since this implies that the text is explicit.

¹⁰⁵ It is evident that in the second and third centuries deaconesses served Christian women in ways which men could not. This included anointing for baptism, visiting and baptismal instruction. See: Olson, *Deacons and Deaconesses*, 41–42. These practical considerations may also loosely support the idea of women as leaders in the New Testament.

things”). These are strikingly similar to previously mentioned requirements of the deacon. The requirement of σεμνάς is identical to deacons in verse 8: dignified. Likewise, the prohibition of “not slanderous” (μὴ διαβόλους) is very similar to the prohibition of “not duplicitous” (μὴ διλόγους) for the deacon in verse 8.

The third qualification for the women is νηφαλίους. This means that she is moderate in her consumption of alcohol or that she is “self-controlled.”¹⁰⁶ This is the exact qualification given to overseers in verse 2¹⁰⁷ and is parallel to the prohibition given to deacons in verse 8: “μὴ οἴνω πολλῷ προσέχοντας” (“not in the habit of drinking too much wine”) and overseers in verse 3: “μὴ πάροινον” (“not a drunkard”).¹⁰⁸ A translation of “self controlled” with the understanding that this encompasses both her alcohol consumption and the rest of her dealings, is best here.

The final requirement for the women is “πιστάς ἐν πᾶσιν” (“faithful in all things”). While this could be referring to a general faithfulness and trustworthiness related to her tasks as a servant of the church,¹⁰⁹ it has also been suggested that this phrase is specifically referring to commitment to the Christian faith. This second idea would make the requirement somewhat parallel to the requirement that deacons “hold the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.”¹¹⁰ Both of these possibilities remain open and one does not negate the other.

Verse 12 focuses back on the deacons and away from the women specifically.¹¹¹ The

requirement that the deacon must be “the husband of one wife” (μῶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρες) sparks almost as much debate as the word “woman” does in verse 11. The exact implications of the phrase are unclear.¹¹² It has been suggested that this is a prohibition of polygamy, but given that polygamy was not practiced in either the Jewish or Greco-Roman cultures of the time, this is unlikely.¹¹³ It is also possible that this is excluding unmarried men from office; however, elsewhere Paul promotes celibacy¹¹⁴ and so it seems unlikely that he would forbid celibate men from serving here.¹¹⁵ This phrase could also be prohibiting re-marriage either after the death of a spouse or in the event of divorce.¹¹⁶ While this is possible, widowed women were not forbidden to remarry¹¹⁷ and so it would seem strange if widowed men were required to remain single. The prohibition of re-marriage after a divorce may be in mind here¹¹⁸ but the immediate context of this passage does not commend this particular interpretation over another. A simple solution, yet unsatisfying to those who prefer concrete conclusions, is that this verse simply requires deacons to be faithful in marriage which is “understood to be monogamous and acceptable in the eyes of the community.”¹¹⁹ While this is a fairly general conclusion, it is as specific an interpretation as possible without straying too far into speculation.

It is not just his marriage which the deacon must care for properly, but also his home and children: τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴκων (“managing his children and his own home well”). In addition to his personal character, the deacon’s home life, including his marriage, his children and any other members of the household must be well managed. A similar requirement is made of the ἐπίσκοπος in verse 4 with the implication in verse 5 that those who cannot manage their own homes will be unable to manage the church or “household” of God. These requirements that Paul sets out for the deacon’s family life are similar to the expected norms of the society of that day. Fathers, as

¹⁰⁶ BDAG, 672; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 204 and Stiefel, “Women Deacons,” 444.

¹⁰⁷ In verse 2 it is perhaps used in the sense of “level-headedness” rather than a prohibition against overuse of alcohol since the overseers are explicitly forbidden from overindulge in alcohol in verse 3 with the words “μὴ πάροινον.”

¹⁰⁸ BDAG, 780.

¹⁰⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 204. Towner suggests that this is a possibility that need not be seen as separate from the woman’s faith. Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 267.

¹¹⁰ Stiefel, “Women Deacons,” 444 and Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 267.

¹¹¹ Curiously, this shift does not include another ὡσαύτως introduction as do verses 8 and 11, but simply begins with the command “διάκονοι ἔστωσαν” (“Deacons must be...”). Given the context of the passage, this lack of ὡσαύτως may in fact suggest that the topic has not completely changed. If the shift in verse 8 is to deacons and in verse 12 the topic is still deacons, it may be correct to say that the

women of verse 11 are somehow part of these deacons, or a subcategory of them.

¹¹² A similar phrase with similar debate is found at 3:2 in relation to the overseers.

¹¹³ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 250, footnote 42.

¹¹⁴ 1 Cor 7:32–38.

¹¹⁵ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 250, footnote 42.

¹¹⁶ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 251, footnote 42.

¹¹⁷ 1 Cor 7:8–9 and Rom 7:1–3.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Matt 5:31–32.

¹¹⁹ Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 250–51, footnote 42.

Cf. Johnson, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 229. By “community” it is not just the Christian community that is meant, but also the outside world.

the heads of households, had ultimate authority over their wives, children and slaves. In turn, children, wives and slaves owed respect and obedience to the head of the household or *paterfamilias*.¹²⁰ The way in which a man managed his family affected the way in which society viewed him. Only the man who managed his home and family well was fit for public office because it was thought that the same set of skills were necessary for both roles.¹²¹ It is certain that when Christian leaders managed their households well, they would be seen in a positive light not only by their fellow Christians, but also by the larger society. A man who managed his home well would earn honour in the eyes of society. If Christian leaders were men of high honour, this, in turn, would paint Christianity in a positive light.

Although this study has focused mostly on the portion of the text which discusses the deacon, there are some important pieces of information to be gleaned by a brief comparison with the preceding section on overseers (1 Tim 3:1–7) to see what, if any, connection exists between the two positions. As has been noted throughout, there are several similarities between the overseer's and the deacon's requirements. Having said this, there are also many differences. Words such as σώφρονα (“prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled”); φιλόξενον (“hospitable”); διδακτικόν (“skilful in teaching”); μὴ πλῆκτιν (not a “pugnacious person, bully”); ἐπιεικῆ (“gentleness, graciousness, courtesy”); ἄμαχον (“peaceable”); and μὴ νεόφωτον (not “newly converted”) are used to describe the overseer but are not used of the deacon.¹²² Similarly, the overseer is never required to be tested and except for the prohibition of new converts, the state of his faith is never mentioned.¹²³ These differences show that these two positions are not interchangeable¹²⁴ and may suggest a greater amount of responsibility for the overseers. Whether or not the deacon is subordinate to the overseer is not explicitly discussed, although, as noted above in connection with Phil 1:1, subordination is implied by the titles of the positions themselves.¹²⁵ Beyond these brief points the text says

nothing concerning the relationship between the two kinds of leaders.

Although the text says little concerning the relationship between these two positions, it does have significant evidence in relation to the question of office. The “more or less public character”¹²⁶ of these positions, and that particular duties were associated with them, can be inferred from the detailed list of character requirements for the overseers and deacons. The care with which these requirements are laid out suggests that these positions were performed on behalf of a group. Also, the purpose of implementing character requirements for these positions is presumably so that only individuals who are well-suited to perform the associated duties are chosen to fill the positions.¹²⁷ The first two requirements of “office” are easily established.

The second two requirements (having authority and being under authority) are also readily apparent. As discussed under Phil 1:1, both overseers and deacons, due to the fact that they are leaders in the Christian community, hold a measure of authority. First Timothy also suggests that these leadership positions are under the direction or authority of another: Paul, and, by extension, his representatives. Paul had previously spent a significant amount of time in Ephesus and seems to have maintained close ties with the Christians there. At the time of the writing of this letter, Timothy is in Ephesus as Paul's representative and Paul is exercising his authority to teach and admonish the Ephesian Christians through Timothy. Although this chain of authority is not formalized, it nevertheless appears to be there in some form.

The combined evidence of this four-point analysis (public character, associated duties, holding authority and being under authority) shows that it is not unreasonable to consider the positions of overseer and deacon in 1 Timothy as early Christian offices. It is important to note, however, that as the church developed in the second and third centuries, these

¹²⁰ Keener, “Family and Household,” 357–58 and Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 90–95.

¹²¹ Keener, “Family and Household,” 357.

¹²² Bauer et al., *Bdag*, 987, 1058, 240, 286, 371, 52, 669 respectively.

¹²³ Verse 10 and verse 11 speak to the faith of the deacon and the woman respectively.

¹²⁴ Cf. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 196.

¹²⁵ Towner also suggests that the deacon is subordinate to the overseer but he makes this assertion based on word order and the fact that more attention is paid to the overseer. Towner, *Timothy*

and *Titus*, 261. Most do not agree that the text supports the deacon as a subordinate position. Cf. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 196 and Witherington, *Letter and Homilies 1*, 240–41.

¹²⁶ Murray et al., eds., *English Dictionary*, 80.

¹²⁷ Although it is not a very specific duty, 1 Tim 3:5 notes that the overseers needed to be fit to care for (ἐπιμελήσεται) God's church (ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ). Although it is only a shadow of a “duty” it alludes to more. Given that the deacons are described in a parallel way to these overseers and associated with them both here and in Phil 1:1 it is reasonable to assume that there were specific duties associated with them as well.

offices would become more developed as well. While we may be justified in referring to overseers and deacons as New Testament offices, we must be careful to differentiate these New Testament offices from later offices with the same titles. It may be wise to think of the New Testament overseer and deacons as “proto-deacons” and “proto-overseers” when comparing them with the ecclesiastical offices of the second and third centuries.

A Working Definition:

Now that this examination of Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8–13 is complete, a working definition of “deacon” can be determined. It has been established that the deacon, along with the overseer, is an example of an early Christian office, although one which is different from the offices of the second and third centuries with the same names. Also, based on the character requirements and the context in which these positions were mentioned, additional pieces of information can be asserted about the New Testament deacon.

First of all, based on 1 Tim 3:9, 11, it can be said that deacons are people of firm faith. The other character requirements of 1 Tim 3:8–12 also show that they are people of good character, who are positive role models in the way they run their families and households. Based on the fact that they are mentioned only in connection with specific Christian communities, it would seem that deacons serve the local congregation. No evidence suggests that the deacons described in these passages served in a wider capacity, although this may have been possible. The fact that the position of deacon is mentioned in conjunction with another position, the overseer, but yet has its own set of requirements, suggests that it is a unique and separate position. The title deacon itself implies that it is a subordinate position. Finally, evidence from 1 Tim 3:11 suggests that women are eligible to be included as part of the office of deacon or some subcategory of it.

Acts 6:

While Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8–13 use the noun *διάκονος* in their description of New Testament deacons, other passages may in fact describe deacons or diaconal activities without specifically using that noun. Acts 6:1–6 is one such passage. These verses are a short narrative outlining a problem in the Jerusalem church: Hellenist (*Ἑλληνιστῶν*) widows are being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. Seven men are therefore appointed to oversee this activity and ensure that no one is missed. Because Acts 6 only uses the verb *διακονέω* (“to serve”) and the noun *διακονία* (“service”), some scholars are uncertain whether deacons are actually present here.

Deacons or not, church leadership and the appointment of these assistants are central to this text.

At this time, the centre of Judaism, and also Christianity as far as can be discerned, was in Jerusalem. It is here that the events of Acts 6:1–6 take place. It is estimated that Jerusalem was a city of 60,000 or more inhabitants ranging from the very poor to the very rich.¹²⁸ The languages of Jerusalem were also varied and included Hebrew,¹²⁹ Aramaic¹³⁰ and Greek.¹³¹ Based on the New Testament evidence, it is apparent that the earliest Christian community was entirely Jewish, although made up of those who spoke Aramaic (and Hebrew) and those who spoke Greek.¹³² It would seem, however, that the Aramaic-speaking group, sometimes known as the “Hebrews” (*Ἑβραῖοι*), was in the majority.¹³³ Acts 6:1–6 brings the issue of “Hebrews” and “Hellenists” to the forefront and much has been written concerning the identity of these two groups.

Scholars have answered this identity question one of two ways: either both the Hebrews and Hellenists were Jews, with the major difference between them being either language¹³⁴ or culture;¹³⁵ or that the Hebrews were Jews while the Hellenists were Gentiles.¹³⁶ There are well-reasoned arguments for both sides; however, the context tips probability in favour of a language-cultural barrier.¹³⁷ Exactly how this cultural and language division manifested itself is hard to know based on the information provided by the text, so it is best to simply

¹²⁸ Fiensy, “Composition,” 214, 26.

¹²⁹ Anderson presents a picture of Jewish education at this time which suggests that most male Jews educated within this system would also have known Hebrew. Anderson, “Jewish Education,” 217–26.

¹³⁰ Fiensy, “Composition,” 230.

¹³¹ It is estimated that between 10–20% of the population of Jerusalem was Greek-speaking. Fiensy, “Composition,” 231.

¹³² Fiensy, “Composition,” 214.

¹³³ Lenski, *Acts*, 241. This can also be inferred based on the number of people who spoke Greek in the city. Fiensy, “Composition,” 231.

¹³⁴ Hengel, *Earliest Christianity*, 71; Smith, *Acts*, 110; Capper, “Cultural Context,” 353; Krodel, *Acts*, 132; Lenski, *Acts*, 240–41; Munck, *Acts*, 57 and Ferguson, “Hellenists,” 204.

¹³⁵ Capper, “Cultural Context,” 353; Munck, *Acts*, 302 and Ferguson, “Hellenists,” 177.

¹³⁶ Cadbury, “Hellenists,” 69 and Tyson, “Dietary Regulations,” 159..

¹³⁷ The strongest argument against the idea of a Jewish/Gentile division is that thus far, the church appears to have been composed of Jews only. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 350 and Haenchen, *Acts*, 264, 66.

understand that both were factors in this division to some degree.

The text can be translated as follows:

¹Now in those days, when the number of disciples was increasing, the Greeks began grumbling about the Hebrews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily aid. ²And the Twelve, after summoning the crowd of disciples, said, “It is not pleasing for us to leave the word of God to serve tables. ³So, brothers, choose seven men from among you who have good reputations and who are full of the spirit and wisdom, and we will appoint them over this task. ⁴We, however, will continue in prayer and service of the word.”

⁵And the whole group was pleased with this idea and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, Phillip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶These men stood before the apostles who, after praying, laid hands on them.¹³⁸

The problem which is being recorded in this passage is laid out in the second half of verse 2: ἐγένετο γογγυσμός τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους (“the Greeks began grumbling about the Hebrews”). The problem is further explained by the phrase: ὅτι παρεθεωροῦντο ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ αἱ χῆραι αὐτῶν (“because their widows were being overlooked in the daily aid”). Tyson suggests the imperfect tense of παρεθεωροῦντο (“neglect”) implies habitual neglect rather than a one-time problem.¹³⁹ The use of the word καθημερινῇ (“daily”) also serves to show the ongoing problem: aid¹⁴⁰ was distributed daily and the Hellenist widows were overlooked. Context would suggest that this neglect occurred over more than one day, further

¹³⁸ My translation.

¹³⁹ Tyson, “Dietary Regulations,” 158. This is in keeping with uses of the imperfect tense and the imperfective aspect which it carries. Cf. Porter, *Idioms*, 21, 29, 33–34. Wallace does not mention aspect, but brings out the same basic meaning of the imperfect. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 546–47.

¹⁴⁰ This phrase also contains the first instance of the διακον- words in this passage. Based on the context in which the word is used here, it is most likely that it concerns the distribution of food. (Beyer, “διακονέω,” 2:84. Cf. BDAG, 230.) It is also possible, however, that some other kind of assistance is meant and so, in order to preserve sense of the text as much as possible, a translation of “aid” is best.

supporting the concept of habitual neglect. This is a significant problem and it is no wonder that it was brought to the attention of the Twelve.

In a patriarchal society, women without husbands or other family would be at the mercy of handouts from the community. Both Spencer and Krodel note that many Jews moved to Jerusalem in their older years so that they could be buried there. When the men died, women were left far from their families who would have supported them.¹⁴¹ These Hellenist widows may have been dependent on aid from the Christian community for their survival and if they were overlooked as the aid was being distributed, these women would have suffered.

After summoning the whole of the Christian community together, the Twelve explain that they cannot neglect their own special duties to handle this new problem. In verse 3, a solution is proposed: ἐπισκέψασθε δέ, ἀδελφοί (“so, brothers, choose”). The assembly was, by careful selection, to choose individuals to take over this new role of administering the daily aid for widows.

The verse goes on to describe the kind of men¹⁴² that should be selected for this position: those with good reputations and who are full of the spirit and wisdom.¹⁴³ The requirement that they have good reputations could also be phrased as them being those “of whom people speak well.”¹⁴⁴ The text is not specific as to who exactly was to speak well of these men. Certainly their fellow Christians would have been included, but there is a strong possibility, due to a lack of qualification, that these men were also to have a good reputation in the greater Jerusalem community.¹⁴⁵ Those who had a positive reputation in the greater community would also have painted Christianity in a positive light in the eyes of the greater society. This qualification, along with the

¹⁴¹ Spencer, “Neglected Widows,” 728 and Krodel, *Acts*, 132.

¹⁴² The word ἄνδρας refers to the male almost exclusively. At times it can refer to “humans” as opposed to “non-humans” (like animals or gods) but to say that this word easily refers to both men and women, and thus the Seven could theoretically have been women, is difficult to support.

¹⁴³ ἄνδρας ἐξ ὑμῶν μαρτυρουμένους ἐπτά, πλήρεις πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας.

¹⁴⁴ BDAG, 618.

¹⁴⁵ In both Luke and Acts, the author attempts to show that Christianity was an acceptable religion and that Christians were good citizens. Cf. Carson and Moo, *Introduction*, 303–04. The portrayal of Christian leaders as having a good reputation in the community may be an example of one instance of this attempt.

requirement that the men also be full of the spirit and wisdom, shows just how important this position was and how seriously it should be taken. Not just any men were to be appointed, but reputable, faithful individuals.

These are similar to the requirements which Paul lays out for deacons in 1 Timothy. Although having a good reputation, being full of the spirit, or being wise does not directly correspond to the 1 Timothy requirements, they contain the same spirit. For example, in 1 Timothy, requirements such as being dignified, being sincere in speech, refraining from too much wine and having an upstanding marriage and family would certainly produce a man of “good reputation.” Also, one who “holds the mystery of the faith in pure conscience” is a similar religious requirement to “being full of the spirit and of wisdom.” In both texts, a positive, faith-filled role model is sought to do the job.

Once appropriate men are chosen, they will be appointed over the task of assisting the widows. Given that the Greek word *χρείας* which is used in verse 3 can be translated as “office,”¹⁴⁶ it is appropriate to examine this text more closely to see if other evidence of a New Testament office can be found within it. When the previously noted definition of office is applied here, it is evident that a sort of office is in mind. This new position is certainly one performed on behalf of a group with duties attached (assisting the widows with the daily aid) and it can also be called a position of service under an authority (namely that of the Twelve). Both of these aspects were important in our previous discussions of “office” and when they are combined with the additional detail that the word *χρείας* can be translated as “office,” they show that the position described in Acts 6 fits the definition of office even better than Phil 1 or 1 Tim 3.

Now that the Twelve have laid out their proposal, the Christian community can respond to it. The text shows that the community was pleased with the proposed solution and they name seven men for appointment to the task of serving the widows: “Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, Phillip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch.” The fact that all seven are named may indicate that they are well known or that their role was so important that the author wanted them to be remembered.

The final verse in this section outlines how these seven men were set apart for service. The text reads that the men stood before the apostles who “laid hands on them.” The practice of laying on hands

to establish a person in a position of authority is found in the Old Testament.¹⁴⁷ Was this in fact an ordination with the laying on of hands? Both Krodel and Lenski agree that ordination should not be understood here.¹⁴⁸ The rite of ordination may be based on this text and others like it, but it is unlikely that the church, at this very early stage, had developed such a formal rite.

Thus the problem of the widows who were being overlooked by those in charge of aid distribution was solved. The church appointed seven new leaders over that task specifically in order to allow the Twelve to continue in their work of furthering the Gospel. This passage and the situation it portrays reveal several things about the early church and its leadership. First of all, it depicts the early Christian assembly creating a secondary position of leadership in order to meet the needs of the people at the time. The group’s primary leadership, the Twelve, felt the addition of a secondary group was appropriate.

The process by which the seven new leaders were selected reveals more: the new position was deemed to be an important one. The whole of the Christian assembly was involved in the selection and approval process and candidates had to meet specific qualifications of character (“good reputation”) and of faith (“full of the spirit and wisdom”). Upon selection, the Seven were formally and publically declared to be leaders in the church, and were assigned a specific task. Such care and concern shows that both the task and those who fulfilled it were highly valued.

The manner in which the position is developed and discussed also suggests that it was in some way subordinate to the position of Apostle, although specifics cannot be discerned. It is important to note, however, that this probable subordination does not appear to portray the idea of lesser importance. As already noted, the care with which the men were selected and the process by which they were set apart for their task suggests that they held a position of importance in the community and they may legitimately be described as holding an office.

This passage demonstrates the New Testament church’s authority to create official roles alongside that of the Twelve through which to carry on the work that needed to be done. It does not, however, explicitly refer to this new position as

¹⁴⁶ BDAG, 1088. BDAG favours the translation of “office” in this verse. Cf. Haenchen, *Acts*, 263.

¹⁴⁷ For example: Num 8:10; 27:18, 23. The laying on of hands also symbolizes a transfer of something from the one laying on the hands to the one on whom the hands are laid. Cf. Lev 1:4 and the transfer of sins from the person to the sacrificial animal.

¹⁴⁸ Krodel, *Acts*, 134 and Lenski, *Acts*, 247.

“deacon.” Whether or not these men can be called deacons depends on how that term is defined. If we make a brief comparison we can see that there are several similarities between the men of Acts 6 and the deacons portrayed in Philippians and 1 Timothy. Both groups are people of firm faith and good character. Both serve local communities. Also, both positions were in some way subordinate to another position of higher authority. The one major difference between these groups is that while 1 Timothy leaves open the possibility of the inclusion of women, in Acts 6 only men are part of the office. According to this definition then, Acts 6 does describe deacons and not only that, but their very institution.

This conclusion, however, cannot be left without certain qualifications. While we, looking back, may legitimately call these the first deacons according to our own definitions, it is unlikely that the church at that point in time would have used that term to label these men. It is very likely, however, that in later years, after Christians were forced out of Jerusalem and took their message far and wide, the model found here (a secondary group assisting a primary group in some way) was carried on. This may be the impetus for the development of deacons in the Pauline churches twenty or thirty years later, which eventually developed into a more structured office that emerges in the centuries which followed.

Romans 16:1:

Thus far it has been established that there is evidence for a diaconate of sorts in the New Testament, the roots of which probably go back as far as the time immediately following the death and resurrection of Christ. While the most explicit evidence for this is found in 1 Tim 3 and Phil 1, there may also be other places where this position is explicitly mentioned in the New Testament. By examining passages where the noun *διάκονος* is used in reference to a specific person, the identities of early deacons may be established.

The Pauline letters refer to six different people using the noun *διάκονος*: Paul,¹⁴⁹ Apollos,¹⁵⁰ Timothy,¹⁵¹ Tychicus,¹⁵² Epaphras,¹⁵³ and Phoebe.¹⁵⁴ In order to ascertain which of these instances can be translated as “deacon” and which are simply referring to these people as general servants, the information which the New Testament shares concerning each of

these individuals must be compared with the working definition of “deacon” which has been previously established.

According to the information gleaned from 1 Timothy, Philippians and Acts, it can be said that deacons: 1) are people of firm faith; 2) are people of good character; 3) serve the Christian community in a local congregation, but not the greater church; 4) are secondary leaders, under some kind of supervisor; and 5) may be men or women. Given that each of these six people appears to be a member in good standing of the greater Christian community, and one who is in some kind of leadership role, it can be assumed that the faith and character of these people are not in question. The points which are most important to consider in this chapter are numbers three and four: the location of service and the level of leadership.¹⁵⁵

A thorough examination reveals that the only one of these six individuals who can be called a “deacon” according to the established definition above is Phoebe. In short, Paul, Apollos and Epaphras are not a secondary leaders, but primary leaders and with the possible exception of Epaphras, all of the other men cannot be said to be local leaders, but rather, they are travelling leaders. This certainly does not diminish the importance of these five men in the leadership of the early church; it simply means that their status as servants (*διάκονοι*) is of a different sort than we are hoping to examine.

Phoebe is mentioned only in Romans 16:1 where she is identified as being from Cenchrea, near Corinth. Romans 16:1 reads: *Συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν Φοίβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν, οὗσαν [καὶ] διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς* (“I introduce to you Phoebe, our sister, who is [also] a deacon of the church in Cenchrea”). This verse shows that Phoebe was a stranger to the Roman Christians. Paul commends her to them and asks them to welcome her while she is with them. Many suggest, probably correctly, that Phoebe was the letter carrier¹⁵⁶ which explains the presence of this passage in the letter.

There is good reason to believe that this passage is meant to portray Phoebe as a deacon and several commentators translate it so.¹⁵⁷ Witherington and Dunn call her the “first recorded ‘deacon’ in the

¹⁴⁹ 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 3:6, 6:4, 11:23; Eph 3:7; and Col 1:23, 25.

¹⁵⁰ 1 Cor 3:5.

¹⁵¹ 1 Tim 4:6; 2 Cor 3:6, 6:4.

¹⁵² Col 4:7 and Eph 6:21.

¹⁵³ Col 1:7

¹⁵⁴ Rom 16:1

¹⁵⁵ In the case of Phoebe, point five, that deacons may be men or women, is also important.

¹⁵⁶ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 729; Cranfield, *Romans 9–16*, 780; Jewett, *Romans*, 942–43; Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 886 and Moo, *Romans*, 913.

¹⁵⁷ Translating as either “deacon” or “deaconess” are: Cranfield, *Romans 9–16*, 781; Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 377; Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 885 and Moo, *Romans*, 912.

history of Christianity”¹⁵⁸ and both Witherington and Cranfield directly link the use of δίακονος in this passage with its use in Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3:8 and 12.¹⁵⁹

The way in which Phoebe is connected to the Cenchranean church suggests that not only is she more than a lay-woman, she actually is a deacon. When she is called “δίακονος of the church at Cenchranea” she is placed firmly in a local congregation.¹⁶⁰ While Epaphras was connected to the Christians in Colossae and area, he was called “a δίακονος of Christ” and so his service was linked to Christ, rather than to the specific people in Colossae. Phoebe’s service on the other hand, is clearly connected to the congregation which makes it very possible that she should be considered a deacon.

The fact that Phoebe may be subordinate to another leader further strengthens the interpretation of Phoebe as a deacon. While Rom 16:1 does not explicitly say that Phoebe is under the direction of another leader, the context of the verse does not immediately refute this either. While it is correct that leadership is at times associated with δίακονος, the word is not necessarily meant to imply the highest leader of the church and this word alone cannot satisfactorily cast Phoebe as the church’s main leader.¹⁶¹ Thus far, Rom 16:1 shows that Phoebe is well-qualified to be the only deacon in the New Testament who is explicitly called by that name.¹⁶²

Further information concerning Phoebe and her role as deacon at Cenchranea can be found in Rom 16:2. The verse reads: “so that you might welcome her in the Lord, in a way fitting of the saints, and that you might help her with any matter with which she

¹⁵⁸ Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 887. Cf. Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 382.

¹⁵⁹ Cranfield, *Romans 9–16*, 781 and Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 382. Even though Phoebe may be considered a deacon, it is probably going too far to translate δίακονος as “deaconess” since the Greek actually uses a masculine noun and “the specific order of women church workers called deaconesses did not exist for another three hundred years.” Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 382.

¹⁶⁰ Jewett agrees that she is a local leader. Jewett, *Romans*, 944–45.

¹⁶¹ Contra Jewett, *Romans*, 944. Based on my extensive study of the term not included here it is clear that the word δίακονος on its own cannot establish Phoebe as the main leader of this congregation.

¹⁶² There may be other people named in the New Testament who could arguably be called deacons according to our five criteria; however, they are not called by the title “δίακονος.”

might need your assistance, for she has been a patron of many and myself also.”¹⁶³ As noted above, Phoebe is going to Rome for some unknown reason and Paul is asking the Christians there to assist her in whatever way she may need. An important detail that this verse gives us is that Phoebe was a patron of many and also of Paul. This detail is important in fully understanding her role among the Christians of Cenchranea.

The patronage system was a major part of life in the Greco-Roman world. Moxenes describes the patron-client relationship as:

social relationships between individuals based on a strong element of inequality and difference in power. The basic structure of the relationship is an exchange of different and very unequal resources. A patron has social, economic, and political resources that are needed by a client. In return, a client can give expressions of loyalty and honor that are useful for the patron.¹⁶⁴

Patronage could also occur between one person and a group (public patronage). In this case, the patron paid for a public building or banquet in exchange for “statues, inscriptions, and public office.”¹⁶⁵ People could also be patrons of clubs or religious guilds of which they were members. In these cases, the patrons were often rewarded with leadership roles in the group.¹⁶⁶ It is significant that women were also known to be patrons of both individual men and women of lower status¹⁶⁷ as well as clubs.¹⁶⁸

Despite the fact that there is a historical precedent for women patrons, scholars are divided over whether or not Phoebe should be considered one. Given the great importance of the patronage system in Roman society, it is difficult to imagine how an association between it and the word προστάτις could have been avoided when the word was heard by Roman ears. It is because of this cultural factor that Witherington clearly links this term with the patron-client system.¹⁶⁹ Based on Paul’s use of the term προστάτις, the historical data which support the possibility of female patrons, and a lack of textual evidence which would dictate

¹⁶³ ἵνα αὐτὴν προσδέξησθε ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως τῶν ἁγίων καὶ παραστήτε αὐτῇ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ὑμῶν χρήζη πράγματι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ.

¹⁶⁴ Moxnes, “Patron-Client Relations,” 242.

¹⁶⁵ Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 50.

¹⁶⁶ Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 50.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 52.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 24.

¹⁶⁹ Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 384.

otherwise, there is no reason to doubt that Phoebe was a patron.¹⁷⁰

Phoebe's status as a patron sheds some light on who she was and what she did. In order to be a patron, Phoebe would have to be a woman of wealth and high social standing.¹⁷¹ It is also likely that she was independent, given that she is not linked with a man.¹⁷² In her role as patron Phoebe may have provided hospitality¹⁷³ or performed charitable works¹⁷⁴ on behalf of individuals, such as Paul, who would be obligated to her as clients. It is also possible that Phoebe may have hosted Christian gatherings in her home.¹⁷⁵ Although specifics of Phoebe's activities cannot be known, all of these suggestions are within the realm of possibility.¹⁷⁶

Though Phoebe is both "deacon" and "patron" the exact relationship between these two roles is unclear. There is no evidence to show that Phoebe had to be a patron in order to also be a deacon and it is not necessarily true that she was a deacon only because she was also a patron. Although a patron would no doubt have been influential in the Christian community, Phoebe's status as leader comes from the designation "διάκονος" more clearly than it does from that of "προστάτις." Having said this, there is nothing preventing her from being both deacon and patron and the two roles fit nicely together. It is possible that they were meant to go hand-in-hand.¹⁷⁷

Conclusions

Our modern diaconate in LCC is certainly not identical to that of the New Testament. At a most basic level, they had no schools in which school deacons could serve and their congregations looked very different than ours. Their congregational needs were also very different than those that we have in

Canada in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, some important parallels can and should be drawn between the two times and places.

Based on the information in this study, LCC's diaconate can be summarized in eight key points. These points, which are described below, allow comparison of the LCC diaconate to be made to that of the New Testament. While the New Testament may not directly address all of these points, they provide an important guide for the study of the New Testament diaconate.

The first of these points concerned the way in which each diaconate was instituted. The LCC diaconate was formally instituted as an office of the church based on a study of scripture and history as well as in answer to a perceived modern need. The New Testament also reveals a small amount of information concerning the origins of the first-century diaconate. Although there is no information about how deacons came to be serving in Philippi, Ephesus, or Cenchrea, we do have information about a general origin of the New Testament diaconate. I have demonstrated that the model upon which the New Testament diaconate was based is found in Acts 6:1–6 and so this passage also sheds light on how the office was instituted. While there is no evidence of a lengthy study or discussion concerning this office, it seems likely that the New Testament Christians did not enter into this model of assistant leadership without careful thought. Acts records that the assembly of Christians appointed the Seven on the advice of their primary leaders, the Twelve, in order to fulfill a group need. Both in the New Testament and in LCC it can be said that the office of deacon, or at least what would eventually become the office of deacon, was instituted because of the need in the Christian community to have a second group of workers to assist in filling a void.

A second point of comparison concerns the geographical settings in which deacons served. Were they local servants or travellers or both? In LCC, deacons are primarily intended to serve either in a local congregation or in a school setting, depending on their training. While it is possible for LCC's deacons to serve in other areas such as part of a service organization or in an administrative position at a district office, this is generally not the case. Similarly, as far as can be discerned, the kind of New Testament leader which we are calling "deacon" served one geographic location. Whether there were several smaller "congregations" or house churches within that one geographic location and whether a single deacon may have interacted with multiple such congregations is unknown. It can be said that the two offices are generally consistent.

¹⁷⁰ In agreement with Phoebe as patron are: Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 731; Jewett, *Romans*, 943; Cranfield, *Romans 9–16*, 783 and Dunn, *Romans 9–16*, 889.

¹⁷¹ Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 60.

¹⁷² Meeks notes that she was independent. Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 60. Although women were generally thought to be under the control of a male relative at all times, it seems that this may have been more tradition than actual fact and at times women could break out of this system. Cf. Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 23 and Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 57.

¹⁷³ Winter, *Roman Wives*, 195 and Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 33.

¹⁷⁴ Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 383.

¹⁷⁵ Winter, *Roman Wives*, 195; Osiek and Balch, *Families*, 33 and Bryan, *Preface to Romans*, 39.

¹⁷⁶ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 731.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Witherington and Hyatt, *Romans*, 383.

Some differences between the New Testament and LCC do emerge at this point. There is no evidence that a New Testament deacon would have acted as a school teacher, nor is there a parallel for deacons working in administrative-type positions. I suggest that both of these situations come about as a result of the greater length of time that LCC's diaconate has had to develop. Neither school teachers nor administrative positions such as those known in LCC today were issues during the time of the New Testament. Our differently developed society has left LCC with needs which are distinct from those of first-century Christians and so some aspects of the LCC diaconate will also be distinct. If the diaconate was developed in order to help the church meet its needs, and if the church has a need for some of its deacons to move beyond the local sphere, then this can still be viewed as consistent with the spirit of the New Testament diaconate. Even with these slight differences, LCC's diaconate is found to be consistent with the idea that deacons are local leaders.

A third point of comparison is the level of respect afforded to the office. The LCC office of deacon is one which carries dignity and respect. This is evident based on the fact that LCC maintains a deacons' roster, includes deacons as members of Synod, and continues to maintain a careful diaconal selection and training process. By creating the diaconate, LCC granted an extra level of dignity and respect to the various positions which make up the diaconate by giving them a legitimate status in the leadership and governance of the Synod. In the New Testament, it is also apparent that those who were deacons were respected and had dignity. In Phil 1:1 the overseers and deacons are included as part of the letter's opening, possibly in order to show these local leaders respect. In 1 Tim 3:8–13 Paul outlines in great detail the qualities that such people are to possess in order to be appointed to the office. It seems questionable whether he would have gone to such lengths for a position of no great consequence. Also, Rom 16:1–2 describes Phoebe in ways which suggest she was highly respected. Paul uses her position as deacon as one means of recommending her to the Christians at Rome. If this designation did not carry with it some kind of weight, it seems unlikely that he would have mentioned it. Also, Paul describes Phoebe as a patron, a position which would also have granted her great respect and honour in that culture. If Phoebe's role as deacon is somehow connected to her role as patron, this grants the position of deacon even greater respect and dignity according to Greco-Roman reckoning. While in different ways and for different reasons, it is clear

that in both the New Testament and LCC deacons hold positions of respect and dignity.

A fourth point of comparison is the relationship between the deacon and other leadership positions. In LCC the office of deacon is subordinate to the office of pastor and is under pastoral supervision. According to this model, unless there is an office of pastor there cannot be an office of deacon. There is a strikingly similar situation in the New Testament. In Phil 1:1, 1 Tim 3:1–13 and Acts 6:1–6 there are always two levels of leadership present and the deacon is subordinate to the primary leaders. In Rom 16:1–2 while no overseer is mentioned, it cannot be satisfactorily established that Phoebe is the primary leader of the Christian community at Cenchrea. Also, by definition, the *δῆκονος*, be that person a household servant, a messenger or a deacon, is working at the command of another. The New Testament and LCC are the same in their placement of the deacon in a secondary leadership position, under the supervision of a primary position.

A fifth point of comparison concerns the duties of the deacon in comparison with its supervisory position. In LCC all diaconal duties flow from the office of pastor; however, deacons are not eligible to preach or administer the sacraments as these two things are considered to be duties of the pastoral office alone. It is very difficult to make a detailed comparison between the New Testament and LCC on this point because the New Testament does not present any concrete evidence concerning the exact duties of the deacon. The Seven, in Acts 6:1–6, are presented as assisting in the distribution of aid for widows, but it is not at all apparent that this is the only function of the office as it began to develop. Also, Acts 6 serves primarily as a model for an assistant-type of position, not the final word on what such assistants were able to do. Additionally, Phoebe's role as patron may suggest that deacons used their wealth to provide things for the Christian community, but the extent to which her position as deacon is dependent upon her role as patron is in question. First Timothy 3 presents an even vaguer picture. While several qualifications of the deacon are mentioned, and while many try to discern diaconal duties based on these qualifications, I find this to be a somewhat futile task.

While comments on the exact duties of the New Testament deacon are nearly impossible to make with any certainty, a couple of important things can still be said. First of all, given that the deacon is always paired with another position whose title implies oversight, it can safely be said that these two positions were meant to be distinct. The differing qualifications listed in 1 Tim 3:1–13 also supports

some distinction between the positions. Whether they are meant to be completely distinct positions with no overlapping duties is uncertain. What this shows, however, is that LCC's distinction between the duties of its deacons and those of its pastors is paralleled in the New Testament distinction between overseers and deacons.

A sixth point of comparison concerns the qualifications for becoming a deacon. Lutheran Church—Canada requires that deacons undergo scholarly and practical training, be recommended to the office and also accept a call to serve before they are made deacons. A person's recommendation to the office of deacon is also contingent on his or her knowledge of theology, appropriate practical skills, Christian character and blameless lifestyle. While the New Testament speaks of no schooling for deacons there are some parallels for LCC's other requirements. In 1 Tim 3:8–13, Paul outlines several characteristics which deacons must possess. According to these verses, a deacon must be a person of firm faith. Lutheran Church—Canada is also concerned with the faith of their deacons. The concerns that deacons have knowledge of theology, possess Christian character and live a blameless lifestyle according to Christian principles are also all designed to get at the heart of an individual's faith.

First Timothy also speaks about the deacon's personal traits such as being dignified, able to properly manage his household, not being greedy for money, and not given to drunkenness. These give the deacon a positive reputation not just among the Christians he or she serves but also in the greater non-Christian community. This positive reputation of Christian leaders in turn gives Christianity itself a positive reputation. The fact that LCC requires their deacons to live a blameless lifestyle and also that they possess practical skills suited to the office are in keeping with these requirements of character in 1 Timothy.

One other parallel between 1 Timothy and LCC's process for diaconal selection can be made: 1 Timothy requires that deacons be tested before they can serve. While the exact nature of this test is unknown, a parallel can still be found in LCC. The deacons of LCC are required to undergo an extensive interview process and complete both academic and practical requirements to a satisfactory level. It is only after an individual passes these "tests" that they are eligible to receive a call and become a deacon. This demonstrates that LCC's process for screening those who wish to belong to the office of deacon is in keeping with the New Testament's requirements of firm faith, good character, and the passing of a test.

A final point of comparison between these two offices of deacon concerns gender. According to

LCC, the office of deacon may be filled by either a man or a woman. This is also the case in the New Testament. Based on the findings of this study, both 1 Tim 3:11 and Rom 16:1 include women as part of the diaconate and thus, LCC's inclusion of women as part of this office is consistent with the New Testament.

This comparison shows that the model which the New Testament presents for the office of deacon is paralleled by LCC's office of deacon. It is important to note, however, that these two offices are not identical. The office of deacon in LCC is much more developed than what we can determine about the office of deacon in the New Testament period and so things such as schooling, interview processes, and synodical membership are not addressed by the New Testament. Also, the cultural differences between the ancient Christians and those of modern day LCC is vast.

This less-than-complete picture should not be cause for alarm nor should it cripple the modern LCC diaconate. In many ways it is a blessing. The information which the New Testament does provide is enough from which to glean a general model for the modern church. It provides insight into structure; it suggests qualifications; and it provides some history. All of the things which are known provide an important foundation. The things which are not known provide important freedom. The modern LCC is two thousand years removed from first-century Christianity in development and oceans apart in culture. The lack of information on some topics allows LCC to shape its diaconate into something that meets the needs of the twenty-first century Canadian church and yet still follow the model left for it by its first-century brothers and sisters.

Part 3: Contributions of the Diaconate to LCC Today and in the Future

LCC is indebted to the deacons of its past and those who are actively serving today. Our deacons serve in a vast array of areas and these will be highlighted below. Before doing so, however, it is worth taking a brief glance at the kinds of activities the original Task Force suggested that deacons could and should participate in as congregational and school leaders.

Activities of Deacons in Lutheran Church—Canada

It was important for the original Task Force to consider which activities would be appropriate for deacons to participate in because without clarification, confusion may arise. For example, if a specific understanding of what duties a deacon is able to perform is not stated, some deacons may be given duties beyond what is intended for the office, and

others may be unnecessarily restricted. Also, unless a proper distinction between deacon and pastor is made, a confusion of roles may result which may lead to power struggles in a congregation and an atmosphere of conflict rather than Christian unity.

As previously discussed, LCC teaches that the office of deacon flows out of the office of pastor and is thus under the supervision of the local pastor. Despite this close connection between the offices and the fact that all activities of the deacon may also be carried out by the pastor, deacons may not assume all aspects of the pastoral office. The document *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures and Nomenclature* states,

Functions that are essentially exercises of the ministry of Word and sacrament should be performed by those who hold the office of the public ministry. Thus, preaching in the worship service, leading in public prayer, celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar, baptisms, wedding and funeral services should be carried out by those who hold the office of public ministry.¹⁷⁸

These functions of the pastoral office are not normally open to deacons; however, this same document goes on to note that in certain circumstances, deacons may fulfil some of the duties normally only performed by those in the pastoral office, so long as there are not other reasons why they should not assume such duties. It states:

However, in exceptional circumstances or in emergencies (as when a pastor is incapacitated), members of the auxiliary offices or other qualified individuals may temporarily be called upon to perform, under proper supervision, functions that are otherwise performed by the pastor and that are not for other reasons precluded (e.g., women teachers or deaconesses preaching in the public service).¹⁷⁹

It is important to note that this does not effectively create two classes of deacons. Male deacons who, in times of emergency, fulfil some of the duties normally assigned to the pastoral office are not qualified to do so because they are deacons. Rather, these men are qualified, just as any other layman

¹⁷⁸ CTCR of LCMS, *Ministry*, 35. This is a document of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS.

¹⁷⁹ CTCR of LCMS, *Ministry*, 35. Since LCC does not ordain women to the office of pastor, a female deacon should not assume any of the duties which are specifically assigned only to the pastoral office.

might be qualified, because they are well-versed in scripture and are leaders within the congregation.¹⁸⁰

Apart from these above-mentioned activities which are specific to the office of pastor alone, there are several other functions of the pastoral office which all deacons are eligible to perform. After a study of scripture and church history, the task force suggested five areas in which deacons may serve.¹⁸¹ The first area is described as an “office of love.” This is described as deacons “[spearheading] common efforts of one or more congregations to give concrete expression to the love that flows from faith.”¹⁸² The kinds of activities described here encompass various charitable works, social work and healthcare. Although this is primarily based on observations of the historical diaconate, the Task Force does link this to the Seven in Acts 6.¹⁸³

A second area where deacons may serve is in pastoral care. In this area, a female deacon might be better suited to serve some of the congregation’s women than would a male pastor, depending on situation and circumstance. This is one of the ways in which the women of the diaconate are invaluable. The Task Force document also states,

Bearers of the diaconal office may extend pastoral care in such a way that the unity and cohesion of the Church is promoted and the laity receive assistance to fulfil their calling as this has been described by St. Peter: ‘Always be prepared to make a defence to any one [*sic.*] who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence.’ (I Pet. 3:15 RSV).¹⁸⁴

Under this category, the task force also included the idea of female theologians contributing to scholarly research, writing, and teaching.

The third area of diaconal service is in the area of catechesis. This area is not meant to include instruction through preaching, but rather the work of Lutheran Teachers as they teach the Word of God in the classroom.¹⁸⁵ It also may encompass the activities

¹⁸⁰ CTCR of LCMS, *Ministry*, 37–38.

¹⁸¹ These are outlined in Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.76–77.

¹⁸² Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.76.

¹⁸³ Cf. Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.76.

¹⁸⁴ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.76.

¹⁸⁵ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.77.

of congregational workers as they teach in various non-preaching capacities within the congregation.¹⁸⁶

The final two areas where deacons may serve are in church administration and the position of church musician. No qualifications or restrictions are mentioned in the document in relation to these two areas.¹⁸⁷ These five areas of service provide many different avenues by which men and women of various gifts can serve their Lord under the title of “deacon.”

Generally speaking, these recommendations accurately reflect the kind of work carried out by deacons in LCC today. Given the breadth of work that deacons participate in, I think it is safe to say that no two deacons serve in exactly the same capacity anywhere in our church body. Our deacons work long hours alongside pastors and lay-people to do what needs to be done in order to further the gospel in the congregations and schools where they serve.

How do deacons serve? In a plethora of ways: mission trips (local, national, international), teaching in Nicaragua, leading youth and young adult retreats (congregational, district, synod), counselling, visiting, living the faith, encouraging parents, teaching all ages, running mission organizations, teaching (school), coaching sports teams, leading after-school clubs, training up future church workers from pre-school age, encouraging pastors, empowering volunteers, leading choirs, playing musical instruments for services, listening, praying, serving on district and synodical boards and committees, acting as delegates to conventions and being ready to perform the work that God has called them to do.

In the latest edition of our LCC Annual, there are ninety-five deacons listed.¹⁸⁸ By far the ABC District has the largest number of deacons who are actively serving congregations or schools. In the ABC District there are twelve congregational deacons and twenty school deacons. The Central District has two congregational deacons and none serving schools. The East District has four congregational deacons and four serving schools. Additionally, there are thirty-six more deacons across Canada who are candidates, some of whom are serving congregations or schools without official calls. Finally, there are fifteen emeritus deacons, most of whom are school teachers. The remaining four deacons are listed in the

annual without a category next to their name and so their current status is uncertain. As we have just concluded the post-secondary academic year, it is also worth noting that there are two diaconal students beginning congregational internships this summer and one additional Director of Parish Services candidate still awaiting a placement. We had no school deacons graduate this spring. We have a plethora of deacons ready, willing, and able to serve our Canadian church.

Images of Deacons

After considering the material both from the original Task Force and our deacons in active service, there are three images of “deacon” which I would like to leave you with. First is the deacon as a delegate of the leader. We see an example of this in Exod 13:18–26 where Jethro admonishes Moses to appoint men among the people to help him. Moses could not be the only one to whom the Israelites looked to for help and Godly guidance; Moses could not handle the pressure of the task alone. Therefore, Jethro advised him to appoint appropriate helpers so that Moses would not become overwhelmed with his task. Deacons serve such a purpose with the pastors with whom they serve. It is impossible in this day and age for pastors to both teach school and manage a congregation as they once did. They need school deacons to help them in the task. Often the pressures and expectations placed on a pastor of a busy congregation makes it difficult for him to also manage and attend to all the business of the congregation and its members. A congregational deacon can assist in teaching, visiting, organizing, equipping and leading as the pastor requires.

A second image of deacon which we have already examined is found in Acts 6:1–6. The Seven are appointed here to fulfil a need in the Christian community which the Apostles cannot meet as they are otherwise occupied. Nevertheless, the need must be met. The community, on the advice of the Apostles, appoints the Seven to fulfil this need for them. In the same way, deacons today assist in meeting the needs of their congregations and schools which may not otherwise be met. They assist the pastors and congregations in accomplishing the tasks that need to be done.

Finally, Exod 17:8–13 provides an image of deacon which perhaps embodies the heart of what the diaconate is. Here the Israelites are engaged in battle with the Amalekites. Moses is watching the battle from the top of a hill. While Moses’ hands are raised, the Israelites are ahead in the battle. As Moses gets tired and is no longer able to hold up his hands on his own, the Israelites begin to lose the battle. In order to assist, Aaron and Hur bring a stone for Moses to sit

¹⁸⁶ The exact words used are “the instruction of the baptized” and it specifically notes that Teachers and DCEs fulfill this role. Cf. Winger et al., “Ecclesiastical Administration,” G.79.

¹⁸⁷ Winger et al., “Scriptural, Dogmatic, and Historical Perspectives,” G.77.

¹⁸⁸ February, 2014, electronic edition.

on and each of them holds up one of Moses' hands. Because of their assistance, the Israelites defeat the Amalekites. In the same way, we can think of deacons as "holding up the hands" of the pastors that they serve with. For a time the pastor may be able to function alone. After a while, however, when the proverbial battles that are fought daily by pastors for the souls of the lost and for the spiritual health of those for whom they are responsible grow difficult, a deacon or deacons can step in to lighten the load and hold up the hands of those with whom they serve that the Gospel may prevail and the battle may be won.

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Opening Service Friday, June 6 Sermon
Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee
“COME TO HIM WHO ANSWERS PRAYER”
Acts 1:1-2,12-26

In Christ, ascended and ruling, beloved friends!
 It happened a week ago yesterday, although you may have missed it if your church didn't have a special service. The 40th day of Easter came and went. That is when the Risen Jesus went back to heaven as His men looked on.

You don't read that His followers cried that day. Isn't that odd? I've watched people cry at all sorts of partings; at funerals, retirement parties, or when somebody you really care about is moving far away. It's hard to imagine any farewell as fateful as that Ascension Day when Jesus WAS TAKEN UP BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES, AND A CLOUD HID HIM FROM THEIR SIGHT. Still, the believers did not seem overcome by sadness.

Here may be part of the reason: When you read the very start of Acts, chapter 1, Luke declares: IN MY FORMER BOOK – he means the one we call “The Gospel according to St. Luke” – I WROTE ABOUT ALL THAT JESUS BEGAN TO DO AND TO TEACH UNTIL THE DAY HE WAS TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN. Get it? Even though Jesus was ascending and was literally out of sight, He was not finished doing and teaching. Ascension's great Lord keeps doing and teaching! That's the message of the Book of Acts. It is a powerful message for God's people everywhere in the world at this moment. Tonight as we mark the beginning of our tenth Synodical convention, we shall spend a few moments meditating on that.

I. Jesus Christ has never stopped working among people like you and me who trust in Him. The Ascension Day story is at the beginning of the book we've come to call “The Acts of the Apostles.” In our reading just now you heard the roster of the apostles who were present right after Our Lord returned to heaven. Interesting! Of all the apostles, not many had their activity recorded in this book we call “the Acts of the Apostles.” Even prominent ones who do get reported on – I'm thinking of guys like Peter and John – don't have the full record of their ministry written down. I could understand it very well if somebody objected that “Acts of the Apostles” isn't the best title for this particular book of Scripture.

That's no huge problem. With all due respect, the apostles are not the big stars taking centre stage in the early days of the Holy Christian Church. That would have been fine with them; they didn't want to be! Jesus Himself was the big Star!

“來到聽禱告的神面前”（使徒行傳1:1-2, 12-26）

教會

大會開幕崇拜2014年6月6日

玫瑰聖母大教堂, Vancouver, British Columbia
 在基督裡, 親愛的朋友們!

一個星期以前, 如果你的教會沒有一個特殊的崇拜, 你可能已經錯過了。復活節的第40天來了又走了。也就是說, 復活的耶穌在祂門徒面前已回到天上。

你看不到祂的門徒的那一天哭了, 是不是很奇怪? 我看過人在不同的分離都有哭: 在葬禮上, 退休時, 或在你關心的人要遷居到一個遙遠的地方。很難想像另外一個告別比耶穌升天更沉重, 有一朵雲彩把耶穌從他們的視線帶走。儘管如此, 信徒似乎沒有太悲傷。

在這裡, 可見部分原因: 當你讀到使徒行傳第1章一開始, “我已經作了前書” – 意思是 – 我們稱之為“路加的福音” – 論到耶穌開頭一切所行所教訓的, 直到祂升天的一日。明白了嗎? 儘管耶穌被提升, 是從人們的視線中好像是消失了, 祂做的和教的是沒有完成。這是使徒行傳的訊息。正是一個強有力的信息傳給神在世界各地的子民。今晚我們慶祝第十教會大會的開始, 我們將用少許時間思考這一點。

一, 耶穌從來沒有停止在信靠祂在你我中間的工作。升天日的故事是“使徒行傳”的開始。在我們剛閱讀的經文, 我們讀了眼見主升天使徒名冊。有趣的是: 所有的使徒, 沒有幾個是把他們的活動記錄在這書中。即使突出的彼得和約翰 – 也沒有完整把他們的事工寫下來。要是有人反對說, “使徒行傳”不是這卷特別的書最好的標題, 我也能理解。

這不是一個大問題。恕我直言, 這一些使徒不是早期聖基督教會的中心。他們也沒有做明星的希望! 耶穌自己才是教會的大明星!” 我已經作了前書... 論到耶穌開頭一切所行所教訓的... 以後被接上升的日子為止...,”

IN MY FORMER BOOK ... I WROTE ABOUT ALL THAT JESUS BEGAN TO DO AND TO TEACH UNTIL THE DAY HE WAS TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN, Luke had said. I repeat. The things Jesus did and taught when He walked around during His 33 years on earth were only the beginning of what He did and taught. Even after His Ascension, Jesus Christ continued to be the great Doer and the great Teacher of His people.

Before He died, Jesus said it would be just this way: I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU AS ORPHANS; I WILL COME TO YOU, He promised. HE WHO LOVES ME WILL BE LOVED BY MY FATHER, AND I, TOO, WILL LOVE HIM AND SHOW MYSELF TO HIM. The Ascended Christ still does this! He lets people see and know that He has not stopped working. He shows Himself to us!

II. This is not a vague, pie-in-the-sky promise. Almost immediately after He was taken to heaven, the ascended Jesus kept doing and teaching among His people. He had told His men not to begin their public work of preaching and witnessing right away. He instructed them to wait and to pray. They needed to wait until the right moment when God would open a door of opportunity to them. They needed to wait until the Holy Spirit was poured out in His fullness to equip them for their work.

In the meantime, THEY ALL JOINED TOGETHER CONSTANTLY IN PRAYER. The task of the Holy Christian Church is not just to get out there and “do” and “produce” the way we think of producing. A big part of the Church’s calling is also to worship and listen. In fact, the Holy Christian Church always needs to worship and listen before it can ever do much of anything. The Holy Christian Church needs to hear and listen to the message of Jesus, Who died for you and was raised again. The Church needs to hear and listen to the message of how you approach God, confessing the sins and failures of your life without making excuses, and how you throw yourself on His mercy and trust Him to pardon you for no other reason than the blood of His Son shed in your place. The Holy Christian Church needs to hear and understand the truth of what’s wrong in the world, and about how to take the cure – Christ! – to people who need Him as you do. The Christian Church must always hear before it can speak, must always receive before it can give anything away, must always be touched by God before it can go out and touch other people for Him.

路加說。我再說一遍。耶穌在地上33年所做的和所教導的，僅僅是個開始。即使在祂升天以後，耶穌基督仍然是偉大作事和做祂人民偉大的教師

在祂被釘以前，耶穌這樣說：“我不撇下你們為孤兒，我必到你們這裡來，”祂作了承諾。“愛我的必蒙我父愛他，我也要愛他，並且要向他顯現。”升天的基督現在還是不停的作工！祂也要人看到和知道。祂要顯示自己讓我們看見！

二。這不是一個模糊的夢想或成空的承諾。雖然祂立刻就升天了，耶穌繼續作工和教導祂的門徒。祂告訴祂的門徒不要立刻開始講道和作公開的見證。祂指引他們要等待和禱告。他們需要等到合適的時機，讓上帝為他們大開機會的門。他們需要等聖靈豐盛的澆灌，使他們有能力作工。

在此期間，他們一齊聚集禱告不止。聖基督教會的工作不單是作為與生產。教會大部分的工作是崇拜和聆聽。其實在作工以前，教會需要崇拜和聆聽。我們需要聽為我們受死和升天的主的訊息。我們需要聽怎樣親近主，怎樣認罪和面對自己的失敗，和如何投入祂的憐憫之下，因耶穌寶血的原故祂已饒恕了我們。教會需要聆聽和明白世界問題的真像，和如何可以將基督這有醫治能力的訊息帶到需要祂的人。需要聽，才可有分享，需要領受，才可有施出，需要被主撫摸，才可以代祂撫摸別人。

During that early period of praying and waiting, the ascended Jesus guided His people through a very down-to-earth piece of work. There was a vacancy in their midst. The apostles no longer numbered 12, but only 11. Judas Iscariot had betrayed Jesus and then destroyed himself. Now the church needed to call a replacement to fill that vacancy.

Jesus guided the process in a marvelous way. First of all, St. Peter got up and quoted words from the Bible to explain how God foretold Judas' downfall, and how God wanted them to find a servant to take Judas' place. After the assembly pondered those Bible words, Peter laid out qualifications for an apostle. It had to be a man who had seen the Risen Lord as an eyewitness. It has to be one who had personally watched Christ's whole ministry. Then people did what church members do nowadays when they hear the qualifications for, say, a pastor in a local congregation. They scoured their memory. They thought about candidates they knew who were sound and would fit the description. Two nominations came in, we're told.

It was a very mundane process. But it was not to be a totally human process. That's why the church prayed. They could identify good candidates, but only God knew the heart of each man. They could nominate, but only God knew which candidate He wanted. The church trusted God to come and take over their very humble methods. It's possible they wrote the names on little wooden markers and dropped them in a bowl. One interpreter explained that perhaps they spun the bowl, and that the marker which flew out bore the name of the candidate now declared "elected."

I'm so glad we have this record in Acts, chapter 1. Nowadays we have our own human methods we call elections. In church elections we generally place names on a list based on people using their memory and judgment to nominate suitable candidates. Then we pray to God. We ask Him to take over our humble ways and to work His will through our limitations. God could have sent a lightning bolt from heaven to pick a successor to Judas. He could have hung a loudspeaker on some cloud and broadcast His choice down to the earth. But God chose not to handle it in that sensational way. God chose to work through a very humble, human process.

在祈禱和等待的初時，升了天的耶穌以一個非常實際的例子，指導祂的子民。在次徒中有一空缺。自加略人猶大出賣了耶穌，然後自殺。使徒再沒有12個，只有11。現在，教會需要調用一人填補這空缺。

耶穌用一個奇妙的方式引導這過程。首先，聖彼得站起來，引用了聖經裡的話來解釋神如何預言猶大跌倒，以及神如何另找一個僕人填上猶大之位。當大家聽了聖經的話，彼得更指出一個使徒的資格。這要是一個親眼見過復活的主的證人。這人必須是一個誰曾親眼看到基督的一生的事奉。教會的成員與現在的信徒一樣，當他們聽到教會需要牧師的，他們搜遍腦袋要找一個合適的人選。我們知道有二位提名。

這是一個非常平凡的過程。但它不是一個完全人為的過程。教會禱告就是為這原因。他們可找出好的候選人，但只有上帝知道每個人的心。人們可以提名，但只有上帝知道祂想要哪一位。教會相信神要用非常平凡的方法。他們可能把名字寫小木牌上，放在一個碗裡。一個解經家說，也許他們轉這碗，直到一個木牌飛出，那候選人就是“當選”。

使徒行傳有這樣的記錄我是很高興。如今，我們有我們的選舉的方法。在教堂的選舉，我們一般憑記憶力和判斷力，提名合適人選列在名單上。然後，我們向上帝祈禱。我們請祂掌管我們謙卑的方式，並用我們有限的過程表出祂的旨意。上帝可以用閃電從天上指定繼任猶大的人。祂可以用大聲音播出他的選擇。但上帝選擇不用轟動的方式。神揀選了一個平凡的，人為的過程。

The choice fell on Matthias. He was duly added to the roster of the apostles. There's no place in Scripture ever giving you the impression that somehow Matthias' choice was suspect, that somehow Matthias was not quite a full apostle because the process of choosing him had such a humble, human side about it. People listening to Holy Scripture ... people using their sanctified judgment to suggest candidates ... people begging God to work blessing through their humble little process ... that was the ascended Christ guiding and doing things in His Church.

Know something wonderful? Even the guy who did not get elected – his name was Joseph Barsabbas – was no “loser.” True, he didn't become an apostle. But he had a fruitful life, a faithful witness. If our sources are accurate, he ended up being a chief pastor in a Greek city. He, too, seemed glad to accept the way the ascended Jesus had guided the whole thing. He lived out that heartwarming old saying,

It takes more grace than I can tell
To play the “second fiddle” well!

III. This record of the early days after Our Lord's Ascension is marvelous stuff for you and me to hear and mull over as we begin the Synod's tenth convention here in Vancouver. At first blush it may sound like mere history. In truth, it is fuel to help you rejoice and take comfort. The Ascended Christ is working. Even when your eyes say they cannot see it, He's working! Even when appearances seem totally to the contrary, He's working! He doesn't just work in toe-tingling stuff like miracles, lightning bolts, and voices booming from the sky. He works through the lowliest things, like that first apostolic call meeting in the upper room reported here. The ascended Christ even worked through things that looked small and seemed like failures. The tiny little groups of people to whom St. Paul preached sometimes, those occasions when people resisted the Good News of Jesus and shut out that message altogether, the way it went in the city of Athens; Jesus was working and doing and sowing seeds in those moments, too.

馬蒂亞斯被選中。祂加入到使徒的行列。聖經中沒有說及馬蒂亞斯的選擇是有嫌疑，或馬蒂亞斯是不太完美的使徒，因為祂選擇的過程平凡和是人為的。人聽聖經的話... 使用他們成聖的判斷作出選擇... 人乞求上帝祝福他們平凡的程序... 那是升天的基督的指導和在他教會中的作為。

你知道麼？甚至沒得選的這人 – 猶士都的約瑟, 巴撒巴 – 也不是“失敗者”。他雖然沒成為一個使徒。但他有一個美好的人生，一個忠實的見證。如果我們的認息來源是準確的，他最後成了一希臘城市的首席牧師。他很樂意接受升天耶穌的引導方式。他活出感人的一句話，認第二（認輸）是需要更大的恩典！

三。當我們在溫哥華開始第十屆區會會議，這初期教會的記錄是值我們聽取和仔細思考。第一眼看來像單純的歷史。事實上，它是幫助你欣喜和安慰的能力。升天的基督正在作工。當你看不見時，祂還在工作！祂不只是用不同樣的奇蹟，閃電，和聲音從天上來。祂也用最平凡的東西，如這裡所述說，使徒第一次的會議。升天的基督，甚至用看起來很小的事，似乎是失敗的事也不浪費。有時聖保羅向小數的講道，那些人抵擋耶穌的福音，或完全不聽，像在雅典城那時；耶穌仍要作工，與播種。

Before He ascended, Jesus promised, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS TO THE VERY END OF THE WORLD. Another time He vowed, WHERE TWO OR THREE COME TOGETHER IN MY NAME, I AM RIGHT THERE WITH THEM. Jesus Christ's presence is built on those promises. It is not built on your seeing, your measuring, or your ideas about how your life and church life have to look in order for you to believe He is really present. His presence is built on His promises. And when your eyes and my ideas and our methods of measuring things get in the way, the words of the Bible are right on target, TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO MAKE IT OBEDIENT TO CHRIST

So sing this night, dear friends! Pray! Teach! Baptize! Guide children! Tell of your Christ! Do it because of His promise, no matter what your eyes say is happening ... or isn't happening. Do it because you know the Ascended Lord Jesus is still the great Doer and Teacher among His people. He is the Source of all our joy! He's your reason to keep on hoping! He's the Energy that moves you forward! He's the Forgiver and Restorer, Who died to cover your sins and lifts you up again with His Word of pardon! He is not just a bygone teacher whose dusty ideas we remember to try to motivate ourselves. He is the Life of His people. If He were not there, we'd have no joy, no hope, no energy, no restoration, nothing at all deserving to be called "life." But you and I this night have every one of those things, because you and I have Him. Now there's a confidence to take with you into the talking, listening and learning we shall do during these convention days. There's something to really celebrate, not just at a glorious festival service like this one, but every day ... and all the time. Amen.

Robert Bugbee, President
Lutheran Church-Canada

升天以前，耶穌曾應許，”我就常與你們同在，直到世界的末了。”還有一次祂應允，”有兩三個人奉我的名聚會，那裡就有我在他們中間。”耶穌基督的同在是建立在這些承諾之上。耶穌的同在不是建立在你的眼中，也不在乎你的猜測，或你對金命和教會的想法而決定祂的同在。祂的同在是建立在祂的應許之上。而當你的眼睛和我的想法和我們的猜測不足的時候，聖經的話是正確的，”又將人所有的心意奪回，使他都順服基督。”

所以親愛的朋友們，今夜要唱詩！祈禱！教導！施洗！引導小朋友！向人述說你的基督！做到這一點，因為祂的應許比你的眼睛看到的更可靠。這樣做是因為你們知道升了天的主耶穌仍然是偉大的作家和教導祂子民的好老師。祂是我們一切喜樂的泉源！祂是你繼續希望的理由！祂是你前進的能力！因祂為你受死，使你的罪得赦免，並再次用祂赦免的話高舉你！祂不是一個過去的老師，只有沒用的想法，試圖激勵我們自己。祂是祂人民的生命。

要是祂不在，我們就沒有喜樂，沒有希望，沒有能力，沒有重生，沒有“生命”。但是你和我今夜這一些都有了，因為你和我擁有耶穌基督。

現在你有一個信心，讓你在這幾天談話，傾聽和學習，主是與我們同在。不單在這一個大日子慶祝，就是每一天... 天天都是慶祝的時候。阿們。

Robert Bugbee, President

Lutheran Church-Canada

加拿大路德會主席

Saturday, June 7, 2014 Sermon
Rev. Paul Roggow
“Groaning Together in the Spirit”
Romans 8:12-17; 22-27

Grace, the undeserved and unending love, and peace, a wholeness, a shalom to you from God our Father and the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, through whose Spirit we groan together. Amen. The sermon text for today is from our Scripture reading, the very promises of God, particularly Romans 8:22-23, which reads:

“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.” Will you pray with me please? Let the words of my mouth and the thoughts of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

I really had no choice as to which text I was to preach for this morning of Pentecost Eve. Sure, there were three fine options from Exodus 19, Romans 8, and John 14. But after standing by my wife’s side just a few weeks ago for the birth of our daughter, Lucia Ella, you can see that I really had no choice on which text I was to preach. It had to be the groaning of Romans 8:22 and following.

Yet the groaning during the labour and delivery of our daughter and all of the other children born on the north end of the third floor of Richmond General Hospital on March 14 wasn’t so much inward as St. Paul describes in Romans 8:23. It was a groaning that was outward, outlandish, and very much out loud.

Just as I’m sure the groaning was great at the same end of the floor of the hospital with those patients in pain in palliative care. Or the groaning of a parent whose child is ill and undergoing treatments. The groaning of a loved one who longs to be married but fears they are past their prime. The groaning of high school grads or college and university students fumbling with their future. The groaning of countries, communities, peoples, police officers, and soldiers ravaged by war.

The groaning of a young couple mourning a miscarriage or begging the Lord to spare their prematurely grown children. The groaning of a father and a mother concerned about the welfare and life decisions of their adult children. The groaning of a child whose parent has died. The groaning of congregations divided by dissent. The groaning of a pastor or church worker and their families who don’t know how much more they can endure at their present Call.

The groaning of men and women attacked by alcohol, done in by drugs, and punctured by pornography. The groaning of a planet that can prevent pregnancy or can choose to discard their babies. The groaning of the elderly, the disabled, and those who care for them longing for a healthier, better day. And the groaning of families and friendships that seem forever fractured.

We are, all together, groaning—groaning since our exodus from Eden. Paul writes in Romans 8:23, “We ourselves,

who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

Our Lord hears our groaning. He knows. Exodus 2:23-25 says, “During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.”

And our Lord’s answer, his solution for our groaning is to groan with us, to groan for us, and to groan within us. Jesus groans, “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”

He groans, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing.” “And about the ninth hour Jesus [groaned,] cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And arisen and alive Christ groans, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Our Lord, His Spirit groans within us calling out, “Abba, Father!” We are baptized with the firstfruits of the Spirit. “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.” You are forgiven. God’s Spirit dwells in you, groans within you, and teaches you to pray.

Romans 8:26 promises us this Pentecost Eve, “We do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.” With God’s Word, God’s promises we pray, we groan together in the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5 declares, “For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing, is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.” We groan together in the Spirit. Before the Lord’s Supper we groan, we confess “I eagerly expect the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.” Before our meals we groan, we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest and let thy gifts to us be blessed.” And until that day of our Saviour’s return when he raises all of the dead, restores their bodies, reunites them with their souls, and together with us and all who are in Christ, perfects and glorifies us to be with Him forever—until that Day, we, as in the pains of childbirth, groan together in the Spirit with the words of Revelation 22, “Maranatha—come quickly, Lord Jesus.”

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sunday, June 8 Sermon
Rev. Dr. Gerald Krispin
“The Valley of Dry Bones”
Ezekiel 37

37 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; ^[a] it was full of bones.² And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.³ And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.”⁴ Then he said to me, “Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath^[b] to enter you, and you shall live.⁶ And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling,^[c] and the bones came together, bone to its bone.⁸ And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.”¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’¹² Therefore prophesy, and say to them, thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.¹³ And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.¹⁴ And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.”

And behold, they were very dry.

Some of you may remember images of the killing fields of Cambodia in the rule of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge: before us were images of a field of human remains, bleached bones reflecting the unbridled blood-lust of a dictatorship that cared nothing for human life. I vividly recall television images of the heaps of skulls of what were once human beings, some who had died as children, others as adults; all that remained of the hopes and dreams of each individual were the hollow cavities that once held the future of Cambodia; dry bones of more than 3 million people.

This was a graphic realization of the 18th century theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher’s contention that when human beings seek to achieve true humanity without reference to God, they end up as brute beasts for whom survival of the fittest is the over-riding directive. Humanity, without Divinity, leads to Brutality. Schleiermacher knew this long before Pol Pot, Mao Tse-Dung, Stalin, or Hitler. He knew it

because he knew scripture and its revelation that a fallen humanity is capable of horrific acts aided by technology that lets us carry them out in reckless abandon.

Ezekiel is placed into the midst of a scene where swords and spears had done their work. The birds and sun had completed the task. All that remained of a once vibrant and vital people were their skeletal remains. Here were the victims of the foreign policy of another power that had no regard for the value of each human being: as with the Khmer Rouge, the Babylonians had thought nothing of annihilating a whole people. Certainly some had been granted life in exile, Ezekiel among them; also, some had managed to flee the death and destruction that the Babylonians were threatening to inflict.

But not all were so lucky: Ezekiel stands in the midst of those whose “luck” had run out; their remains were a testimonial that the hopes and dreams of individuals and nations can come to a sudden and ignominious end. What more can be said in the face of so much death? Ezekiel shares his observation

about the bones before him: behold, they were very dry.

This observation is now drawn into a question that God asks of Ezekiel: “Son of man, can these bones live?” I think this a question that would have been very easy for any of us to answer with a resounding NO. These bones were very dry; there was no place in which life could be located. But then, it is God asking the question, and instead of a resounding NO, Ezekiel answers with a timid: “Lord, you know.” For Ezekiel knew that with him was the God who had formed Adam from the dust of the earth and had breathed life into him. And who knows what God could do with such a mass of dry bones?

And indeed, Ezekiel is called upon to become the agent of God to restore dry bones to life, by the same means that God has always created life: his Word. “Prophesy.” Preach! To the dead, to the dry bones, even though there are no ears, no eyes, no mind, no heart; though there is no capacity to reflect or respond by any of the recipients of this preaching, Ezekiel is told: “Prophesy.” And Ezekiel does. He speaks the words that God has given him to say, words that take the dry and lifeless remnants before him and restores them to the semblance of what they once were . . . but only a semblance. There was no breath in them.

Clearly people are more than just flesh and blood. This resurrection is more than just a recovered human body. Life from God needs to be infused into each of these newly created forms by further preaching. And so Ezekiel is told to speak once more: “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Lord God says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.’

Only such preaching, only words given by God, to be spoken by the one ordained to speak God’s words, brings life. Ezekiel spoke; the spirit moved. “And they lived and stood an exceedingly great army.”

And here, this morning, is part of that army in this very room. For each of us was once as those dry bones; we were all at one point dead in our trespasses and sins. We may have been, at one point, among those people who felt themselves cut off by sin from God and life itself; people who believed themselves beyond hope and redemption. For the wages of sin is death, and even before it comes, death casts a pall over all of life. And so people, we among them, plagued by our trespasses and sin, cry out: “we have been cut off; cut off from life; cut off from God.” Along with St. Paul we lament, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

Well, here in our text, Ezekiel prophesies of the hope of new life; and immediately after his confession St. Paul proclaims: “thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” For Christ has sent the Spirit, the Comforter, the “Lord and giver of life.” Such is the promise of Pentecost which our text foreshadows and which this day celebrates as being fulfilled.

And so we turn to Peter in his Pentecost sermon!! There were not exactly dry bones in front of him, but here was the Jewish diaspora!!! In some ways, Peter stands among the kind of people to whom Ezekiel preached; God tells him: “these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’ Therefore prophesy, and say to them, O my people. . . . I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.” With Pentecost, it is done.

Now, I would venture to say that there are some pastors here this morning who have seen themselves standing amid dry bones, among people who cry out that “our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost.” For such is our lot as we live our daily lives, as we age, as we live in a world of sin, death, and damnation. And we may wonder looking about us at our congregations: “Can these people, can this church live?” But in keeping with our calling we begin to speak confidently. We speak as men of God who have been given the promise: “My word will not

return empty but will accomplish that for which it has been sent.” And we behold what this word does to a people who had been consumed by the world, the flesh and the devil: God’s words, coming from our lips, begin this transformation: sinews, muscle, skin . . . and finally, faith begotten of hearing, brings with it new life from God!! For such is the work of God’s spirit working through the word. So we also confess in the AC 5:

“That we may obtain this faith, the office of preaching the gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel.” Faith comes through hearing; and hearing through the word of Christ!”

As I was writing this sermon, I was reminded of a translation I once began on a Sermon by Luther from 1529. It struck me as particularly significant, as Luther here expounds upon the Office of Preaching, i.e. the Predigtamt.” Happily, someone else’s translation happened to appear in a new addition to Luther’s works, volume 69. In his **Sermon for Easter Tuesday Morning, John 20:19-23 Wittenberg March 30, 1529**, Luther states:

This is the most glorious part, that to the apostles and their successors He not only gives power and authority to preach, and calls and send them to exercise the Office of the Keys in His kingdom (which is the right and ordinary manner to carry out the office of preaching), but he also sends them in every way as He was sent from the Father; and He places the power and the work of His resurrection into the mouth of the apostles and of all preachers who have the office and the Word;....

It is a divine, Christian, salutary Office by which the people should be served for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. For this the apostles and ministers of the Word are placed in office, to deliver the people from sin to righteousness, from death to eternal life, from the kingdom of the devil to the kingdom of God, from damnation to blessedness. ... This treasure, however,

Christ won through his suffering, death, and resurrection; and he placed the Word of this treasure in the mouth of the apostles and preachers. It is faith that grasps the Word, and the heart is the little chest in which this treasure encloses itself thorough the hearing of the Word and through the power of the Holy Spirit....

Now this is our text, one that we should esteem as glorious and carefully note. For from it we hear what the office of preaching is: namely, an office of the Holy Spirit.

Such is Pentecost: the speaking of the word, the creation of faith, the birth of the Church, and the establishment of certain location of all of Christ’s gifts in the office of preaching and administering of the sacraments. Here dry bones are revitalized into living human beings; here those dead in trespasses and sins are restored to life; and here we are assured that what God spoke through Ezekiel truly applies to each of us: *I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. 14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD. He has done it! AMEN*

Rev. Dr. David Altus
President Lutheran Church of Australia
Transcribed from his greetings to the convention on Monday, 9 June

Grace and peace to all of you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ this morning. It has been my great privilege to be here with you in these days and our time with you has been a wonderful gift from God. And now it is a privilege to give something back to you before we leave and what better gift than to share the word of God together.

Coming from the other side of the world, I couldn't go past the first section of the gospel which Paul read to you this morning from John 3:16-17. "For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him." This is God's word for all of us and the world this morning.

Imagine what this convention would have been like if, when you registered on Friday or Saturday morning, at that very moment, you suddenly knew everything about each other. And I mean everything. If every thought, word, action, motive behind them for your entire lives was suddenly made conscious to each other. President Bugbee would know what you really thought about him and you would know what he really thought about you. I would know what you really thought about Australians and you would know all about me. If we knew everything about each other, how would this convention have panned out? Would it have been the shortest in LCC history? Would we have so happily got on the bus for Vancouver for worship on Friday evening, or would we have caught the first Greyhound back home. What would we have done with such intimate knowledge about each other? The look on your faces is much the same as on Australian faces when I began a sermon at our general convention about a year ago on a Monday morning when I was asked to preach. The look of guilt is universal. It looks the same on every face regardless of race. The truth is, we couldn't handle that kind of intimacy about each other. We couldn't handle it if we really knew ourselves as God does, let alone knew each other as God does. To know so much about each other would probably destroy our relationships with each other and would be the death of the church and the synod. But not with God. Not with God.

You see, our faith says that for those who are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. The verses of our text today said that in Him, we are not condemned. We have life. Our faith says that what God did with everything He knows about us that would condemn us before Him, that would destroy our relationship with Him, and so often threatens to with each other, is what God embodied that in one person. And that is in the person of His Son. God wrapped up everything that is condemnable, everything that deserves death in us and between us and He embodied it in Jesus. He allowed it to be crucified, nailed to a cross, buried in a tomb, taken away from us. In exchange, He gives us the life, the life that Jesus entered when He walked from the tomb. That's what our baptism enables us to say and to dare to believe about our lives before God and our lives together as His church. Not death. Not condemnation. Life. Eternal life with God which begins now in His people who have already crossed or passed over from death into life because of Him. "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." I have 3 sons. I couldn't dream of giving any one of them away to anybody. God had one. A Son He loved deeply, who was His own essence in being, but a Son whom He willingly gave up for us all. That we might know the life that He and His Son and His Spirit share and live in eternally. "God so loved the world." I don't know about you, but I find it hard to love the world. It's hard enough to love the few people that God places in my life to look after and to love properly for Him let alone everyone else. Especially those who don't like me. Those who won't like me. Those I simply don't like. Jesus says God does. He loves the world that looks to Him and the world that doesn't. The world that worships Him and the world that worships idols. The world that has no room for Him. He loves the rich as well as the poor; those who suffer, and strangely, those who cause them to suffer, even while He hates their sin. I don't understand that kind of love. I certainly don't have the capacity for it in myself. I'm often too busy condemning the world instead of working with Christ to save it. Jesus reminds us in these verses that if anyone is condemned by God it is because they condemn themselves, by rejection the saving love and help that He himself gives to them.

“God so loved the world.” Remember that when you feel unlovable. On those days when you think, “I don’t deserve to be called a Christian let alone a pastor, a deacon, or a president.” God so loved me that He sent His Son. If I dare to believe Him, I won’t perish, but I already have eternal life. The world includes you. That might sound obvious, but don’t forget that. And when you meet someone who seems unlovable to you, remember God so loved them too. And although your arms might not be big enough to embrace them, His are and so is His heart. The cross is a constant reminder that God so loved the world.

In the next chapter of John’s gospel, we come across a lady who is “Exhibit A” of that fact. She discovered firsthand how big the arms and the heart of God are. She was going about her daily business when she came across a man who knew everything about her. Every last intimate detail. He knew she had been married 5 times. He knew she was living together with another man. He knew she wasn’t Lutheran. But what did He do with what He knew? He didn’t condemn her, did He? He offered her life. Life-giving water. He saw the heart past her behavior and He looked at her thirst behind that behavior. And He met it with love. Unconditional love and forgiveness. A different kind of love came into her life that day that didn’t condemn her, but in fact, saved her. What did she do with that love that came into her life that day? Now, I know what I would not do if I met someone who knew all about me. I wouldn’t tell you who they were. Because they might tell you about me. But she went and told everybody in her world about Him. Him who knew all about her, but loved her anyway. God knew all about that woman. We don’t even know her name. But God sent His son into her world that day not to condemn her, but to save her. She was living proof that God so loved the world. And her response was to go and tell her world all about Him. This same God knows all about the Lutheran Church—Canada and everyone in this room and everyone in the congregations where you come from. He knows all about the Lutheran Church of Australia and everyone where I come from.

The truth is, we don’t know ourselves very well. We don’t know each other as well as we like to think we do. We don’t know each other’s intimate sins and secrets and probably just as well. But we do, together know the mind and heart of God. The heart and mind of God that we read and see most clearly in

John 3:16. The God who so loved the world that He gave us His son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. God so loved the world that He gave us His Son. And God so loves the world that He sends us to that world with the message about His Son.

When I go back home on Wednesday night, I have been given a parcel to take with me. Inside this parcel is a symbol of love, and with that symbol of love comes a wonderful message and story. A couple of weeks ago in our local church in Adelaide, a young girl came up to me and she said, “Are you going to Canada?” I said, “Yes.” She said, “Will you be seeing pastor Solie?” And I said, “Yes.” She said, “Well, we were visiting them in the winter. We had just been married and my husband lost his wedding ring in the snow as we were playing in his front yard in Regina. His wife was gardening once the snow had thawed in Spring and she found the ring in the dirt in the garden. Can you bring it back to us? Now he doesn’t know this and you’re not going to tell him, are you? So keep this secret for a few weeks.” So this is my wife’s task and mine and we feel a bit nervous about it, as if we’re going to lose it again. So don’t let me leave it on the lectern, please! But we are entrusted with this symbol of love and the message that’s contained in this symbol. And to take this back to the other side of the world to this man who doesn’t yet know that it still exists. You are about to go back to your words. Your hometowns. Your congregations. Your communities. But God doesn’t limit you to that. I’m about to go back to Adelaide, Australia, but God doesn’t limit me to that. But each of us is entrusted by that symbol of love that He has given us and that is this one. The cross. And the story about it. The story of His dying and unconditional love. It’s not just for us in the LCC and LCA, but His love for the whole world.

We are meant to take this symbol and what it means, what it contains, and the story about it. The story of Jesus with us wherever we go. Whether that’s locally or abroad and be prepared to share of it with those who haven’t yet heard of it. Who don’t yet know about it or have forgotten that it exists. Doing that isn’t easy. It’s particularly not easy in places like this. And I’m really glad that you met in a university with students coming and going. That’s a pretty gutsy move. I don’t know if our church would have done that. But I reckon that it’s a great statement and a witness to the people who have been coming and

going here in recent days. But on a daily basis, it's not that easy and I've been talking to Paula about that last night at tea. To share the good news of Jesus when not everyone wants to know about it or hear about it and a lot of people simply haven't heard at all. Really not up to it, are we? We can't convince anybody. And so we "Come to Him who answers prayer." We pray for forgiveness. We are more ready to condemn the world than work with Christ to save it with His gospel. We already have that forgiveness. We pray for the world, not against it. We pray for peace so that the gospel can go out unhindered, as Timothy encourages us to do. We pray for His help to love the world, even as Christ did, even the hard people. We pray for workers. We pray for the harvest. We pray that God would do what only He can do in the hearts of people in the power of the spirit that He gave us at Pentecost. We pray that He would use us, as imperfect and unworthy as we may feel, to carry this symbol of love

and its message to everybody who will listen. So God knows. And He knows that we know that He knows all about us and His world, but we know that he doesn't condemn. John 3:16-17 remind us of that loudly and clearly. He didn't send His son into the world and our lives to condemn us, but to save us and to see the world through Him. God knows, but He loves us. He loves us to death. And I've come halfway around the world to be here with you and it has been a delight to discover that love of God in Jesus is certainly here and in you as well.

So my prayer for the LCC as it is for the LCA, is that we will together remain in that incredible love that we have come to know and be embraced by in Jesus Christ. And that, together, we will keep on giving witness to it wherever God places us and wherever God sends us to for the sake of the world that He so loved. Amen.,

Rev. Dr. Ed Lehman
President Emeritus of Lutheran Church-Canada

Dear president Bugbee, delegates and guests

Some weeks ago, you invited me, as a president emeritus, to attend this synodical convention and bring greetings to the delegates. Thank you for this kind gesture.

However, as many of you know, I have been confronted with serious health issues and, earlier in the year, was hospitalized for seven weeks. By God's grace, I have been steadily recovering, even though I still have very far to go. I have concluded that it would be best if I chose not to attend, and concentrated instead on getting the rest that I need to regain my health. I therefore ask you to excuse me from attending this convention, although you will surely be in my prayers, and I will follow, with interest, whatever reports I may receive.

It is a fortunate coincidence that our synodical convention is being held over the Pentecost weekend. As the delegates hear reports about the challenges facing our congregations – and, for that matter, churches around the world – it is important to remember that it is through the work of the Holy Spirit that God's Church is created, strengthened, and preserved. Our most

ambitious resolutions, inspiring speeches and far-reaching resolutions can only be tools which the Holy Spirit might choose to use. The power to face whatever the world and its culture throw at us is not within ourselves but is a gracious gift from our Triune God.

I also want to take this opportunity to make a bold prediction, even though these words are written before the convention has even begun. I wish to predict that our esteemed president, Dr. Bugbee, will be elected to serve us for another three years, and I therefore congratulate him in advance! I personally thank God for the visionary and inspiring leadership he has shown, and pray that God would keep him and his dear wife Gail, under His protecting care.

May God's Spirit guide and direct you in all your deliberations and decisions, so that His Name will be glorified and His will be done!

In Christ

Ed Lehman

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

President Bugbee, delegates to this convention, brothers and sisters in Christ, I greet you with these words of direction and encouragement from the Apostle Paul, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Thank you President Bugbee for the privilege of bringing greetings and for the opportunity to share a few words with the convention. During these past six years, it has been my joy to serve our Synod's Mission in Nicaragua. During the early years when the church was just being established, I had the privilege of serving in country twice a year in three month intervals. During the past couple of years as the church has matured, that time has decreased. This past year, only a month and a half.

I say joy and privilege because I was blessed through it all. I was given the privilege of seeing God work His miracles in the lives of people and in the life of

His church as he used trial and difficulty, hardship and struggle to bring blessing. When you witness how God works, you begin to understand what scripture means when it says that "in all things God is working for the good of His children, for those He has called according to His purposes.

And when you understand and believe that you are going to "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks in all circumstances. . .

The Convention theme is most meaningful. "Come to Him who Answers Prayer." President Bugbee has spoken of this theme as arising out of the previous theme of 3 years ago which centred on the Word. God speaks to us in His Word and we respond as we speak His Word back to Him in prayer and praise and thanksgiving.

I would like to encourage you to consider another connection. It's the connection with mission. St. Paul in his letter to Timothy that speaks of that connection. He says.

1 Tim. 2:1-4

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, [2] for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. [3] This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, [4] who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

First of all, of supreme importance, is for you to pray. Paul uses four different words to describe your praying. Every possible way of talking to God is included.

And who are we to pray for? We are to pray for all people. In these opening 7 verses, the word “all” is used 5 times. Everyone is to be included; no one is to be excluded from the church’s prayer list. It includes the insignificant child and the reigning Queen, the struggling teenager and the prime minister.

The reason the church needs to pray for all people is because no one else can really pray for them. No one else has the ear of God except those to whom he has

given the privilege. It’s a privilege given to us. We have been given that privilege and if we don’t pray for them, then who can and will?

It’s good for us to do this, St. Paul says, but even more important, it’s God pleasing because He’s a God who wants to save all people!

Here’s the connection. We pray for all people because God wants all people to be saved. To pray is to be in Mission and to be in Mission is to pray!

My brothers and sisters, First of all, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people. . . Come to Him who Answers Prayer. Pray for the world; Pray for the mission of the church; Pray for our missionaries in country and out of country. Support them with your prayers and your offerings.

It’s good to do, but even more important, it pleases God who desires all people to be saved.

May God bless this convention and the decisions that are made; May He bless those whom you have elected to serve as Shepherds of our beloved Synod – including our dear president Robert!

Rev. Vannarith Chhim
President, Evangelical Lutheran Church Cambodia

Greetings to President Bugbee, pastors, delegates, lay leaders and deacons who are here these few days. It has been a great privilege for me to be here with you and this morning to be greeting you on behalf of the ELCC from our pastors, deacons and lay teachers of Cambodia. I am here also to offer the great thanks to LCC for her great contribution to the birth of ELCC and also to ELCC mission work these past 4 years. It has been a great challenge as you know for ELCC. Five years ago was the birth of ELCC and we continue to organize as a church body and to also continue training our leaders who sometimes feel isolated in the world. We are a small and young church. We thank you for the receipt of President Bugbee 3 years ago to Cambodia that brought us to a partnership. So now we can say that we are not alone and we have a great partnership here.

ELCC was born from the Luther Institute of South Asia (LISA). It was 7 years ago when Rev. Dr. Leonard Harms visited Cambodia and saw the great need of theological training for pastors, church leaders, and deaconesses. We launched LISA training in July 2007. The first classes had 68 students enrolled and there remained 38 at the annual graduation. During the training, we began to see a great vision and one confession to form a Lutheran church body in Cambodia. I was called and ordained in 2010 to be a church president at 28 years old. So there was a time when I was known as the youngest president in the world. But thanks be to God that we

are small and young and we are growing by the grace of God and in the Lord Jesus Christ. And we are thankful that ELCC and LCC decided to have a partnership agreement for the last 3 years. Now we are not alone and we are growing in the grace of God for the mission for the past 5 years.

Now, I would like to report that we have 32 congregations and 17 churches as members and have ordained 3 pastors and 3 ordained missionaries and we have been able to send our local missionaries to reach out to ethnic groups in the North of Cambodia near the Vietnamese border.

The challenge that we now have is 3 Christian private schools because we see a great need to have teaching in the community to provide also the Christian education by our deaconesses and gospel training and Sunday school. We have 3 schools this year that offer the government curriculum and Christian education to 500 children in the countryside. The education has to be connected to the gospel. We also continue the translation of Lutheran material for our future members. We are looking forward to the great completion of the Book of Concord by 2015. So I have many jobs. Also, we have a translation of the Khmer Lutheran Service book and write our own melody familiar to Cambodian Christians to contextualize. Because sometimes I have to sing German melodies. “A Mighty Fortress is our God” is very famous, but to a Cambodian it’s like eating a German sausage so we don’t like it so much!

Now we also continue with the education for LISA, but we take ownership. Our local teachers take the lead because in the past some of our professors at Concordia Lutheran Seminary like Stephen Chambers and Nolan Astley have contributed to teach. But now we are teaching our own. Our great hope is that in the near future we would have a national institute—our own Concordia Lutheran Institute, which is a great dream that I would like to see in the very short future. So far, we have 18 deaconesses who have been trained and serve across the country of Cambodia. Their focus is training and Sunday school, children’s ministry and serving women in the communities. I have to say that the women have very important roles comparing to pastors. They have very good works in the community. I am sometimes tempted to say that they work better than the pastors because they don’t

challenge about leadership but they are willing to serve the communities.

Finally, I’d like to give thanks for the partnership we have in hands with LCC. Great thanks to Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary who has brought us some visiting lecturers to train us in LISA program and CLS Edmonton and also great partnership in providing transportation for deaconesses and projects in Cambodia for the past 6 years from LWML. We have received 2 motorbikes for our deaconesses and we pray for more because they are low cost and flexible for visits to the communities. Sometimes I ride on the backs of the bikes because it is very hot and dangerous in Cambodia.

Thank you so much, Dr. Bugbee, who invited me to be here.

Bishop David Altus
South Australia/Northern Territory District
Lutheran Church of Australia

It is a privilege to be here on behalf of the Lutheran Church of Australia and I thank you for your hospitality and welcome.

I bring greetings from Bishop John Henderson and your brothers and sisters in Australia. President Bugbee was with us at our Synod in Adelaide last year when we moved from “Presidents” to “Bishops” and elected our first Bishop – John Henderson. John could not be here at your Synod but will meet President Bugbee here later this year.

Several years ago our Presidents (as they were called at the time) met with your Presidents in retreat here in Vancouver and I was unable to be here, so I am thankful for this opportunity to get to know the LCC better. I remember before they went they asked themselves how we might justify all of them being out of the country at the same time. Within minutes we filled a whiteboard with issues and items of mutual interest and things we wanted to explore further with you. This was indicative of our growing relationship. We face many similar challenges in ministry in our countries today, but we have the same faith in common that we seek to share.

Be assured that the LCA values our relationship with the LCC and our Bishops are committed to nurturing that relationship over time. It is wonderful to know that we are not alone – far from it. There are others who share the same faith and similar challenges to sharing it today even on another side of the world. The exchange of pastors between us from time to time has continued to be a mutual blessing and it has been wonderful for me to catch up with pastor Solie who shared a parish in South Australia with me some years ago.

“*Come to him who answers prayer*” is the theme of your convention. Be assured of our prayers for you at this time and season in the life of the LCC. Can I ask for your prayers for us, especially as we in the LCA once again face the challenging question of the ordination of men and women at our next synod in 2015. Pray for us as we study God’s word again, pray for our unity and for a God pleasing outcome. Thank you for your invitation to be present, and may God bless his church, the LCC as you come together in this convention.

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison
President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Transcribed from his greetings to the convention on Sunday, June 8

Thank you, President Bugbee. It is a great joy to be here and see so many friends again.

Luther knew in the fall of 1545 that he would not see Easter. He said, "I will not live to see Easter next year." And it was late in January that he travelled to Eisleben. Eisleben was the place where he was born and the minor Counts of Eisleben had been arguing about property and mines and all kinds of other things and they hated each other. If you visit the place, you can see the remnants of the castle where they lived above Montville and you can see the same little chapel in the keep. Luther tried and others had tried to solve the problem, but he was making one more attempt. He was riding on the way down to Halle. He got there. It was cold and (something you Canadians can relate to) the river was iced over so he couldn't pass. He wrote letters to his wife and if you never read any other letters than the ones Luther wrote to his wife at the end, you've got to read those. "Dear madam Saumeister of Wittenberg." "Madam Brewmeister of Wittenberg." "My Lord Katie of Wittenberg." He couldn't cross and he quipped, "That Saale river, that old Saale is an old Anabaptist woman and she wants to re-baptize me, but I won't let her do it." He finally was able to cross and he was met by a retinue of about 75 soldiers and they had come all the way from Eisleben. They rode with him as he travelled along. He thought the wind was blowing evil over a couple of towns and it was making him have pain in his neck and down his arm and in his chest. Well, we know what that's all about. He didn't. He got to the town and began working on the problem. He wrote Katie, saying, "This problem has more porcupine quills than a porcupine." Finally, after arduous negotiations an agreement was found and there was reconciliation. So Luther climbed the pulpit that is still there to this day in Eisleben at St. Andrew's church and preached on Matthew 11—his last sermon ever. "I thank you, my Father, that You have hid this from the wise and revealed it to the babes." While he was preaching, he was overcome with pain again and had to stop short and he was taken across the street.

Well, that night he went to the window, as was his custom, to pray. It was about 9 o'clock. He went back to bed, waking on and off. He woke about one o'clock and said, "Oh dear Jonas." Jonas was with him and also his two sons. "Jonas, I fear I am going to die here in Eisleben where I was born." He began repeating Bible verses. "For God so loved the world

that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." He said, "Dear Jonas, make sure and pray for our dear Lord God and His gospel because the Pope and the Council of Trent because they really have a grudge against Him." Jonas, sensing the end was near, said, "Father Luther, will you die confessing the faith which you have confessed?" And he said, "Ja!" And then he drifted off into eternity. Did you know something? After Luther died, they found a note in his pocket. It was the last thing he ever wrote. If you put the Weimar edition of Luther in two stacks, they may be waist high. On that scrap of paper, it said this at the end. "No one can understand the Holy Scriptures unless he has governed the church for 100 years with the apostles. We are beggars, this is true." "Wir sind bettler, hoc est verum." This is Luther's great gift to Christianity. We are not poor, sick men like men in a Dostoyevsky novel for Eastern orthodoxy, being nursed back to spiritual health. We're not people with a free will, in some sense impaired, but still a free will for the Baptists or Roman Catholics. Luther's gift to Christianity is to know that we are dead in trespasses and sins. And just like the gospel comes to a dead man in the person of Lazarus when Jesus says, "Lazarus, come out!" And the power for Lazarus to rise didn't rest in him. He didn't say, "Lazarus, I've given you a choice to make. It's all up to you. I've done everything I could, now, if you want to rise." No. "Lazarus, come out!" And where was the power?

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe. The gospel is the power to raise from the dead. Thanks be to God! That's why we preach like we do. Do we preach this way anymore? On Pentecost, the apostles preached, "You killed the Lord of Glory. You crucified Him. But this one whom you crucified, God has raised from the dead. Repent and believe the gospel. Repent and be baptized. Every one of you—the promise is for you and your children. All who are far off. Repent." Are we still the church of the Lutheran reformation? Do we still preach repentance and Christ crucified? Luther wrote one time that the gospel is a "fahrender Platzregen." It's a passing rain shower. It comes and it stays for a generation and then it moves on. Once, he said, it comes for 150 years and then it moves on. It passes on. Do you know why it passes on? Never to return, he said. Thanklessness. Believe me, when I look at all the challenges in front of us—in the

Missouri Synod and Lutheran Church Canada, the Lutheran church worldwide, I shake my head, but it's also easy to become thankless in that context.

Today is a great moment for us. You know the challenges, but we have opportunities everywhere. Central America. South America—the doors are wide open and we're walking through them with you. In Africa. Especially with Madagascar. And other enormous church bodies. Untold opportunities and they're asking for us. They want our theological integrity. Opportunities in India. A new church emerging for us to have fellowship with in Indonesia. Opportunities in Asia. All over the world, the door is open for us like never before as Liberal Lutheranism in the north jumps off the cliff. The south wants the faith. The faith of the scriptures.

Now, I will do a little liturgical response with you. Please respond with "Thanks be to God."

The doors are open all over the world for the gospel—Thanks be to God.
 For 95 deacons in this church body—Thanks be to God.
 406 pastors—Thanks be to God.
 312 congregations—Thanks be to God.

A fairly decent president [laughter]—Thanks be to God.
 3 districts—Thanks be to God.
 2 seminaries—Thanks be to God.
 Concordia Lutheran University—Thanks be to God.
 LLL—Thanks be to God.
 LWML—Thanks be to God.
 CLMS—Thanks be to God.
 Youth and Young families—Thanks be to God.
 A fantastic host of Lay people—Thanks be to God.
 Missions in Nicaragua doing fantastic work—Thanks be to God.
 Missions in Cambodia—Thanks be to God.
 Missions in Ukraine—Thanks be to God.
 Missionary Ted Krey—Thanks be to God.
 The Book of Concord—Thanks be to God.
 Luther's catechism—Thanks be to God.
 The sacred scriptures—Thanks be to God.
 The Holy gospel—Thanks be to God.
 500 years of Lutheranism—Thanks be to God.
 LCMS—Thanks be to God.

Thank you for being the Lutheran Church Canada, our dearest and most cherished brothers and sisters in Christ
 And now may the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord make His face to shine upon, the Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen

Rev. Dr. David Wendel
President, North American Lutheran Church
Transcribed from his greetings to the convention on Sunday, 8 June

President Bugbee, leaders, pastors, and members of Lutheran Church Canada. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. On behalf of our bishop, John Bradosky, and all you brothers and sisters in the North American Lutheran Church, I bring you greetings in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Because Bishop John couldn't be with you on the occasion of your convention, he has provided a written greeting, which I believe has been provided to you. He speaks in his letter of your scriptural theme, "Come to Him who answers prayer" from Psalm 65, where he states, "We cannot think of bringing our prayers to the Lord our God without being mindful of the manifold and many ways He has already acted on our behalf, the greatest of which is through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The bishop also affirms how, in spite of our several differences, we are committed to working together to witness to the truths of God's word through law and gospel, the value of all human life from birth to natural death, and affirming the biblical truth that God has created

marriage to be only between one man and one woman and the gift of sexuality is intended to be with that bond.

Given these printed words of greeting from Bishop Bradosky, I kind of wanted to think of a different biblical image that I could share. So as I was thinking about that, I thought that, given the fact that many of the LCC may not be familiar with our new church body of almost now 400 congregations, formed in 2010 after the actions of the ELCIC and the ELCA with regards to the changes in biblical teachings that have guided God's people for thousands of years. While our journey out of our former Lutheran denomination has been described as "coming through fire" or "living through hell" I would actually describe it more in terms of an exodus from a foreign land in which we finally found ourselves held in bondage by people who served false gods, often of their own making. Now we have been delivered by the grace of God, renewed by water and the Holy Spirit, given really a new birth, a dying and

a rising as we have been liberated truly from our former church bodies where many, at least, no longer serve the triune God or hear and heed His unchanging word, so that daily we give thanks to God for our deliverance and we rejoice that through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the church is being renewed and reformed. God has not forsaken us and in Him is our hope for the future.

I will say, though, if we claim the biblical image of exodus as reflective of our journey into the NALC, there are still some realities that we, in the NALC have to face. While we are deeply grateful to be out of our former church bodies, we have found that Lutheranism of today is no promised land of milk and honey. Unfortunately, we are the same sinners in the NALC that we were in our former denominations. Many of our congregations are caught up in an institutional model of church that is causing them still to be stagnant and stifled. Some of our members continue to be apathetic and lukewarm, and like the Israelites before us, we have had some few of our people who were murmuring and complaining even before our feet were dry from the Red Sea crossing, which, thankfully, serves to humble us and to remind us that the NALC is not our saviour. It's only an instrument in God's hands to renew our pastors and our congregations, not as an institution, but as a community of disciples who are learning again what it is to be disciples of Jesus Christ, even more, who know what it is to actually make disciples in our world today. As our incarnate Lord is present in word and sacrament in the church through the Holy Spirit calling people, enlightening people, sanctifying people, and keeping people in His body to be light

and salt in this dark and depressing world—where so many still have not received the word made flesh, come to dwell among us full of grace and truth, to set us free from sin, death, and the devil, to live this abundant life that Jesus Christ promises and gives.

But I would like to share with you also, as I consider our journey into the NALC in light of the biblical image of deliverance from bondage. That, as God brought us out of Egypt and our wilderness wandering, to that new life that He prepared for us, we were truly blessed to find you there as well. As you have even welcoming us and encouraging us and supporting us in so many ways, and yes, even more, praying for us, coming to Him who answers prayer, on our behalf. And I hope you take it in the right way, but as we look in the book of Joshua, we find that the first friend the Israelites found in the new land was Rahab, a sinner, who sheltered the two Israelite spies, and testified, saying, "For the Lord your God is He who is God in heaven and above and on Earth beneath." I certainly don't want to push that image too far, but we do give thanks that "He who is God in heaven and above and on Earth beneath." That you, your leaders, in particular, President Bugbee have befriended us and aided us along the way and prayed for us as we are finding our way in , sin some ways, this new land. We come to Him who answers prayer on your behalf as well, praying that God will strengthen and encourage your bold and faithful witness for the sake of a world in need.

Thank you for inviting us here and thank you for the opportunity to be with you.