

The Lutheran Connector

An Official Publication of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC)



Inside This Edition

From the President's Desk.....	1
CALC's SHEPHERDS	
Ordination of Edgar Roste.....	2
OFFICIAL NOTICES	
Motion for Biennial Conventions.....	3
Motion to Reduce Size of National Council.....	4
REPORT ON CONVENTION 2018	
Setting and Attendance.....	5
Elders' Report	5
President's Report	7
Trustees' Report Budget/Finances	7
Elections	8
Closing Banquet and Giving Thanks.....	8
Next Year's Convention	9
Keynote Speaker	10
Congregational Activities	11
Report on 2018 Pastors' Retreat.....	13
NEWS FROM ILT	
For Such a Time as This	15
Board Meeting September 2018	15

The Lutheran Connector is a newsletter published by:

Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations

1162 Hudson Rd. West Kelowna, BC, V1Z 1J3

Telephone: 250.801.3860

Website: www.calc.ca

Email: info@calc.ca

President: Pastor Ed Skutshek

Email: ed.skutshek@gracelutherankelowna.com

Vice President: Helen Zacharias – vice-president@calc.ca

Secretary: Vivien Georgeson - secretary@calc.ca

Treasurer: Brenda Evjen – treasurer@calc.ca

Treasurer's Address: 4808 51 Ave., Stony Plain, AB, T7Z1C4

From the President's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is hard to believe Advent is here and Christmas is around the corner. During these seasons we remember Jesus' first advent or coming. The angel Gabriel declared to the virgin Mary that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Messiah would be conceived in her and she would give birth to her firstborn son. The world was oblivious of what was happening deep inside Mary. King David spoke of this miracle centuries before it happened. *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made."* (Psalm 139:13-14). God knit the Messiah together in Mary's womb. Jesus was fearfully and wonderfully made. Within one human body the finite and the infinite, and the mortal and the divine, coexisted. His human and divine natures were inseparable. At just the right time, the time God had ordained, Jesus was born. The angels came and expressed heaven's joy at the birth of God's firstborn son.

During Advent we also declare that Jesus came to come down to save us through his sacrificial life, suffering and death and glorious resurrection. We declare he ascended to heaven and promised to come again and judge the living and the dead. *"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done."* (Revelation 20:11-13).

During Advent we must also declare that in the time in between Jesus' first and second coming, he is not idle, he comes to us. He comes to us every time the Gospel is proclaimed in its purity and the Sacraments are rightly administered.

God is still knitting a body together that is fearfully and wonderfully made. The Apostle Paul declares to Christians of every time and place: *"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."* (1 Corinthians 12:27). *"For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."* (1 Corinthians 12:13).

At just the right time, when the Body of Christ has reached its fullness, Father, Son, Holy Spirit and all the angels will come, the Body of Christ will emerge in its fullness, and the words of the Prophet Isaiah will be fulfilled. *“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.”* (Isaiah 65:17). *“But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. Those who live in the dust will wake up and shout for joy!”* (Isaiah 26:19).

May God bless your Advent and Christmas seasons.

In Christ,

Pastor Ed Skutshek, President.

CALC's Shepherds

Reverend Edgar Roste Ordained – Sharon Lutheran Church, Irma, AB



On Sunday September 23, 2018, Edgar (Ed) Roste was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament at Sharon Lutheran Church, Irma, Alberta. He was installed as Sharon Lutheran's pastor in the same service. Pastor Edward Skutshek, our

President served as Ordinator.

Pastor Ed is married to Wendy. They have three adult children, Jenna, Michael and Breanna. Two of their children are married and they are expecting two grandchildren.

Pastor Ed is the nephew of Vern Roste, the founding President of CALC. He and wife Wendy were baptized, confirmed and married in the Lutheran Church. Both attended Lutheran Bible Schools as young adults.

The ministry is a second career for Pastor Ed. He hails from Burnaby BC, where he graduated from High School. He studied biology and pre-med studies at Trinity Western University, Langley, BC, from 1979-83. In 1984 he began studies at British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) to study the pulp and paper industry. In 1986 he received a Chemical Sciences Diploma from BCIT.

In 1986 he began a thirty year career in management within the pulp and paper and sawmilling industry. He has served in middle and upper management positions in both saw and pulp mills, including participation in the design and start-up of two pulp mills. He also witnessed an unprecedented contraction of the industry due to the societal shift away from paper products as a primary means of communication in business and education toward electronic and social media.

Pastor Ed and his wife raised their three children in the smaller rural communities where his career led them. They came to enjoy and even prefer rural life. The church was always central to the life of the Roste family. They attended church in every community they lived in. Many of these communities did not have a Lutheran church. Over the years they attended Lutheran, Evangelical Free, Alliance, Baptist, and Reformed churches. Wherever they attended, Pastor Ed was active in congregational life. He has served as an elder in five different congregations, taught Sunday school, led Bible studies, and preached. On a couple of occasions he took on a significant leadership role in congregational life following a pastor's departure. These experiences allowed Pastor Ed to see how difficult it was for rural congregations to find and to afford a pastor.

As the possibility for retirement came closer, he began to wonder whether God could use him as a pastor in a rural setting. He prayed in earnest, sought the counsel of his Pastor, fellow elders, his friends and his family. He retired at age fifty-seven. He had not studied at a university level for some thirty-four years. The fall of 2015 he applied to and was accepted by Regent College in their Graduate Diploma program. After completing a year at Regent, he transferred into the Master of Divinity program. During his studies he completed a required two year internship at Trinity Baptist Church of Vancouver. He received his Master of Divinity degree the spring of 2018.

Pastor Ed's and Wendy's faith journey began in the Lutheran Church. During their marriage they have attended churches affiliated with other Christian denominations. They came to appreciate their strengths and weaknesses. However, in the end they continue to see themselves as evangelical Lutherans. They hoped God would call them to ministry in rural Alberta. The Lord brought Pastor Ed and the people of Sharon Lutheran Church of Irma together. They called him to be their pastor. He accepted a permanent three-quarter time call. May God bless them all as they move forward in faith.



Pastor Ed Roste, Pastor Ed Skutshek, the council and leadership team of Sharon Lutheran Church, Irma, AB.

OFFICIAL NOTICES



The Board of Trustees periodically reviews the financial condition, policies, practices, and operations of all components of our Association. In the course of such a review, our Board of Trustees (BOT) examined our practices with respect to our annual conventions. The BOT noted that conventions are costly. They noted that measures should be taken to control costs. In addition they noted the high costs borne by our congregations in sending delegates to annual conventions, most especially those who live great distances from the site of the convention. They put forward a motion that would have changed our cycle of conventions from annual general conventions to biennial general conventions (every other year). They noted that the act of Canadian Parliament which created CALC permitted our Association to hold biennial conventions. The constitution and bylaws accepted by our membership provided for annual general conventions.

The implementation of biennial general conventions required significant amendments to our constitution and bylaws. By way of example, all the language in our constitution and bylaws establishing annual general conventions would have to be changed to "biennial conventions." The delegates to biennial conventions would have had to approve budgets for the two years between conventions. The way we elect members of our National Council (NC) for staggered four year terms would have had to change. The four year terms of the members of the NC would have to be staggered so that five members of the NC would be elected at each biennial convention.

The NC's rationale for proposing biennial conventions and the necessary amendments to our constitution and bylaws to implement the same, were set out in the Bulletin of Reports for the 2018 Annual General Convention and explained to the delegates at the 2018 Business Meeting. Delegates spoke in favor and in opposition to holding biennial conventions.

- Delegates who spoke in favor of the implementation of biennial conventions supported the BOT's rationale and emphasized fiscal restraint on the part of our Association in spending on conventions. Some emphasized the high costs of travel that some of our delegates must incur to attend our conventions. Biennial conventions would increase the time travel funds could be raised.

- Delegates who spoke in opposition to biennial conventions emphasized the value of annual convention, including, the relationships and fellowship between and among congregations and individuals which have grown and flourished over the years. They have been informed and inspired by keynote speakers, engaged in the business of our Association, and inspired and encouraged by convention worship.
- Pastors' Retreat which has been held in tandem with the convention was addressed. The retreat was described as an opportunity for professional development, relationship building, mentoring, and fellowship.
- Those who spoke in opposition of biennial conventions recognized that our member congregations are spread over five provinces. As a consequence some congregations will spend significant amounts on travel no matter where our convention is held. Another solution to the travel challenge is to create a designated fund which provides grants to financially challenged congregations.
- Pastors and delegates who spoke in opposition to biennial conventions emphasised that two years between conventions is simply too long and will diminish the strengths of annual conventions: effective Christian Education; relationship building and engagement in our Association's business.

The vote of fifty percent (50%) plus one of the delegates present and voting at the business session was required to approve biennial conventions and pave the way to a ratification vote by our congregations. When the vote was taken, a significant majority of the delegates opposed the motion. The motion was thus defeated.

National Council would like to thank all the delegates to our convention for their passionate and heartfelt debate on our proposal change annual to biennial conventions. We have heard your voices and in response we will strive to:

- ❖ Be fiscally responsible and judicious in organizing and spending on our annual general convention (AGC).
- ❖ Retain keynote speakers for our AGC who will engage, inspire, encourage and equip our delegates for ministry.
- ❖ Plan worship to open and close our convention which will give glory to God and inspire, encourage and equip delegates and visitors for ministry.
- ❖ Make individuals and congregations aware of our existing "Gathering Fund" and seek donations to the fund. This dedicated fund was established to provide financial grants for congregations who would otherwise be unable to send a delegate to an AGC.
- ❖ Continue to seek special donations from individuals and organizations to fund costs of hosting an AGC in addition to registration fees and CALC's general funds. (Our Association received special donations of more than \$11,000.00 to offset costs of our 2018 AGC)

Delegates to 2018 Convention Approve Reduction in the Size of the National Council



The minimum size of CALC's National Council (NC) is fixed by our Constitution as ten members. The NC consists of the Executive, the Board of Elders (BOE) and the Board of Trustees (BOT). The Executive consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The BOE consists of the President and the Secretary and three elected Elders. The BOT consists of the Vice President and the Treasurer and three elected Trustees. National Council's proposal presented to the delegates to the 2018 AGC was to reduce the minimum number of Trustees elected from three (3) to two (2) and the minimum number of Elders elected from three (3) to two (2). NC's rationale for the reduction follows.

NC's primary motivation in reducing its size is our belief that, given the size of our Association (32 congregations), a council consisting of ten members is not necessary to fulfill our Association's current needs. The reduction of the NC to a minimum of eight members could reduce traveling costs. The NC typically meets twice a year and attends the General Convention. CALC reimburses NC members for their costs of travel to NC meetings and the Annual General Convention (AGC).

It could be argued that the two positions we propose to eliminate will most certainly contribute to the effectiveness of the NC in making decisions which affect the entire Association. Ten minds are better than eight when the entire NC is called to make important decisions which impact our congregations and individual members. It could be argued that power and authority become more concentrated when you move from ten to eight members on the NC and opposing voices are thus more easily overcome.

It could further be argued that travel costs could be reduced by using technology to connect NC members. Online live video conferencing services such as "Adobe Connect" or "Go To Meeting," as are currently used by our seminary students attending ILT, can be used to connect the members of the NC. While these strides in technology are effective, and helpful, it is beneficial to have face to face meetings so that relationships between new and incumbent members of the NC may be fostered.

It cannot be denied that a reduction of the size of the NC could impact its effectiveness as a decision making body and/or make the consolidation of power by a group on the NC possible. However, delegates were reminded that NC was only asking that the minimum size of the Board of

Trustees and Board of Elders be reduced. As CALC grows and prospers and the workload of the Board of Trustees and Board of Elders increases, or for any other reason, the delegates to the General Convention have the authority to increase the number of members on the Board of Trustees and the Board of Elders and elect candidates to fill the newly created positions.

The following specific amendments to CALC's Constitution required to reduce the minimum size of National Council were presented.

The following amendment was proposed to Section 1 of Article Thirteen of CALC's Constitution: the minimum number of the members of the Board of Trustees specifically elected as Trustees is amended to include two (2) members.

1. Membership. The Board of Trustees is composed of the Vice President as Chairperson as tie breaker and Treasurer, and not less than three nor more than nine other members. Apart from the Vice President and Treasurer, this Board shall consist of **two (2)**, three (3), five (5), or seven (7) members, as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

The following amendment is proposed to Section 1 of Article Twelve of CALC's Constitution: the minimum number of the members of the Board of Elders specifically elected as Elders is amended to include two (2) members.

1. Membership. The Board of Elders is composed of the President as Chairperson as tie breaker and Secretary, and not less than three nor more than nine other members. Apart from the President and Secretary, this Board shall consist of **two (2)**, three (3), five (5), or seven (7) members, as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

The vote of fifty percent (50%) plus one of the delegates present and voting at the business session was required to approve the reduction of the National Council and pave the way to a ratification vote by our congregations. Following a brief discussion, the delegates overwhelmingly approved both proposed amendments to CALC's constitution.

The following procedure will be followed for approval of the amendments to CALC's Constitution required to reduce the size of the National Council:

- ❖ A congregational referendum will be held.
- ❖ The Board of Elders will prepare disclosure materials and a ballot for each of our congregations entitled to vote in a congregational referendum.
- ❖ The disclosure materials and ballots will be emailed and mailed to our voting congregations the last week in December 2018.
- ❖ Congregations must vote on the proposed constitutional amendments at a duly called annual or special congregational meeting of the congregation. The disclosure materials and ballot are sent in

December so the materials may be voted in on In January, February or March, the months our congregations typically hold annual general meetings.

- ❖ The vote of fifty percent (50%) plus one of the congregational members present and voting at the duly called congregational meeting must be achieved in order to approve the reduction of the National Council.
- ❖ To be counted, completed congregational ballots must be returned to CALC's Secretary (by mail or email) by 6:00 PM (PST) on Monday April 1, 2019.
- ❖ To be implemented, the proposed amendments must be approved by 75% of the congregations who return ballots in a timely manner.

Report on Convention 2018

October 26th to 28th



Setting and Attendance:

Our 2018 annual general convention (AGC) was held at Deer Valley Meadows Christian Camp and Retreat Center. The camp is located on 142 acres of woodland and grass meadows on the north bank of the beautiful Red Deer River. The camp is located 48 kilometers east of Red Deer, AB on Highway 11; and 33.5 kilometers west of Stettler, AB on Highways 12 and 11.

The Friday learning event, Saturday business sessions, convention worship services and keynote addresses were held in the camp's newly constructed chapel.



Delegates and visitors stayed in rooms at the camp or nearby hotels in Stettler, AB.

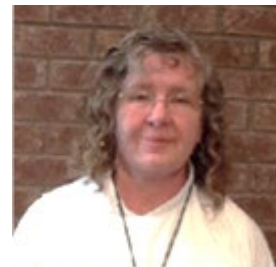
Vivien Georgeson, CALC's secretary reported that there were 70 people registered for the 2018 CALC Annual

Convention, including 29 registered for the Pastors' Retreat and convention. There are 40 registered as Voting Delegates, 1 Associate Member, 7 members of National Council and 22 Visitors, with representatives from 24 congregations from 5 provinces – 4 congregations from BC, 11 congregations from Alberta, 2 congregations from Saskatchewan, 1 congregation from Manitoba and 6 congregations from Ontario.

She further reported that, attending as Visitors, were Timothy Swenson representing the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) and his wife, Dale Ann, of South Dakota, USA, keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. John Krahn, New York, Pastor Charles Jackson, representing World Mission Prayer League, Sherwood Park, AB, Pastor Rick Bergh, Certified Thanatologist with Grief Counseling Ministry, Pastor Ted Hill, Camrose, AB, representing Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute (CLBI), and also Dan Bidulock, of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Cochrane, AB, representing Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Elders' Report: Elders Sherland Chhangur, Randall McLeod and Pastor Ed Skutshek delivered the Elders' Report.

Historical Event: The delegates to CALC's 2017 AGC approved the establishment of a Diaconal Ministry. Our congregations ratified this action in a congregational referendum conducted in 2018. Lila de Waal, serving Victory Lutheran Church Medicine Hat, AB, was the first candidate who applied for roster on CALC's Roster of Diaconal Ministers. The delegates affirmed her roster as Diaconal Minister together with all rights, privileges and obligations appertaining thereto.



Changes to the Congregational Roster: Journeys Lutheran Church (JLC), Grand Prairie, AB, asked to be removed from CALC's Roster of Pastors. JLC was a house church organized by members of Christ Lutheran Church, Sexsmith, AB. The congregations are worshipping together again. The remaining charter members of JLC wish to dissolve the congregation. The motion was moved, seconded and carried (M/S/C).

Individual Associate Members: National Council received and accepted applications from: Reverend Dr. Eddie Kwok of Vancouver, British Columbia; and Pastor Chim Pich (Samuel) of Hamilton, Ontario & Cambodia. The delegates affirmed their acceptance and roster as Individual Associate Members together with all rights, privileges and obligations appertaining thereto.

Ordinations: The following candidates were ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament since our last AGC: Pastor Billy Chiew, January 7, 2018, serving Basel Hakka Lutheran Church, Burnaby, BC; and Pastor Edgar Roste, September 23, 2018, serving Sharon Lutheran Church, Irma, AB. The delegates affirmed their roster as Parish Pastors together

with all rights, privileges and obligations appertaining thereto.

Changes to the Roster of Parish Pastors:

Deletions: The following pastors were removed from the Roster of Pastors by reason of their separation from the congregation that called them: Pastor John Gooch, Immanuel Lutheran Church of Rosenthal, Stony Plain, AB; Rev. Dr. Eddie Kwok, Vancouver Chinese Lutheran Church, Burnaby, BC.; and Pastor Ted Hill, Asker-Calvary Parish, Ponoka, AB. The delegates affirmed these changes in the Roster of Parish Pastors.

Additions: Pastor Elaine Hobden, serving Peace Lutheran Church, Wainwright, AB (her name was mistakenly taken off the roster); and Pastor Mark Lapointe, serving St. Andrew’s Lutheran, Church in Kamloops, BC (Pastor Lapointe accepted a call from St. Andrew’s). The delegates affirmed these changes in the Roster of Parish Pastors.

Changes to the Roster of Pastors in Extended Ministry:

Additions: Pastor Harry Huff of Owen Sound Ontario, has received special training in and practices grief education counseling. He is rostered as an Individual Associate Member of CALC. He has applied for roster as a Pastor in Extended Ministry as a grief counselor and educator. The delegates affirmed Pastor Huff’s roster on the Roster of Pastors in Extended Ministry, with all rights, obligations and privileges appertaining thereto.

Changes to the Roster of Pastors Emeriti:

Additions: Rev. Dr. Eddie Kwok applied for roster as a Pastor Emeritus. The delegates affirmed Pastor Kwok’s roster on the Roster of Pastors Emeriti, with all rights, obligations and privileges appertaining thereto

Lutheran Enrichment: CALC congregations are free to call pastors who were trained by and served in other Christian denominations. CALC encourages pastors trained in another denomination to take courses through our seminary (Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT)) to enrich their understanding of the beliefs, confessions and traditions of the Lutheran Church. Pastor Hein Bertram, St. John Lutheran Church, Preeceville, SK, received a certificate affirming his completion of his Lutheran enrichment courses with ILT. It was noted that the following pastors were currently taking Lutheran enrichment courses. Leslie Kern, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Mission, BC; and Pagie Isaac, Faith Lutheran, North York, ON.

Mission Congregation in Camrose, AB:

Our President was contacted early in 2018 by Pastor David Hesje, a former CALC Pastor (he served at Christ Lutheran in Morden, MB), about setting up a CALC Mission Congregation in Camrose, AB.

It was suggested that this group take the same path as Goodwood Lutheran Church, meeting in Uxbridge, ON. Pastor Peeter Vanker and his wife Carol and other charter members joined CALC as individual members and began to meet as a mission congregation. In the years that followed,

the group that met formed their own stand alone congregation. CALC had entered into a Mission Development Agreement. Offerings collected were made out to CALC. CALC would then return the funds to Goodwood mission group who paid their bills. CALC issued Charitable Receipts at the end of the year. CALC gave the Goodwood Mission \$1,000.00 in seed money.

Our Association received applications for membership as Individual Associate Members from Pastor Hesje, his wife and 10 individuals. The group in Camrose met under the name: “Camrose Church of Joy.” A Mission Development Agreement was prepared. CALC set up a special mission development account. Offerings were deposited in the account and cheques for the operations of the mission congregation were written on the account. Tax receipts were to be issued by CALC at the end of the year. CALC also gave the Church of Joy \$1,000.00 in seed money.

The congregation met in a small rental space in a local business park and eventually a in a facility maintained by the City of Camrose in a local park. Pastor Hesje had to take on a second job, as the offerings from the congregation could not cover his living expenses. Pastor Hesje drove a cab at night to supplement his family’s income. Despite the best efforts by Pastor Hesje’s family and the members of the mission congregation, the maintenance of the mission congregation proved impossible. Pastor Hesje resigned and the mission congregation dissolved.

Seminarians: The following were recognized as students in various stages of seminary training. All but one student, is enrolled with the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), an online seminary located in Brookings, SD. Candidates are enrolled in either the ILT’s Master of Divinity Degree program or Pastoral Ministry Certificate program:

Candidate	Congregational Affiliation
Colin Adams,	Faith Lutheran Church, North York, ON
Sherland Chhangur	Faith Lutheran Church, North York, ON
Kelly Fedkiw	Faith Lutheran Church, Calgary, AB
John Lofstedt	Resurrection Lutheran, Pembroke, ON
Ronald Laferrier	Peace Lutheran Church, Wainwright, AB.
Randall McLeod	Immanuel Lutheran Church, Stony Plain, AB.
Kevin Nelson	Bethel Lutheran Church, Marwayne, B.
Ed Parke	Bethel Lutheran Church, Marwayne, AB.
Lynn Rech	Trinity Lutheran Church, Leader, SK.
Wendel Ritz	Deer Valley Meadows Camp, Alix., AB.
Roland Weisbrot	Faith Lutheran Church, Calgary, AB

Pray for our seminarians: Almighty God, we beseech you to inspire, guide, prepare and equip our seminarians so that they may one day feed and tend your flock with your Word and your Sacraments. We beseech you to prepare our hearts so that we receive your Word willingly, and Sacraments rightly, so that, in the end, we all receive the crown of eternal glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Vacant Pulpits: The following congregations have vacant pulpits and have requested pulpit supply while they prepare to call a pastor.

Asker – Calvary Lutheran Parish , a two point parish, made up of Asker Lutheran Church, Ponoka, AB and Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, AB.
Immanuel Lutheran Church of Rosenthal , Stony Plain, AB.
Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd , Toronto, ON.
All Saints Lutheran Church , Ottawa, ON.

Constitutional Amendments: Please see pages 3-5 above.

President’s Report: President Ed Skutshek’s report touched the following topics.

Social Issues: He described decisions rendered in three important legal cases which impact religious freedom in Canada. He will take up these decisions in more detail in future editions of the Connector.

The case involving Trinity Western University (TWU), of Langley, BC. The Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) ruled that Canadian Law Societies may refuse to accredit TWU’s proposed law school if TWU requires its students and faculty to sign a covenant to keep all sexual relations within marriage defined as one man and one woman. TWU has reluctantly made this covenant voluntary.

The case involving the Canada Summer Jobs Grant. Our Federal Government invited churches and religious organizations to apply for job grants, however, they required applicants to covenant they supported same gender marriage and abortion rights. Many religious groups, including CALC, sent letters to our Prime Minister objecting to this governmental action. Right to Life of Toronto, ON, filed a lawsuit and asked for an injunction forbidding the government from imposing these requirements. The court held they did not allege facts which justified a preliminary injunction. The case is making its way through the courts.

The case involving The Highwood Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The SCC held that a member of the congregation could not appeal a decision of the congregation’s judicial committee to the civil courts. The court held that the civil courts of Canada have no business deciding church doctrine.

Cluster Conferences: He described three successful cluster events: in Vancouver, BC; Goodwood, ON, and Deer Valley Meadows in Alix, AB. He encouraged congregations in geographic proximity to continue planning and hosting these events.

CALC’s Support for Ministries: Our President described the role CALC plays in ministries beyond our congregations, including, grief counseling and education ministries. He encouraged our Association to step out and support other ministries undertaken by members of CALC.

ILT: Our President described strides forward made by ILT since their accreditation by the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). Student enrollment has jumped by over

100. The institution is moving forward with a PHD program and a Master of Divinity Degree specializing in military chaplaincy. ILT uses 21st Century technology to pass on to their students the faith and theology of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation. He encouraged all those present to invest in CALC’s seminary.

Emphasis on Discipleship. Jesus’ Great Commission commands the church to make disciples. Discipleship is the passing of the Christian faith from one person to the next. The Scriptures are clear; discipleship touches every aspect of our lives, including job or vocation. Lutherans believe that our workplace and those we touch because of our job, trade or profession are a part of our mission field. We will search for presenters, programs and materials in this area and even develop our own.

The challenges we face are formidable. However, we can take heart. We must believe and trust that God is on the throne and is behind all that occurs around us (according to His definite plan) and our prayers to God change things.

Trustees Report:

Pastor Vern Roste Memorial Scholarship. A suggestion was made at the 2017 AGC to create a scholarship fund in the name of Pastor Vern Roste, CALC’s founding President. The establishment of a typical endowment fund, where interest from the fund is used for a scholarship, would require a great deal of capital and take a long time to raise. The decision was made to rename our Pastoral Training Fund, a pass-through fund, to the “Vern Roste Memorial Pastoral Training Fund.”

Contingency Fund for Congregations in Need. A suggestion was made at the 2017 AGC to create an emergency fund to meet the needs of congregations requiring emergency building repairs and similar capital projects. The Trustees noted that CALC operates as a decentralized model where each congregation looks after its own needs. Each congregation should have a reserve fund for this purpose. The establishment of such a fund is not a mandate of CALC.

Website: The Trustees noted the CALC website is looking a little “old” and needs to be revamped. The cost of rebuilding the website is a 2019 budget item.

Director Liability Insurance: The Trustees have made application with Robertson Hall Insurance Agency for directors’ liability insurance.

Financial Reports for 2017: Brenda Evjen, our Treasurer noted that in the year ending December 31, 2017, CALC received revenues in the amount of \$102,428.00. In the same period CALC incurred expenses in the amount \$108,178.00 resulting in a deficit of (\$5,750.00). The deficit was funded by unrestricted reserve cash. CALC’s cash reserves December 31, 2017 were:

Non-Restricted Operating Surplus	\$45,301
Pastoral Formation Fund	2,571
Gathering Fund	2,250
Church Extension Fund	1,743
Surplus - End of the Year	\$51,865

Financial Condition 2018: Our Treasurer reported that as of September 30, 2018, CALC had received \$41,006.00 from all sources. CALC's expenses for the same period totaled \$54,816.00, leaving a deficit of (\$13,810.00). The Treasurer and Randall McLeod encouraged congregations to fund this deficit.

2019 Budget: The delegates to the 2018 AGC approved the following budget for the year ending December 31, 2019.

REVENUE	2019
Congregational benevolence	\$80,000
Contributions - other	11,100
Convention registrations	10,000
Pastors retreat registrations	9,500
GST rebate	700
Totals	\$111,300
DISBURSEMENTS	
Administrative Assistant ¹	\$3,600
Annual national convention	13,000
Bank service charges	100
Conference fees ²	500
Director liability insurance	1000
ILT Canada Society	3,000
Marriage Registration	2,000
Membership - CCCC	250
National Council meetings ³	10,000
Office and postage	150
Outreach ⁴	55,000
Pastors' retreat	12,500
Travel - pastoral & executive	8,000
Travel assistance (Gathering Fund) ⁵	
Website maintenance	2,200
Totals	\$111,300

1. Paid to CALC secretary for administrative work in support of convention and working with CALC's President's for special tasks. Calculated at 200 hours X \$18/hour.
2. Registrations for conferences attended by Pastor Ed and executive.
3. Travel and meeting room rental costs for two fully funded meetings. Other meetings are held by teleconference calls as required.
4. Compensation to Grace Lutheran for the time Pastor Ed devotes to CALC @ \$4,583.33/month.
5. Disbursements are made from designated funds if funds are available and are not a budget item. The purpose of the designated fund is to provide grants for congregations who need assistance in sending a delegate or their pastor to CALC's Annual General Convention.

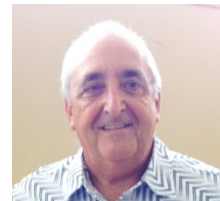
National Council want to thank all our Congregations and Individuals for your generous donations, tithes and offerings. We pray that as this year ends and you count your blessings you prayerfully consider blessing CALC.

Elections:

The position on the Board of Elders held by Randall McLeod became vacant at our 2018 Annual General Convention. The vacant position was for a term of four years. Two nominations were received prior to the convention.



Randall McLeod, of Stony Plain, Alberta. He is a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Stony Plain, Alberta. He has served one four year term on the Board of Elders. He is a licensed Doctor of Chiropractic. He is a long-time member of and has served in leadership positions at Immanuel Lutheran. He is currently enrolled in theological studies at the Institute of Lutheran Theology.



David Neiman, of Alexandria, Ontario. He is a member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Cornwall, ON. He is a retired school teacher. He is a long-time member of and has served in leadership positions at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. He has served on the Board of Directors of a Teachers' Pension fund.

A candidate for the position was nominated from the floor at the convention.



Alvin Sorenson, of Viking, Alberta. Alvin has served as the Pastor of Golden Valley Lutheran Church for many years. He has served on the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute

(CLBI), of Camrose, AB. He has also served on the Board of Hastings Lake Bible Camp, located east of Edmonton.

The delegates voted to elect Pastor Alvin Sorenson to fill the vacancy on the Board of Elders. The members of National Council look forward to Pastor Sorenson's service on the Board of Elders. A more detailed article on Pastor Sorenson will be featured in the next edition of the Connector.

The members of National Council would also like to thank God for Randall McLeod and his service on the Board of Elders. The spiritual gifts God has given him, together with his unique skills and talents contributed to the effectiveness of the Board of Elders and National Council in making decisions which affect all the members of our Association. His presence will be missed.

Closing Banquet.

The closing banquet is one of the highlights of every convention. This year was no exception. We feasted on turkey and barbeque ribs and all the trimmings.

The entertainment after our meal was a feast for the ears. We were inspired and entertained by the 75 voice Central Alberta Homeschool Choir directed by Debbie Zepick.



They opened with a choral piece entitled “Africa.” The piece involved some amazing choreography. The whole choir used their hands, arms and legs to make sounds including, thunder and rain showers. Their performance was breathtaking.

The concert included some original music played and sung by Debbie Zepick. Some young people from the choir provided special music.



The choir is made up of young men and women that are being home schooled. They come from Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House, Lacombe, Ponoka, Camrose, Killam, Viking and even Airdrie. The senior choir is made up of students aged 12 through 18.

The highlight of every choral season, which begins in September, is the Christmas Choral concert. The senior choir is joined by a junior choir consisting of 100 homeschooled children (ages 6-11). The Christmas concert typically includes sacred Christmas and worship music. The free will offering taken at the concert, goes to support the Christian Life Orphanage Centre, a home for former street boys, in Mwanza, Tanzania. Concerts are held in three locations in central Alberta. During their CALC concert, we were treated to a preview of the music that will be featured in this year’s concert.

Giving Thanks.

National Council wishes to thank God for and acknowledge the significant contribution of the following groups and individuals.

Deer Valley Meadows Christian Camp and Retreat Center (DVM) for the hospitality they extended to us. The facilities were wonderful and the meals were amazing. Special thanks to Wendel Ritz, director of programing for his hospitality, guidance, assistance and leadership.

Thanks to Asker Lutheran Church, Ponoka, AB and Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, AB, for partnering with DVM in hosting our convention.



Pastor Ted Hill for preaching at the Opening worship service on Friday October 26. Pastor Ted, Debbie Zepick and Dean Zepick for planning opening and closing worship services and providing musical leadership for both services. Thanks to Wendel Ritz for providing opening devotions for the Saturday business meeting.

Registrations for this year’s convention were complicated. Some stayed at camp. Some stayed in local hotels that featured breakfast. All ate lunch and supper at the camp. As a consequence there were many rates and delegates and visitors asked for exceptions. Special thanks to our Secretary Vivien Georgeson and our Treasurer Brenda Evjen, for all their efforts in registering all our visitors and delegates.

Convention 2019 October 18-19, Calgary, AB.

Back to Our Roots.

Next year’s convention will be held at the Best Western Port O’ Call Hotel, 1935 McKnight Blvd NE, Calgary, AB T2E 6V4. CALC had its first meeting here Reformation weekend 1992! Opening and closing worship, Christian Education, business sessions and all meals will be held at the Port O’ Call Hotel. We have been given a special convention rate for rooms which includes a hot breakfast.



The Convention will take place over two days. It will conclude Saturday with closing worship at 4:00 PM and dinner/farewell and Godspeed supper at 5:00 PM. Details in the February 2019 Connector!

Convention 2018

Keynote Speaker

Rev. Dr. John Krahn

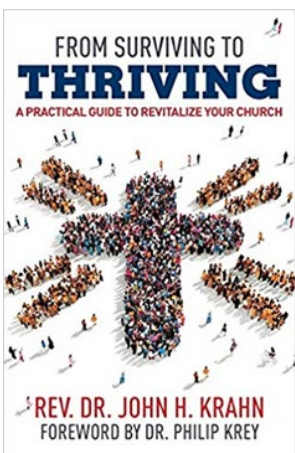


We invited Rev. Dr. John Krahn as our conventions Keynote Speaker. He gave a series of four presentations, two on Friday October 26th and two on Saturday October 27th. He is known as the "Go to Guy" for finding creative and successful ways to save failing churches.

Dr. Krahn has served both one of the largest churches in the ELCA and some of the smallest.

Canadian government statistics for the period from 1971 to 2011 reveal that Canadians identifying themselves as: Protestants declined by 34%; and as Roman Catholics by 17%. During the same period, Canadians identifying themselves as: belonging to other (non-Christian) religions increased by 275% and those identifying themselves as having no religion at all increased by 600%.

Rev. Krahn noted that statistics for the US are as dire. In the United States 85% of all churches have either plateaued in membership or are actively declining in membership. He noted between 6,000 and 10,000 churches close each year in the United States. These statistics do not bode well for the church. However, Dr. Krahn's response is that he believes that no church needs to fail.



For years, Rev. Dr. John H. Krahn has been a successful interim pastor whom God has used to save many dying churches. He shares his proven methods for helping churches which are barely surviving to once again thrive in his book entitled: *From Surviving to Thriving -- A Practical Guide to Revitalize Your Church*. Whether your church is on life support or is doing quite well, his book provides a hands-on approach

that will assist you and your church greatly. He reiterated many points from his book and gave us new insights. His presentation was organized, precise and delivered with passion and zeal.

He hammered two points home repeatedly during his presentation:

- ❖ The problems faced by the Church and each and every congregation which is an expression of the Church, are never more powerful than the God behind us.
- ❖ God does not call His Church to be successful; rather, God calls us to be faithful. God does not want us to sit idly by. God calls us to do something.

He gave us many practical points and ideas for congregational and individual action.

- ❖ **A Ministry of Invitation.** Inviting people to attend weekly worship and special congregational events is the simplest form of outreach into the community. During his presentations he displayed examples of invitations. Some were business card size others were more elaborate. He emphasized that a location map was an important part of every invitation. Invitations to church events could be posted in public places. He also encouraged congregations to make tracts available that describe the basics of faith. The tracts could be handed out with invitations or even left in public places for people to discover.
- ❖ **Sharing Faith.** Sharing your faith story can be a powerful witness to others. Describing your faith journey may lead those who hear it to dig deeper into the faith that has inspired and encouraged you. Following his Friday sessions, Rev. Krahn asked those present to form small groups of six in each. Each participant was invited to share his/her faith journey with the others in the group. Participants commented about how each was moved by the faith stories that were shared. With one voice they declared the value of sharing our faith stories with one another as a way of getting to know one another in a more intimate way and as preparation for sharing our faith stories with others outside the church.
- ❖ **Disciples not Members.** In his Great Commission (Matthew 18:18-20), Jesus calls his church to make disciples. The whole congregation is called by Jesus to be engaged in the study of God's word.
- ❖ **Reaching out to the Inactive/Lapsed Members.** Rev. Krahn emphasized that members come and go. Confirmands and their families seem disappear after Confirmation Sunday. People leave for other reasons. They may just fall out of the routine of coming to church on Sundays. Some may leave because of conflict or their offense at the behavior of the pastor, other leader or member of the church. Some of the lapsed members join other churches, however, most do not. It is important to reach out to the lapsed.
It is important to be proactive in dealing with the lapsed. If a member has been conspicuously absent for several Sundays, it is important to reach out to them before too much time passes.
- ❖ **Christ Centered Worship/Prayer.** Lutheran worship is Christ centered worship. Rev. Krahn calls us to draw heavily on our Lutheran worship. He calls our worship

to be the best it can be. If a pastor does not have a good singing voice, don't chant the liturgy. Congregations should draw upon the gifts God has given parishioners for worship. He calls us to be praying congregations. New programs and ideas should not be undertaken without prayer support before, during and after.

❖ **Stewardship of Time:** From time to time Congregations must seriously evaluate their programming. They must evaluate the role each program has on fulfilling their mission to reach out into the community. In the same way pastors must look at their ministry and their involvement in various committees and programs. Pastors cannot be involved in all programs and committees and must intentionally give up some congregational commitments in order to focus time on outreach in the surrounding community.

❖ **Finances.** Rev. Krahn emphasised that the mission of every congregation must be properly funded. To stimulate thought on how to obtain the funds necessary to meet the present and future costs of operating a congregation he:

- ❖ Challenged congregants to tithe to their church.
- ❖ Challenged church councils to constantly evaluate congregational spending and cut cost whenever possible.
- ❖ Challenged congregations to establish endowment funds and to encourage congregants to give gifts and make bequests to endowment funds. (He provided information on the establishment and marketing of an endowment fund).
- ❖ Challenged congregations to encourage members who have been blessed by the Lord to be a blessing to their congregations by giving gifts for the ministry of their congregation.
- ❖ Challenged pastors to be much more aware of giving habits and patterns of their congregation and their congregants and to acknowledge that they are called to be fundraisers in their congregations.

❖ **Creative Thinking.** Rev. Krahn emphasized God inspires individuals and congregations with good ideas for outreach into the community with the Gospel message. He encourages congregants to be on the lookout for these ideas and to borrow good ideas. He emphasized that not every idea is suitable for every congregation. Some ideas may have to be modified to fit a particular congregation. He urged congregations to be creative. To reinforce these points he had the groups of six that had shared their faith stories to share ideas. The results follow.

We want to thank Rev. Krahn for educating, inspiring and equipping us for God's mission.

Every CALC congregation received one copy of Pastor Krahn's book before the convention.

Pastor Krahn has implemented what he recommends and seen the results of intentional missional ministry in more

than one context. The book is available for purchase on Amazon.

On behalf of our Association, National Council thanks Rev. Dr. Krahn for his excellent presentation.

Keynote Speaker Breakout Groups Programs & Ideas

Those participating in Friday's Learning Event broke into groups of six individuals: Each member of the group was asked to share:

- A recent activity, or a proven beneficial activity, which has strengthened the ministry of your congregation; or,
- a good idea for all our churches to participate in.



Group #1

1. During a pastoral vacancy the people of this participant's congregation stepped up and utilized their gifts to strengthen the church.
2. The music leader of this congregation took a risk by inviting a young man, who was not a member of their congregation, to play drums during worship. The future of this young man in the music ministry is very much in God's hands.
3. One of the participants spoke of their congregation's ecumenical mindset. This congregation joined with another local church for youth activities. Their young men participate in the other church's program known as "Young Men of Valor" and their young women participate in "Girl Talk."
4. Another participant spoke about how their congregation engaged "sports dependent" families. They held a service of blessing for players, parents and coaches at the beginning of the hockey season.
5. Another participant described how their congregation took lunch and a card of blessing to farmers working in their fields on a Sunday.

6. Another participant described how their congregation was reaching out to disadvantaged and troubled people in their community.

Group #2

1. We learned that a congregation held an annual "Church Camp-out." During the camp-out they invited all to worship with them on the lakeshore.
2. Once a month a group from this congregation (the groups includes youth) support the homeless of the community through helping in the kitchen at a rescue shelter. Outreach to widows has grown into special fellowship luncheons are held for widows, widowers and couples.
3. A participant described how their congregation participates in the Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child." Informational tables were set up. Youth were involved in a mass packing of 180 boxes.
4. We learned that one of our congregations hosts an annual free beef supper in their Community Hall.
5. A participant described their congregation's active men's group. This group fosters brotherhood and service.
6. The following idea was presented: "Hello Inn" (Play on the word "All Hallows Eve"). October 31st Children are given sweets which have written on them: "Today we give thanks that 501 years ago God opened the door for the English translation of the Bible."

Group #3:

1. Two times a year this participant's church family organized a mission trip to build a home for a needy family in Mexico. Because of this program – one family has become active in congregational life.
2. Another participant described their congregation's mission outreach to the west coast of BC: a VBS for Haida people and community aide. They also supported a church in Peru. The congregation was very excited about raising funds for this project.
3. A participant spoke of an event involving a special speaker brought in to speak on the way Jesus sees grief. All the congregations from the surrounding area were invited.
4. Another participant described a speaker that was brought in in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.
5. Another participant described their congregation's outreach to young families through a program called "Faith Tweak." The family receives a webpage which provides information on the Gospel lesson for the week- a devotion is provided for each day. This page goes out to the families through social media.

Group #4:

1. This congregation has been active as a parish internship site for students from CLBI. This congregation has hosted six thus far.

2. Another congregation has encouraged and enabled a "Wycliff Missionary" through a relationship and financial support.
3. This congregation studied "CALC's" doctrines.
4. This congregation has become a "multi-cultural ministry." They have specifically reached out to single mothers. They partner with other area churches in the Mosaic Ministry and reach out to the homeless through this ministry.
5. Ideas: Children coming to Christian Camps often come from homes with no connection to a church. Camps would like to establish a network of churches which would connect with campers who have no connection with a church.
6. Ideas: Congregations should emphasize the "Priesthood of All Believers" and "Discipleship."

Group #5

1. A participant described how their congregation mentors new pastors; and has encouraged and supported a Men's Ministry. About 20 men meet once a month for a meal and discussion on a Christian topic. All denominations are welcome.
2. Another participant described how their congregation has reached out to the residents of an assisted living facility (65+). The congregation connects with the seniors once a month. They talk with and socialize with the residents. The congregation is loving it. The congregation is committed to reaching out to the 25-35 year old group and the lonely of all ages.
3. This congregation strives to visit people in their homes.
4. Seizing opportunities. A pastor conducted a funeral on the loss of a parent. A child attended the funeral who had lost connection with the church. Funeral services allow people to reflect on their connection with the Lord of the Church and the Church. These moments can lead to a new connection.
5. This congregation offers a grandparent-youth game night.
6. This congregation passes out prayer cards. A group connects online to pray for those who request prayer.
7. Idea: Reaching out to those who have lost a connection with a congregation: continue to welcome them; if people have lost connection with a congregation because they have been hurt and are offended, admit your fault to God and then the people you have offended.

Group #6

1. A member of this group described their congregation's "carnival outreach" to their community. The carnival includes, horses, petting zoo and free food. Fliers are sent out to the neighborhood in advance of the event.
2. Idea: People want more: They want their worship service to be sacred. Traditional services have value. Bible Study, especially on Sundays, promotes spiritual

growth and better stewardship of time, talents and possessions.

3. A participant described how their congregation rents space to a Daycare operation. The congregation invited children from the Daycare to participate in the Easter service. Attendance at the service went up as a result. The congregation will invite these families to a worship service and pot luck meal after. The Daycare families will receive a congregational schedule for Advent and Christmas.
4. Idea: People desire to be in the Word of God during the week. Emphasize a scripture text once a week and teach on the scripture during the Children's time.
5. Idea: A congregation is a community. More must be done to foster relationships between people. We must be intentional about creating relationships.
6. Another participant described efforts in their congregation to help people in crisis. They have begun Stephen ministry classes. Stephen Ministry classes train volunteers. A discipleship group was also begun.

Group #7

1. One of the participants described some annual events that fostered community building within their congregation:
 - Christmas Tree decorating event;
 - Annual Church supper.
 - Pie auction with proceeds going to various mission activities.

It was noted that the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) received academic accreditation in February of 2018. Student enrollment went from 101 to 221.

2. Another participant described how their congregation hosts a men's luncheon each month. It is open to all denominations. It has grown from 2-3 per month to 35. This fellowship has seen a lot of "lost souls" finding a connection.
3. Another participant described their annual Fall Beef Supper. The supper is unique and stands out from the traditional "Turkey Dinner." The supper also involves music.
4. Another participant spoke about the importance of Bible Study in the life of their church. They spoke about their congregation's participation in the Women's Inter-church Council. They meet from time to time as part of this group and participate in the planning of the annual World Day of Prayer. The congregation has also hosted a "Invite a Friend to Church" Sunday.

Group #8

1. Idea: Worship services are internal focused to promote growth of the church family.
2. Idea: The purpose of all we do in the church is to renew our relationship with Jesus.
3. Idea: The focus should be inviting people to Bible Study.
4. Idea: Church Growth is not just about numbers but growth in faith.

5. Idea: The church has a twofold mission: (1) Bible Studies: Teaching; (2) Helping the Poor.
6. Idea: Don't cater to the unchurched: cater to God.
7. Idea: Sharing time after the service.

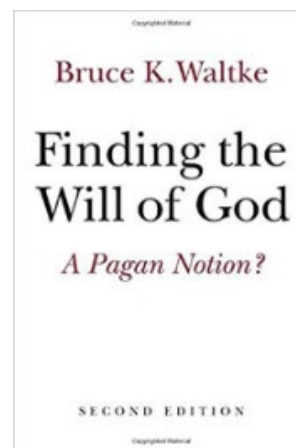
2018 Pastors' Retreat

CALC's 2018 Pastors' Retreat (PR) was held October 24-25 at the Deer Valley Meadows Camp and Christian Conference Center. All 29 registrants stayed at the camp for the retreat. Two distinguished guests participated in the retreat, Pastor Charles Jackson, representing World Mission Prayer League, Sherwood Park, AB; and Pastor Mac de Waal, Dean of NALC's Canada Mission District.



Reverend Doctor Eddie Kwok was our keynote speaker. He is on CALC's National Council. He is a member of the Board of Trustees. Pastor Kwok has experience as a parish pastor and seminary professor at the Lutheran School of

Theology (LTS), of Saskatoon, SK. He is a graduate of Regent College Master of Divinity (M.Div.). He has earned a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Systematic/Historical Theology from London School of Theology.



Pastor Kwok's presentation relied on a book written by Professor Bruce K. Waltke – *Finding the Will of God – A Pagan Notion?*. Pastor Kwok believes that this book should be read by all those who wish to serve on church council. The author asks: "Does the Bible teach Christians to "find" God's "special will" for their lives?" No, it does not, says respected biblical scholar Bruce Waltke, contrary to much popular evangelical

teaching. In this acclaimed book, Waltke clearly distinguishes between pagan divination ("guessmancy") and solid, Bible-based guidance as he distills from Scripture a six-point program to help guide Jesus' followers on their life journey. Pastor Kwok presented a thorough summary of Professor Waltke's theses and provided practical examples of these principles in action in ministry. Some of Professor Waltke's ideas and theses were challenging and sparked some good, passionate and animated debate.



Waltke draws on the Apostle Paul's challenge to every generation of Christians to: *"in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2).*

We are called to live according to God's will. However, the Apostle Paul would not condone consulting your "Horoscope," "Tarot" cards or even randomly opening the Bible to a certain page and then randomly pointing to a verse on that page as a way of determining God's perfect will. Nor would he condone a man embarking on a mission trip to the Philippines because he woke up at 7:47 one morning (and reasoning that the time pointed to a Boeing 747 aeroplane); and then got a flat tire in front of the Philippine Embassy. St. Paul would urge Christians seeking God's will to be immersed in God's word. Paul declared that all Scripture is *"God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2



Timothy 3:16-17).

Like Paul, he is adamant that God's word reflects His good, pleasing and perfect will; therefore, it is imperative we become serious students of God's word. He encourages all to read, memorize, interpret, meditate on, apply and obey Scripture. He sets out a systematic plan to accomplish each of these goals.

Waltke believes that God gives us freedom to choose what we do. However, with freedom comes responsibility. He urges those seeking God's will to, in addition to immersion

in God's word, seek wise counsel. Wise counsel comes from the congregation one belongs to, friends and elders in the church. He asks those who want to find God's will to consider the gifts (both temporal and spiritual), abilities and skills God has given them, together with their circumstances. Waltke reminds us that God's will for His children is that we live sacrificial lives, that is, in our daily lives we consider the needs of others as superior to our own.

Professor Waltke focused on two key Old Testament verses which must be addressed in the process of discerning God's will. The first is Jeremiah 17:9: *"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"* Jeremiah warns us to be careful when we attempt to discern God's will. The instrument we use to discern God's will, our minds, is defective and beyond repair. Our defective minds will always try to influence our deliberations on God's will. He then quotes Proverbs 4:23: *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."* He asks anyone seeking to discern God's will to ask these questions: "Does what I believe God is asking me to do correlate with or correspond to: Scripture; Jesus' call to follow him and imitate him; God's call to offer our bodies as a spiritual sacrifice; faith; prayer, and/or wisdom."

We were all awestruck by the immensity and the complexity of the task of trying to discern God's will. The book and discussion surrounding the same drove home God's words given through the Prophet Isaiah: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.*" Isaiah 55:8. Our response is summed up in King David's words: *"Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain."*

Finding the will of God is an immensely difficult task. Waltke summed it up nicely with a simple sentence: *"Rather than talk about seeking God's will we ought to speak of following the guidance of God."* He went on to say: *"God has given us a program of guidance that involves getting to know him through his word and letting him shape our character, our hearts and desires through our prayerful response."*

Waltke's words point us to God's words recorded in the Book of Isaiah 55:10-11: *"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."* Our response: "Lord let your word take hold of me and let me bear fruit in accordance with your will."

On behalf of our Association, National Council thanks Rev. Dr. Kwok for his leadership during the retreat and his excellent presentation.

Next year's Pastors' Retreat will be held at the Port O' Call Hotel, Calgary, Alberta, in conjunction with our convention on Wednesday October 16 and Thursday October 17th.

News From ILT



Institute of
Lutheran
Theology

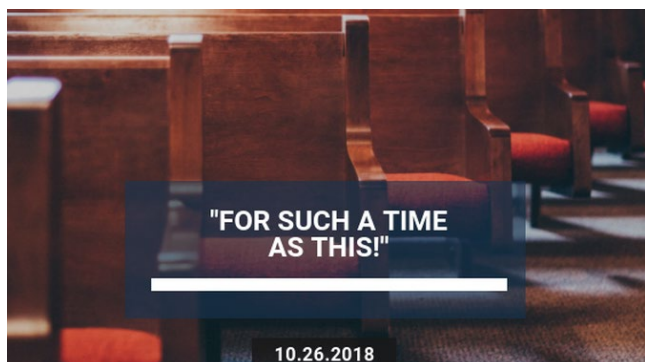
The Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), headquartered in Brookings, South Dakota, USA, is CALC's seminary. Students learn in an online classroom created by video conferencing software. Students can attend a high quality and accredited seminary without leaving home, family and employment. Two members of the CALC are on ILT's Board of Directors, Fred Schickedanz (St Peter's, Cochran, AB), and Pastor Ed Skutshek (CALC President).

Below please find two articles written by the staff of ILT:

Brothers and sisters in Christ:

Our church is in crisis. Our nation is in crisis. We are in desperate need of strong, well-trained leaders who are able to think theologically and fearlessly interpret the times in which we live. We need pastors who can proclaim the Word of God effectively and relevantly.

This crisis of leadership is growing. Congregations are finding it increasingly difficult to find faithful well-trained pastors. Seminaries are finding it difficult to find faithful academically capable teachers/scholars who can prepare these pastors for ministry.



This is not new. God's church has been here before. The Holy Spirit has repeatedly responded to 'such a time as this' by creating special schools. It was true in ancient Israel when Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha established schools of the prophets 'for such a time as this'.

The Reformation established schools to train and equip pastors and scholars to rightly handle the Word of God during the cultural and religious crisis of the 1500's. Seventy years ago, Dietrich Bonhoeffer established a seminary in exile to train pastors and church leaders 'for such a time as this' in Nazi Germany. Today, the Lord has called the Institute of Lutheran Theology into being for 'such a time as this'.

The community of ILT is personally and vigorously invested in preparing faithful pastors, teachers and lay people 'for such a time as this'! Our goal is to equip a new generation of Lutheran Christians to effectively proclaim the gospel and serve Christ's church throughout the world. Will you partner with us in achieving our goal? We have three requests.

1. Include ILT in your Sunday morning Prayer of the Church!
2. Include ILT in your congregational budget!
3. Sign up to receive the Epaphras prayer letter on the ILT website.

As Mordechai said to Esther, "If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"



The ILT Board of Directors held its annual meeting on September 19th through the 21st. Members of the Board Executive Committee were elected. The Board also received reports from the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Educational Ministry, the Director of Donor Services, and the Comptroller. Mr. Fred Schickedanz returned for a new term and Mr. Tom Hill joined the Board.

Board Members include: Fred Baltz (Board Chair); Phil Wold (Board Vice-Chair); Fred Schickedanz (Treasurer); Debra Hesse (Secretary); Ed Skutshek; John Stiegelmeier; Tom Hill; John Bent and Janine Rew-Werling.

As ILT continues to grow there are many issues to be addressed. The Board worked together to refine policy issues, future growth of the school, succession and staffing issues, and many other topics related to strategic planning.

ILT has added a Master of Military Chaplaincy and is hoping to be able to offer the Ph.D. next year.

The Board received the news that the SALT seminary in Madagascar desires to cooperate with ILT and passed a motion supporting an exploration of projects of mutual benefit.

All four of President Bielfeldt's trajectories laid out in his President's Convocation at the end of August were discussed. The Board wants to move ahead on the first three and study the fourth. These new programs bring with them a host of policy and staffing issues. This strong and diverse Board is up to the task and is preparing for the future of ILT.