

# Convention 2020 Recap



CALC's 2020 Annual General Convention was one for the record books. The convention was entirely online using ZOOM, a live and interactive video conferencing service. The meeting began at 9:00 AM Pacific Daylight Time (PDT). Delegates were spread across Canada, from Vancouver Island to Cornwall Ontario, and points in between. The meeting lasted just under 4 hours, including a 20 minute break.

## Opening Devotion.



Rev. Dr. Peeter Vanker gave the opening devotion. He began with three vignettes, real stories which recounted interactions with people who lived in the community around the congregations he had served. In

each vignette the community member displayed a sincere and innocent ignorance of what happens in the church and what Christianity is really all about. A child who would not enter the church because he was afraid he would be baptized against his will. A couple who wanted to rent the beautiful church sanctuary for their wedding scheduled for a Sunday morning. Funeral attendees who wondered whether the numbers on the hymn board were winning numbers in the lottery. Pastor Peeter asked us to consider who is to blame for this ignorance. It is easy to blame the people. However, the blame rests squarely on our shoulders.

He concluded his devotion with the Apostle Paul's words from Romans 10:14-15: *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"* Pastor Peeter declared that we are called to preach that word of Christ whenever and wherever God gives us the opportunity.

## Participation.

There were about 31 computer screens participating in the meeting. The picture above accurately depicts what it was like to participate in the meeting. A participant

could see all the other participants on the screen, could speak to the others and could hear those who spoke. Clusters of delegates met behind some computer screens. Cluster sizes varied in number from 4 to 8. In large clusters the image on the computer screen was projected on a screen or television monitor. The vast majority of screens were used by one and sometimes two delegates.

## Registration and Quorum.

A total of 62 registered for the meeting. All CALC congregations in BC, Manitoba and Ontario registered delegates. 2 out of Saskatchewan's 3 congregations and 8 of Alberta's 15 congregations registered delegates.

Below please find the registration report given by Vivien Georgeson, CALC's secretary.

Voting Delegates – Lay	29
Voting Delegates – Clergy	21
Non-voting Associate Congregation Lay	2
Non-voting Associate Congregation Clergy	3
Individual Associate Members	1
National Council	6
Total Registered	62

## New Member Congregation.

A vote to admit New Life Chinese Lutheran Church ("New Life") of Vancouver, BC, as a full member congregation of CALC with all rights and obligations appertaining thereto, was a highlight of the meeting.



New Life congregation meets at 6215 Main St, Vancouver, BC V5W 2T9. Weekly worship services are conducted in Cantonese, Mandarin and English. Pastors serving New Life include: Rex Lo, Gordon Ng, Mavis Quan and Eddie Kwok (Pastor Kwok is a member of CALC's Board of Trustees).

## Report of the Board of Elders.

Pastor Alvin Sorenson presented the report of the Board of Elders.

**Inter-convention Legislative Acts.** CALC's Annual General Convention for 2020 was scheduled for October 16-17 in Calgary, AB. The annual Pastors' Retreat was scheduled for the 14-15 of October. Inter-provincial travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with safety concerns, prompted

National Council (NC) to consider canceling the in person convention and pastors' retreat and holding the business meeting of the convention as an online meeting. May 2, 2020, NC asked our congregations to approve a proposal whereby the National Council is given the authority cancel the in person convention and pastors' retreat and hold the business meeting on Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup>. Because COVID-19 precluded congregational meetings, we asked congregations to vote on the proposal through their church councils. Twelve congregations responded and each one voted in favour of the proposal by the June 15 deadline.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, as provided in the proposal, the NC voted to cancel the in person convention and pastors' retreat and hold the annual convention as a ZOOM meeting. In taking the vote, the NC relied on the results of the congregational referendum and the NC's authority to act as an interim legislative authority under Paragraph 4.1 of Article 10 of CALC's constitution if an emergency situation arises. The COVID-19 pandemic certainly created an emergency situation. Any action taken under Paragraph 4.1 must be presented to the next General Convention for review. The delegates approved NC's actions.

#### **Changes in Rosters.**

**Parish Pastors.** The following pastors were added to CALC's Roster of Parish Pastors by virtue of their call to ministry in a CALC congregation.

1. Pastors Rex Lo, Gordon Ng, Mavis Quan and Eddie Kwok. New Life Chinese Lutheran Church Vancouver, BC.
2. Pastor Harry Huff, Interim Pastor, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Sullivan, ON.
3. Pastor Boyd Hopkins, Interim Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church of Rosenthal, Stony Plain, AB.

**Diaconal Ministers.** Gray Graumann was conditionally endorsed to the office of Deacon at the 2019 Annual General Convention, subject to fulfilling certain requirements. He has fulfilled these requirements and his restrictions have been lifted. He and his wife live in McCreary, MB. He ministers to seniors in care homes in McCreary.

#### **Congregations in the Call Process:**

1. Asker-Calvary Lutheran Parish, a two point parish with churches in Wetaskiwin and Ponoka, AB
2. Christ Lutheran Church Sexsmith, AB.
3. Immanuel Lutheran Church of Rosenthal, Stony Plain, AB.
4. Salem-Trondhjem Lutheran Parish, a two point Parish with churches in Kingman and Round Hill, AB.
5. St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Sullivan, ON.
6. Vancouver Chinese Lutheran Church, Burnaby, BC.

**Seminarians.** Conner Longaphie was added as a seminarian. He is enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at the Institute of Lutheran Theology, Brookings South Dakota. He and his wife are associated with the Goodwood Lutheran Church, and St. Peter's Lutheran Church in ON.

**Amendments to CALC's Constitution.** The delegates to the 2020 convention approved the following amendment two CALC's Constitution proposed by the National Council.

Paragraph 10 was added to Article 9 which permits the Annual General Convention or any other meeting of the members to be held as:

- a. An online meeting in the same way our 2020 Annual General Convention was held.
- b. A hybrid meeting, with some participants meeting in person and others participating in the meeting by electronic means (ZOOM or other video conferencing platform).

Paragraph 4.1 of Article 10 was amended to permit the National Council to establish and appoint members to ad hoc committees. The ad hoc committees would be tasked with assisting the Board of Elders in their mandate with respect to coordinating our congregations in the area of: global and local missions; constitutional advancement (amending our constitution and bylaws); theological advancement (studying contemporary social issues and other theological issues); and media and outreach (maintaining and improving our website and emerging podcast network).

#### **President's Report.**

President Ed Skutshek gave the following report. COVID-19 has pushed us. It pushed us out of our sanctuaries as governments forbade assemblies. We pushed back by worshiping online. Church councils and committees and CALC's National Council met by ZOOM. Bible Studies and Sunday School went online. When permitted by local government, we instituted socially distanced in person worship while maintaining an online presence. Pastors gave pastoral care by using the telephone, ZOOM and Facetime and later through socially distanced visits.

When this pandemic passes, and it will pass, we must continue a robust online presence. The proclamation of the Gospel has escaped the four walls of the church buildings. With a good internet connection, a laptop with a camera, and a big screen TV, congregations can have live interactive worship via ZOOM. Pastors hundreds and even thousands of kilometers away can preach and lead worship live. These same pastors can provide pastoral care for congregants remotely using video conferencing platforms. The internet can function as a lifeline for some of our remote congregations. CALC's National Council and committees could meet online through ZOOM.

Our constitution and bylaws outline the duties and expectations of the President in some general ways. As CALC's spiritual leader the President represents CALC in external relations, witnesses to his/her faith in our Triune God, defends the constitution, promotes CALC's programs, intercedes in congregational strife, oversees the work of the NC, BE, BT and committees, and chairs meetings. If the President is a pastor he/she may preside at ordinations, installations, and worship at CALC conferences and conventions. Each President will fulfill these expectations in his/her own unique way.

Our President as fulfilled the traditional roles of the President for the past 11 years. He has fulfilled many managerial roles. . In addition to being the Association's spiritual leader and chief executive officer, his duties have grown and expanded to include much of the day-to-day management and operations of CALC. These day-to-day and managerial tasks have included: acting as the first point of contact to our Association; preparing and distributing most all of the newsletters, notices and miscellaneous correspondence of the Association; working with local congregations in planning provincial clusters; and taking a lead role in working with congregations and vendors in planning, organizing the details and convening the Annual General Convention and the annual Pastors' Study Conference.

It was suggested for purposes of succession, one person taking all these roles would be onerous. It was suggested that in order to assist the president and boards, a new position could be created.

**The Administrative Coordinator:** The administrative Coordinator would be responsible for much of the day-to-day management and operations of CALC. These day-to-day and managerial tasks may include: acting as the first point of contact to our Association; preparing and distributing most all of the newsletters, notices and miscellaneous correspondence of the Association; keeping the CALC's website current; working with the Pastoral Review Panel and Board of Elders to keep guidelines and forms for the training, call and discipline of pastors current; working with local congregations in planning the details of provincial clusters; taking a lead role in working with congregations and vendors in organizing the details of and convening of the Annual General Convention and the annual Pastors' Study Conference, including registration; and such further duties as may be assigned by the National Council.

The delegates authorized National Council to prepare a job description for the position of Administrative Coordinator so that the delegates to the 2021 Annual General Convention may authorize the creation of the position, and funding the position according to the terms of remuneration found in CALC's 2021 budget.

The President offered to take on the role of Administrative Coordinator, if asked by NC. A motion was made directing NC to define the role of Administrative Coordinator for approval by the delegates to the 2021 convention. The position, if approved, to be filled in the typical fashion, that is, chosen from a slate of applicants.

#### **Trustees' Report:**

Vice President Fred Schickedanz delivered the Trustee's Report. The abnormalities of life in 2020 have radically impacted behaviors in CALC, its Boards, its member churches and its individual membership. The Board of Trustees has not met independent of the CALC National Council at all since the October 2019 CALC AGM. Members of the Board of Trustees have however been regularly engaged with their fellow national council members at regular, electronic meetings. The major discussions for the year have involved:

1. Governance issues to allow CALC AGM's to take place electronically.
2. Changing CALC AGM's to much earlier calendar date, to allow financial reporting and budgeting to be more understandable to the membership.
3. CALC Financial Reports and budgeting for 2020.
4. Necessary governance modifications to allow for easier succession practices within the CALC presidency position. This includes breaking the presidency position down into two independent roles.

The National Council is still trying to accommodate an "in person" AGM for April 2021.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Helen Zacharias, gave the following report:

**Financial Statements for 2019:** During 2019, CALC received income in the amount of \$100,281.00 and incurred expenses in the amount of \$104,634.00 for an operating loss of \$4,362.00. At the end of 2019 CALC carried a surplus of unrestricted funds of \$27,137 and restricted funds of \$9,321.00 (Restricted Funds: Pastoral Formation Fund \$2,571.00; Gathering Fund \$6,007.00; and the Church Extension Fund \$743.00). The financial report was adopted by the delegates.

**Financial Statements for 2020:** As of September 30, 2020 CALC carried a surplus of unrestricted funds of \$33,712.26 and restricted funds of \$9,321.51 (Restricted Funds: Pastoral Formation Fund \$2,571.07; Gathering Fund \$6,007.44; and the Church Extension Fund \$743.00).

The delegates approved the following budget for the period ending December 31, 2021:

<b>Revenue</b>	
Congregational Benevolence	73,350.00
Contributions – other	10,000.00
Convention Registrations	7,500.00
Pastors' Conference Registrations	5,000.00
GST Rebate	800.00
	96,650.00
<b>Disbursements</b>	
Administrative Assistant <sup>1</sup>	1,200.00
Administrative Coordinator <sup>2</sup>	18,800.00
President <sup>3</sup>	16,000.00
Annual National Convention.	20,000.00
Bank service charges	100.00
Committee Expenses	1,000.00
Conference fees	500.00
Director liability insurance	1,000.00
ILT Canada Society	3,000.00
Marriage Registration	2,500.00
Membership - CCCC	350.00
National Council Meetings	7,500.00
Office & Postage	200.00
Pastor's Conference	13,000.00
Travel – Pastoral & Executive	6,000.00
Reserve	4,000.00
Website Maintenance	1,500.00
	96,650.00

(1) Administrative Assistant 4 months at \$300.00 per month \$1,200.00

(2) Administrative Coordinator 4 months at \$2,500.00 plus 8 months at \$1,000.00 for \$18,800.00

(3) President 8 months at \$2,000.00 per month \$16,000.00

### Elections.

Two positions on the National Council became vacant at the convention. The position on the Board of Elders held by Sherland Chhangur; and the Position on the Board of Trustees held by Tim Bauer.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the life of congregations and of our association. This simply was not a good time to recruit candidates for the two positions becoming vacant at 2020 Annual General Convention. The 2021 Annual General Convention is an important one. The office of the President, Secretary and a position on the Board of Trustees will become vacant. The National Council has much work to accomplish before the 2021 Annual General Convention, including: (a) the creation of four new ad hoc committees who, subject to the Board of Elders oversight, will work to fulfill the Board of Elders mandate in certain spiritual matters; (b) the creation of a paid position entitled “Administrative Coordinator”

For this reason, National Council suggested that the delegates elect the two eligible incumbents to their position for a term that ends at the 2021 Annual General Convention. The delegates voted to elect Sherland Chhangur to the position of Elder and Tim Bauer to the position of Trustee for a term ending at the 2021 CALC Annual General Convention.

### Nominating Committee.

The following were elected as a Nominating Committee for CALC's 2021 Annual General Convention: Helen Zacharias, Fred Schickedanz, Pastor Peeter Vanker, Laurie Storsater, Pastor Bart Eriksson and Pastor Harry Huff.

The Nominating Committee's mandate is to seek candidates who will stand for election to the following positions:

1. President, Secretary and Pastor Eddie Kwok's position on the Board of Trustees for a four year term ending 2025.
2. For the position on the Board of Elders held by Sherland Chhangur which would normally end in 2024 and for the position on the Board of Trustees held by Tim Bauer which would normally end in 2024.

### 2021 Annual General Convention.

#### Date, Time & Venue

The delegates voted to convene the 2021 Annual General Convention (AGC) as follows:

1. **In-Person Meeting:** The AGC will be an in person meeting.
2. **Date & Time:** Saturday April 10, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM – Mountain Daylight Time.
3. **Location/Venue.** The AGC will be held in Alberta at a central location and at a venue to be determined by the National Council.
4. **Agenda.** The morning session will be devoted to the usual business meeting and the afternoon devoted to a keynote speaker and closing worship.
5. **COVID-19 Contingencies.**
  - a. Any person entitled to attend the annual convention may participate in the meeting by means of a telephonic, an electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting; and
  - b. In the case of a provincial lockdown, National Council may vote to hold the meeting entirely by means of a telephonic, an electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

With the business as set forth in the agenda for the meeting completed, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting, was seconded and carried. Pastor Alan Gilman provided a closing hymn. He sang and played guitar. Pastor Harry Huff closed in prayer.