

The Lutheran Connector

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

September 2011: Fall Edition

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH TO HOST CALC GENERAL CONVENTION 2011



*CALC is a Community of Independent
Congregations Living Together*

*The Word of God Created Us
The Word of God Sustains Us
The Word of God Redeems Us*

*We are servants of one another
We share one another's burdens
As Jesus served us and bore our burdens*

As one we proclaim Jesus to the world

The date for the 2011 General Convention of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations has been set for November 4-6 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Cochrane, AB. Cochrane is located in the heart of Alberta's cattle country, situated at the base of Big Hill in Bow Valley, 37 kms (23 mi) northwest of Calgary and less than an hour's drive from the spectacular Canadian Rocky Mountains. Cochrane is a historic western city and proudly exhibits its western heritage by a country and western downtown that gives visitors an authentic western experience.

General Convention 2011 will be significant for CALC as it celebrates its 20th Annual Convention.

These years have given CALC history and experience ... a past that we presently celebrate and are thankful for...and a future to embrace and forge together.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

	Page
• CALC General Convention	1
• President's Message:	2
• Recovering Lost Sheep	5
• Pastors' Retreat at River's Edge	6
• Congregational News	8
• National Council News	13
• Institute of Lutheran Theology	14
• Sola Publishing	14
• The Color of their Eyes	15
• Preparing for General Convention	16
• Notice of Constitutional Amendment	17
• Final News of Interest	18



The Convention theme is, 'Cast The Net On The Right ... And You Will Find' (John 21:6), which boldly brings to mind the initiative to try something new in faithfulness to God and His Word while being guided by the Holy Spirit.

On Saturday morning a relatively short business session will be followed by an informative session that will be of interest to those who are either new to CALC or who are hoping to learn more about CALC. **CALC 101** will explain who CALC is in terms of organization, ministry standards, confessional emphasis and vision.

The afternoon session will be devoted to the convention theme, which hopefully will engage the delegates and visitors in conversation and sharing about creative ways to "cast the net". The invited speaker for the afternoon session is Rev. Dr. Douglas Schoelles (*schell-iss*), lead pastor at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Keller, Texas. One of his passions (and his doctoral dissertation) is *How Do We Equip Parents to Be the Spiritual Leaders in Their Home*. He is looking forward to speaking about his passion at CALC's General Convention.



So mark it on your calendars: CALC General Convention, November 4-6.

A copy of the convention brochure as well as online registration for delegates and visitors is available at CALC's website: www.calc.ca. See you there!!

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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

As I reflected on recent events in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) and the church universal, two verses of the well loved hymn, "The Church's One Foundation" came to mind.

<p>Verse 2 Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth; her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth; one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food, and to one hope she presses, with every grace ended.</p>	<p>Verse 3 Though with a scornful wonder The world sees her oppressed, by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed, yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?" And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.</p>
--	--

Verse 2 of this beloved hymn lifts up the diverse membership, the strength, unity and mission of Christ's Church: proclamation of one Lord, one faith, one birth. Verse three is a verse of lamentation. It declares that that the unity of Christ's Church will be tested by persecution, schism and heresy precisely because she is his bride. These words of verse three have taken on flesh this summer.

The delegates to the 2011 National Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), held July 14-17, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, made history. They approved a new Statement on Human Sexuality ("Statement"). The adoption of the Statement permitted the delegates to pass resolutions which empowered ELCIC clergy to solemnize and/or bless same gender marriages, and empowered congregations to call and ordain non-celibate gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) people as

parish pastors. They join the United Church of Canada, Anglican Church of Canada and other mainline Protestant denominations who have endorsed these practices. CALC has responded in writing to these actions. You can find a link to CALC's responses and the response of the Lutheran Church-Canada at www.calc.ca. I commend these publications for your study.

To the extent that the clergy of the ELCIC solemnize or bless same gender marriages, and/or congregations call and ordain non-celibate GLBT people, they break faith with the historic witness of the Christian Church. They leave the church home and go down another path. The ELCIC's actions have exposed a deep division within the ELCIC and the church universal over these issues. Many faithful orthodox Lutherans within the ELCIC do not know what to do next and or even really understand the situation they face.

Christians who are opposed to same-gender marriage and the ordination of non-celibate GLBT people are routinely labeled as "homophobic," "judgmental" and "hypocritical." We must understand no matter what we may say in defense of our position in relation to marriage and ordination, we will be labeled judgmental, hypocritical and homophobic by those inside and outside the church who support the normalization of homosexuality and homosexual behavior within the church and Canadian society. Our stand on the Word of God has and will continue to represent a barrier and a wall of separation between CALC congregations and the members of some Christian denominations together with large segments of our Canadian society. Orthodox Christians who stand on the Word of God are suffering in other ways. It seems that every time orthodox Christians rise up to meet a challenge, we unite in order to face the challenge. We test the teaching of church leadership, and when such teaching threatens salvation, we flee the false teachers. Those that flee do not attempt to maintain unity between and among us. We fragment based on issues. Splits have and will be continue to form based upon essentials of faith, including, the authority of Scripture, Baptism, Holy Communion, the work and evidence of the Holy Spirit in the church, marriage and ordination. We will also continue to split based on non-essentials like women in leadership, church hierarchy and church organization. Fragmentation weakens the witness of the church and puts up barriers between and among church bodies and between the church and the un-churched. In the meantime, Canada and the U.S. are becoming secular humanist societies on a greater and grander scale. Despite the formation of mega churches in urban areas, membership in churches across our land is shrinking. We can see this trend in our own church body. Yet, Jesus reminds us there are people out there who are hungry. They have questions about life, themselves, faith and God. They are hungry for answers to their spiritual questions. Jesus calls us to go out into this world and feed them the Gospel. What do we do? How do we overcome these great odds and get the message out? If getting the message out and ministering to a broken world is a challenge for large church bodies and mega churches; how can CALC, a tiny church body, make even the slightest difference?

I was encouraged by the Gospel lesson for Sunday August 28th.

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

"Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matthew 14:13-21)

In this Gospel lesson, Jesus had confronted the disciples with an impossible task, physically feeding over 5,000 men, women and children. They had so little, five loaves and two small fish, with which to do so

much. They had to repent and admit that they could not by their own reason or strength or by their own physical resources, fulfill Jesus' command to feed. They needed a miracle.

Jesus broke and blessed the bread and the fish. In faith they distributed the food and a miracle occurred. Jesus changed and transformed the fish and the bread by his blessing. He gave the bread and fish supernatural attributes. Every time a man, woman or child picked up a fragment of bread or a piece of fish, the act of taking did not diminish the stock of bread or fish; just the opposite, the bread and fish multiplied. A new piece of bread and fish took the place of the one taken. In fact it was more than just a one for one replacement for pieces of bread and fish. In the end the disciples received twelve baskets of food.

Each congregation and each person who calls CALC home, must see themselves as one of the fish and one of the pieces of bread. We must ask Jesus to bless us in the way he blessed the bread and the fish. We must ask Jesus to transform us and give us supernatural attributes. We must ask God to use us to share the Gospel with the world around us and feed people with the Bread from Heaven, the Word Made flesh, our Lord Jesus. We must allow Jesus to use us to multiply the kingdom.

God has endowed each and every one of us with supernatural gifts. He made some preachers and teachers, some are administrators, some are given the gift of healing, some the gift of encouraging and others the ability to show mercy by helping. God has endowed us with the ability to bear supernatural spiritual fruit: peace, love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23). God has called each of us to use our gifts and bear fruit in order to enrich the church and equip the church for evangelism and growth. It is our reluctance to use our spiritual gifts and to bear spiritual fruit that frustrates the Holy Spirit and leads to challenges in the church.

We need a miracle. We need a new and clean heart, soul and mind. We need a new spirit, one that wants to follow God and strengthens us so that we may do God's will. The Bible speaks of only one way that can happen. We have to repent. We have to admit that we have failed God. We have to admit we wanted to do good, to preach and proclaim God's Word as law and Gospel and administer the Sacraments, but have failed. We must admit we have deluded ourselves. We mostly preached God's Word as all law or all Gospel. We have encouraged people to admit their sinners, suck it up and change by their own power and strength or remain the same way because we are born that way. We have not seen the log in our own eye; only the speck in our neighbor's. We have not encouraged people to seek a transformative relationship with Jesus Christ by admitting we are powerless to change and only Jesus can change them. If we can really repent; we can really be changed, and we can be the bread and fish that Jesus created us to be.

This is how we have to prepare for our upcoming annual General Convention. We have to confess our sins and empty ourselves of our pride, our judgmental attitudes and our reliance on human ways of dealing with challenges and be open to the work of the Holy Spirit. This is a time of great challenge and a time of great hope and promise for CALC. I want to encourage as many of you as possibly can, to come out to the convention and be blessed and transformed so that we may feed others and allow God to bless and change them.



In Christ's service,
Pastor Ed Skutshek, President

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. (Galatians 5:16-18)

RECOVERING LOST SHEEP: What's a church to do?

By Aaron Epp | Tuesday, July 19, 2011

Article used with permission granted by Christian Week (www.christianweek.org)

WINNIPEG, MB - As they walked out of church one Sunday last September, attendees at Waverley Fellowship Baptist Church stopped to sign three cards, one each for three couples who had contributed significantly to the life of the congregation and who had all, in the past 18 months, decided to leave that church and go elsewhere. *"The reasons they left were each different, says lead pastor Mark Kraft, but he wanted the couples to know the impact they had made while at the church, and that the church wished them all the best in the future."*

People leave churches for a variety of reasons - they have a relational falling out, they experience a life crisis, or they begin to feel disconnected for some other reason. Some find a different church to attend, and some stop attending church altogether.

Just as there are many reasons why people leave, there are a number of ways that churches respond. Kraft says that whenever possible, he and his church's leadership try to meet with the people who are leaving to discuss why. It's an informal exit interview that can take place over coffee. *"When that's possible, I encourage our leadership to do that,"* Kraft says. *"I make myself available for those things as well."*

Each year, the church reviews its membership list. If the church's leadership hasn't seen or heard from a member for six months, they are placed on an "inactive" list. After that member has been on the inactive list for 12 months, the church sends them a letter saying that they will be removed from the membership list unless the church hears from them otherwise. *"It's varied,"* Kraft says of the responses he receives to those letters. *"There's been instances where you don't hear anything from anybody, so you just do it."* Others ask to remain on the list until they find a new church home, others have been going to a different church so they begin the process of transferring their membership, and others respond in anger, asking, *"How dare you kick me off the membership!"*



Pastor Mark & Nicole Kraft w/children: Jeremy & Kayla

Never Rescinded

At Charleswood Mennonite Church, membership is never rescinded, says John Braun, who has been the lead pastor there for the past 17 years. Before his ministry at Charleswood, Braun was the pastor at a church where the membership list was re-evaluated and letters were sent out to members who had been inactive.

Braun found the practice to be counterproductive, and prefers to approach people as personally as possible when they are no longer attending the church. *"There are lots of reasons why a person might not be attending, so it's not good to jump to conclusions,"* Braun says, adding that patience is key.

"Sometimes people need space," he says. *"If you have the sense that they would like to be left alone for a while, then I think the church needs to have patience and then [approach them] again later on."*

At Calvary Temple, the downtown congregation that draws 1,800 to 2,000 people to its services each Sunday, it's easy for people to disappear out the back door if they haven't invested in a small group, says lead pastor Bruce Martin.

Approached By A Friend

If someone who has invested in the life of the church stops attending, typically they are approached by a friend from the church. If that friend asks Martin to visit the member who has stopped attending, he does. *"I have a theory that everybody...wants to know two things,"* Martin says. *"Do you love me? And, do you need me? That's usually what people are asking. Even the people who slam the door and say, 'I've had it, I'm going to walk out of here.' What they're really doing is testing you to see if you'll love them through the anger."*

During his conversations with people who stopped attending Calvary Temple, Martin attempts to understand why, and he apologizes if they feel that the church has hurt them. The church doesn't ever purge its membership, he adds. *"If someone didn't want to be a member, they'd have to tell us - we wouldn't tell them,"* Martin says. *"I don't look for ways to exclude people. I look for ways to include people."*

At Waverley, Kraft has seen his share of membership transitions. He once heard a statistic that said when there's a change in senior pastor leadership, there's usually a 20 to 30 per cent turnover rate in membership.

Since he took over as lead pastor in August 2006, he's found that statistic to be true. *"I've learned many, many times that it has to do way more with the person that's leaving than me, and secondly, sometimes it is me, and the question I always ask is, God, what would you have me learn from this situation? Is there a nugget of truth in what they're saying, and if there is, what would that be, and how can I learn from it?"* Kraft says. *"And I've found most often when I've had a chance to reflect in a healthy way, if it was something I've done or my style or my philosophy of ministry, I own what I need to own to the people or to the individual, and communicate that over a coffee or an email,"* he continues.

"Nine times out of 10, it really opens the door to have no awkwardness when you bump into people down the road."

CALC PASTORS' RETREAT 2011 – RIVER'S EDGE CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

This year's CALC Pastors' Retreat followed a different format in that it centered around a course, "A Pastor's Devotional Life". The course given by Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS), Fort Wayne, Indiana provided an opportunity to examine the devotional life expected of a Lutheran pastor, seeking to assist the participants in designing and developing a regular devotional practice for his or her ministry. Prayer, meditation, reading and the Christian lifestyle were stressed and discussed.

John Pless, courtesy of Rev. Harry Huff, inducted as a member of "Team Canada".



The course instructor was Rev. John T. Pless, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions and Director of Field Education at CTS.

The 3-day course, June 7-9, 2011, was held at River's Edge Camp and Retreat Center, located a short distance away from Cochrane, Alberta in the idyllic foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Very comfortable lodging was provided at the Retreat Center's "Country Inn" (where the course was held) with meals being provided at nearby Frontier Hall.



CALC's pastors, all but one, were able to attend the retreat, including Tom Baker, Rick Bergh, Ed Skutshek, Harry Huff, Marc Lapointe, Karen Seifert, and Ana Beck.



As well, Ron Voss and Pastor Peter Hincke from the ELCIC's Eastern Synod attended.

The participants were treated to fine western hospitality by the River's Edge staff including tasty,

wholesome meals (see photo above left) and evening snacks.



Rev. Pless started his lectures with an overview of 'contemporary spirituality', spirituality of the self, drawn from a variety of sources with an emphasis on experiences disconnected from God's Word as truth and appealing to the language of autonomy so prevalent in the post-modern world. The Lutheran response is that the Word of God creates faith – God coming down.

He introduced the group to Martin Luther's "correct way to study theology" anchored in the three rules set forth in Psalm 119: A threefold method of prayer (*Oratio*), meditation (*Meditatio*), and conflict (*Tentatio*). He provided a novel understanding of Luther's Catechism as being used as a prayer book. He concluded his lectures by introducing the group to three representative Lutheran theologians, one from the post-Reformation period, one from the 19th century and one from the 20th century, whose writings have provided pearls from the past, contributing to an understanding of a devotional life:

- *Johann Gerhard (1582-1637), who is regarded as the most influential Lutheran theologian from the great "golden age" of Lutheran orthodoxy, that period of time marked basically by most of the 17th century.*
- *Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872), a founding sponsor of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LCMS).*
- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), German Lutheran pastor, theologian and martyr. He was a participant in the German resistance movement against Nazism and was executed by hanging in April 1945, 23 days before the Nazis' surrender. His view of Christianity's role in the secular world has become very influential.*



Johann Gerhard (1582-1637)



Wilhelm Löhe (1808-1872)



Dietrich Boenhoeffer (1906-1945)

It is so awesome to have the opportunity to be together as colleagues, brothers and sisters in Christ. Meeting Pastor Ana, Pastor Harry and Pastor Peter from the east was a privilege too. Rev. Pless provided some great insight, bringing history to the present ... very inspiring. I look forward to 2012. – Pastor Tom Baker (Christ Lutheran – Morden)



The happy 'graduating' class along with course instructor, Rev. John Pless. Left to right, back row: Pastors Marc Lapointe and Harry Huff, Ron Voss and Rev. John Pless. Left to right, middle row: Pastors Peter Hincke, Ed Skutshek, Rick Bergh and Tom Walker. Left to right, front row: Pastors Ana Beck and Karen Seifert (and 'Tommy').

The time together and the learning experience was appreciated by all.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

(Martin Luther-Vancouver, Grace Lutheran-Kelowna, St. Andrew's-Kamloops, Christ Lutheran-Sexsmith/Journeys-Grand Prairie, St. Peter's-Cochrane, Christ Lutheran-Morden, Faith Lutheran-North York, Resurrection Lutheran-Pembroke)

Grace Lutheran – Kelowna



The summer has been very busy here at Grace Lutheran in West Kelowna, BC. Over 55 children participated daily in our annual vacation Bible school, July 18 through 21, showcasing David and Goliath. Pastor Karen and husband Mike, along with assistance from some of our youth, created amazing larger-than-life puppets for the VBS and for two local Canada Day parades.

We had great response from our parade participation and from our booth during the 'Westside Daze' Canada-day festivities, resulting in a number of new children attending our VBS – and hopefully our Sunday School in the fall – as well as our fledgling contemporary Sunday noon-hour worship service, 'Get Fed'!



Goliath VBS Puppet



Pastor Karen enjoyed some time off at the end of July and Pastor Ed began his holidays August 1st.

One week later, Pastor Karen and husband Mike became the proud parents of Thomas (Tommy) Orville Seifert, Grace Lutheran's newest member. He was born Tuesday August 9, 2011 in Prince George, British Columbia, weighing 3 pounds and seven ounces, and was 16 inches long. Tommy was born a month and a half before his due date. Pastor Karen was taken to Prince George by air ambulance, as Kelowna General Hospital cannot handle babies under 30 weeks. Tommy continues to make progress, has surpassed his birth weight and is growing. He was transferred to Kelowna General Hospital's maternity ward the evening of Thursday, August 25th. We praise God for Tommy's good health and excellent care, and for Pastor Karen and Mike's return home to Kelowna!

Pastor Ed returned to his work at Grace one week early from holidays and the days have flown by preparing for a very busy fall. Volunteers have stepped forward to handle all aspects of congregational life here at Grace Lutheran, including worship services. God has blessed us with many talents at Grace and we are thankful for all the efforts and commitment put forth, during summer holidays, by our church family! One successful and much-anticipated summer event is our monthly Hot Dog BBQ luncheons, put on by our Special Events Committee. It serves as a wonderful way to include family guests and friends in the fellowship we enjoy as a church family – and there is always so much food – and much more than hotdogs!

This fall, we are looking forward to two Bible studies led by Pastor Ed; a mid-week study on the Book of Job, and our Sunday morning study on the Exodus. Our congregation will experience our first Mission Fest at Grace, where representatives from nine of the missions we support will be attending our September 11th Sunday service, followed by a luncheon and the opportunity to meet with the representatives and learn more about the missions.

Youth events are in the works, including our annual 'Hallowe'en' sleepover at Grace, for youth in Grades 7 and up. While Pastor Karen is on maternity leave, congregants will cover for Pastor Ed on Sundays he is away on CALC business. We are blessed with many in our church family who have the necessary gifts for leading worship, reading scripture, conducting Children's Time, and reading prepared sermons. Our congregation is thankful that God has prepared Pastor Ed and CALC to guide ELCIC congregations struggling for direction and yearning for fellowship with others who believe and hold reverent the inerrant Word of God.

'The law of his God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.' - Psalm 37:31

Submitted by Karen Emmond on behalf of GLC Congregation

St. Andrew's Lutheran – Kamloops



It has been an exciting and blessed time at St. Andrew's following the call acceptance of Pastor David and Cathy Schumacher from Ponoka, Alberta in December of 2010. Their arrival ended a year-long search and has certainly brought a spirit of leadership and the Word to all.

The spring "learn to pray" program led by Pastor and Cathy was very successful. This program was complimented by ongoing events with lay leaders from the congregation including Sunday morning Bible study, ladies Bible study, spring and fall choir presentations and men's prayer breakfast. Pastor David also led a weekly afternoon Bible study. The special praise and worship team has continued with their special music now under the leadership of Cathy.

I would like to highlight the men's prayer breakfast for this issue. St. Andrew's men's breakfasts have been successfully held over the years, the most recent being with Pastor Steven Herbert. In April of 2010, Alfie Kiesman proposed that the program be resumed as a prayer breakfast to initially pray for St. Andrew's quest for a pastor and of course for praise and thanks to God for all our blessings, and all other concerns for the church, its members and our world about us.

The initial attendance on Wednesday mornings was quite small, but as the weeks went on, the word of special fellowship, pretty good food and the ever presence of the Holy Spirit as we kneel at the altar brought more to the event.

The morning starts with a meal cooked by one of the guys, some of the favorites being Keisman kubosa omelet, Schumacher sausage, bepple Portugese with muffins and Eggs Benedict. The program is totally funded by those attending. Fellowship and friendly discussion takes place during the meal followed by a morning devotion. We then proceed to the altar and kneel in prayer with all presenting their personal petitions to the lord, a very special time indeed.

Everyone attending participates in the morning including the set up and preparation, taking turns at devotion and of course doing the dishes. The breakfast and time together in worship has become very meaningful to those who come and as mentioned earlier, the food is pretty good. Someone suggested that we should maybe produce the first ever "Lutheran men's cookbook" featuring a breakfast menu, possibly named, "breakfasts for the Lord".

The next few months will be a special time for our congregation as we will be planning St. Andrew's 50th anniversary in 2012. A weekend of celebration and worship will be held at a date to be determined in the next couple of months. More to follow in the next issue of *The Connector*.

Submitted by Dennis Kujat, President.

St. Peter's Lutheran – Cochrane



St. Peter's continues to become a simple church with a more focused emphasis. The church is accustomed to specific ways of doing church and a paradigm shift that is new and different becomes a challenge to implement. We try to face reality and take responsibility of how the church has failed in its implementation and teaching of the gospel. We can either stick our heads in the sand and wonder why the Christian church is struggling in North America or we can ask God for some help to do things in a different way.

The gospel message remains the same today as it has been since Jesus' death and resurrection. The promises, hope, and grace are still available. But the world has changed. So how do you fit the message into a culture and church that you and I live in? Make it simpler! Make it about making disciples! Notice what Jesus did! Follow the patterns of God's Word. It kind of makes sense doesn't it?

We are in the process of praying through a new mission statement at St. Peter's. At St. Peter's, we believe that faith is a journey to enjoy! There is something more to discover about God. There is always an opportunity to grow closer to Jesus. The Holy Spirit is always willing to move us out into exciting areas of life where we will find our unique place and purpose in God's bigger story for the world. Isn't it good to be part of a bigger story?

We invite people to enter into a process of becoming a disciple. Our goal is to help people move you forward in this journey; helping, encouraging and equipping each one for a adventure with God. We hope people will be interested in discovering a life filled with God? At St. Peter's we have four emphases which underlie our discipleship process.

What's a discipleship process? A discipleship process was part of Jesus command in Matthew when he commanded his disciples to Go into all nations and make disciples. How do you make disciples? This is our attempt. A discipleship process moves all of our members through ongoing maturing faith steps so that each ones comes to Know God, Grow in faith and Sow the seeds of Christ love to a lost and hurting world.

What are our specific emphases?

O brother, where are thou?

Encouraging men to get back into the game

No journey in isolation

The importance of a faith buddy

Family-centered faith formation

Empowering parents to raise up their children in the faith

The significance of prayer

The untapped source and connection to God

Most people do not want another activity or program to add to their already busy schedule. We are in the process of eliminating programs and making a conscious choice to spend our time and energy equipping people to make faith development and spiritual formation a natural part of their daily life outside the activities and programs of the church.

How will we do this?

Statistics prove that the involvement of men in their church and men who practice faith daily in their homes is crucial to the involvement of the rest of the family and the continuation of their child's involvement once they leave home. We will equip and teach men to take an important spiritual leadership role in their homes, communities and at work.

Jesus' pattern of making disciples included the importance of mentorship. At St. Peter's we believe that each person should have at least one other faith buddy to encourage, support, and challenge each other to grow in their faith. We will encourage people to pray about that one person whom God wants them to spend time with. We will provide venues of fellowship through our focus group ministry. We will provide peer mentorship training and a process that will form effective faith buddy relationships.

At St. Peter's the church is not the primary influencer of a child's faith and we will not take away the privileges that scripture has given to parents as the ones who pass on faith. We will provide resources and equip people to influence their children and grandchildren's faith formation. Our faith at home ministry will equip and provide ongoing resources for use outside the church building.

The significance and the teaching of prayer will be embedded into every fiber of what we do at St. Peter's. We will continue to provide a variety of prayer opportunities outside of Sunday morning. Prayer along with God's Word will become a daily practice of each of our members and become central in our homes and the life at St. Peter's.

We are in the final phase of completing a new website and continue to look at how to use technology to get the message of the gospel out to the world wide web.

- Pastor Rick Bergh

Christ Lutheran – Morden



It is hard to believe that our summer has quickly been passing us by, but it is fun to look back on the last few months and remember some of our highlights. During our Sunday Services we have had some musical guests join us (Mother's Day) and some of the younger teenagers from the church have also sung.

Just before July we held our annual Church BBQ to celebrate another completed year of ministry. The last weekend of July another Church social had been held at the home of one of our church families. Events such as these we value so much. They provide an outlet for further relational growth for the church ... plus, they are fun and we get to eat someone else's cooking for a change (lol).

With the fall approaching, we look forward to another great ministry year and thank God for the slow and gradual growth of people that He has brought to us. There are more children and a few younger families in the church once again and we thank God for them. And we have a fantastic Church Council who have a heart for seeing the love of God touch each life, each family.

We are faced with the challenge of questioning how we might continue moving forward diligently and effectively with the message of Jesus in our community and area. It's a challenge, but it's fun too. And we thank God for it all.

Resurrection Lutheran – Pembroke



Resurrection Lutheran looks forward to a wonderful Fall filled with activity. Something that they are very excited over is a series of studies that will be available to the whole church. It is called the, *Taking Hold Of Your Life – Studies for Life-Improvement*. This series of studies includes a variety such as,

POTTER'S CLAY – Training in Becoming Malleable

- *A year long course in how to use Prayer, Meditation, Suffering to allow God to shape us into His Image and Likeness using Martin Luther's, 'Three Rules' of Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio.*

CHRISTIAN ETHICS – how to know what is right in a messed up world.

BODY and SOUL – Discover the connection between Health and Faith.

PERFECT GENTLEMAN'S TOOLKIT 101

- *A Course designed to equip boys age 8 to mid-teens with basic skills to safely complete minor home and automobile maintenance.*

TRUE BEAUTY – a mini spa, a spiritual discussion, a practical challenge.

Resurrection also has a Men's group, Bible Study and Prayer Time, and other ministry opportunities. For more information, please check out <http://sites.radiantwebtools.com/?i=8683>

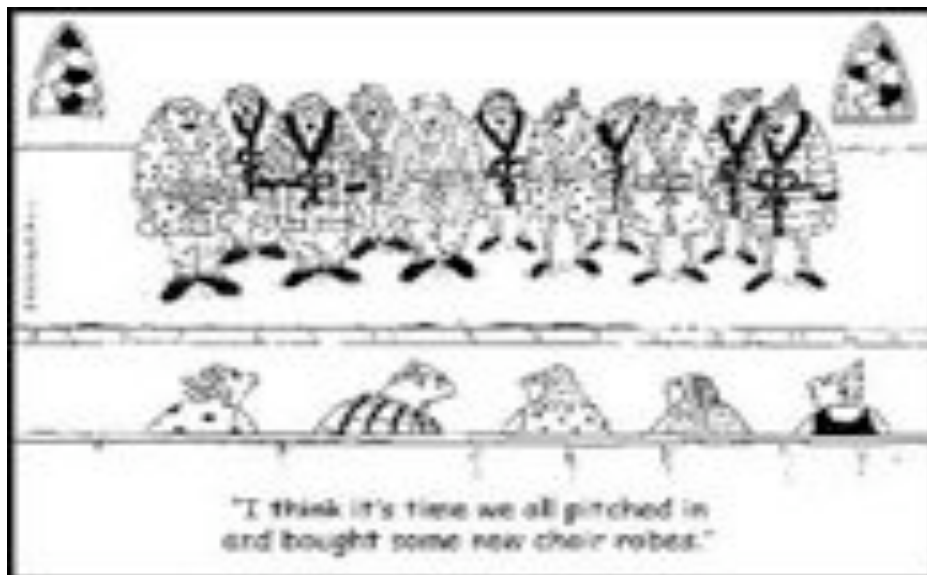


NATIONAL COUNCIL NEWS

Since the last (May 2011) edition of *The Lutheran Connector*, CALC's National Council has met once, in person in Calgary on May 28th. At this meeting:

- Pastor Ed's work in securing marriage registration for CALC in Alberta and BC was reported as progressing well.
- Work continued in the preparation of a document, "Charting Your Course to Greener Pastures An Introduction to CALC For Congregations in Transition", which can be made available upon request by congregations seeking to sever their relationship with the ELCIC as a result of the actions taken at 2011 ELCIC National Convention.
- Pastor Ed was invited to visit a Lutheran congregation in Ontario on June 25th and 26th where he preached and helped them sort out some of the meanings behind the motions that were to be presented at the ELCIC 2011 National Convention.
- Plans for St. Peter's, Cochrane to host the 2011 General Convention to be held November 4-6, 2011 in Cochrane were discussed.

Next meeting (in-person) of the National Council is to be held in Calgary on Saturday, September 10th, 2011.



INSTITUTE OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY



Where The Reformation Lives ...

The response has been overwhelming!

We at the Institute of Lutheran Theology are excited to see the incredible response to our offering of the free course for congregations on evangelism, "How God Grows Churches." Lutheran congregations across the country are clearly demonstrating their desire - as the body of Christ - to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19, NIV).

To view the course description for this Fall's evangelism course, including the dates and times of this class, please go to [www, http://www.ilt.org/files/HowGodGrowsChurches.pdf](http://www.ilt.org/files/HowGodGrowsChurches.pdf). If your congregation has not yet signed up, but wishes to take advantage of this first of its kind course offering, please let us know. If this is your first time participating in a course from ILT, please contact our Director of Information Technology and Registrar, Dr. Doug Dillner (admin@ilt.org), about computer setups and Internet connections.

Our course on evangelism this Fall is just one of the many educational opportunities available to your congregation through ILT's Word at Work program. Other classes for the Fall Word at Work program include: *Introduction to the Apostle Paul*: Mondays, Oct 10 - Nov 14, *Lutheran Church History: Our past, our present, and our future*: Tuesdays, Oct 11 - Nov 15 and *Defending Your Faith! Apologetics for the Christian Layman*, Oct 20 - Nov 10. All those congregations that have formally partnered with the Institute of Lutheran Theology (known as Distance Teaching Centers) in our mission to educate the next generation of faithful Lutheran preachers and teachers are able to enroll in any of the Word at Work program courses free of charge. This is a great way for your congregation to become a part of ILT's effort to equip pastors with a commitment both to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and to deep dialogue with the contemporary intellectual horizon.

There are many other educational opportunities that ILT can provide and would be privileged to assist all who are seeking graduate and post-graduate degrees. For a complete view of what ILT offers, please follow the link: www.ilt.org.

INTRODUCING SOLA PUBLISHING



Sola Publishing is an educational ministry serving the needs of congregations of NALC, LCMC, CALC, Lutheran CORE, and other orthodox Christians looking for teaching resources that are trustworthy and useful, at a reasonable price.

Sola's materials are grounded in the authority of Scripture, with a distinctively confessional Lutheran focus, centering in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sola strives to be practical and functional, with curricula written by people doing actual ministry in congregations.

Sola has a wide array of ministry products such as:

Adult Resources *Children's Resources* *Adult Bible Studies* *Bible Book Studies*
Women's & Men's Group Studies *Sunday Schoolhouse* *Vacation Bible School*
Small Cat Series *Confirmation* *Worship Resources* *Books*
Connection Magazine

There is a wide array of resources available for congregations to use in effectively communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their regions. For more information, a print copy of the current Sola Catalog can be downloaded from: www.solapublishing.com/doc/SolaPublishingCatalog.pdf

THE COLOR OF THEIR EYES

This past July was the anniversary of my 15th year of being in pastoral ministry. My first 11 were as youth pastor and the past 4 have been as pastor of Christ Lutheran – Morden. Through the years there have been more than a few wonderful people who have left an indelible mark on my life, helping shape me as a person and as a pastor. A young teenage guy by the name of Stacey was one of those people.

I met Stacey when he was only 15 years old. He was born in the US and had moved to Fort St. John, BC when he was only 10. Stacey was an avid basketball player. He was unlike anything that we had ever seen on a junior high or senior high basketball court. His mother even had a miniature basketball court made on their yard for Stacey to play on.

I would drive out to his house to play *'one on one'* against him. Stacey loved to play and that is exactly what he would do, *'play with me.'* He could have beaten me easily, but often took it easy until the score became close and then usually finished the game off like a pro, sinking his final basket as if it were a last second buzzer beater in game 7 of the NBA final. He would cheer with his hands raised overhead, jogging a victory lap around his homemade court ... and would then politely decline my offer of teaching him another sport, such as, boxing.

When Stacey began attending senior high youth in our church he dove right in, fully engaging into every youth retreat, function or event that was going on. He absorbed it all, including most conversations that took place about the love of God for all people ... how all people matter to God and the church. You could see on his face the concentration and it left myself or the other leaders saying to one another, *'Stacey is really growing, he is taking it all in and it was fun to see grow in his walk with Jesus.'* And it was exciting.

When Stacey had graduated from High School and was preparing to leave for Capernwray Bible College in the fall, I had met with him before he left. We reminisced over the years we shared together and he asked me if I knew what had made the biggest impression in his life during his years in FSJ. I tried to think of what story or lesson might have been told, but his answer had put so much into perspective. He said, *'What meant the most to me over the past 4 years was when you came and played basketball with me.'*

'It was when you came to play basketball with me.' This remark by Stacey is something that I have carried with me ever since. I have attended several church growth seminars and courses. I have spent countless hours either by myself or with others trying to come up with ideas and strategies that will hopefully be a catalyst to further growth within the local church. And these are all good things ... courses, seminars, brain-storming sessions, etc. But they are all empty unless these strategies and ideas

are accompanied by an authentic and genuine, heart desire to know people. You see, nobody really cares how much you know until they know how much you care. All of the courses and resources are all for not unless they are used to personally engage people with the love of Jesus. Techniques and theories have no impact without heartfelt compassion that will meet people in the 'day to dayness' of their lives by taking notice of the color of their eyes.

I think that most congregations want to see their church grow. It can be an indicator that people are being inspired and encouraged in their walk with Christ and that they have a strong sense of belonging to a church family that cares for them. As believers and followers of God we seek to make Him known here on earth. All of the creativity, brain-storming, and resources within our congregations are used to engage the world with the love and compassion of God where people sense that the church accepts them and that they belong and are cared for.

It begins by taking notice of one another ... to care deeply ... to notice of the color of each other's eyes. Often what demonstrates the love of God more than ministry programs and events is simply taking an interest in another ... *'what meant the most to me was when you came to play basketball with me.'* I have learned much through this simple phrase by Stacey ... and by the way ... his eyes are brown.

Pastor Tom Baker
Christ Lutheran – Morden, MB



PREPARING FOR CALC'S 2011 GENERAL CONVENTION...

ORDINATION OF WOMEN TO THE OFFICE OF WORD & SACRAMENT/ STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

One of the items of business at CALC's upcoming 2011 General Convention, November 4-6 in Cochrane, will be the adoption of the two papers (including amendments, if any, arising from the congregational review), "Ordination of Women to the Office of Word and Sacrament - Scriptural and Confessional Authority", and "Statement on Marriage and Human Sexuality - Scriptural and Confessional Authority" that Pastor Ed Skutshek introduced at the 2010 General Convention in Morden. Recently a St. Peter's Convention Committee met to discuss and plan the arrangements for the 2011 General Convention. It is hoped that the business can be taken care of expeditiously so as to allow a 'CALC 101' session to take place before lunch. The understanding is that with a year to review the papers and provide feedback, there would be limited, if any discussion required at the 2011 General Convention.

Please come prepared in having read each paper. Both papers can be found at:
<http://www.calc.ca/resources.htm>

Notice of Proposed Constitutional Amendment Submitted by Christ Lutheran, Sexsmith, Alberta

According to Article Seventeen, Section 3.1 of CALC's constitution, amendments to CALC's constitution and bylaws may be proposed and submitted to the annual General Convention, provided that the amendment is authorized and signed by representatives of at least one Member congregation or the National Council. Pursuant to Section 3.2 of the same Article, the President shall have the proposed amendment prepared in proper form with the approval of those proposing the amendment (concerning the wording and intent of the amendment). The President shall arrange to publish the proposed amendment in the official publication(s) of this Association at least thirty days prior to the General Convention. Representatives of Christ Lutheran Church of Sexsmith, Alberta, have proposed the following amendment to CALC's constitution and provided the accompanying rationale:

Resolution of Concern for presentation at the 2011 General Convention of the Canadian Association of Congregations according to Article Nine, Section 2 of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Christ Lutheran Church, Sexsmith, Alberta recommends that Article Ten (The National Council), section 10 (Membership) of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations be amended to include the new section 10.1 which will read as follows:

10.1 Member congregations are encouraged to participate in the life of this Association by serving on the National Council. Member congregation may have a maximum of two seats to fill the required number of seats on the National Council.

Rationale

After much discussion, the Church Council of Christ Lutheran Church, Sexsmith feels that we need to encourage new member congregations to take an active role in the life of this Association. As such, we believe that this resolution will open the door and help to foster growth within this Association by inviting and encouraging member congregations to be involved in the life of this Association through the National Council. Christ Lutheran Church Council agree that limiting member congregations to a maximum of two members opens the possibility for more member congregations to be encouraged and to be involved on the National Council of this Association.

If this amendment is passed by the delegates to the Annual General Convention, for it to be effective it must be approved by 75% of CALC's congregations who cast votes approving the amendment at a congregational meeting called for that purpose. The National Council has not had an opportunity to discuss the proposed resolution.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Ed Skutshek, President



FINAL NEWS OF INTEREST

- ✓ The Board of Directors of the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) has unanimously elected Dr. Frederick W. Baltz as the seminary's Interim President. Dr. Baltz is Pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Galena, Illinois and will remain in that position while also leading the seminary.
- ✓ CALC responds to actions taken at the recent ELCIC National Convention. Statement can be found at: http://www.calc.ca/calc_responds.htm

SEE YOU ALL IN COCHRANE!



November 4-6, 2011

**St. Peter's Lutheran Church,
Cochrane, Alberta**

THE LUTHERAN CONNECTOR

The Official Publication of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC) www.calc.ca

Editor: Pastor Tom Baker

Assistant Editor: Mr. Ron Voss

Please direct all correspondence to: Pastor Tom Baker (c/o Christ Lutheran Church)
Morden, MB
R6M 1N9
Phone: (204) 822-3277
Mobile: (204) 823-2777
Email: christlc@mymts.net