



## **‘The Little Lutheran Church That Stood’ – Q&A’s about the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC)**

**Q:** *What can you tell me about CALC’s roots?*

**A:** CALC was birthed in the early 1990s by a group of conservative Lutheran lay people and clergy who desired to keep central in their faith the authority of Scripture. Today, as then, CALC provides a “home” for Biblically-faithful Canadian Lutherans. In June 1994, CALC was granted its Canadian federal incorporation and associated charitable status.

**Q:** *Tell me what CALC teaches and believes?*

**A:** CALC is a “confessional church” which means that its members and member congregations subscribe to written statements of what CALC believes, teaches and confesses (see Appendix I). Central to CALC’S teaching is the ultimate authority of the Scriptures. Further, central to God’s written word is the saving work of Jesus Christ which becomes paramount for our faith and life. Our commitment above all is to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died and rose again to save us from sin, death and the devil. It is through Jesus’ death and resurrection and by his grace that we are in fellowship with God. We are called then to spread this good news to the “nations”.

**Q:** *What is CALC’s mission?*

**A:** CALC is a community of independent congregations living together.

*The Word of God* has created us,

*The Word of God* sustains us,

*The Word of God* redeems us.

As believers we are servants of each other,

As believers we share the burdens of each other,

Like Jesus did for us at the cross.

As one we proclaim Jesus Christ into the world.

**Q:** *Where is CALC headquartered?*

**A:** CALC has its headquarters in Kamloops, B.C. Thus, along with the ELCIC and Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC), CALC is one of three Canadian-based Lutheran denominations.

**Q:** *How many congregations are there presently in CALC?*

**A:** There are currently eight congregations in CALC: Christ, Morden, MB; Christ, Sexsmith, AB; St. Andrew’s, Kamloops, BC; St. Peter’s, Cochrane, AB; Grace, Kelowna, BC; Faith, North York, ON; Martin Luther, Vancouver, BC and one mission congregation, Journey’s Lutheran Church, Grande Prairie, AB. Thus, CALC fits among the ten relatively smaller Lutheran denominations currently active in Canada (see table below).

<b>Lutheran Denominations Active in Canada</b>	<b>Congregations</b>
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)	612
Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC)	320
Apostolic Lutheran Church of America (ALCA)	2
Alliance of Renewal Churches (ARC) - charismatic	1
Association of Free Lutheran Congregations-Canada (AFLC)	10
Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC)	8
Church of the Lutheran Brethren-Canada-Canada (CLB-C)	11
Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC)	2
LC-MS English District*	12
Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (LCR)	1
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)	6
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)	16

\* A non-geographical synod of LC-MS

**Q:** *What are CALC's administrative costs?*

**A:** As there are no salaried employees in CALC's National Office, the administrative costs are minimal and primarily related to out-of-pocket expenses. CALC endeavours to be a lean organization focussing on growing the mission through church plants and providing support for the ministry needs of its local parishes as identified through CALC's national conventions.

**Q:** *Under CALC, who owns the congregational property and building?*

**A:** As per Article 2.2.2 of CALC's Constitution, "The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations has no claim to a local congregation's property".

**Q:** *What is CALC's position with respect to the ordination of women to the pastoral office?*

**A:** Men and women may become pastors.

**Q:** *What is CALC's policy concerning who may participate in Holy Communion?*

**A:** CALC practices "open communion", that is, Lutherans from other church bodies as well as other Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion in CALC churches.

**Q:** *Who can be called to be a pastor to CALC congregations?*

**A:** According to the constitutional amendments approved at the 2009 General Convention, and ratified by the congregations, the number of classes of pastors was reduced from ten to three, namely, "pastors of this association" (serving in parish ministry), "pastors in extended ministry" (serving in non-parish ministry) and "pastors emeriti". According to *The Book of Concord* (Kolb & Wengert, pages 340-341) "...it is necessary for the church to retain the right to call, choose, and ordain ministers. This right is a gift bestowed exclusively on the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church." Accordingly, CALC tries to minimize the denominational constraints placed upon congregations as to who they can call.

**Q:** *How does CALC train its pastors?*

**A:** Given its small size, CALC does not have a seminary of its own. However, CALC does not necessarily consider that a limitation as that allows CALC's congregations to spread their nets wider to find a pastor aligned with CALC's Confession of Faith. As well, in cooperation with the Institute of Lutheran Theology this has opened up the opportunity for CALC to introduce a new innovative program (in progress) for pastoral preparation – the Holistic Pathway – to meet the diverse needs of CALC's congregations, particularly smaller, rural congregations.

**Q:** *What are the financial implications of joining CALC?*

**A:** Membership in CALC imposes no financial obligations on a congregation. The association depends entirely on contributions from congregations and individuals. We suggest giving a portion of benevolence dollars to the general fund of CALC to help pay for the National Office's administrative expenses, conventions, and expenses associated with supporting the ministry of our congregations. Additionally, CALC has one restricted fund available for direct contribution, the *Mission Support Fund*.

**Q:** *Does CALC address social issues?*

**A:** CALC views the congregation as the primary expression of the church and generally does not speak for its members. However, in circumstances where the truth of God's Word is being consistently challenged, the association may decide to speak to the issue. For example, according to CALC's *Policy on Marriage*, "In accordance with our confession of faith, we define marriage as being between one man and one woman".

**Q:** *How is CALC governed?*

**A:** CALC's *National Council* is composed of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary as officers along with the members of the *Board of Elders* and the *Board of Trustees*. The current President of CALC is Pastor Ed Skutshek, Grace Lutheran, Kelowna (elected in 2009), and Fred Schickedanz, a lay member of St. Peter's, Cochrane, is the Vice-President of CALC (elected in 2009). According to CALC's Constitution, either at least one or both of the positions of President and Vice-President must be held by a lay person. At the present time, none of the members of CALC's National Council are paid employees; participation is on a volunteer basis. The National Council functions as the legislative agency of the Association between General Conventions in order to deal with situations which necessitate action before the next General Convention. Legislative acts by the National Council shall require a majority vote of all its members and must be presented to the next General Convention for review.

The *Board of Elders* is responsible for the leadership and supervision of CALC in all spiritual matters. The Board of Elders is composed of the President of CALC as chair person, the Secretary, and not less than three nor more than nine other members as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

The *Board of Trustees* is in charge of the general management and business affairs of CALC. The Board of Trustees is composed of the Vice-President of CALC as chair

person, the Treasurer, and not less than three nor more than nine other members as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

The highest constitutional authority delegated by the congregations to CALC shall be vested in the *General Convention*, which shall meet in regular sessions annually by call of the President in consultation with the National Council. CALC's Constitution states that one of the limitations on the General Convention's powers is that, "questions involving doctrine shall not be ultimately determined by vote of the General Convention, but on the basis of the Word of God and the Confessions of the Church". In keeping with the 'bottom up' nature of CALC, before any amendments to CALC's Constitution and by-laws which approved through majority vote at a CALC General Convention become effective they must be ratified through a process whereby three quarters of CALC's member congregations vote in favour of the amendment.

## Contact Us

Anyone wishing further information about CALC or wishing to join, please contact us. Written copies of the Constitution and its by-laws, additional educational and informational materials and copies of our newsletter *Lutheran Connector* are available from the address below. As well, additional information can be found at CALC's web site [www.calc.ca](http://www.calc.ca). Our members are available to meet with your congregation to answer any questions and to provide any further information.

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## **Appendix I.**

### **CALC's Article 3 – Confession of Faith**

#### **1.     *The Bible***

The Association accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God, and joyfully submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of life and faith.

#### **2.     *Faith in the Triune God***

The Association is built upon faith in the ever-living Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as revealed in the Holy Scriptures to Whom be the glory for ever and ever (see the three Ecumenical Creeds).

#### **3     *God the Father***

3.1     Almighty God, Creator of the universe, Who formed man in His own image, Who from the beginning loved goodness and hated evil, desires that the children of His creation live in eternal fellowship with Him. We hold to the creation and fall of humanity as described in the first chapters of Genesis, not as myth, but as historic facts.

3.2     Therefore, the Creator gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16) to be the Savior of the world, that people might be set free from the bondage of sin, and become joint heirs with Jesus Christ of eternal life.

#### **4.     *Jesus Christ, God's only Son and our Savior***

4.1     At the heart and centre of this faith is confidence in Jesus Christ and love for Him, the Eternal Word of God, true God (only Son of the Father from eternity), and true man (born of the Virgin Mary), and the only Savior of the world.

4.2     The reason for our being the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations is to proclaim salvation solely by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ.

#### **5.     *Dependence upon the Holy Spirit***

We also acknowledge dependence upon the Holy Spirit working solely through the Means of Grace to call unbelievers into saving faith in Jesus Christ, to empower believers to grow in faith, to bestow His gifts for the ministry of the Church locally and universally, to inspire love for one another, and to bring glory to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church.

#### **6.     *Symbols: Basic and Required***

As brief and true statements of the doctrines of the Word of God, this Association accepts and confesses the following Symbols, subscription to which shall be required of all its members, both congregations and individuals:

- 6.1 The ancient Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian;
- 6.2 The Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism.

7. ***Book of Concord: Normative***

As further elaboration of and in accordance with these Lutheran Symbols, this Association also receives the other documents in the Book of Concord of 1580: the Apology, Luther's Large Catechism, the Smalcald Articles (including the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope) and the Formula of Concord; and recognizes them as normative for its theology.

8. ***Pure Doctrine***

The Association accepts without reservation these symbolic books of the Lutheran Church, not insofar as, but because they are the presentation and explanation of the pure doctrine of the Word of God and a summary of the faith of the evangelical Lutheran Church.

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