

CTCR DOCUMENT
CREMATION AND THE CHRISTIAN

"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful,"
but not all things build up. 1 Cor 10:23

With these words St. Paul sets out the truth of Christian freedom under the Gospel. The believer is set free in Christ from the demands of the old covenant and is made righteous under the grace of the new covenant. This notion of Christian freedom was near and dear to the Reformers, and appears repeatedly throughout the Lutheran Confessions.¹ Christian freedom was the answer to the demands that Rome sought to impose upon them as necessary for salvation. The Reformers objected that conscience should not be enslaved by the doctrines of men but rather be accountable solely to the Word of God. St. Paul beautifully lays out this freedom for us, even as he emphasizes that this freedom should not simply be exercised for freedom's sake. There may be things that are free to the Christian, yet may not be helpful or build up.

When considering the rising practice of the cremation of the dead in our society, the words of St. Paul are helpful in establishing a God-pleasing answer toward it. Technically, cremation is the burning of the human body following death at a high temperature until only the bones remain, which are then ground up and placed in a container.² What must be stated at the outset is that this practice is not Christian in origin. Although there is no place in the scripture where the practice is expressly prohibited, the practice is also not instituted or endorsed. The reverent treatment of the human body after death, however, is repeatedly emphasized throughout scripture. From the time of the Patriarchs onward, God's people treated the human body with great dignity after death and conscientiously and faithfully established and maintained tombs for the dead.³ Conversely, being burned up with fire is most often associated scripturally with the judgement of God.⁴ Throughout her history, the Christian Church has not sanctioned or encouraged the practice of intentionally destroying the body after death. Following the Jewish burial practices, the human body has been consistently and reverently entombed; its return to dust has been left in the hands of the One who created it. The Jewish practice of placing the bones after decomposition into a box called an ossuary was not a precursor of cremation. The ethos behind the two practices are diametrically opposed to one

¹ AC XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII; Ap VIII, XV, XXVII; FC X

² It should be noted that in this process it is simply not possible to recover all the remains of an individual body from the cremation chamber. Operators of crematoriums endeavour to collect the majority of the bodily remains after the burning process is complete, but inevitably some are left behind. The result is that the bodily remains that are returned to the family are likely to contain some of the bodily remains of previously cremated individuals and that some of the bodily remains of the a loved one will be commingled with the following cremations. This fact is often explicitly stated in the "Authorization to Cremate."

³ Gen 23:19; 25:9; 35:29; 49:31; 50:13-14; Deut 10:6; 34:6; Josh 24:32-33; Judg 8:32; 1 Sam 25:1; 2 Sam 2:4; 21:14; 1 Kgs 2:10; 11:43; 13:31; 2 Kgs 13:20; 23:30 etc. Not to be properly buried is a sign of judgement (Jer 8:2; 16:4, 6).

⁴ Such was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19: 24) and also with the Golden Calf (Exod 32: 20). The Lord destroys the sons of Aaron (Nabab and Abihu) with fire when they disobey Him (Lev 10:1-2). In Num 11:1-3 the Lord burns part of the Israelite camp when the people complained in His hearing. The Lord commands that Achan and his household be stoned and burned with fire for disobeying His command (Josh 7:15; 7:25). The bodies of Saul and his sons were burned before their bones were buried, but this appears to be a case of expediency due to their dismemberment and display upon the city walls of their enemies (1 Sam 31: 12-13; 1 Chr 10: 12). Even so, the manner of their death and their burial could arguably be connected to God's judgement. In 2 Chr 16: 14 and 21: 19 there appears to be some form of fire connected with the burial of some of the kings of Judah, but it is not clear that these were actual cremations. Christ repeatedly connects the image of burning with fire to hell (Matt 5:22; 18:9; 25:41; Mark 9:42-48). He also connects the image of being burned up with God's judgement (Matt 7:19; 13:40; John 15:6). In the Revelation to St. John God regularly exercises His judgment with fire (Rev 8:5, 7; 9:18; 11:5; 14:10; 16:8; 17:16; 18:8; 19:20; 20:9-10, 14-15; 21:8). Jeremiah 25: 33 implies that not being buried is tantamount to being "garbage", while Num 11: 1-3 recommends that complaining Israelites should be consumed with fire.

another. The Jewish practice does not seek to promote decomposition but rather to preserve the remains, while cremation has at its very heart the goal of destroying the human body.⁵

The origins of cremation are not Christian but pagan. The practice comes to us from outside the Christian faith and has as its basis a separate belief system with regard to the human body. Although many Christians have recently chosen to have their bodies cremated without understanding or accepting the belief system behind the practice, understanding that belief system may help us to determine whether or not this practice is helpful or up-building for those who hold to the Christian faith. Cremation of the human body after death appears largely in those cultures where the material world is regarded as neither good nor profitable. Much of Greek philosophy saw the body as the prison of the soul. The goal of every life was to attain a higher spiritual state of existence. Matter, including the human body, was in and of itself evil. The various followers of Gnosticism had a similar understanding of the material world, and the human body in particular, as they sought to marry Christianity and contemporary pagan philosophy. This same understanding of the material world pervades much of eastern mysticism in its various forms. The Christian Church has repeatedly rejected this understanding of creation as being contrary to the scripture. Sadly, however, many modern Christians have taken up such a negative attitude toward the human body.

Holy Scripture clearly identifies creation as good. If the book of Genesis is taken seriously as the veritable word of God, then there is no escaping the divine verdict on all that God made. The repetitive refrain from the creation account is “God saw that it was good (Gen 1:3, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25).” His final assessment after the whole world was created, including mankind, is that it all “was very good (Gen 1:31).” Man was created in the beginning consisting of a good soul and a good body. The objective judge who alone stands outside of creation declared both to be so after He had formed them. The scripture tells us that God created man in His own image (Gen 1:27). God created man in the beginning with both body and soul. The dissolution of that union would be contrary to God’s image, where unity is eternal (Mal 3:6). To view the human body as a prison in which the soul must suffer for a time until it is released to a higher level of existence is contrary to the Word of God and so misrepresents the loving Creator. Prior to the advent of sin in the world, creation did not suffer death and decay. Only when man rejected the life God gave to him did death become a part of his life experience (Gen 2:17; 3:19). The shattering of God’s image in man brought about the dissolution of the bonds that united his body and soul, and so brought about the death and the destruction of the human body.

To save us from this terrible end, the Father sent His only Son into the world to become man, and to suffer and die innocently under our punishment, for our release (John 3:16). The very incarnation of the Son of God clearly testifies to the goodness of the human body. The writer to the Hebrews clearly states for us that the Son became man like us in every way, except without sin (Heb 2:14-18; 4:14-16). The Gospel of John in particular emphasises the truth that the Word indeed was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Since God is incapable of evil (Lev 19:2), it is not possible that the Son of God could have taken up a human body if it was evil in itself. The Lord Jesus Christ takes up our sin and is made to be sin for us (2 Cor 5:21), but nothing that is His can in and of itself be evil. The human body of our Lord Jesus was very good. His Resurrection confirms this verdict. The Lord’s tomb on Easter morning is found empty by numerous witnesses. The Lord then appears in real flesh and blood that can be seen and felt (John 20:26-28). He even eats food before the disciples to clarify that He is not a ghost or spirit, but a real and complete man (Luke 24:41-43). The Lord’s body is not a new distinct body from His old one. The tomb is found empty. His resurrected body wears the scars of the cross. The Lord has defeated sin and death. He no longer humbles Himself by bearing the burdens of sin. Yet He still stands in front of the disciples in His human body.

The inherent goodness of the human body is further testified to by the life of God’s people as it flows out from the cross. The gift of the Holy Spirit to live and abide in the saints after Pentecost is expressed by St. Paul in the truth that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20). The body is not simply a container for the soul, where a spiritual union occurs between the soul of man and the Triune God. As the Son of God took up both a human body and a human soul in the incarnation and still retains them after His resurrection and ascension, the gift of the life that He shares with us by the Holy Spirit is intimately connected to us both spiritually and

⁵ Most provinces in Canada do not regard cremated human remains as “human remains” under the law. There are statutes that are instituted to protect the dignity of the human body after death; however, once the body has been burned these statutes do not appear to apply.

physically. The life of the Church bears this out particularly in the sacramental gifts, in which the believer is made one with Christ by the means of Word-infused elements that are applied or given to the body to benefit the whole person – body and soul.⁶ The Church through her union with the Son of God is identified with His body, which is not just a spiritual concept, but has a concrete physical reality to it. Thus the Lord Jesus says, “Whatever you do to the least of my brethren you do unto me” (Matt 25:31-40). For this reason He can also accuse Saul of persecuting Him when Saul is physically assaulting His Bride the Church (Acts 9:4). The soul and the body, although distinct parts of the whole human being, cannot be separated from one another without resulting in the person’s death. Although they may be distinguished from one another as two integral parts, they form one cohesive whole, wherein their separation makes the human being incomplete. The Lord has created us in this way, and so cannot share a life with the soul that the body does not also partake in. Thus the Lord’s salvation for us is a complete restoration of all that sin has broken.

The resurrection of the dead is the final outcome of the Lord’s salvation for mankind. The Lord’s empty tomb is the foundation of this hope for all believers. The Lord Jesus Christ, through His own death, destroys the power of death and rises victorious on Easter morning. We are told that the Lord’s resurrection is not an event unique to Him, but is what He has prepared for His whole body the Church (1 Cor 15:20-23). The Lord Jesus Christ is the first fruits of them that sleep, and we are told that if we share in a death like His through Baptism we will share in a resurrection like His (Rom 6:3-5). The human body, as the church clearly confesses in her creeds, will rise from the dead (1 Thess 4:13). The only referent that we have for such a resurrection is the Lord’s own resurrection and the simultaneous resurrection of many saints who appeared in Jerusalem (Matt 27:52-53). The tombs in those cases were empty. New bodies were not given while the old bodies lay mouldering in the dust. On the last day a new body will not emerge from nothingness but will be born of the very flesh and blood that we have possessed on earth. A new perfect body like Christ’s body emerges, but the origin of that body is the original one we are given (Phil 3:21). The body is the same body, yet set free from sin. Those who are left alive until the return of Christ do not discard their bodies at His appearing. Their bodies in that moment will be changed to be like His glorious body (1 Cor 15:52). As the temple of Christ’s body was destroyed and built up again on the third day, so too the temple of His body the Church, consisting of all those whose bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, are restored to glory in the end. Reason unsubmitted to an Almighty Creator who knows every bit of dust of the earth may balk at such an assertion, but it is the plain teaching of Holy Scripture.

In light of this truth our Lord Jesus resists speaking of the dead as dead. Notably, with both Jairus’ daughter (Luke 8:49-56) and His friend Lazarus (John 11:11), the Lord refers to them as “sleeping.” In both cases others protest in unbelief. The mourners at Jairus’ home laugh at Him. Lazarus’ sister sets forth the truth about the decay of his body. Yet Christ unveils the truth of His great salvation by waking the dead from their slumber. The rest of the New Testament repeatedly employs the term “sleeping” for resting saints⁷. In keeping with this truth, the Church has also often spoken of the Christian body as only “sleeping”. Luther draws attention to this fact when he points out the origin of the word cemetery is actually derived from the Latin for “dormitory”.⁸ He also makes the point that the bodies sleeping in the ground continue to be holy, and even hallow the ground where they are laid.⁹

⁶ “We must think this way about Baptism and make it profitable for ourselves. So when our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say, “Nevertheless, I am baptized. And if I am baptized, it is promised to me that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body.” For that is the reason why these two things are done in Baptism: the body – which can grasp nothing but the water – is sprinkled and, in addition, the Word is spoken for the soul to grasp. Now, since both, the water and the Word, make one Baptism, therefore, body and the soul must be saved and live forever (1 Cor 15:53). The soul lives through the Word, which it believes, but the body lives because it is united with the soul and also holds on through Baptism as it is able to grasp it.” LC IV. Baptism (44-46)

Luther asserts a similar truth with regard to the Sacrament of the Altar in his writing of 1527 entitled, *This is my Body*: “But the heart knows well what the mouth eats, for it grasps the words and eats spiritually what the mouth eats physically. But since the mouth is the heart’s member, it must ultimately live in eternity on account of the heart, which lives eternally through the Word, because it also eats here physically the same eternal food which its heart eats spiritually at the same time.” AE 37:87

⁷ Matt 27:52; Acts 13:36; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess 4:13-15; 5:10; 2 Peter 3:4

⁸ AE 53:326

⁹ AE 43:137

The image that St. Paul uses for the sleeping body of the Christian is that of a sown seed (1 Cor 15:35-49). The seed is buried in the ground in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection. The seed is precious because it contains within it the life of the plant. Without the seed there is no plant. Until recently, Christians have consistently set apart and consecrated ground as “dormitories” for the saints. They have firmly believed that on the last day the earth and the sea will give up their dead (Rev 20:13). Worldly man laughs at such a notion. In his supposed wisdom he declares a bodily resurrection absurd and impossible. Sadly, some Christians have adopted such folly and have sought out another answer to the resurrection in some form of spiritualized body that has no part in God’s original creation, despite the clear testimony of our Lord’s empty tomb. A God, however, who cannot keep track of the dust of our flesh and return it to life ceases to be an Almighty One.

Our bodies do not belong to us apart from the gift of the Creator, who still maintains dominion over us (Rom 14:7-12). As Christians we have been bought with a price, and so should glorify God in our bodies (1 Cor 6:20). The body we have, like our whole life, is a trust from the Lord. In opposition to the modern notion of individual autonomy, Christians recognise that their lives flow out of the heart of the Father. The choices we make with regard to our bodies need to reflect that we are only stewards of our lives and will, at the end, be required to give an account of what we have done in the body – whether good or evil (2 Cor 5:10). As God’s people we do have freedom under the Gospel to choose things that are not expressly forbidden to us by the Word of God. These choices, however, should always bear in mind the need to make a clear confession of what we believe, and so be helpful and up-building to our brothers and sisters in Christ as well as those outside the Church. Such concerns should govern our decisions as we contemplate what should be done with our bodies at the end of life. At the moment of our death we have an opportunity to make a clear confession about our hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting.

The resurrection is one of the key foundation stones of the Christian faith. St. Paul argues this point in his first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 15:12-19), saying that if there is no resurrection of the dead then Christ was not raised, and if Christ was not raised then we are still lost in our sins. The sun, however, did rise on the third day to shine its brilliant rays through an opened door to reveal an empty tomb to the world. Standing firmly on this truth, the Christian Church boldly confesses with the Lord Jesus that the saints are only sleeping in their graves until He comes to wake them. We also firmly believe with St. Paul that our bodies are the seeds from which will spring forth our recreated resurrection bodies. The practice of destroying the sleeping body or precious seed with fire runs contrary to these truths, which the Lord has given us to confess. The small box of ground-up bones provides a rather disjointed (if not outright contrary) confession to the world about our belief in the bodily resurrection. While an almighty God can and will raise up even those who have chosen to have their bodies burned into dust, the historic Christian burial practices make a clearer testimony to the resurrection of the dead, and leave in God’s hands the return of the body to dust. If it is the will of almighty God that our bodies are destroyed in some way by the manner of our death, such as fire etc., then we can leave the care of our remains safely in the hands of Him who rules all things. The same can also be said for those rare occasions where bodies may need to be burned to prevent the spread of illness or disease. When, however, the Lord leaves the trust in our hands, we are right to consider the truths of our faith in making a final decision.

Without realizing the implications of faith, Christians have sometimes chosen cremation for financial reasons. They falsely believe that cremation is always a more economical option, and so to be chosen based on necessity or pious frugality. At present, a direct earth burial in some instances can in fact be less expensive than cremation. A pious Christian burial can be performed without many of the trappings that have come to be part and parcel of modern funeral practices. These trappings are not wrong, especially as they work to confess our faith in the sanctity of the human body as well as our hope in the resurrection, yet they can be piously laid aside in accordance with need and good stewardship. As Christians, however, we do not worship the tyrannical god of Mammon, but the loving Holy Trinity. Finances, except in cases of genuine need, should not be the main governing principle in deciding whether or not our bodies should be cremated. A clear confession of our faith should be our main concern while making what may well be the final act carried out in our name on earth. Such an action should clearly be one that can be carried out in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, confessing His awesome albeit mysterious work in our lives. In cases of genuine need there is a great opportunity for the Church to carry out her work of charity in assisting those who are not able to provide for themselves. Such a work has been carried out by those congregations who have maintained, and continue to maintain, often at some cost of both time and money, their own cemeteries.

A practice that sometimes accompanies cremation is the scattering of the remains in some memorable location.¹⁰ This practice comes from Eastern Mysticism that sees the soul being reunited with the “oneness” of the universe after death. Scripturally the scattering of one’s remains over the ground is in fact a sign of judgement against those who have worshipped the creation over the Creator.¹¹ Without a grave such people are forgotten. The custom of scattering the cremated remains over and above the act of cremation itself takes an even greater step away from the clear confession of our faith. The practice of scattering the remains of the body is incongruous with a belief in the resurrection of the dead.¹² An actual grave preserves the truth about the sanctity and uniqueness of each human body, and provides a location for grieving family to visit and express their grief. The absence of an actual grave for a person leaves the family and future generations without any lasting memorial of that person’s existence.¹³ Similarly, the practice of keeping the cremated remains of a loved one on a mantle, etc., rather than reverently laying them to rest, is not in accord with our faith.¹⁴ The Christian body, even if it happens to be cremated, is no simple memento left behind at death, but is an integral part of a person’s being as God created him. The Christian Church firmly believes that the body will be resurrected on the last day, and that the departed soul will be returned to it. The practice of keeping the urn in the home should be discouraged. Our hope for our departed loved ones is found in Christ. Closeness to them is not maintained through keeping their cremated bodies close at hand, but through the Communion of the Church, where the faithful are forever bound together in their Lord (Rom 8:35-39). In the resurrection on the last day a true physical reunion will be granted to all the faithful in Christ’s Kingdom, which will have no end.

Although there is no Word of the Lord that forbids the practice of cremation, clearly the traditional Christian form of burial is more in keeping with our faith. The intentional destruction of the human body after death may be free to us under the Gospel, but the practice is neither helpful nor up-building in making a clear confession of our faith in the bodily resurrection of the dead. In making a decision for his own burial, it is preferable for the Christian to confess this truth by entrusting his body into the keeping of almighty God. In making decisions for a loved one who has not given direction for his own burial, the same counsel is recommended. In looking after the affairs of a loved one who has made a decision to be cremated, the Christian may, without harm to conscience, fulfill the wishes of the deceased. They may not, however, fulfill the wishes of a loved one to have his ashes scattered in an illegal manner. In this case the Christian must obey God, rather than man, who has commanded us to obey the authorities set over us in all things that do not contradict the Word of God (Rom 13:1-2, Acts 5:29). The Christian

¹⁰ Most Provincial Law in Canada does not expressly forbid this practice and in some cases is being amended to allow it. The scattering of ashes on land that is not your own cannot be done, however, without the express permission of the land owner or appropriate governing body. Scattering ashes without express permission to do so is illegal and you can be prosecuted for trespassing and littering. Unlike land that has been specifically designated for cemetery use, the scattering of ashes in a particular location in no way guarantees the relatives future access to that land or in any way protects the way in which that land may be used or developed in the future. Ashes scattered or buried on your own land in no way binds future owners with regard to the use of that land.

¹¹ “And they shall be spread before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served, which they have gone after, and which they have sought and worshiped. And they shall not be gathered or buried. They shall be as dung on the surface of the ground.” (Jer 8:2).

¹² A plethora of practices is emerging as the scattering of ashes is becoming more socially acceptable in the North American context. Some, while seeming to border on the ridiculous (such as fireworks and helium balloons loaded with human remains designed to explode at certain altitudes), are a clear assault on the sanctity and dignity of the human body and by no means can be countenanced by God’s people. Other practices involving memory and sharing circles or portioning of the remains in cups to be individually cast into the wind have a markedly pagan air about them and should also be avoided.

¹³ God’s people have consistently from Old Testament times established memorials of a person’s existence. These memorials not only provide invaluable records of our ancestry but also stand as a constant reminder of death and the need for repentance. If emerging trends continue, whole generations could leave this world without any record left of their existence. Conceivably a time could come when no one would have to face death and the need for salvation in a body being laid to rest in the ground; no rows of stones would call out to passers by to number their days and consider the world to come.

¹⁴ Once again a disturbing number of options are being made available for the disposal of cremated bodily remains, including having them transformed into a gem stone or encased in some piece of jewellery or picture frame. Such practices clearly make a veritable mockery of the human body and are decisively opposed to the truth of the bodily resurrection of the dead.

should endeavour to ensure that the bodily remains are treated with the dignity that they deserve. A pastor should make every effort to confess and teach the scriptural truth about the bodily resurrection of the dead in his congregation. In the case where a decision has already been made to cremate the body of a congregational member, he may in good conscience officiate at such a funeral as long as the remains are reverently laid to rest.¹⁵ In the case where no decision has been made he should offer his counsel in accord with our faith. If the opportunity arises prior to death the pastor should lay out the truths of our faith for the dying person and/or family members, that they may make a faithful decision. If a person in weakness chooses to be cremated despite the pastor's teaching and counsel, the pastor may still officiate in good conscience. Although the practice of cremation does not make a clear confession of our faith in the resurrection, the Lord has not expressly forbidden it.

The Church does not seek to unduly burden the conscience of the Christian with new laws and so teach as doctrines the precepts of men. She does, however, seek to encourage the Lord's children to live out their faith keeping in mind that all things may be lawful but not all things are helpful or build up. The traditional burial methods that the church has practised for hundreds of years make a clear confession about the resurrection of the dead. This practice was not something new but flowed out of the Old Testament into the New Testament and so out into the life of the Church. Although such customs are not binding on the conscience, they are good and salutary and so should not be abandoned lightly. Cremation as a burial method has become relatively common in dealing with the human body after death. Even amongst Christians the practice has been rising in frequency. It must be admitted, however, that the intentional destruction of the body of the sleeping Christian does not make a very clear confession of the resurrection of the body. In some cases it can even lead to real confusion about this doctrine. For the sake of our faith and its confession in the world, it is therefore advisable and preferable that whenever possible Christians lay their bodies to rest in the state that God created them. Trusting in the Lord and His promises, we may leave our bodies in the keeping of almighty God until the last day when our Redeemer will stand on the earth and in our own flesh we will see God.

Guidelines for Pastoral Care in the Context of Cremation

Given the fact that a significant number of funerals or memorial services which Christian pastors currently perform are for persons whose remains have been cremated, pastors need to provide care for those grieving in these circumstances, recognizing on the one hand that cremation does not testify to the resurrection of the body in the way that burial does, but at the same time recognizing that for the Christian, having one's remains cremated does not jeopardize one's salvation. The pastor should act in the following manner:

1. While not the case in Canada, there are places in the world where, because of the scarcity of land, it has become virtually impossible to purchase land for cemeteries and for burial plots. If cremation has become the only option in certain lands, Christians need to find ways to make clear witness for our faith in the resurrection of the body.
2. The pastor should not offend the consciences of those who have chosen cremation. In the case of one who is dying and who has made up one's mind on the subject, using the law to convince them to do otherwise could create spiritual doubt regarding their relationship to God.
3. The pastor should discourage thoughts of having the ashes of the departed scattered, for this practice indeed arises from a pagan denial of the importance of the body, and creates the impression that the spirit's survival is all that matters.
4. Families of Christians who have been cremated should be encouraged to have the remains of their loved ones placed in a columbarium, or kept together in some other way. The name of the deceased should be noted on the urn and/or on the niche in memory of the one who has died and who awaits the resurrection.

¹⁵ The act of cremation should not be regarded as a form of committal of the body. The committal involves the actual burial of the remains of the Christian body. The Committal Service should be preformed when the remains are buried, rather than at the Crematorium.

5. Though ashes cannot be committed to the earth in the same way that a body may be committed, a clear message of hope in the resurrection of the body needs take place even as the ashes are commended into the hands of God in the hope of the resurrection.
6. As is always the case, the clear message given at the funeral/memorial of all Christians is the hope of the resurrection of the dead, not merely the survival of the individual in heaven. Our creeds confess the resurrection of the body (indeed, of the flesh!), not merely the survival of the soul.
7. In sermons and Bible studies throughout the church year, especially when dealing with lessons that cover the subject, the Christian teaching on the resurrection of the dead must be stressed, and the blessings confessed by the traditional practice of burial over against cremation must be noted. Burial should be encouraged over against cremation as the means by which the church best confesses before the world the return of Christ and the resurrection of the body.

CTCR Document

**The Public Reading of the Scripture in the Divine Service
An Apologetic**

We always create our own troubles. The Lord of the church gives His gifts to His people, and we always find a way to think of His gifts as our work rather than His giving. We can create our own troubles, but our Lord supersedes our troubles with His grace and His gifts.

The reading of the lessons of the day in the Divine Service has traditionally and ordinarily been the calling of the ordained pastor. By 'traditionally', we mean the practice that was handed down as commonplace and salutary in all times and in most places. By 'ordinarily' we mean that this has been the usual practice (though there have been and will be exceptions to usual practice) and also that this is the 'orderly' practice, or that 'according to good order' in the church.

There have been times and places where those in the *order* of readers also read the appointed lessons other than the Gospel reading. This is because they were in training for the pastoral ministry. It was a sort of seminary fieldwork. The introduction of 'lay readers' in the Divine Service of the church is a recent innovation. In the 1970's, in particular, the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship promoted the concept of 'assisting ministers' – lay persons who were given an assisting role to the pastor of the congregation. Unfortunately, this terminology has only added to the confusion in understanding the role of pastor and people, or preacher and hearers. Perhaps, collectively, we can say that we did not think through the implications of this change when it was introduced.

First, some clarification must be made. In no way does the recommendation that pastors should be the ones to publicly read the Scriptures in the Divine Service imply that lay persons are less holy or 'not good enough' to do so. Nor do we mean to say that the Scriptures lose their power or cease to be God's Word when read by laymen. The efficacy of the Word is innate. The power of the Word is the Author of the Scripture, the One Who is the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ.

Nor is this a question of power. We do not speak in the language of 'rights' or 'rules' when we discuss who should read the Scripture publicly in the Divine Service. Those who partake in the delivery of God's gifts to His people do so as a matter of blessed privilege, not of human right. And the church has no place in setting up 'rules' when it comes to God's gift of His Word.

The focus in this regard needs to be on Christ's institution. Christ gives His Word to wound and to heal, to accuse and to forgive, to convict guilty sinners and to pronounce them innocent saints. The Word of God always has this authority. In any and every situation, God's Word will not return to Him empty, no matter who speaks it.

However, in the Divine Service, Christ gives His gifts of Word and Sacrament through His called and ordained ministers. Christ Himself established this ministry of the Gospel in order that justifying faith may be given through His chosen means. When the pastor is given by Christ to read the Word of God to God's people, it is not because the church has made a rule about the public reading of the Scripture, but because the office of pastor is also a gift to God's people. The pastor is a servant of the *Word*. This is a rich title. The pastor is a servant of Christ, the *Word* made flesh, for the sake of Christ's people. Yet he is also a servant of the *Word*, the *Scripture*. His delivery of the Word of God is the way Christ comes to His people in the Divine Service.

Perhaps it is helpful to make a general distinction between the sacramental and the sacrificial portions of the Divine Service. Typically, the pastor serves God's people in the sacramental portions: the Absolution, the Reading of the Word, the Sermon, the Lord's Supper, the Benediction. Typically also, both people and pastor together respond to God's grace in the sacrificial portions: the hymns (though hymns also proclaim), the Creeds, the Offering, the Prayers.

In this general paradigm, it may be helpful to ask where the most appropriate roles for lay persons in the Divine Service are. Those baptized into the priesthood of all believers are called to 'declare the praises of Him Who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light'. (1 Peter 2:10)

Thus prayer, praise, thanksgiving are the fitting work of the lay persons. Perhaps, for example, a lay cantor could sing the Kyrie in the Service. Or lay person(s) could offer up prayers, or lead the prayers in the litany. In these activities the priesthood of believers fulfils the calling God has given – to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

This may not be the place to go into the various vocations in which all Christ's people 'offer up their bodies as living sacrifice' in the home, in the community, in the workplace – all places where they speak the Word of God to all who will hear. But these are also the 'spiritual worship' of the saints of God. The questions at hand, however, deal more specifically with the Divine Service, where Christ comes to His people in Word and in Sacrament.

It is also important to add that no part of the Divine Service is 'holier' than any other. The Holy Spirit sanctifies all. The sacramental portions of the Service, wherein the pastor serves God's people in the stead of Christ, are not 'holier' than the sacrificial portions of the liturgy, where people and pastor respond to God in praise, prayer, and thanksgiving.

Addendum

One of the difficult practical questions that arises in regard to the pastor's office including the public reading of the Scripture is what to do when that office is vacant. What happens in congregations who do not have a pastor to serve in the stead of Christ because of location or other circumstance? We certainly have had many parishes in Canada where lay-led services have been common and necessary.

It would seem that in these cases, we are addressing unique and unusual (extra-ordinary, that is, outside of what is 'ordinarily' done) situations. Where these are not temporary conditions, the church's alternate means to provide one to fill the pastoral office (e.g. PATS) would come into play, so that the pastoral office would no longer be vacant. Where these are temporary conditions (e.g. a pastoral vacancy), they are simply the exception to the norm to which they will return when the office is no longer vacant.

Where a layperson is leading the Service (including the public reading of the Scriptures), he does so not to be a 'minister', but to take this leadership role in this exceptional circumstance. (No doubt, there have been times and places where such 'exceptional circumstances' have lasted for years, even decades.) Lay-led services are really an extension of family devotions. (This is why it would be more salutary if Matins or Responsive Prayer were used in such circumstances instead of a truncated Divine Service.) Just as parents take up the Scriptures to teach their families at home, so an elder, a father figure in the congregation, ensures that the Word of God does not fall silent during the vacancy.

We must acknowledge, likewise, that where congregations do have the practice of lay readers in the Divine Service, that these lay persons serve under the office of the ministry. That is, they do not take on this public reading as part of the priesthood of the baptized, or according to some perceived 'right'. The pastor in such a circumstance is to train and supervise the readers, for the responsibility for the public reading of the Scripture remains his as the servant of the Word.

CTCR Document

May a Vicar Celebrate The Lord's Supper in an Emergency Situation?

INTRODUCTION

At the 2008 Convention of the Lutheran Church-Canada Resolution 08.1.05b: “To Request a Study from the CTCR on Whether A Vicar May Celebrate the Lord’s Supper in An Emergency Situation” (ref Overture 1.05) was passed. That Resolution read as follows:

WHEREAS a thorough study of the matter of whether or not a vicar may celebrate the Sacrament of the Altar in an emergency situation will be helpful in assisting the church-at-large to determine the appropriateness of such a practice; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the CTCR be asked to provide a study on whether a vicar, in an emergency situation, with the approval from the vicarage congregation, the seminary and the Council of Presidents, may celebrate the Sacrament of the Altar; and be it further

RESOLVED that the study be submitted to the next Synodical convention for consideration; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Council of Presidents and the seminaries be mindful of the discussion and concerns expressed at this Convention and of the pending study in any consideration of a request for a vicar to celebrate the Sacrament of the Altar based on emergency; and be it finally

RESOLVED that for the time being, in any apparent emergency, the Council of Presidents in conjunction with the respective District and circuit shall continue to seek all possible means to provide sacramental ministry by an ordained pastor.

This Resolution was adopted in Session 6.

Upon reflection on the task assigned to the CTCR it became clear to the members that there were a number of related questions that needed to be answered in order for the original question contained in the Resolution of the Convention to be considered. Significant among those questions are the following:

Since the Office of the Keys has been given by Christ to the Church, is the celebration of the Eucharist publically a unique function of the Office of the Pastoral ministry?

Can a lay person be permitted to celebrate Holy Communion in a public worship service?

What is the status of a Vicar?

What would constitute an “emergency” situation in which a Vicar might be the celebrant at a Communion Service?

Based upon the Scriptures, the teachings of Martin Luther, the Book of Concord of 1580, the writings of notable Lutheran Theologians of old (e.g. Chemnitz; Gerhard, C.F.W. Walther, et. al) and recent papers presented by recognized contemporary confessional theologians and pastors of the Lutheran Church-Canada, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and Lutheran Church of Australia, the following is a concise, Biblical and Confessional opinion on the question at hand as to whether Vicars, in an emergency situation, may celebrate Holy Communion.

I. The Four Questions

To be able to answer these questions honestly and forthrightly we must look at the evidence of Scripture, the Confessions and orthodox Lutheran theologians as they put down on paper their understanding of the Office of the Holy Ministry and the priesthood of all believers or, as some would prefer, the priesthood of the baptized.

In Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession (Augustana) Luther and the Reformers of the 16th Century clearly state: **“Our churches teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church, or administer the Sacraments, without a rightly ordered call (ohne ordentlichen Beruf, nisi rite vocatus).”** 16

¹⁶ *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions (A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord)*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 2nd Edition, 2005

This “rightly ordered Call” has always been understood in our Synod as a Call from the Church into the Holy Ministry after a Candidate successfully completed his course of studies and has been duly certified by one of our Seminary faculties. Only then does the Board of Assignments place such a Candidate into a parish of Lutheran Church–Canada. Although Vicars receive a temporary “call” to minister, it is not a permanent Call to Ministry in a particular place and it is not received by one who is ordained. Therein lies an important distinction. A Vicar is always “Inducted” into his temporary service at his vicarage parish but never “Installed”, as is a Called and Ordained Pastor. For the Vicar is in reality a man in training for the Holy Ministry.

He does not in any way hold the Office of the Pastoral Ministry. However, he is given permission by Lutheran Church-Canada and one of its congregations to perform, in a limited way, some of the functions of Office of the Pastoral Ministry in that place, under the strict supervision of one who does hold the Pastoral Office. Again, he is only given this permission and this opportunity to practise and develop pastoral skills under the strict supervision of a Called and Ordained Pastor of Lutheran Church–Canada. For that reason he may preach and teach, but not preside at Holy Communion.

The formal concept of “Vicarage”, also known in some denominations as an “Internship” is actually a relatively new innovation in the North American Church when viewed against the entire history of the Christian Church from the first century forward. Today a problem has arisen in recent history in that men in training for the Pastoral Ministry (Vicars) have been placed into remote congregations that by themselves cannot afford a Called and Ordained Pastor. These men have had little supervision by supervisory pastors who sometimes are half a day’s drive or more away. For ten months to a year the Vicar carries on “pastoral ministry” in an isolated community, is then perceived by many of the laity as a “Pastor”, and often functions as a pastor even though he is but a lowly intern with no pastoral authority as regards the Office of Keys. He is a man who carries out some of the functions of Holy Ministry in the same way that a student teacher carries out some of the functions of a full-fledged teacher in a school. His authority to proclaim the word of God and bring that word to the people comes only from his position as one who is part of the priesthood of all believers on account of his baptism, not by virtue of any claim to the Office of the Pastoral Ministry.

The problem has become even more serious with the acute shortage of Clergy and the inability or unwillingness of the larger Church (District and Synod) to provide qualified clergy to serve these remote congregations.

Quite rightly there is a great concern amongst both the lay people and the clergy of Lutheran Church–Canada that people in remote areas of Canada in congregations be able to receive the Lord’s Supper. However, one does not meet that deep need for the strengthening of people’s faith through the Holy Supper by undermining a long held Scriptural and Confessional standard as regards the public ministry of the church and its functioning through the Called and Ordained pastorate.

That this is the case is obvious from the Confessional and historical writing of the early Church Fathers, Luther and the Reformers of the sixteenth century. As one of our own theologians and professors, Dr. John R. Stephenson writes: “And who can suppose that the lay or diaconal celebration of the Holy Supper can find even a shred of support in the catholic tradition of the Church, eastern or western?”¹⁷ The early church simply did not engage in this practice. Since prior to his Call and Ordination a man remains part of the Priesthood of all Believers and does not hold the Office of the Holy Ministry, therefore until he does receive a Call and is Ordained, he remains a lay person, not a Pastor.

In modern times support for the lay administration of Holy Communion as well as a host of other public functions of the Office of Holy Ministry is espoused and put forth both by modern day enthusiasts and practitioners of the Church Growth Movement. In both cases there is a serious blurring of the distinction between the Priesthood of all Believers and the Office of the Holy Ministry which is wholly unbiblical, un-Lutheran and an error much practised today in a large part of Protestant Christianity in Canada.

On the other hand, Christ has graciously given us the Office of the Public Ministry for the oversight, teaching, and care of His Bride, the Church.

¹⁷ Stephenson, John, *Who is The Rightful Celebrant of Holy Communion?* LTR II (Fall/Winter 1989-90) pp. 25-32

Therefore we ought to use that which He has authorized and not short-circuit His plan by giving Pastoral oversight and authority to Vicars who are laymen in training for the Office of the Pastoral Ministry.

But then the question arises as at the Convention: “What about “emergency situations”?” Unlike baptizing, one cannot conceive of an emergency situation in which Holy Communion would be required for the salvation of an individual. Jesus says to all Christians: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19) and, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16) but no such statement can be found regarding Holy Communion. Rather our Lord’s words and those of the Apostles as regards Holy Communion always focus on the faith strengthening, not the faith creating power of the Lord’s Supper.

The only situation that one can think of where there might be an “emergency” situation is if an individual is dying and requests Holy Communion for comfort and strengthening. In such a situation the church has never authorized a lay person or a lay person in training for the ministry (a Vicar) to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. However what every lay person and Vicar has been authorized to do is to read and proclaim the Gospel of our Lord found in the Holy Scriptures which St. Paul reminds us “is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe” (Romans 1:16). As the Priesthood of all Believers, the lay members of the Holy Christian Church have the authorization and in fact, the obligation individually (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8) to proclaim the Gospel on a daily basis where they live and work and therefore the church in its long history has never had a problem with a Vicar or lay person preaching the Word under the direct supervision of a Called and Ordained Pastor.

However, there is no similar authorization given by Scripture or the Confessions or the orthodox Lutheran Church down through the years as regards the celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

In his second sermon preached in the year 1522 on the John 20:19-21 text, Dr. Martin Luther says: “This power is here given to all Christians (i.e. the spiritual power and rule)... when you shall speak a word concerning a sinner, it shall be spoken in heaven [as well]) and in 1540 on the same text: “This (whatsoever sins you forgive, etc.) is not said alone to ministers or servants of the church, but to every Christian. Here each may serve another in the hour of death, or wherever there is need and give him absolution...”¹⁸. It is interesting to note that there is no consideration by Luther whatsoever of a lay person ministering to a dying person by celebrating the Lord’s Supper. If the authors of the Synodical resolution requesting this paper from the CTCR are suggesting that in and of itself, a congregation of believers in a remote part of Canada constitutes an “emergency”, we simply could not concur. Such a group of believers has the written Word of God and the remembrance of their Baptism, that is, their incorporation into the family of God thereby, and may be daily and weekly strengthened by the proclamation of that Word.

That congregation of LCC, however, should not be ignored regarding their inability to receive the Holy Sacrament on a regular basis because they cannot support a full-time Pastor. Surely the three hundred plus congregations of the LCC, through its Council of Presidents ought to be able to find a way to provide them with a qualified Called and Ordained Pastor who can preside at a monthly or bi-monthly Service of the Sacrament in that remote community. But to ask a Vicar to do so is to violate, undermine and weaken the Biblical and Confessional position of our Synod as outlined in AC XIV and practised throughout our history. It also leads to a gross confusion of the distinct biblical character of the Priesthood of all Believers and the Office of the Holy Ministry.

Dr. John Kleinig of the Lutheran Church of Australia writes: “Christ authorises and empowers pastors to exercise the keys in the congregations that they serve by baptizing and withholding baptism, by forgiving and retaining sins, by preaching God’s word as law and gospel, administering and distributing the Lord’s Supper, by judging doctrine and condemning false doctrine, by admitting and excluding from the Lord’s Table (Matthew 16:18-19; John 20:21-23; Apology 28:5-6,21). This means that the administration of Holy Communion cannot and must not be done apart from the full, public exercise of the keys.”¹⁹ Dr. Kleinig’s words clearly point out the importance of having clergymen who are Called by the church to care for the souls of God’s redeemed people... men who know the hearts of their people and can responsibly administer the Lord’s Supper to them. In the same

¹⁸ *Sermons of Martin Luther* Vol. 2 Ed. John Nickolas Lenker. 1983 Grand Rapids, MI Baker, p. 362

¹⁹ Dr. John Kleinig, *Lay Presidency: Does a layman have the authority to administer Holy Communion?* December 2008

way that Luther spoke strongly against the Roman Catholic Church of his day which had turned the Holy Sacrament into a mere commodity of the Church by licensing laymen and Nuns to speak the Words' of Institution, so we must avoid this practise today by not licensing Vicars to do the same.

Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the first President of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and eminent orthodox Lutheran theologian of the nineteenth century in the fifth edition of his *Americanish-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie*(Concordia: St. Louis, 1906, 175) writes: “The great majority of our theologians, with Luther at their head, are of the opinion that the Holy Supper should never be administered by someone who does not stand in the public preaching office or by a so-called layman. This is so partly from the fact that with the Lord’s Supper – unlike Baptism and Absolution – no emergency situation can arise which would justify departure from God’s order (1 Cor 4:1; Rom 10:15; Heb 5:4), partly from the fact that the Holy Supper is a public confession which ought to have public ministers, and partly from the fact that such clandestine Communion can easily beget schisms.”²⁰

Perhaps the clearest statement that sums up our position is given by Dr. John Kleinig: “The ministry of the word and sacrament does not just create a congregation and build it up as a holy community; it also includes that congregation in the heavenly assembly and its service together with the angels and the whole communion of saints in God’s presence (Heb 2:22-24). The administration of the Lord’s Supper involves the congregation in the one holy catholic and apostolic church through *communio in sacris*, communion by right participation in the holy things of God. So those who administer Holy Communion thereby hold a public position of leadership with ecumenical responsibilities. To fulfil their task they need to have the authority to admit or exclude people from other congregations and denominations to the Lord’s Table. This cannot be done without proper authorization and due accountability. No lay person has that ecumenical authority.”²¹

II. Conclusion

Since historically the celebration of Holy Communion publically has been a unique function of the Office of the Holy Ministry, and since a Vicar is a lay person in training for the Office of the Holy Ministry and not a Pastor, and since no incidence of an “emergency” can be suggested in which the historical practice of the Church should be abrogated, therefore, Vicars should not be allowed to celebrate Holy Communion other than as an assistant to the presiding Pastor who alone has the right by means of his Call and Ordination to speak the Words of Institution publically on behalf of the entire congregation prior to the communing of the saints of God.

²⁰ This translation comes from John Stephenson, *The Lord’s Supper*(The Lutheran Academy: St. Louis, 2003), 86

²¹ Dr. John Kleinig, *Lay Presidency: Does a layman have the authority to administer Holy Communion?*, December 2008

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CTCR DOCUMENT

**The Doctrinal Authority of C. F. W. Walther's *Kirche und Amt* (*Church and Ministry*) in
Lutheran Church–Canada**

In her first convention Lutheran Church–Canada [LCC] committed herself to the doctrinal position of her mother synod by including article II in her constitution. This article binds the synod and every member thereof to accept without reservation the Holy Scriptures as the only rule and norm of faith and practice, and the writings in the Book of Concord as a true and unadulterated exposition of the same. The convention made no express commitment to any doctrinal writings, resolutions, or statements of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod [LCMS], though it has been assumed that the historical actions of the mother synod would continue to carry weight in the daughter. In order to clarify the status of existing LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations [CTCR] documents, for example, LCC passed resolution 90:1.02, which explained that they were to be received “as part of its heritage” and referred to “for reference and guidance”.

The present confusion in LCC over the authority of C. F. W. Walther’s writing, *Kirche und Amt* (Church and Ministry), can be adequately addressed on the basis of the preceding paragraph. Although no CTCR existed in 19th-century Missouri, Walther’s book served a similar purpose to such documents in that it provided a unified response to a theological issue that stood behind a church relations problem (see the history below). Although it cannot be placed on the level of the doctrinal authorities in Article II, it ought to be received and honoured by LCC “as part of its heritage” and referred to “for reference and guidance”. However, in light of recent action in the LCMS, the popular belief that *Kirche und Amt* was officially adopted as a binding doctrinal statement needs further examination.

In her 2001 synodical convention, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod passed resolution 7-17A “to reaffirm” that Walther’s book *Kirche und Amt* [KuA] is “the official position of the LCMS”. The convention did not claim to be adopting KuA but to be “reaffirming” its status. The historical basis was presented in the second and third “whereas” of the resolutions:

WHEREAS, Dr. C. F. W. Walther addressed this confusion [with regard to the doctrine of church and ministry] in 1851 through his *Theses on Church and Ministry*, which were subsequently declared to be the position of the LCMS in 1851; and

WHEREAS, The book *The Voice of Our Church on the Question of Church and Ministry*, by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, was published in 1852. The LCMS in convention declared this book to be the pure doctrine (*reine Lehre*) of church and ministry;

It is in the very nature of a “whereas” that what it states must be incontrovertibly and demonstrably true. Unfortunately, the resolution does not cite explicit text from the 1851 and 1852 conventions to which it broadly refers (with the exception of the two German words). In order to understand precisely what occurred, it is necessary to examine closely the published *Synodal-Berichte* (convention records).

The Origins of *Kirche und Amt* in the LCMS (1850-52)

The genesis of Walther’s writing can be found in the minutes of the 1850 synodical convention in St. Louis. The synod discussed at length their ongoing pastoral and doctrinal conflict with Pastor Grabau and the Buffalo synod, dating back to his *Hirtenbrief* “Pastoral Letter” (1840)¹ and perpetuated in disputes over the right of excommunication.² At the heart of the debate was the source and nature of pastoral authority. Grabau was understood to be the aggressor, against whom the synod felt compelled to defend herself. Having heard Pastors Walther, Sihler, and Brohm present a series of theses on the basis of the Book of Concord, the convention commissioned Walther to develop the work into a book, a draft of which was to be presented to the synod the following year.

At the 1851 convention (Milwaukee), Walther presented the completed theses on church and office, including a sketch of the supplementary material from Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the church fathers that would be marshalled in their defence. The published convention minutes are worth reading at length:

When, at the last Synodical convention, Grabau’s second Synodical letter, that included false accusations and charges, was discussed, it was thought best to publish a paper as a justification for our teaching on Church and Ministry. We were not only accused, on these parts, of false teaching by Pastor Grabau, but also among our brothers in Germany, with whom we are in faith fellowship, there is a growing disapproval. Prof. Walther had taken over the preparation of the paper on behalf of the Synod, and now he presented the draft of the paper to the present convention for examination. According to his presented plan the paper is divided into three parts: a preface, historical presentation of the conditions under which the paper arose; a number of theses that present our teaching on the Church as well as the Preaching Office in a short and precise fashion; it ends with an epilogue that focuses on the application of the theses on the present doctrinal differences. As proof for the theses the author cites from a) Scripture, b) the Symbolical Books, c) the acknowledged most reliable teachers of our and of the early church, in order to, in the strongest sense, dispel the appearance of an innovation in the teaching; to show the agreement between the whole Church from the beginning and our church, and to put this agreement, with a systematic

compilation of many witnesses, in the clearest light. The character of the whole paper should be more apologetic than polemic in order to invite a more relaxed examination and to heal the impending split in love. The Synod declared itself in full agreement with this plan, and approved the apologetic way of teaching of the author in so far as that through it the necessary proof of the untenability [sic] of the opposing errors are given.

The honorable author now presented the specific theses to which the Synod gave its agreement [ihre Beistimmung]. Since, however, the book will be published soon, it would be superfluous to go into the specifics of the theses here. The reading itself, and the discussion that followed on the doctrine and practice of the Church, was held, with very little interruption, in eight sittings. This was unquestionably the part of the proceedings that was proven to be the most fruitful. It filled the hearts of everyone with great rejoicing over the Scripturality, the clearness, and the loveliness of our teaching. It was also experienced that the peace of the Spirit of God is a sweet, well tasting fruit of the true unity and confidence of faith.³

The following noteworthy points arise from a careful reading of this report:

1. The historical context and purpose of *Kirche und Amt* is apparent: it was a defence against the accusations of Pastor Grabau, and an attempt to avoid a breach with the German churches.⁴ It did not arise from internal disputes among the Missourians, nor was it intended to settle an internal dispute. Nor, additionally, was it directed against Pastor Wilhelm Löhe, with whom the Missourians were still in fellowship.⁵
2. The intention of *KuA* was to be “apologetic” (defensive and explanatory) not “polemic” (aggressive or condemnatory).
3. Although Walther is presented as the “author”, it is apparent that *KuA* is viewed mainly as a collection of sources that can be used to defend the Missourians’ teachings. It is for this reason that Walther will later appear on the title page as “editor” (not author).⁶
4. As each thesis was presented to the synod and discussed at length, the convention pastors and lay delegates gave their “agreement [Beistimmung]”. The meaning is clearly that they agreed with the teaching of the theses and concurred with Walther’s marshalling of evidence to be presented to and against Grabau.

Most significantly, however, there is no evidence that the convention “adopted” the theses as a confessional document to which the members of synod would be bound, as is frequently asserted.⁷

What the 1851 convention did was to agree that Walther’s theses and proof material from Scripture and historic Lutheranism formed a magnificent reply to Grabau. The convention therefore commissioned Walther to complete the book (which was published the following year by a printer in Erlangen, whom Walther had visited while in Germany). In the preface to the first edition of *Kirche und Amt*, Walther rehearsed this history, noting the resolve of the 1851 Milwaukee convention “to publish the manuscript as our unanimous confession in our name.”⁸ As Walther appears to be referring to the above-cited section of the 1851 Synodal-Bericht, “our unanimous confession” would seem to be his paraphrase of the fact that the convention gave its Beistimmung “agreement” to each of the theses. Walther does not mean that the synod adopted his writing as a new confession, but that they wholeheartedly agreed with his theological presentation against Grabau.

The following year, at the 1852 convention (held again in Milwaukee), the delegates again discussed the ongoing dispute with Pastor Grabau. The minutes record the convention’s decision:

The synod expressed herself in the matter this way: “Since it is important above all things to become one in doctrine with the Buffalo Synod, specifically with Pastor Grabau, her [the synod’s] response [consisting] of the pure teaching on church and office, edited by Prof. Walther under her commission, ought to be sent to the latter [Grabau] through the Secretary, with the request to read through this book in as impartial a manner as possible, and thereby to be persuaded that our apology is nothing other than the voice of the Lutheran Church.”⁹

The minutes then record that, should Grabau not be fully persuaded by reading the book, a delegation should be sent to meet with him. In the meantime, no one in Missouri was to write against him. (Unfortunately, Grabau was not persuaded by *KuA* that the Missourians were right, nor did the planned meetings take place.) From these minutes it is clear that the synod believed *KuA* contained the “pure teaching” of historic Lutheranism, but the word “edited” reminds us that *KuA* was viewed chiefly as a collection of sources. The convention took no action other than sending the book to Grabau. It did not officially adopt *KuA* or elevate it to the status of a doctrinal norm.

The phrase “the voice of the Lutheran Church” found in those minutes echoes the opening words of Walther’s title page, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt: Eine Sammlung von Zeugnissen* ... [“The Voice of Our Church in the Question of Church and Office: A Collection of Witnesses ...”]. This title and the words of the 1852 convention have sometimes been subtly but significantly misinterpreted. “The Voice of Our Church”, as interpreted by Walther’s own subtitle, clearly does not mean “The Voice of the Missouri Synod” but “The Voice of Historic Lutheranism”—for Walther considered the material that he “edited”¹⁰ merely to be a collection of sources from the Scriptures, the Confessions, and the church fathers. Walther clarifies this meaning in his preface:

hardly anyone, so far as we know, has thought of letting the church of our fathers also express its opinion, and since the opinion is becoming ever more general that our church has left the doctrines in question unanswered, we therefore do not consider it superfluous if in this present book, according to the humble talent entrusted to us, we seek to make a contribution so that in the present important controverted question concerning the church and the ministry also our official confessions and the private writings of its teachers may be heard and considered.¹¹ It is quite likely that the common misinterpretation of Walther's title as "the voice of the LCMS" fuelled the belief that KuA had been officially adopted as a doctrinal statement.

Walther's own actions belie this interpretation, as he took upon himself personally to revise and reissue the volume in a second and third edition (1865, 1875) without any commission from or approval of the synod. A fourth edition appeared after his death (1894), revised by Walther's student, Franz Pieper. This is not the expected behaviour of men who believed the first edition was an official synodical document.¹² Nor does Walther refer back to KuA in his later writings or published convention essays; there is, at least, no evidence that Walther held KuA in higher esteem than any other of his writings.

The Reception of Kirche und Amt in Later LCMS History

The same conclusion must be drawn from examining synodical literature on church and office in the generation after Walther's death. Franz Pieper's —A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod || (1897) is consistent with KuA but does not cite its theses or contents. Pieper's three volume Christian Dogmatics certainly cites KuA, but accords it no more prominence than any other writing of Walther; Pieper, in fact, cites Walther's Pastoral Theology more frequently than KuA in his sections on church and office. As Todd Peperkorn concludes about this period in a significant recent study of the question:

In the first seventy-five years of the history of the Missouri Synod, there was little distinction made between any of the writings of Walther as to their authority. Kirche und Amt was understood as authoritative because it contained the doctrines which the Missouri Synod stood by and for. It was an anthology of what the Lutheran Church has always taught, and not a new confession as such. This was also true of Die rechte Gestalt, the Pastoraltheologie, and many other writings of Walther. Walther and the early Missouri Synod were not asking the question of whether or not they were creating a new confession.¹³

What changed at the end of this 75-year period, according to Peperkorn, is that KuA took on a new prominence in the growing debate between Missouri and Wisconsin on church and office.¹⁴ It was at the height of this debate that CPH published the English-language abridgement of KuA in the little volume Walther and the Church (1938). In the translator's preface W. H. T. Dau refers to KuA as "an official manifesto of the Missouri Synod".¹⁵ The page headers for this section of the volume repeat the assertion: "Church and Ministry—Our Church's Doctrine". According to Peperkorn, "This is the first instance where Kirche und Amt is specifically and emphatically placed on a different level than the other writings of Walther."¹⁶ The fact that a new generation of LCMS pastors was arising who could not read German meant that Dau's translation would be their only point of contact with KuA, and the words of his introduction were most likely responsible for perpetuating the belief that the synod had officially adopted it. But the evidence cited thus far suggests Dau's judgment that it was "an official manifesto" cannot be substantiated. Dau's abridgement dealt a further disservice to a new generation of Walther students by reproducing only the theses and scriptural proofs, while neglecting the citations from the Confessions and the Lutheran fathers that Walther believed were the unique strength of his argument.

It is intriguing to follow the fortunes of Kirche und Amt through the intervening decades of the twentieth century. Todd Peperkorn has performed a remarkably-thorough investigation of LCMS publications in the hope of discerning the role that KuA played. Walter Baepler's A Century of Grace: A History of the Missouri Synod 1847-1947 (1947) does not mention KuA in its 11-page history of the Grabau/Löhe debates. The first two volumes of doctrinal essays, The Abiding Word (1946-47), likewise published in honour of the synod's 100th anniversary, display a distinct ambivalence towards KuA. Of five essays touching on church and office, three make no reference to KuA, and two cite it only occasionally.¹⁷ When the 44 "Statementarians" of 1945 criticize the growing use of synodical resolutions as "canon law" they do not mention KuA.

In response to the latter crisis and in the successive years leading up to the seminary walkout, the precise nature of doctrinal resolutions made by synod became the subject of intense debate. In 1959 resolution 3-09 bound all pastors of synod to teach and act in harmony with "every doctrinal statement of a confessional nature adopted by Synod", which were "to be regarded as public doctrine (publica doctrina) in Synod"; three years later the 1962 resolution 6-01 rescinded this action as unconstitutional, in violation of the doctrinal norm expressed in article II. At the same time, resolution 3-17 affirmed the use of doctrinal statements in subordination to Scripture and Confessions, and asked members of synod to honour and uphold them. In successive years, this view of the synod's doctrinal resolutions was generally upheld, though every resolution passed was fiercely contested.¹⁸ The two decades of discussion culminated in the formulation of a procedure for producing doctrinal resolutions and

statements (1977:3-07), contained also in the by-laws (1.03) of LCC. It is significant to note that since the creation of the distinction between “doctrinal resolutions” and “doctrinal statements”, no document has been put through the procedure to elevate it to the latter status.

Likewise, it is remarkable in this era that the aforementioned synodical resolutions do not formulate a list of doctrinal resolutions or documents they believed the synod had previously accepted and might be placed at the level of a “doctrinal statement”. Contrary to popular belief, no such list can be found in the synodical minutes. The lengthy Preamble to resolution 1973:2-12 comes closest as it includes a paragraph giving the history of Walther’s theses on church and ministry, and quotes Dau’s 1938 preface to the effect that they are “an official manifesto” of the LCMS. Significantly, however, they do not quote a convention of synod in support of Dau’s belief. The Preamble goes on to cite the 1881 theses on election, which might more legitimately be labeled synod’s official position, inasmuch as they were explicitly adopted. When the 1973 convention proceeded to propose “A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles” for adoption by synod (3-01),¹⁹ the Preamble cited the Thirteen Theses on Election as precedent, but did not mention KuA. Thus, not until 2001 did the LCMS directly address the doctrinal status of Walther’s work.

Summary

This lengthy historical investigation has resulted in a complex picture of Kirche und Amt’s role in the LCMS. On the one hand:

1. Kirche und Amt was commissioned by synod in convention (1850) as a defense of her teaching in response to Grabau.
2. At the 1851 convention, Walther presented the 19 theses and a summary of the book. The convention delegates gave their unanimous agreement to the contents as the appropriate way to respond to Grabau.
3. The 1852 convention resolved to send the book to Grabau in the hope of achieving unity in teaching. They spoke of the book as containing “pure teaching” on the matter, and representing the voice of historic Lutheranism.
4. KuA was understood as an apologetic writing explaining the Missourians’ understanding of church and office, and was never intended to be used in a disciplinary manner within the synod.
5. Prior to the 2001, no subsequent LCMS convention adopted KuA or referred to it as Missouri’s official position. Thus, the early LCMS conventions give no evidence that KuA was “adopted” by synod, nor that it was intended to resolve internal disputes or to be used in a disciplinary manner. The popular belief that KuA was adopted may have arisen from the following factors:
 1. The initial words of the title “The Voice of Our Church ...” may have been misunderstood as if it were “The Voice of the LCMS”. Walther’s preface, however, makes it clear that it is “The Voice of Historic Lutheranism”, meaning that it was chiefly a collection of sources.
 2. Dau’s preface to the 1938 abridgement of Kirche und Amt calls it “an official manifesto”, but such words are not supported by the actual language of the 1851 convention.
 3. J. T. Mueller’s 1987 translation of the preface places the words “our unanimous confession” into quotation marks, implying that these words are quoted from the convention minutes, which they are not.
 4. The synodical controversies of the 20th century led the synod into lengthy debates on the authority of synod to take decisive action on doctrinal matters. As doctrinal resolutions were passed on a raft of theological issues in order to deal with internal disputes, the belief (mistakenly) arose that KuA had arisen in the same circumstances and had the same purpose.

This historical survey has nonetheless demonstrated the enormous significance that Kirche und Amt holds in the common history of the LCMS and LCC. Walther’s theses and his collection of Lutheran sources in defense of the same were received unanimously by the synod for the purpose of responding to Grabau’s errors. Thus, KuA was “official” in the sense that it was produced at synod’s request and had her approval.²⁰ The oft-asserted distinction between the theses and the rest of the book is perhaps overdrawn, inasmuch as Walther himself placed far more weight on the Lutheran authorities he cited than on his own contribution in the theses and introductions. Walther believed, and the synod concurred, that the volume contained the voice of historic Lutheranism, and as such must be taken with utter seriousness by any church that professes to be truly Lutheran. His theses represent the LCMS’s historic response to Grabau’s errors and illustrate how Missouri theologians have spoken about church and office.²¹ The language of LCC’s resolution 1990:1.02, though written about CTCR documents, provides a helpful pattern of thinking also for KuA:

RESOLVED that the Lutheran Church–Canada receive the documents of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as part of its heritage; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Lutheran Church–Canada continue to refer to these documents for reference and guidance and/or for study in accord with their mode of adoption by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, in regard to matters of doctrinal content, and in practice insofar as they are applicable to the Canadian scene;

Most importantly, Walther would have his beloved synod follow his own method: that in addressing theological controversy we begin with the teachings of Holy Scripture, follow them through into the Lutheran Church's confessional writings, and confirm them with the wisdom of the church fathers' private writings (among whom Walther himself must surely be numbered).

In the end, however, the synod which understands herself to be "Waltherian" ought not ignore the profoundly confessional perspective of her founding president. In his own lifetime C. F. W. Walther discerned and fought against a growing tendency to turn his own writings and the public words of the synod into a new confession. Walther's thorough commitment to Holy Scripture and the Book of Concord led him to warn sternly against this development in his own church:

Unfortunately there has constantly been among certain individuals also in the orthodox church a wrong, "parrot" mind-set. One would follow this or that great teacher. Now, as long as this had reference only to what is right, it may indeed not have caused particularly great harm, although, considering its character and nature, it always was and is something extremely dangerous. Furthermore, we do not deny that also among us there have been and perhaps still are people, and in fact good, guileless people, who simply say in their defense, "You see, it says so in the Proceedings of the Western District." Or if one asks that this or that point of doctrine might be proven, one can perhaps also sometimes hear, "You see, it says so in Walther's Pastorale." This indeed happens as a rule in pure simplicity, without any intent to place human writings next to Scripture or even above Scripture. Yet it is and remains papistic, dangerous, and harmful to faith; therefore we cannot among ourselves oppose this tendency earnestly enough.²²

Notes

1 This pastoral letter was addressed to a group of Prussian Lutherans in Wisconsin, whose pastor had turned back to Germany. The congregation wished to choose a suitable man from their midst and ordain him as their pastor. Grabau argued that such an ordination and any subsequent sacramental acts would be invalid, as the ministry can only be conferred by those who already possess it. Grabau, in a friendly gesture, sent his letter to the Missourians for their advice and approval of his position. He was surprised to discover that they disagreed, as they had emerged from the Altenburg debate with the view that the ministry—in an emergency—can arise from the congregation on the basis of the Word of God alone. Thus, at the heart of the debate on the office of the ministry between Missouri and Grabau (Buffalo) was the question of from where the ministry derives its authority.

2 Grabau complained that Missouri congregations had received as members, people who had been rightly excommunicated from Buffalo Synod churches. Some Missourians argued that their congregation had the right to overrule the judgment of the Buffalo Synod pastor. Grabau disagreed.

3 Synodal-Bericht 1851 (convention minutes), 169-70. Translation from Todd Peperkorn, *The Use of C. F. W. Walther's "Kirche und Amt" in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to 1947* (Ft. Wayne: unpublished S.T.M. thesis, 1999), 139, with minor editing of the final sentence.

4 In the preface to *Kirche und Amt*, Walther recognizes that the North American disputes on church and office were only on the fringe of a much larger debate going on in Germany, —the great battle being fought in our old German fatherland on the field of theological science || . He was referring to the German territorial churches' attempts to free themselves from the dominance of the state and establish a churchly governance, a battle in which Löhe was a major player. Walther hoped by his written contribution to persuade the Germans not to adopt a hierarchical system of church governance. See Holsten Fagerberg, *Bekenntnis, Kirche, und Amt in der deutschen konfessionellen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1952).

5 Certainly there were already public disagreements between the Missourians and Löhe on some aspects of church and ministry (see 1850 convention minutes), though Löhe considered himself a mediating party between Walther and Grabau. The same 1851 convention commissioned Walther and Wyneken to visit Löhe in Germany to try to heal the impending breach, as well as to visit the various theological faculties and church conferences to avoid a split with the German mother churches. Walther reported that their meetings with Löhe were cordial, though little substantial progress was made on points of theological disagreement. At the 1852 convention Walther hailed Löhe as a founding father of the Missouri Synod. The ultimate cause of Missouri's break with Löhe was the latter's upset over what he called —papistic territorialism || when the Missourians tried to assume control of his Pilgerhaus and teacher's college in Michigan. In his black-edged —farewell letter || in 1853 Löhe specifically noted that he did not believe the differences over church and ministry were divisive. See Thomas M. Winger, —The Relationship of Wilhelm Löhe to C. F. W. Walther and the Missouri Synod in the Debate Concerning Church and Office || , *Lutheran Theological Review* 7 (Fall/Winter 1994 and Spring/Summer 1995): 107-32.

6 The full title is highly significant: *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt: Eine Sammlung von Zeugnissen über diese Frage aus den Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche und*

aus den Privatschriften rechtgläubiger Lehrer derselben. Von der deutschen evang.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten als ein Zeugnis ihres Glaubens, zur Abwehr der Angriffe des Herrn P. Grabau in Buffalo, N.Y., vorgelegt durch C. F. W. Walther [The Voice of our Church in the Question of Church and Office: A Collection of Witnesses concerning this Question from the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and from the Private Writings of Orthodox Teachers of the Same. By the German Evang.-Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States, as a Witness of Her Faith, in Defence against the Attacks of Pastor Grabau in Buffalo, N.Y., Presented by C. F. W. Walther].

7 When the synod did wish to solve an internal dispute by adopting a decisive doctrinal position, they clearly knew how to do so. Consider the following declaration from the minutes of the 1881 convention at which Walther's Thirteen Theses on Election were declared to be the truth of Scripture from which the members of synod were not expected to deviate:

We are assembled here by the authority of all our congregations. Every one of our congregations is decidedly represented here (in spite of the delegate system established in 1872) and this includes also each one's confessional position. No one has the right to insist on the contrary unless he can produce uncontroverted facts in his favor. No individual members of the Synod or their persons have rendered a confession, but the Synod itself has rendered its confession. If later on it should appear that the confession of this or that delegate in this or that matter is not the confession of this or that parish which he represented, that still does not alter the circumstances in the least that here the Missouri Synod as such was assembled and rendered a confession. All the congregations of our synodical fellowship knew what the doctrine of Synod on predestination was. If our congregations did not acknowledge this, then, through their properly constituted boards, they would have stepped into the matter and would have expelled those, who, according to their convictions, had publicly been defending false doctrine. Our congregations will neither tolerate nor retain false teachers in their institutions. (Synodal-Bericht 1881, 43; trans. August Suelflow, "Congregational Autonomy", Concordia Journal 3 [Nov. 1977]: 268.)

8 In J. T. Mueller's 1987 translation of the preface, the final words are rendered "'in our name and as our unanimous confession' [that of Missouri Synod]" (9). The quotation marks imply (quite misleadingly) that Walther is quoting words from the convention minutes; in fact, the original German text of Walther's preface contains no quotation marks, nor the name of the Missouri Synod (which Mueller adds in brackets).

9 Synodal-Bericht 1852, 212; trans. T. Winger.

10 It has been suggested that Walther considered himself merely an "editor" because Kirche und Amt was published in the name of the synod, the LCMS being the true author (see Dau, below). In light of Walther's own explanation in the preface, this interpretation is surely wrong.

11 C. F. W. Walther, Church and Ministry (Kirche und Amt): Witnesses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church on the Question of the Church and the Ministry, trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia, 1987), 8-9.

12 It is also noteworthy that, though an abridgement was produced in 1938, Concordia Publishing House did not produce a complete English translation until 1987, after many other writings of Walther had previously been rendered into the synod's new language. It is apparent that in the early- to mid- 20th century Kirche und Amt held no higher rank among Walther's writings.

13 Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 141.

14 See Todd Peperkorn, "C. F. W. Walther's Kirche und Amt and the Church and Office Debate Between the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods in the Early Twentieth Century", Concordia Theological Quarterly 65.4 (Oct. 2001): 299-322.

15 Walther and the Church, ed. Wm. Dallmann, W. H. T. Dau, and Th. Engelder (St. Louis: Concordia, 1938), 50. The full context of the statement is even stronger:
The treatise is evidently regarded by him no longer as his own, to promulgate his private opinions, but it is an official manifesto of the Missouri Synod, which here offers to its Christian brethren everywhere and forever its humble witness to the truth which it has joyously embraced on these great basic questions: What is the Church? and, What is the Ministry of the Church? Let Walther's synodical posterity take notice of this fact: In Walther's Kirche und Amt spoke—and still speaks!—not a single, deservedly revered individual but the entire God-blest Missouri Synod, whom this treatise of Walther helped to make into a sound, staunch, faithful herald of genuine Lutheranism. (50-51)

Dau's revisionism is apparent in the first sentence of the next section: "Church and the Ministry is a polemical essay"—precisely the opposite of what the 1851 minutes actually report, that it was apologetic, not polemical.

16 Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 116.

17 See Peperkorn, S.T.M. thesis, 130-38.

18 See resolutions 1969:2-27; 1971:2-21; 1971:5-24; 1973:2-12; 1975:3-04; 1977:3-07; 1986:5-02A.

19 This document was adopted by simple convention majority (562-455), and therefore, contrary to popular belief, stands at the level of “doctrinal resolution”, not “doctrinal statement” (according to the 1977 terminology). The language of the next convention, 1975:3-05, clarifies this:

A Statement is not to be used mechanically or legalistically to discipline members of the Synod, but it is to be honored, upheld, and used fraternally and evangelically throughout the Synod in an effort to assist the Synod in remaining faithful to its confessional position. ... [T]he Synod cannot make A Statement binding upon its members in the same sense in which the Scripture is binding. Nor can it ask its members to bind themselves to A Statement in the same manner in which they freely bind themselves to the Lutheran Confessions.

20 Thus it holds the kind of official status given to the synod’s hymnals and explanation of the catechism.

21 The 1981 CTCR document, “The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature”, included Walther’s 10 theses on the ministry in an appendix, to which it appended this measured comment: “We append ‘The Theses on the Ministry’ prepared by C. F. W. Walther and approved by the Synod in 1851 not merely as a matter of historical interest, but as a testimony to the theological and practical consistency of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod in its view of the ministry” (45).

22 C. F. W. Walther, “Church Fathers and Doctrine: Synodical Conference Essay, Cleveland, Ohio, Aug. 13-19, 1884,” in *Essays for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992), 2:83-84.

Vicarage Task Force

Final Report June 2010

Introduction

The 2008 convention of Lutheran Church–Canada adopted resolution 08.1.06 To Establish a Task Force to Review the Vicarage Program. This resolution called for a review of the “practical training of seminary students with respect to length, location, and financing of vicarages as well as the mentoring and placement of vicarages.”

In September of 2009 President Bugbee gathered the members of the task force together at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, ON for their first meeting. Serving on the task force were Rev. Mark Dressler (Chair), Mrs. Cindy Israel (Secretary), Rev. Prof. Jonathan Kraemer (Vicarage Placement Supervisor, Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, AB), Rev. Dr. William Mundt (Vicarage Placement Supervisor, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, ON), Deacon Siegrid Robak, Rev. Andre Schroth, and Rev. Daryl Solie (Council of Presidents’ Representative).

At the September meeting the task force reviewed Resolution 08.1.06 of the 2008 Synodical Convention. It examined the benefits and drawbacks of the current vicarage system, and performed a similar examination of a proposed residency program. It then began to assess what further information would be beneficial, and what sources would be helpful in retrieving that information. Before adjourning, each member of the task force was given an area to research, and that information has since been shared through email and discussed at the subsequent teleconference calls. This report is the culmination of their research.

Strengths of the Current Program

Through its interviews the task force quickly recognized that, while the vicarage program could certainly be improved, the current system is not broken. There are clearly many strengths of the current vicarage program. It gives vicars opportunity to apply their theological training to a sustained practical experience in everyday parish ministry.

Where there is direct instruction of a supervising Pastor, the vicar is exposed to a variety of lessons; both as overtly taught by the supervising Pastor, and those which he experiences while observing his supervising Pastor.

Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accreditation requires “supervised ministry”²² to be a part of the Master’s of Divinity degree as this is a “practical” degree. The current program fulfills that requirement.

The vicar is normally exposed to multiple aspects of parish ministry which will help reveal his strengths and weaknesses which can be addressed in his fourth year, as well as be helpful for candidate placement.

3rd Year vicarages allow for:

- A. The student to seek out answers to theological questions that have arisen during their vicarage
- B. The vicar to reflect, ask questions and learn from fellow students and professors.
- C. The student to take additional courses to meet their challenges and identify and address areas of personal growth identified during the vicarage.

Through greater interaction with laity, vicars:

- Learn the importance of how to deal gracefully with people.
- Have their preaching shaped by the experience of vicarage.

The vicarage helps a student acquire confidence in preparing him for his divine call.

²² “Supervised Ministry” is defined as practical learning experiences under the supervision and mentorship of experienced pastors. “Supervised Ministry” may be part time (“Field Work” or “Field Education”) complementing the full time classroom studies, or full time (“Vicarage”) immersions in parish life.

It allows students the opportunity to grow by being away from family and friends and adapting to a new environment.

The vicar has a chance to earn some money in a time when he may incur much debt.

It allows opportunities for interaction between student, supervising Pastor and Seminary such as:
Seminary vicarage supervisor who visits the vicars in their vicarage congregation.
Orientation time where the Seminary can make its expectations clear to both vicars and supervisors.

While the primary purpose of vicarage is that the vicar grow in learning, it also provides that opportunity for the supervising Pastor.

Concerns Arising from the Current Program

1) Lack of Quality Vicarage Congregations

All three Overtures identify a problem also recognized by the Task Force members. One of the problems recognized by those the task force interviewed, as well as by seminary representatives on the task force, was the lack of quality placements for vicars. There is no question that the program would benefit by having more congregations apply for vicars, thus giving church officials more options in placing the vicars each year.

It was noted that the congregations that usually apply for vicars are either smaller vacant congregations that have no pastor on site, or large congregations that are able to afford a vicar. The first situation, a parish without a pastor on site, will be addressed later in this report under the topic of mentorship. The second situation offers vicars with a variety of experiences in his vicarage parish, but is often very different from the parish he will be placed into as a Pastor since many candidate placements are not larger congregations. During the task force interviews the thought was raised a number of times that it would be beneficial for some vicars to spend their year of practicum in a smaller parish with a pastor on site. The problem, of course, is the affordability of a pastor and a vicar to a smaller congregation. This, and other issues were the reason for creating the task force. This concern from the synod can be seen in some of the original overtures sent to the 2008 synodical convention.

Concerns Arising From the Overtures:

Resolution 08.1.06 was the end result of a number of overtures concerning the vicarage program that were submitted to the convention. These overtures revealed some of the concerns the church has with the vicarage program:

2) Congregational financial constraints

OVERTURE 1.06 To Provide Synodical Funding For Vicarages addressed the concern that good potential mentors and congregations are eliminated from the vicarage program due to cost constraints.

3) Vicars being used as cheap labour

OVERTURE 1.08 To Explore a New Model for Pastoral Training suggested an alternative Residency Program to replace the current vicarage. It stated that current practices involved in vicarage are counter-productive:

Too often the Church has made use of less than adequate vicarage experiences. Supervision is often lax due to distance and time commitments. Vicars are sometimes viewed as "cheap labour" rather than involved in a teaching environment. One year does not provide the pastor in training with enough experience to meet the increasing demands of pastoral ministry in the 21st century.

Vicarages in multi-point parishes do not provide responsible mentoring to the vicar, because of distance involved and the lack of time for teaching and learning opportunities for the pastor to meet with the vicar. This also happens with congregations not having time to provide the necessary input to the vicar, again because of distances involved.

Both OVERTURE 1.06 To Provide Synodical Funding For Vicarages and OVERTURE 1.07 To Provide Excellent Mentoring For Vicars claim that the current program "often necessitates vicars being put in less than ideal situations, often impairing their pastoral formation, putting them at a deficit from the outset of their ministry"

4) Excellence in mentorship of vicarage

-All three overtures recognize the importance of

- a) Recruiting mentor pastors.
- b) Matching mentor pastors with students.

5) The length of vicarage

Proposal for Residency Program for Lutheran Church Canada – supplement for OVERTURE 1.08 To Explore a New Model for Pastoral Training states:

“One year does not provide the pastor in training with enough experience to meet the increasing demands of pastoral ministry in the 21st century.”

6) Mentoring of New Pastors.

The residency program outlined in OVERTURE 1.08 To Explore a New Model for Pastoral Training focuses the mentoring of new pastors once their seminary courses have been completed.

Components of Vicarage

Duration

The length of “supervised ministry” which is required of students at our LCC seminaries as being insufficient preparation for ministry was examined. It should be noted that while vicarage is only one year of full time mentorship and immersion in parish life, students are required to undergo two years of part time “supervised ministry” (“Field Education or Field Work”) under the mentorship of pastors in congregations near the location of the seminaries. This has been part of the curriculum from the beginning of our two seminaries in recognition that theology is a *habitus practicus*; theology is practical. There is a reciprocal relationship between classroom and parish. As students are formed theologically in the classroom, they experience the practice of that theology in the parish; the practice of theology in the parish drives the student’s studies in the classroom. Summer vicarages are also available at both seminaries, on a voluntary basis for the students.

A study of ATS accredited schools was conducted in order to gage the depth and length of our seminaries’ “supervised ministry.” The study revealed a range of practices. Some schools had as little as one year of part time supervised ministry in a three year degree program. Our seminaries’ program, with two years of part time and one year of full time “supervised ministry,” was longer and more in depth than most schools in ATS. This means that in terms of duration and depth, field education and vicarage at our seminaries affords our students with more opportunities for practical experience and mentorship than most students receive at the average seminary in North America.

Vicarage in the third year of seminary, while it does sometimes mean inconvenience to the student and their family, is an important component of the curriculum. Feedback from students and faculty has suggested that a third year vicarage is important in order to give the students upon their return time to reflect upon their vicarage experience and to address any deficiencies that were identified during the vicarage year. The vicarage year enables the family also to work through the process of moving and getting re-established in a new community. These are invaluable skills to develop in order to make the transition at the end of seminary a smoother one.

The vicarage task force was intrigued by the recommendation that accompanied Overture 1.08, recommending an extension of the vicarage to three year residency program. After completing its research it unanimously concluded that such a radical change to the system was not required. The task force did, however, recognize the value of an extension of mentorship to the first few years of ministry.

Recommendations:

- 1) To continue with 2 years of field education and 1 year of vicarage, preferably in the third year of the four year M.Div. degree.
- 2) The Council of Presidents study the possibilities of implementing a process for mentoring pastors in the first few years of their ministry. One such option for this is a model developed by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod entitled PALS (Post seminary Applied Learning and Support). This program has been operating for twelve years and, while it is voluntary, it includes approximately 60-65% of the candidates placed into the field for their first call. PALS pairs young pastors (not more than three years in the ministry) with more senior pastors (ideally 15-20 years of parish experience). It was first established to try to counteract pastors leaving their first parish after a relatively short stay by providing encouragement and support.

Mentorship

Underlying the overtures and resolution was the desire to see the best possible mentorship provided to our seminary students while on vicarage. Surveys of graduates and interviews with clergy and District Presidents affirmed the importance of mentorship and the priority it should play in the placement of students for vicarage. While there is a consensus that good mentorship is essential for meeting the expected outcomes of vicarage, it was discovered that there are various views on what qualities good mentors should have as well as which strategies make for good mentorship.

Broader research suggests there is good reason for the various views on mentorship. One study suggested that there are four basic styles of mentorship: supporting, coaching, delegating, and directing.²³ A follow-up study summarizes the styles in this way:

The supporting style uses praise to promote cooperation, consideration and minimization of conflict. It is more relationship oriented than task-oriented. The coaching style involves modeling and demonstrating appropriate behaviors. It includes integration, persuasiveness, and active assumption of the mentor role. The delegating style places greater responsibility on the protégé and tolerates greater ambiguity and freedom of choice. The directing style involves telling protégés what, how and when to do things. It places the emphasis on task completion and performance outcomes.²⁴

While vicarage supervisors may gravitate toward a certain style of mentorship as their strength, good mentorship actually requires flexibility in style. Flexibility is necessary in order to address the particular needs of the vicar and to adapt as the student shows growth. For example, vicars may often in the initial stages of the vicarage require a more directive style, yet as growth, maturity, and responsibility are evidenced, the mentorship may transition into more of a coaching or delegating style.

Though there are varieties of approaches to mentoring, research has shown that excellence in mentorship entails certain attributes whatever style is used. They are: interpersonal skills, personal attributes, and professional competencies.

The interpersonal skills of a good mentor involve caring and encouraging, promoting and sponsoring, supporting and protecting, as well as challenging and demanding. The personal attributes of a good mentor include being mature and wise, friendly and optimistic, admired and respected, as well as trustworthy and dependable. Finally, good mentors should be professionally competent, which includes being qualified, experienced and seasoned, knowledgeable and informative, as well as professionally involved and active.²⁵

These attributes together constitute the kinds of qualities that should guide the process in seeking suitable pastoral mentors for vicars. Years of pastoral experience do not necessarily a good mentor make, nor does the identification of exceptional interpersonal skills in the pastor if he had had but a few years of experience.

Excellence in mentorship entails not only the use of different styles and the choice of mentors with certain attributes; a key ingredient is time spent in the process of mentoring. An effective mentorship through vicarage entails observation by the student of his supervisor in various capacities of ministry, debriefing and discussion of approaches used by the mentor, and then observation of the student by the supervisor with debriefing and feedback to follow. Often the student will learn not only by hearing what is said, but how it is said, and observing the body language of the mentor.

²³ Stahlhut, R., & Hawkes, R. "Mentoring student teachers: A conceptual model." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Las Vegas, NV. February 1990.

²⁴ Wadkins, Theresa, and Miller, Richard L. "Bending Twigs: The Act of Mentoring Undergraduate Student Research." In *Developing, Promoting, & Sustaining the Undergraduate Research Experience in Psychology*. Edited by Richard L. Miller, et al. Syracuse, NY: Society for the Teaching of Psychology, 2008: 209.

²⁵ Wadkins, Theresa, and Miller, Richard L. "Bending Twigs: The Act of Mentoring Undergraduate Student Research," 209.

Recommendations:

- 1) Whenever it is possible, students should be placed with their mentor supervisor on-site. Vicars should not be placed primarily to fill vacancies, nor to serve as mission developers.
- 2) Active identification and recruitment of excellent mentors be a priority of the Council of Presidents.
- 3) The revision of vicarage application process to include letters of recommendation from Circuit Counsellors and District presidents which include a discussion of the potential mentor's attributes and style. This helps to match a student's needs with a supervisor's strengths.
- 4) Directors of vicarage continue to orient and support mentors through the whole vicarage year.

Congregation

Although not the primary focus of the concerns raised in the overtures, the Vicarage Taskforce identified the congregation as another key partner in the vicarage process. Congregations not only support the vicar and his family financially, but by prayer and in many other ways. In some vicarage congregations, support committees have been formed in order to ensure the needs of the vicar (and his family) are being met, or if need be, to be a mediator between pastor and vicar in the case of conflict.

Congregations also give of their pastors time which is spent in the mentoring of the vicar. In entering the vicarage program it is vital that the congregation do so informed of all the consequences as well as the joys in serving the broader church by assisting in the formation of a pastor.

Congregations of a larger size have typically been the type of congregations that have applied for vicars. Often this is because they are able to financially support a vicar. The larger congregation also has served the student well in many respects in that there often is a broad range of experiences which the student may be exposed to or can expect to be exposed to in the short period of one year. On the other hand it has also been suggested that in some respects a vicarage in a larger congregation does not prepare the student for the type of ministry they will typically encounter when they themselves receive their first call.

Recommendations:

- 1) That consideration be given to a variety of different congregations for the placement of vicars.
- 2) That congregations inquiring into the possibility of applying for a vicar would receive appropriate information regarding not only the financial commitment but the amount of time that mentoring a vicar will require so they can enter into the process with appropriate expectations.

Student

One last aspect of vicarage, which is also a key component of the process, is the student himself, in particular his attitude toward the vicarage year and his engagement in the learning process. While deficiencies in the early years of ministry may be due to the process of formation in the seminary, it may also be due to the student's investment in the process itself. The student who views it as just another requirement to meet will receive something very different from the experience than the student who actively seeks out opportunities to learn and grow. The student who has a servant attitude and opens himself up to receiving feedback will have a very different experience than the one who already "knows it all."

Recommendations:

- 1) That seminaries continue to improve their evaluation of students' readiness for vicarage.
- 2) That seminaries, and in particular the vicarage directors continue to prepare students to enter the vicarage year with the appropriate servant attitude.

Undergirding this: Financial Support

Benefits of an Affordable Vicarage

One solution, that will see more congregations involved in the vicarage program, would be to make the vicarage more affordable. As mentioned above, only larger congregations or vacant congregations tend to apply for vicars. If the cost of a vicarage were lowered more congregations would be able to apply for a vicar. This would offer much more flexibility to the Council of Presidents and the Vicarage Directors when they arrange placements each year. A more affordable vicarage would make it possible for smaller congregations with a Pastor to also afford a vicar. If there were more placement opportunities, then those who decide the placements would have the luxury to weigh the mentorship that each placement offers, thus improving the vicarage experience. In past years, the

placement options have been very limited, and in some years (2010 for example) there were not enough placements for all the vicars which required the deferral of some vicarages to the student's fourth year.

A Shared Concern

It is important to note that every congregation in the synod benefits from an effective vicarage program. Whether a congregation has had a vicar in their parish or not, they are still reaping the benefits through their pastor who was once a vicar. It can therefore be argued that a solid vicarage program is the responsibility of the entire synod. The task force thus believes that the synod should examine sharing the cost of training vicars instead of leaving the entire burden of the cost with the vicarage congregation. To see how this might be accomplished some essential statistics are listed below:

2008 LCC Synodical Statistics

52,654 confirmed members in LCC

316 congregations in LCC

229 (72%) were small with 1-199 confirmed members

72 (23%) were medium with 200-499 confirmed members

15 (5%) were large with 500-1000+ confirmed members

Annual Vicarage Costs

6-8 vicars are placed per year from the 2 seminaries

Average cost for a vicar = \$40,000

Total cost per year for 8 vicars = \$320,000

Synod's proposed portion of the total cost (50%) = \$160,000

Proposed Formulas for Cost Sharing Among LCC Congregations

If synod chooses to subsidize vicarage congregations, then the funds would have to come from assessing the congregations of the synod. There are two possible ways to accomplish this; to assess each congregation per confirmed member, or to assess them according to their congregational size. The suggested amount for both options are outlined below.

If cost is shared per confirmed member

$$\$160,000 \div 52,654 \text{ confirmed members} = \$3.04 \text{ per confirmed member}$$

If cost is shared per size of congregation

Example # 1

Annual support from

Small congregations (100 confirmed members) \$275 x 229 congregations = \$62,975

Medium (350 confirmed members) \$1000 x 72 congregations = \$72,000

Large (750 confirmed members) \$2250 x 15 congregations = \$33,750

TOTAL \$168,725

*{\$8,725 overage}

*Overage assumes that some congregations will not submit annual contributions.

Example # 2

Annual support from

Small congregations (100 confirmed members) \$500 x 229 congregations = \$114,500

Medium (350 confirmed members) \$750 x 72 congregations = \$54,000

Large (750 confirmed members) \$1000 x 15 congregations = \$15,000

TOTAL \$183,500

*{\$23,500 overage}

Vicarage Placement Assistance Fund

Should an assessment be made of synodical congregations, then a system for collecting and distributing the funds would have to be established. Mr. Dwayne Cleave, Treasurer of LCC, suggested the following parameters for a potential Vicarage Placement Assistance Fund:

- 1) All congregations would be billed an annual assessment based on communicant membership to support the vicarage program. The Districts would collect the funds from congregations and forward them to LCC.
- 2) The LCC Vicarage Placement Fund would have maximum capital limit established by the Council of Presidents (Suggestion \$240,000). This amount would cover approximately 50% of the cost of having 12 vicars placed.

3) The Congregation that has a vicar placement would be responsible for covering 50% of the annual costs with the remainder being covered by the vicarage fund.

4) Lutheran Foundation–Canada financial gift coordinators would communicate and support the Vicarage Placement Fund through their ongoing presentations to our communicant membership with the hope that fellow brothers and sisters in Christ will see and heed to the need and support of this fund through planned gifts

5) The Vicarage Placement Fund be invested equally in each District’s CEF, managed by the Synod Treasurer and any interest earned through this investment be rolled back into the Vicarage Placement Fund

6) The fund, its balances and disbursements would be reported in the Synod’s annual financial statements

Concluding Recommendations

The Vicarage Task Force has concluded that the current vicarage program has served Lutheran Church–Canada well through the years. Changing to a three year resident program at this time would not be in the best interest of the church. Maintaining a one year vicarage in the third year of the seminary program remains the preferred option. The system is clearly not broken, but it would certainly benefit with some “fine tuning.” These adjustments require participation from various participants in the church. Therefore the task force suggests the following recommendations:

The Seminaries

Ensure that congregations inquiring into the possibility of applying for a vicar would receive appropriate information regarding not only the financial commitment, but the amount of time that mentoring a vicar will require so they can enter into the process with appropriate expectations.

Orient and support mentors through the whole vicarage year.

Continue to improve their evaluation of students’ readiness for vicarage.

Continue to prepare students to enter the vicarage year with the appropriate servant attitude.

The Council of Presidents

Encourage congregations to consider the possibility of applying for a vicar, and provide the appropriate information regarding not only the financial commitment, but the amount of time that mentoring a vicar will require.

Actively identify and recruit excellent mentors as a priority of The Council of Presidents.

Whenever possible, place vicars where the mentor is on-site. Vicars should not be placed primarily to fill vacancies, nor to serve as mission developers.

Create an application process to include letters of recommendation from Circuit Counsellors and District Presidents which include a discussion of the potential mentor’s attributes and style of mentorship.

Study the possibilities of implementing a process for mentoring pastors in the first few years of their ministry. (Similar to the PALS model used in the LCMS)

The Synod

Adopt a system of subsidizing vicarages whereby congregations are yearly assessed and contribute to a Vicarage Placement Fund.

Individual Congregations

Examine themselves to see if they would be a good training ground for a vicar.

Consider participating in the vicarage program (especially if it is made more affordable through subsidy) thereby offering more options for placement.

Commit themselves to support the Vicarage Placement Fund.

It is the prayer of the task force that the recommendations brought forth in this report would be considered and implemented, so that the Synod can raise up Pastors that are both faithful to God’s Word, and pastoral with His people. May the vicarage program be improved as He sees fit, and may God continue to bless the process of training shepherds for His church.

Respectfully submitted,
The Vicarage Task Force
June 14, 2010

**Task Force on Cost-Efficient,
Sustainable Seminary Education**

**Final Report
December 1, 2010**

Executive Summary

One of the core objectives of the Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth.” (Handbook, Constitution III. 3). Our Lord has truly blessed seminary education in Canada. However, this success has not been without challenges. The 2008 Convention of Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) adopted Resolution 08.3.04, to implement a cost efficient seminary program for LCC. In response to this, the Board of Directors established this Task Force with a main goal of providing the Board of Directors with a series of recommendations that will lead to providing cost-efficient theological education for the church.

This final report provides an overview of the current system, key recommendations for a cost efficient, sustainable seminary program, together with cost projections the Task Force recommends be contractually obligated between each of the two seminaries and Lutheran Church–Canada in a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement to accomplish the key Task Force recommendations including:

- Lutheran Church–Canada and its membership be encouraged to continue and grow their support for seminary training as a core objective of the Synod.
- Seminary education be continued at both Edmonton and St. Catharines sites.
- The administration and operations of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary – Ontario and Concordia Lutheran Seminary Edmonton be integrated such that there would be a single president and administration, single budget and non-overlapping academic program for seminary education in Lutheran Church–Canada, and ultimately the two seminaries be amalgamated with a single Board of Regents.
- The total full-time faculty workload equivalent not exceed five professors, including the president, who will also be expected to teach as necessary.
- ‘Smart classrooms’ be used as much as possible to facilitate simultaneous joint classes between the two campuses.
- Various administrative and support functions such as accounting, development and recruitment be centralized.
- Our seminaries begin a Distributed Learning MDiv/Theological Diploma Pilot Program combined with its existing classroom-based MDiv program.
- In due course, a new name be chosen for the integrated seminaries.
- The Synodical Bylaws of LCC be followed, and if necessary be amended to allow a more direct relationship between the Board of Directors and the Board of Regents, such that current ambiguities noted by the Task Force be clarified.

It is our prayer the recommendations contained herein will lead to a new day in seminary education where the support for and the sustainability of seminary education will increase; where our Synod will *value* seminary education as its founders envisioned. The Task Force also prays that while the changes recommended herein will be challenging to implement, the seminaries themselves will embrace anew their mission and strive to work together in good faith to be good and faithful stewards of the treasures, talents and time entrusted to their care.

1. Introduction and Historical Background

Before there was a Synod there were seminaries.

When the forebears of Lutheran Church–Canada first arrived in North America the first priority was to establish seminaries. A log cabin seminary was constructed in 1839 in Perry County Missouri, fully eight years in advance of the founding of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) in 1847. A second seminary was established in 1846 to continue to meet the pastoral needs of congregations.

North of the 49th parallel we note a similar history. Resolution 6.08A of the 1975 Convention of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod authorized Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield (Fort Wayne) ... “to establish

an extension program in Ontario at a site to be approved by the Ontario District in convention” As a result Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (CLTS) in St. Catharines, Ontario began offering classes in the fall of 1976. A sister seminary, Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS) opened its doors in 1984. Resolution 6-02 of the 1981 LCMS Convention "To Authorize Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) to Determine the Location of Seminary Education in Canada,” gave LCC which was at the time still a federation of districts within the LCMS the freedom to opt for either one seminary or two and decide on the location(s). The only stipulation being, if LCC opted for two seminaries, one seminary would be in St. Catharines. Subsequently LCC (federation), in its convention in November 1981, adopted resolution 81-06-01B "To Adopt Edmonton, Alberta, as the Location for the Western Seminary." Thus both of Lutheran Church–Canada’s seminaries were fully operational before LCC held its founding convention as an independent church body in 1988.

Before there was a Synod there were seminaries. Indeed, one of the core objectives of the Synod is to “recruit and train pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth.” (LCC Handbook, Constitution III. 3)

As Lutheran Church–Canada has grown into a fuller understanding of its mission in the world, a key element of that work has always been the training of indigenous pastors in each of its mission outposts. In Ukraine, in Nicaragua, and in South East Asia before there were synods there were seminaries, staffed in large part by pastors and professors from LCC. Though much has changed since the days when the confessional Lutherans first immigrated to North America, one of the core values of those pioneers remains unchanged – the proper training of confessional Lutheran pastors in their own culture to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of that culture and to the ends of the earth.

To be sure, the seminaries established in Canada have been a great blessing to the Synod and its people. As of September 2010 some 155 of the 243 active parish pastors in LCC are graduates from either the St. Catharines or Edmonton seminaries. Table 1 shows where our graduates are presently serving:

Table 1: Status of Graduates from CLS and CLTS

Status	Seminary	Total
Active Parish Pastors	CLS	80
	CLTS	75
Candidate Status	CLS	3
	CLTS	5
Emeritus (retired)	CLS	5
	CLTS	15
Military Chaplain	CLS	2
	CLTS	2
Serving in Administrative Positions	CLS	3
	CLTS	5

However, at the same time as the Synod has realized great blessings from its seminaries questions have been raised within LCC on a regular basis concerning its seminaries. Overtures have been regularly submitted to various Conventions asking that action be taken to restructure, reorganize and re-evaluate seminary education in Canada.

For example, prior to the 1999 Synod Convention an overture was submitted to the Convention asking the Synod to re-evaluate the need for two seminaries. The Convention however passed a resolution affirming the need for both schools.

WHEREAS we believe it is important as an indigenous church body to be self sufficient in providing parish pastors, professors, and other ordained clergy for Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC); and

WHEREAS recruitment possibilities are significantly enhanced with two seminaries; and

- WHEREAS our seminaries are cost efficient in preparing men for the pastoral ministry; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that LCC give thanks to God for the blessing of these two excellent institutions; and be it further
- RESOLVED that LCC in convention commend its seminaries for the work they do in preparing men for the pastoral ministry; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that LCC in convention affirm its commitment to both seminaries.

At the 2002 Synod Convention overtures asking for a review of the previous convention's decision to continue with two seminaries were declined. However, this Convention established the "Task Force on the Delivery of Theological Education" mandated by Resolution 02.2.03. This task force, composed of representatives from the Boards of Regents and the faculty of the three educational institutions of the Synod, presented its interim report to the 2005 Synod convention. Considerable time was devoted in the work of that Task Force to the question of the number and location of seminaries for Lutheran Church–Canada. The task force concluded that "the question may not be one of consolidating the institutions, but rather determining how we can better provide theological education in the future." It recommended further study be given to the concept of "The Development of a Model for Theological Education in a Small Church." Unfortunately, a number of factors including a lack of funds prevented additional research from being conducted and no further action was taken on the recommendations of this task force.

In the triennium between the 2005 and 2008 Synodical Conventions both seminaries underwent times of great change. Vacancies were filled in the presidencies of both seminaries, enrolment shrank and the financial health of both schools declined. The most dramatic of the financial changes occurred at St. Catharines where the accumulated operating deficit grew by \$270,250 in the 2007-2008 fiscal year, increasing the long term debt of the seminary by about 70%. In Edmonton, operating deficits also created challenges eroding the surpluses that had been accumulated over several previous years. In the months leading up to the 2008 Convention, it was estimated the accumulated operating debt of the two seminaries stood at nearly \$800,000.

Concern over the viability of the seminaries lead the Board of Directors of the East District to submit the following overture to the Convention:

- “WHEREAS the seminaries of Lutheran Church–Canada continue to face new challenges and opportunities as they seek to sustain their service to our Synod in training pastors and church workers; and
- WHEREAS financial support for operating two seminaries continues to diminish as expenses continue to rise; and
- WHEREAS student enrolment at both seminaries continues to remain stagnant for the foreseeable future; and
- WHEREAS an opportune time now exists, because of vacancy in the office of President of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Catharines, for the Synod to consider the efficiency and stewardship of maintaining two separate administrative structures; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that the Synod adopt a single administrative structure governing both seminaries; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure make the necessary Handbook changes to bring this about; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Synod be empowered to implement these changes during the next triennium with the approval of this convention.

This overture was reviewed, amended, and after much debate, the following resolution was adopted by the Convention:

Resolution 08.3.04 To implement a cost efficient seminary program for Lutheran Church-Canada Ref: Overture 3.11, Reports 3, 20, 21 and institutional Reports (p. E50 of Convention Workbook)

- WHEREAS the seminaries of Lutheran Church–Canada continue to face new challenges and opportunities as they seek to sustain their service to our Synod in training pastors and lay people; and
- WHEREAS Synod is unable to materially increase its financial support for operating the two seminaries; and
- WHEREAS student enrolment at both seminaries has declined from the 1990s and on a combined basis has remained stable for the last 4 years; and
- WHEREAS cost effective technological advances exist to creatively deliver theological education, including video conferencing, web-based delivery and distance education; and
- WHEREAS the two seminaries have an accumulated deficit of \$800, 000.00 and the average cost of operating the seminaries over the last 6 years has exceeded revenue by \$96,612.00 per year; and
- WHEREAS our partner churches in Australia and Brazil face similar issues of geography and yet each maintains a single seminary; therefore be it
- RESOLVED that Lutheran Church–Canada create a cost efficient seminary program for the training of pastors for Lutheran Church–Canada; and be it further
- RESOLVED that the Board of Directors implement a plan to fulfill this resolution, including bringing forward to the next Synodical convention amendments to the constating documents and Handbook of Synod; and be it finally
- RESOLVED that the Board of Directors provide semi-annual progress reports to the constituency of our Synod through the *Canadian Lutheran*.

In response to this resolution the Board of Directors of LCC at its October 2008 meeting established the Task Force on Cost-Efficient, Sustainable Seminary Education. The first meeting of the Task Force was held in Winnipeg January 19, 2009 where the following Terms of Reference were adopted:

Mission of Task Force

- To provide Lutheran Church–Canada’s Board of Directors with a series of recommendations that will lead to providing cost-efficient theological education for the church.

Timeframe

- 2009 research and analysis
- 2010 report & recommendations to the Board of Directors
- 2011 report to Synodical Convention

Outcomes: The Task Force will deliver to the Board of Directors

- An overview of the current system
- Recommendations for a cost efficient, sustainable, seminary program
- Projections of cost and consequences
- An implementation timeline

It bears noting at this early stage of this report that while the establishment of this Task Force comes at a very important time in the history of our Synod, LCC is by no means the only church body undertaking a review of its seminary education programs. We have watched with particular interest the developments in the United States as the LCMS has examined its seminary training. At Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, for example the financial situation was such that for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009 the institution was forced to reduce costs by \$6,000,000, reducing its budget by approximately 25%. One of the measures adopted to achieve this goal was the offering of early retirement to all faculty and staff aged 55 or older who had been with the seminary for five years. To prevent the faculty and the programs of the seminary from being decimated many of the affected faculty were re-hired in a limited capacity on a stipendiary basis.

We have also attempted as best as possible to monitor developments beyond our ecclesiastical family. In the wake of the 2008 economic crisis, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) convened a one-day think tank that brought together chief financial officers from member schools and experts in theological education to consider institutional viability and financially stressed schools. In preparation for that meeting, the ATS surveyed its schools and their finances. Of those who responded 63% indicated they have made immediate cuts in their budgets. Of those schools, 12% were forced to reduce their budgets by more than 10%. In spite of these cuts only 45% of respondents expected to end the 2008-2009 fiscal year with a balanced budget. To compound matters, 68% of respondents reported the value of their endowment funds decreased by at least 21%.

2. Overview of Present Seminary Operations

Following its initial meeting, the Task Force conducted site visits at both seminaries as well as at Concordia University College of Alberta to solicit the input of the Synod's educational institutions themselves and to gain an overview of the current situation at the seminaries. Following those initial visits the Task Force has had ongoing conversations with both seminaries and has asked for and received additional detailed information. The findings from these site visits and subsequent discussions are set forth below.

2.1 Concordia Lutheran Seminary – Edmonton (CLS)

- **Corporate Structure:** Concordia Lutheran Seminary was established by an Act of the Alberta Legislature in 1984. One year later the Act was amended to give CLS the right to grant degrees in Divinity.
- **Property and Physical Plant:** The seminary is situated on land owned by "Lutheran Church–Canada, the Alberta British Columbia District". Its building was dedicated in 1991 and there are no outstanding debts in regard to the construction of the building.
- **Academic Program:** CLS is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) to offer the Masters in Divinity degree (MDiv), a professional degree recognized in North America particularly as the normative degree for the pastoral ministry. In 2004 the accreditation of the MDiv was extended for 10 years (the longest term possible) and the following particular strengths of the seminary were noted by the ATS:
 - Sense of mission and close relationship to the church
 - Strong sense of community among faculty staff and students
 - Consistent support of the church for the seminary
 - An excellent facility
 - An excellent faculty to student ratio
 - A well-crafted field education and vicarage program

However, in addition to these important positive comments concern was raised over a number of other issues including faculty work-load and an aging donor base. The ATS also raised concern about whether LCC with its comparatively small size will have the resources in the future to maintain two seminaries. Also as a result of the accreditation process CLS discontinued its Masters of Theological Studies (MTS) degree due to ongoing low enrolment in the program.

In addition to offering all the courses necessary for the MDiv degree CLS also provides education to various students enrolled in the Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT) program and to individuals seeking to become pastors in LCC via colloquy.

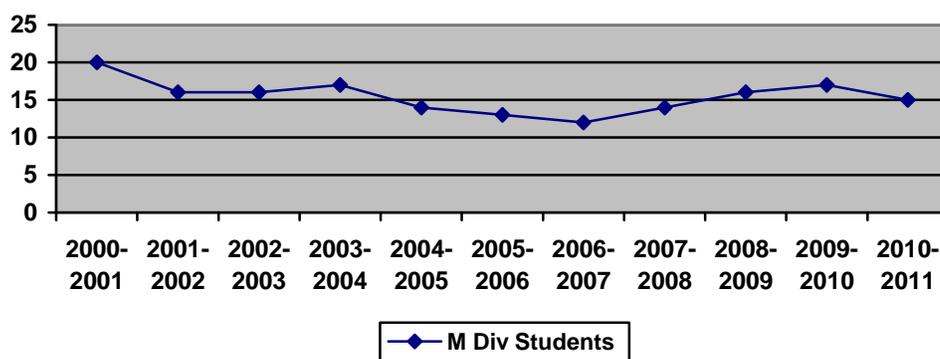
A unique element of the program at CLS is the Missionary Study Centre. Founded in 1997 to serve as concrete evidence of the Seminary's commitment to the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world, the Centre is funded by a \$200,000 grant from the Schwan Foundation.

- **Faculty and Staff:** Rev. Dr. Manfred Zeuch was installed as the fifth President of the seminary in March 2007. In addition to the president there are three full-time faculty members at CLS, two of whom have earned doctorates while the third is in process of completing his doctoral studies. Support staff consists of a full-time registrar/director of recruitment; a full time development officer, a full time administrative assistant to the President, a full time administrative assistant to the director of development, a full time library clerk, a part-time treasurer and a part-time director of music.

- **Enrolment:** After declining in the early years of this decade, enrolment in the MDiv program appears to have stabilized.

NOTE: The Task Force recognizes that both seminaries offer courses and programs beyond the MDiv degree. However as the MDiv is the "flagship" program of the seminaries and a bell weather of the overall health of the institution, we have chosen to report only those enrolment figures for both seminaries in this report.

Figure 1: MDiv Enrolment CLS 2000-2001 -- 2010-2011 Academic Year



- **Recruitment:** CLS has at its doorstep a tremendous asset in its recruitment efforts. Situated across the street from Concordia University College of Alberta it is able to target some of its recruitment efforts at young men enrolled in the pre-seminary program offered at CUCA. At any given time approximately one third to one half of the student body at the seminary are students who earned all or part of their undergraduate degree at CUCA.

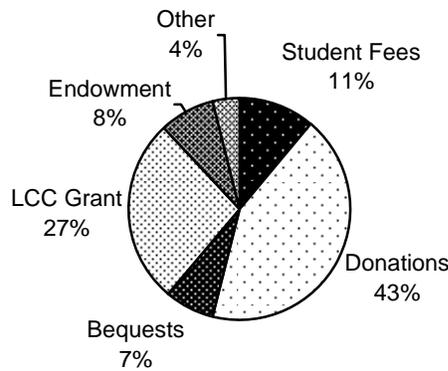
- **Donor Base** numbers of unique donors by district are shown in Table 2

Table 2: Annual CLS Donors by LCC District

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ABC	542	601	678	602	1035	790	743	744	664
Central	424	512	648	671	827	744	656	600	590
East	37	33	30	27	46	44	39	40	24
Other	50	54	47	46	103	72	60	33	46

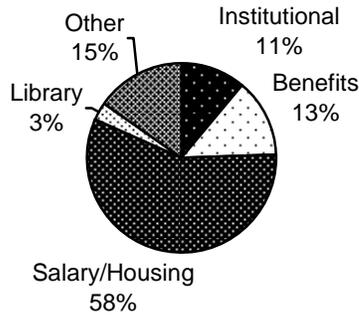
- **Income:** From what sources does the seminary receive its finding? As shown in Figure 2, nearly two-thirds of the funding for the Edmonton Seminary comes either from the Synod or from individual donations.

Figure 2: Average Income Sources by Source CLS



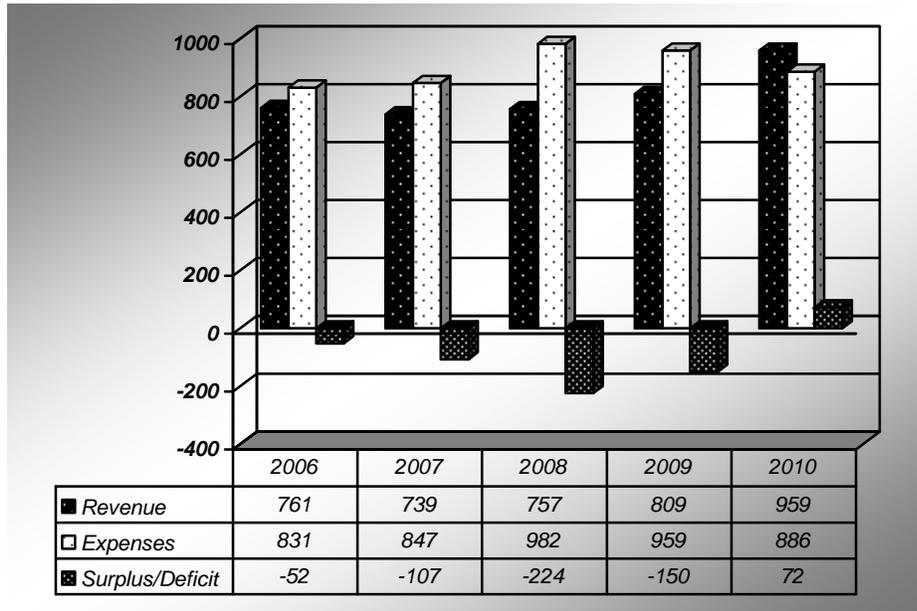
- **Expenses:** Where does the money go? To no one's surprise the bulk of the seminary's expenses are directed toward the costs of staffing. The results shown in Figure 3 (from the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008) reflect the historic averages.

Figure 3: Average Expenses by Area CLS



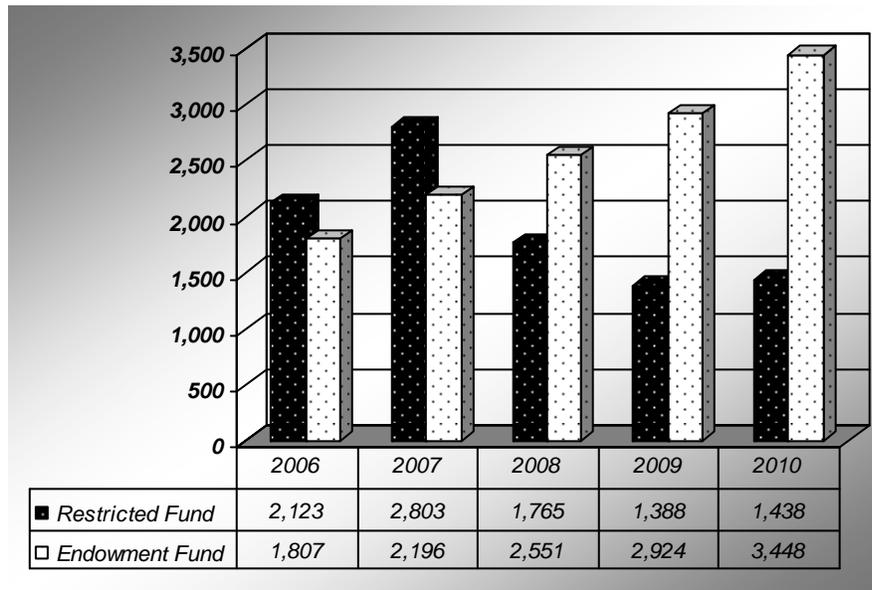
- **Operating Results:** Figure 4 depicts the revenue and expenses of CLS for the past five fiscal years. It is important to note while operations in 4 of the past 5 years have resulted in deficits, reserves from previous years' operations have offset these deficits.
NOTE: for the purposes of this report only the General Fund income and expenses are noted. Donations to and transfers from Restricted funds are not shown. All amounts represent thousands of dollars.

Figure 4: Operating Revenue and Expenses CLS 2006-2010



- Foundation:** An understanding of the financial position of either seminary is not complete without reference to the funds held in reserve and in the endowment funds owned by each institution. At CLS the balance in the restricted fund has decreased over the past five years as cash has been transferred to offset operational losses. However at the same time the value of the endowment fund has continued to grow (see Figure 5). Even during the current economic recession strong donations to the endowment fund have continued. The total of all donations to the endowment fund over the past 5 years exceeds \$1.8 million.

Figure 5: Restricted Fund and Endowment Fund CLS 2006-2010



- Distance Education:** The ATS defines distance education as the offering of courses where the students and the instructor are not in the same location. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. CLS has entered into a relationship with the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), an independent, pan-Lutheran institution, providing confessional Lutheran seminary training for individuals seeking the MDiv degree but who do not

wish to attend seminaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America or Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. In the 2009 – 2010 academic year, six students from the ILT participated in four courses offered by CLS. The students participated in lectures and completed course assignments via the Internet. This arrangement with the ILT has resulted in the receipt of just over \$5000.00 additional student fees for the seminary in the 2009-2010 fiscal year and has given the seminary valuable experience in teaching courses using alternate delivery methods. CLS and CLTS have also engaged in the sharing of courses via the Internet.

- **Institutional Isolation.** One of the challenging topics that arose in the Task Force’s conversation with CLS is the perception at least of differing visions for and differing approaches to theological education between the two seminaries of our Synod. In his submission to the Task Force CLS President Dr. Manfred Zeuch reported,

“There are differing ‘visions’ for theological education between the two seminaries. The two faculties do not always seem to share a common set of priorities, or even to understand church and ministry in similar ways. This fundamental difference of approach between the two schools is perhaps the biggest overall problem to be resolved within the realm of LCC’s seminary program.”

As result of this concern the Task Force, included the following comments in its first interim report:

“The Task Force believes that the most effective way to stop this problem is by presenting a united front to our Synod with open, real co-operation between the seminaries on all levels. It appears that there are many areas in which our seminaries can work together to great advantage. Recruitment, development and communication are among the most obvious of these areas for joint work, but certainly the list is far greater than these two areas.

Not all the blame for this lack of unified action can be assigned to the seminaries themselves. The Handbook of LCC establishes an Advisory Council (Synodical Bylaw 2.81) made up of the presidents of the educational institutions established by Lutheran Church–Canada and a member appointed by and from the Board of Directors of LCC. The purpose of this Council is to study issues and problems in the field of higher education and other such matters as may be assigned to it by the Board of Directors. It appears that this Council has not met for some time and that such meetings as have been held have not dealt seriously with matters such as reducing the isolation of our schools from each other.”

2.2 Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary – St. Catharines (CLTS)

- **Corporate Structure:** Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary was incorporated by Letters Patent under the Corporations Act (Ontario) in 1976. For a period of several years it operated as an extension of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS) in Fort Wayne, Indiana. From 1976-1985 Dr. Roger Humann served as the Dean of the seminary, before the calling of a first president.

- **Property and Physical Plant:** The seminary is situated on land leased from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. According to the terms of the agreement the seminary owns the building and leases, for the sum of \$500.00 per year, the land upon which it is built. This lease expires on June 30, 2080. However, should the seminary cease to operate or be declared bankrupt or insolvent, the ownership of the building is surrendered to Brock University. The construction of the building was completed in 1984 and there are no outstanding debts in regard to the construction of the facility. With a chapel seating 150, a library capable of housing around 80,000 volumes, two classrooms able to seat 25-30 students each, and two seminar rooms, the building is easily able to handle a student body of 80 individuals.

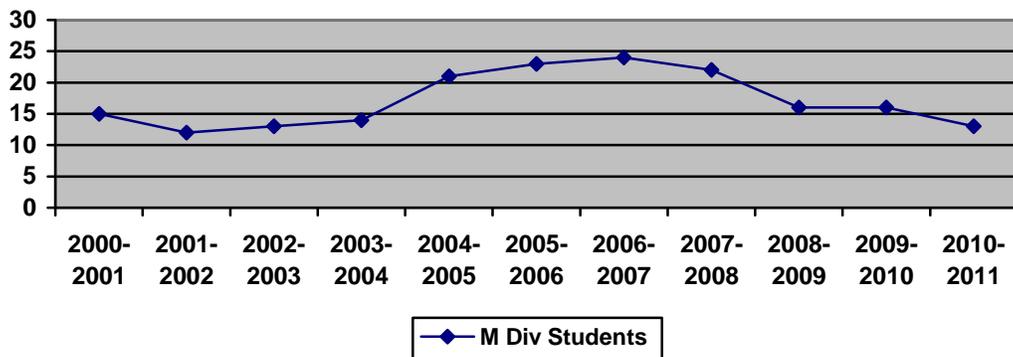
- **Faculty and Staff:** Since January 2008 CLTS has operated without a full time president. Following the resignation of Dr. Harald Tomesch, Dr. Thomas Winger has served as Academic Dean and Acting-President. In addition to the president, there are two full-time faculty members at CLTS, both having earned doctorates while a third part-time, contract faculty is in the process of completing his doctoral program. Support staff consists of a full time administrative assistant to the president, two part-time library clerks, a part-time treasurer and also a part-time director of music.

- **Academic Programs:** CLTS offers two masters level degree programs. Like CLS, the St. Catharines seminary offers the MDiv degree and in addition offers a Masters in Theological Studies (MTS). However,

CLTS does not have the authority to award its own degrees. Instead, its degrees are awarded in cooperation with Brock University. CLTS is in the process of having its MDiv program accredited by the ATS. In addition to the MDiv program CLTS offers a pastoral diploma program leading to certification for the Holy Ministry. Enrolment in this program is limited to mature students, with a strong background in the Lutheran Church, and supported in their application by their District President. While the course of study is similar to the MDiv no degree is awarded. Like its sister seminary CLTS also offers training for students enrolled in the PAT program and who are participating in colloquy studies. While not part of the academic program *per se* it is important to note, students at CLTS are offered full access to all of the facilities of Brock University and the institution generally speaking benefits greatly from its 30 years of close association with Brock.

- **Enrolment:** In recent years enrolment in the MDiv program at CLTS has declined (see Figure 6). The Task Force has heard that to some degree this recent decrease may be attributable to a lack of clarity or certainty about the future of the seminary.

Figure 6: MDiv Enrolment CLTS 2000-2001 -- 2020-2011 Academic Years



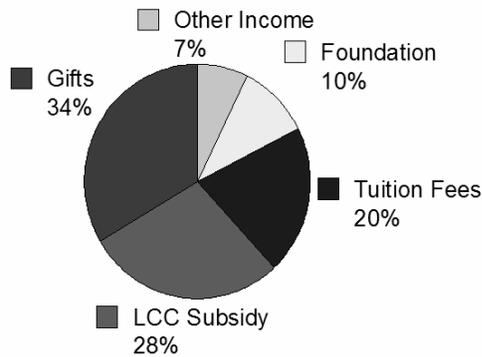
- **Recruitment:** The work of recruitment at CLTS is handled in much the same manner as it is at CLS. However CLTS is in a unique position as it is able to recruit students from Canada as well as from areas of the US that are closer to St. Catharines than they are to either of the seminaries of the LCMS. It should be noted, in the 2009-2010 academic year 36% of the CLTS student base were American residents, who would not attend a seminary in any other part of Canada. While it is tempting to view this merely as a service offered to the LCMS, one must take note of the contribution these students make to the viability of CLTS (through their fees and the donations they draw) and also count as a blessing a number of American students who have chosen to take a call in Canada because of studying here.

In addition to these recruitment issues the Task Force's consultation with CLTS, focused on the broader issues of recruitment, focussing not simply on quantity but also on quality of students attending our seminaries. Acting President Dr. Thomas Winger offered the following summary of the situation as he perceives it:

"It is no secret that LCC is declining numerically and greying. Nonetheless, there are young men in the church who might be directed to the pastoral office if their parents, pastors, peers, and professors would make the effort to do so. In addition to numbers, the quality of our seminary students is a major concern. For various reasons, it appears that the highest quality men in our church are no longer placing the pastoral ministry at the top of their list. There is consequently an overall decline in the level of academic rigour and theological intensity at our seminaries. Nor is this just an academic problem. Failed pastorates are as often owing to the pastor's lack of personal skills as anything else—a factor greatly beyond the seminary's control. The church at large has a great role to play in filtering and favouring the most suited candidates for the seminary".

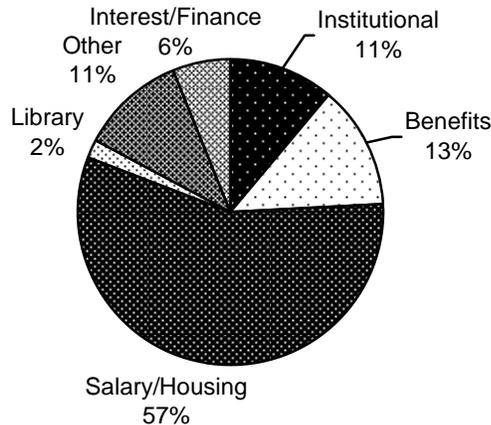
- Donor Base:** Of 3,000 donors in the CLTS database, about 500 have donated within the last five years. In the five-year period from 2004 to 2008:
 - 77% of donations are from Ontario
 - 7% from the rest of Canada
 - 15% from the US
 Over the same period a total of 5,300 gifts were received:
 - 35% were under \$50
 - 46% were between \$50 and \$250
 - 19% were over \$250
- Income:** With some minor variations the income pattern for CLTS is very similar to that of its sister seminary (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: CLTS Average Income by Source



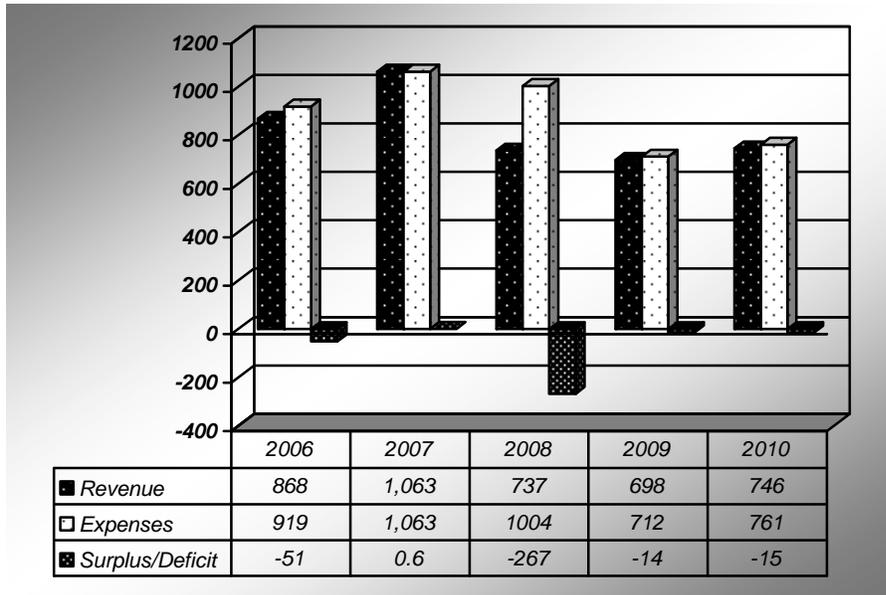
- Expenses:** At CLTS expenses generally follow the same pattern as at the Edmonton seminary with one exception. Due to its large accumulated operating debt, CLTS expends significant funds to service the interest costs that accrue to the debt. The percentages shown in Figure 8 below are based on results to the end of June 2009.

Figure 8: CLTS Average Expense by Area



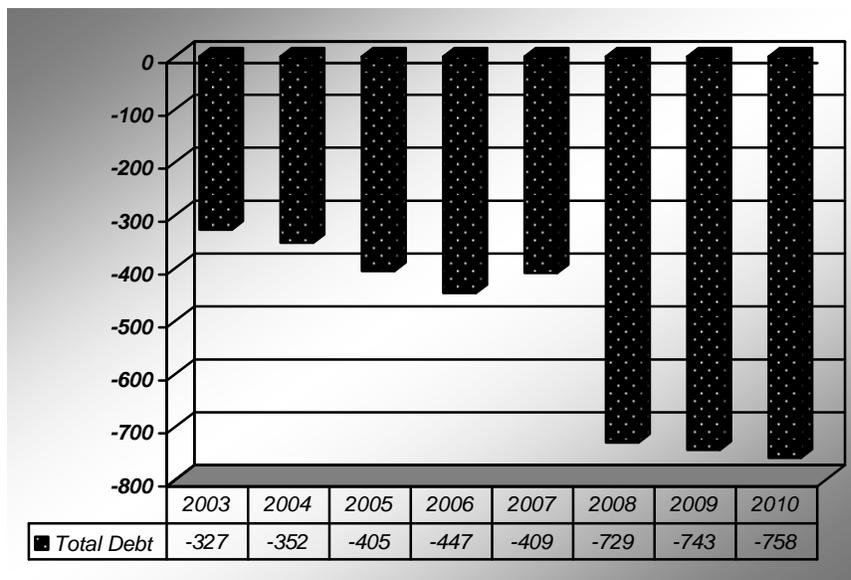
- Operating Results:** Figure 9 depicts the revenue and expenses of CLTS for the past five fiscal years. (As in Figure 4 above, only the General Fund income and expenses are noted. All figures are shown in thousands of dollars.)

Figure 9 CLTS Revenue and Expenses: 2006-2010



- Long-term Debt:** One of the most pressing concerns at CLTS is the growth in the long-term operating debt of the seminary. Figure 10 below shows the debt has more than doubled since the 2002-2003 fiscal year, with much of increase occurring in the 2007- 2008 fiscal year.

Figure 10 CLTS Long-term Operating Debt: 2003 -2010



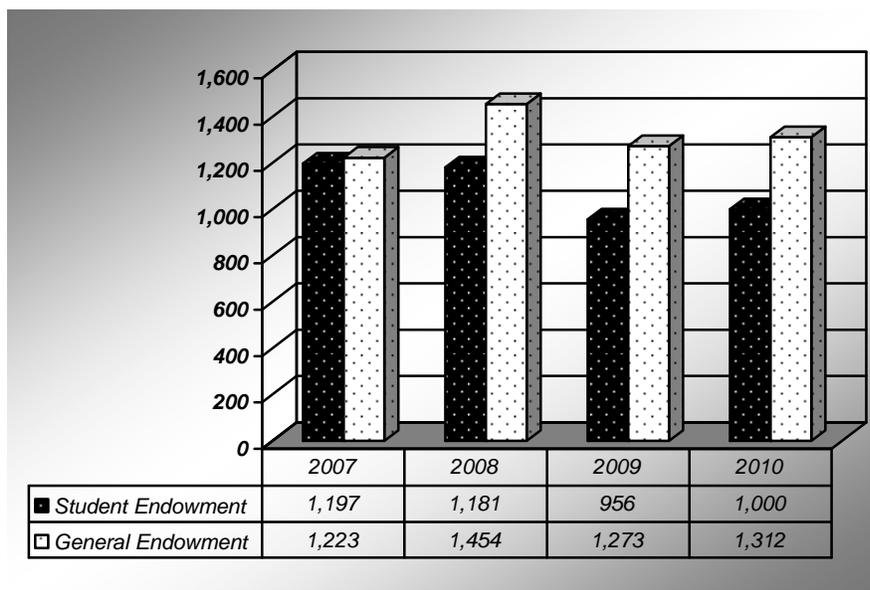
In an addendum to its second interim report the Task Force identified this long term debt as “one of the biggest obstacles to be overcome as we move forward.” Regardless of what structure emerges for our seminaries, those who implement that structure will be at a significant disadvantage if they are immediately saddled with a large inherited accumulated operating deficit.

The Task Force recommended the Board of Directors engage in immediate discussions with the Board of Regents at CLTS to devise a plan to raise funds to eliminate their accumulated operational debt by the time of the 2011 Synod Convention. Giving to a deficit is among the least appealing of fund raising tasks both for those who do the asking and for those who are asked to contribute. However, the longer it takes to address this

crippling debt, the harder it will be to restore a positive vision for seminary education in Lutheran Church–Canada. The Task Force is thankful action has begun toward this goal and prays God’s blessings on this task.

- Foundation:** From its earliest days CLTS has benefited greatly from the donations made by the people of our Synod to its endowment funds. A brochure prepared for distribution to the church in early 1976 looked forward to the establishment of a \$1,000,000 endowment fund in the hope the “interest alone would more than cover operating costs!” Those operating costs were projected to be \$67,500 per year. In the end over 1000 donors made pledges and the seminary foundation was begun. However in recent years new gift support for the seminary’s two endowment fund has not kept pace with that of her sister seminary. Combined giving to both endowments has averaged just over \$29,000 for each of the last four years with \$116,301 in new money received by the endowment funds. This, together with the effects of the global recession, has kept the value of these funds static over the past few years.

Figure 11: CLTS Student Endowment and General Endowment 2007-2010



- Church Confidence:** One of the topics discussed at length in the Task Force’s consultation with CLTS is a perceived lack of confidence in the final “product” i.e. the pastors graduated from our seminaries. Dr. Winger described the problem as follows:

“Though finances have been the catalyst, one might argue that the deeper crisis facing the seminaries is one of confidence. While the loudest voices have tended to come from those who criticise CLTS, St. Catharines, for the perceived quality of its graduates, we must not ignore the opposite voices expressing dissatisfaction with CLS, Edmonton. In other words, the ‘seminaries problem’ is an LCC problem, and reflects the various divisions that mark our church, including east-west prejudice, and theological and practical differences. Unfortunately, these divisions begin to affect all aspects of seminary life as church members give or withhold their donations according to (mis)perceptions of each seminary, and young men are directed to or away from each seminary for similar reasons.”

While the issues raised by Dr. Winger are strictly speaking beyond the scope of this Task Force, they are a cause for concern. Money follows mission; if the constituency of LCC has lost confidence in either or both of its seminaries then financial support, or more precisely the lack thereof, will surely reflect that perception.

3. Review of Input Received by the Task Force from the Synod, its members and other entities

One of the most important and intriguing aspects of Task Force's mandate was to receive input from the Synod and its membership concerning the questions at issue. Much of that input took the form of formal written submissions; however a good deal of input was also received informally by individual members of the Task Force in the way of comments, questions and encouragement. The Task Force made itself available at each of the 2008 District Conventions and also encouraged members of the Synod to submit written comments, ideas and concerns to the Synod office for consideration. Formal consultations were held with the Board of Directors of the Synod as well as with the President and Executive Staff of Lutheran Church–Canada. A submission was also received from Concordia University College of Alberta.

Below are summations and quotations concerning the main positions taken in the submissions made to the Task Force. Comment upon these alternatives will come in a later section of this report devoted to examination of the various alternatives before the Synod at this time.

3.1 Input from Members of the Synod

One of the biggest surprises of this phase of the Task Force's work were the number of submissions (both formal and informal) that called for the closing of one or both of the seminaries. The argument advanced in the majority of these submissions was based either on financial concern or on concerns regarding the quality of education our seminaries are able to deliver.

Financial arguments for the closing of institutions often paralleled the comments below which were received from the Voters Assembly of a congregation in Western Canada:

“If the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod with a membership of 1,856,783 can operate with two seminaries, then it is far fetched that Lutheran Church–Canada with approximately 55,177 confirmed members in its congregations needs two seminaries.

According to the number of seminary students attending our seminaries, we would be able to pay their tuition and living expenses and still be ahead.

Therefore it is our recommendation that we arrange seminary services from the LCMS and close both our seminaries.”

Another submission was more succinct:

“LCC is too small to even have one financially viable seminary.”

The “quality of education” argument for closing seminaries often echoed the comments of a Canadian-born pastor who reflected on his seminary education at one of the Seminaries of the LCMS:

“Our seminarians simply do not hear from enough voices in their formation. When I attended seminary I heard from over 20 different professors while our students hear from only 3 or 4. We are not able to provide the depth of education that the American seminaries are able to offer.”

A less drastic suggestion focussed on the consolidation of all seminary education at one location. Submissions favouring this approach often argued it would foster a greater sense of unity within the Synod if all pastors were trained at one seminary.

A number of submissions offered suggestions for alterations to the present structure, one of the most popular of which was development of some arrangement whereby Concordia University College of Alberta (CUCA) would assume a greater role in the formation of seminary students.

Among the more compelling arguments in favour of this approach is the opportunity that would be afforded for seminarians to have greater interaction with those preparing for the diaconal service in the Synod.

“Pastors and diaconal ministers will be working together in the parish. They can only benefit from being involved in preparation and training together.”

Another submission which favoured greater involvement of the University College suggested:

“If all pastors were educated at [CUCA] this would allow them to mingle with many other students and professors, enriching their education and life experiences ... It would also serve to strengthen LCC and draw us closer together as one body seeking to do the Lord’s will in this place at this time.”

Finally there were some submissions that argued for the continuation of the present two seminary system and a renewal of support from the Synod and its members.

“In the present circumstances that face our seminaries, it seems that financial concerns are uppermost. But they are only a symptom of the problem, not the problem itself. The symptoms are also of a temporary nature. For most of its history, CLS has operated in the black. In the early years of its history, CLTS gathered endowment funds far beyond what could have been reasonably expected. The supporting constituencies may be withholding support, but that can be reversed. I do not agree with the “whereas” in the convention resolution which stated, ‘the synod is unable to materially increase its financial support for operating the two seminaries.’ Since ‘synod’ means all the pastors, deacons and congregation, I contend that the synod is not ‘unable.’ It is currently ‘unwilling.’”

3.2 Input from the Synod Board of Directors and Executive Staff

Even as the membership of the Synod looks to its Executive and Board of Directors for leadership, so also the Task Force thought it prudent to consult with the leadership of our church body on these important matters. Among the highlights of the information received are the following points.

- The Board of Directors and the Synod President are convinced Lutheran Church–Canada needs to maintain seminary training in Canada.
- Partner churches such as the Lutheran Church in Brazil who have had two seminaries and closed one of them have experienced a rapid and significant decrease in the number of seminarians.
- The amount of funding available from the Synod for its seminaries is likely to decrease by about 25% over the next two years. Currently the Synod provides \$205,000 per year to each seminary. It is anticipated going forward a combined total of \$308,000 will be available from the Synod for seminary education.
- Even though the importance of face-to-face learning experiences for seminarians cannot be underestimated, new technologies make it possible for our seminary faculties to compliment each other and make it less necessary for each school to have faculty specialists in every theological discipline.
- Many areas of the administration of our seminaries can be consolidated. Prime examples of this are finance, accounting and development.
- A means needs to be found for the Board of Directors of the Synod to more effectively interact with the Regents and Administration of the seminaries without compromising the integrity of the seminaries.
- Recruitment must be a higher priority for the Synod and its members.

4. Review of Alternatives

After gathering the information summarized above the Task Force engaged in a review of all the alternatives proposed and developed its recommendations. While many approaches were taken to analyzing the data received one of the most helpful tools was the Pugh Analysis. The main purpose of using the analysis was to adopt an established analytical method to aid in understanding the impact of certain scenarios regarding the main objectives of the Task Force. Developed by Stuart Pugh, University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, England, the analysis remains an established method for determining approaches and considerations around complex decisions.

Pugh's analysis uses facts, substantiated by information regarding certain characteristics. Since many of the details used in the Pugh analysis were provided directly from seminary responses to questionnaire surveys, on-site visits and historical records, with other details from LCC, there was less bias from third party information sources. The Task Force believes this strengthens the validity of any outcomes. By examining selected pros and cons in a well-defined matrix, and ranking options with respect to decision-making impact, certain considerations are kept for further scrutiny, while others are clearly less viable. Among the options studied, the following fall into the latter category:

4.1 Close both Seminaries and Send Seminarians to the LCMS

While at first blush this might seem like a cost-effective, logical, “back to the future” solution to the seminary questions before the Synod, the Task Force is persuaded this alternative would have several irreversible negative consequences and indeed may not even be particularly cost-effective.

Tuition costs at LCMS seminaries are approximately 3 times higher than at our Canadian seminaries. The tuition at Concordia St. Louis, for example stands at \$585/credit hour. Each student is expected to take 36 credit hours per year which equals \$21,060 (US) per year. Current admissions information for prospective students at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis advises married students expect costs for a nine-month academic year to approach \$50,000 (US), more if the student and his wife have children. Because Canadian students and spouses are severely restricted in their ability to be employed while in the US the only reliable way to meet these costs for Canadians seeking education in the US would be through generous student aid from LCC. If LCC were to close its seminaries and offer to cover the costs of the 23 current M. Div students (a number lower than the historic average) costs to the Synod would be at least \$1,150,000 (US) per year.

Based on previous experience, it is unlikely all or even a majority of students would be able to uproot and move to St. Louis or Fort Wayne. When the decision to withdraw from an inter-Lutheran seminary arrangement at Saskatoon was made the consequences for pastoral recruitment in western Canada were particularly devastating. Even though LCC, which was then still a federation of districts within the LCMS, offered to fund three round trips per year between the seminarian's home and school for students from the west and even though Concordia Seminary, St. Louis accepted the Canadian dollar at par, and living costs were far less than they are today, only a very few students went from western Canada to either of the American seminaries, or for that matter to CLTS in St. Catharines.

One of the core objectives for the Synod is to recruit and train pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth. Prior to the establishment of our Canadian seminaries in 1976 and 1984, we relied almost exclusively on seminary training offered in the United States. To be sure, in bygone days many Canadians received excellent seminary training through this arrangement. However, by the 1970s the number of Canadians willing to uproot and move to the US was in serious decline. The number of Canadians recruited for US seminaries remained small compared to the stronger recruitment experienced once seminary training was established in Canada.

Another factor to be considered in this regard is the need to provide “Canadian content” to seminarians attending St. Louis or Fort Wayne. In the nearly 23 years LCC has been an autonomous church body it has continued to have a strong relationship with The Missouri Synod. It also must be acknowledged the two church bodies have grown apart in some respects. This ought not to be seen as a negative development as much as a natural progression as LCC has matured as an indigenous church body. An obvious solution would be to fund a chair at each of the US seminaries to provide a Canadian focus for Canadian students. Such costs would be in addition to the cost of sending students and

estimated conservatively would likely be at least \$110,000 per year for each position. Thus the total cost of sending the current number of seminarians stateside (if indeed they would go) plus the cost of a Canadian component in their education would be approximately \$1,370,000 US not including costs for recruitment, fundraising and other activities to support this option. Financial savings in this approach, as compared to present costs, will be comparatively small if indeed, there are any savings at all.

Another factor to be considered before moving on is the impact such a move would have on missions of our Synod. As noted at the outset of this report, much of our Synod’s mission work has come through the establishment of seminaries in mission fields. The faculties of our seminaries have contributed immeasurably to this work. Not only would this resource be taken away, but our mission would most surely lack credibility if we sought to establish seminaries for others while having none of our own.

Finally, it must be noted seminaries provide services to the churches in their area, such as lay courses, festive worship services, library facilities, retreat facilities, and the labour of their professors as vacancy pastors and speakers for church events. Likewise at the synodical level, having two faculties has enlarged considerably the resources available for academic writing and work on committees such as the CTCR. Loss of these resources would deprive our church locally and nationally.

4.2 The Single Seminary Option

Many of the same concerns as were raised above apply to the option of reducing the number of our seminaries from two to one. The results of this action in Brazil are immensely instructive. While it was believed the students, faculty, and money would automatically shift from the closed seminary to the other, the reality was quite different. The president of the seminary in São Leopoldo, Brazil, reported the following effect on the total number of graduates when the seminary in São Paulo was closed (see Table 3):

Table 3: Brazil Seminary Enrolment Pre- and Post-Closure

6 years before closure (actual graduates from 2 seminaries)	6 years after closure (predicted graduates based on enrolment)
2002 - 35	2008 - 14
2003 - 44	2009 - 17
2004 - 43	2010 - 20
2005 - 37	2011 - 21
2006 - 24	2012 - 22
2007 - 35	2013 - 15

As Table 3 shows, graduations decreased by fifty percent (from 218 to 109). It is also reported overall giving is down, and the remaining seminary is already being asked to make cuts for financial reasons. The effect on the church has been divisive, as members view the decision concerning which seminary to close as political and theological. It is clear the supporters of one seminary do not automatically divert their gifts and students to the other.

The closure of either seminary in LCC would likely cause similar repercussions. Both seminaries are supported by donors who have a strong geographic connection to the institutions. Over the past five years more than 77% of gifts to CLTS came from residents of Ontario, 15% from the US, and only 7% from the rest of Canada. At CLS financial support again tends to be regionally based. While there are many donors in the Central District the majority of the seminary’s gifts have come from individuals in the Alberta British Columbia District.

Further practical matters complicate any recommendation to close a seminary. Were the St Catharines seminary to be closed, it is unlikely LCC would take any assets of significance out of the institution to fund seminary operations in Edmonton or other location. The building (which has no mortgage) is located on land leased from Brock University. As noted elsewhere in this report, should the seminary cease to function the building reverts to Brock University. The building was recently assessed by a commercial real estate agent at \$950,000 and this number was qualified by the reminder it might be impossible to sell a building on leased land to a commercial purchaser.

Another option would be to attempt to sell the building to Brock. However, the university would be under no obligation to offer a fair price if LCC took the first move to break the lease.

The situation in Edmonton, while different in particulars, is essentially the same as in St. Catharines. The building, which is likewise debt-free, sits on land owned by the Alberta British Columbia District. Should the seminary be closed, the sale of the land and the building would doubtless result in little if any direct improvement in the financial outlook of the St. Catharines seminary.

The economic argument for closing a seminary would be much stronger if closing one of the two seminaries would result in enhancement of resources for the fulfillment of the task of training pastors. However, in each case closure of a seminary would potentially result in giving away significant assets or selling them at deeply discounted prices while not necessarily improving the economic outlook for seminary education in LCC. The Task Force is of the opinion such stewardship of the synod's assets would be rightly questioned for generations to come.

4.3 Close both seminaries and begin a new seminary in a new location

A variation of the two options discussed above is to close both current seminaries and merge their operations into one school located in the central region of the country, perhaps in Winnipeg. While there are some potential advantages to such an option, such as bringing all seminary resources to one location, unity in pastoral training across the Synod and proximity to the national office of the church body, there are many compelling reasons why such an arrangement is not in the best interests of LCC at the present time.

In their current locations the seminaries receive strong regional support for their operations, both financially and in recruiting efforts. Uprooting the seminaries to a new location would run the risk of alienating support while a new donor base is built up and new loyalties are forged. This could well result in several years of deficit operations which the synod and the seminary simply cannot afford.

Further our two current seminaries are located in areas where there is a large enough LCC population to provide for varied fieldwork experiences for all seminarians and enjoy close relationships with other post-secondary educational institutions. While these assets could well be achieved in other communities, the disruption to pastoral formation would be significant and costly.

Finally any move to a single central location would have its own significant costs. Faculty would need to be moved, space would need to be purchased, rented or leased, and the legal and administrative costs of establishing a new seminary would have to be met. Where it is possible these costs might be covered by the sale of existing properties. This option might be worthy of more serious consideration, however as the sale of current facilities is likely to result in little or no net gain the entire move would be an unfunded liability.

For these reasons the Task Force concludes this option ought not to be pursued at this time or in the future.

4.4 Merge of some or all seminary programs at Concordia University College.

Before there was a Synod, and indeed before there were seminaries, there was Concordia College, Edmonton. Established by the LCMS in 1922 and renamed Concordia College University College of Alberta (CUCA) in 1990s.

Concordia currently offers a number of degree options in its Religious Studies program that are designed to meet the needs of generally interested students, lay people in the church, and those seeking to become professional church workers.

- Three-year BA (Religious Studies) Concentration: a minimum of 18 credits in prescribed and optional Religious Studies courses.
- Four-year BA (Religious Studies) Major: a minimum of 30 credits in prescribed and optional Religious Studies courses.
- Four-year BA (Religious Studies) Applied: a minimum of 30 credits in prescribed and optional Religious Studies course, including Parish Services Courses and Practicum Experience (Year 5)

- Two-year MA (Biblical and Christian Studies) Graduate: a minimum of 30 credits, including a 12 credit thesis, in one of three concentrations: Old Testament, New Testament, Christian History /Doctrine

These programs offer options to students in order to provide Liberal Arts education, with the specific focus of Religious (Christian) Studies. They also provide the necessary courses to meet the colloquy requirements for Lutheran Teachers and the general pre-seminary courses necessary for pre-seminary preparation (e.g. Greek/Hebrew/Latin)

At an early stage in its work, the Task Force realized while its mandate, strictly speaking, was to focus on cost efficient sustainable seminary education and thus on the two seminaries of the church body, the potential of closer association between the university college and the seminaries was a subject worthy of attention. This initial investigative direction was confirmed by a number of submissions to the Task Force that called for a closer working relationship between the seminaries and CUCA.

To explore this option further, the Task Force asked Dr. Gerald Krispin, president of CUCA, to advise the Task Force on the possibilities for integration of seminary education into its mission. We are thankful Dr. Krispin was amenable to this request.

In broad strokes, the proposal as submitted for the integration of the seminary education into the program of CUCA would see seminarians complete their university course work at CUCA and at the same time be enrolled in the seminary in a program that leads to a degree from the former and certification (via a diploma) from the latter. The university component would focus primarily on “academics” while the seminary would work to inculcate orthodoxy in doctrine, preaching, teaching, and practice. While new to LCC, such a model is not original. Our sister synod in Germany uses a similar model and here in Canada both the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church have a university component of pastoral education which is concurrent with seminary formation.

However, while there would be greater connection between the university college and the seminary, the seminary would retain its ecclesial identity due to its explicitly pastoral focus, and would have its own Board of Regents that oversees its mission and vision and ensures the calling of orthodox and confessional faculty members. Consequently, seminary faculty would be deemed adjunct professors of the university, and be on its payroll as well as advisory members of the Religious Studies Division. Conceivably, three full-time permanent individuals, supplemented by some sessional instructors, would be required on the seminary faculty to execute the practicum component and to oversee pastoral formation. Furthermore, the Board of Regents of the seminary would appoint a maximum of two advisory members to the Board of Governors of the University to maintain not only the seminary’s interests, but further strengthen the ecclesiastical bond of the university with Lutheran Church–Canada.

To be sure there are a number of attractive aspects to this alternative. These include such things as greater cooperation between seminarians and students training for service in the diaconate and interaction with a greater number and diversity of faculty than is possible at present. At the same time, a student would also benefit from the mission and service opportunities at CUCA, including the annual mission trips, work at the various ministries in the Edmonton area, and engagement in the university chapel.

However, despite these potential advantages, there are also significant cautions, not the least of which are the financial implications arising from such a merger. CUCA is itself struggling to maintain its fiscal integrity. Recent and proposed future increases in the costs of the Synodical worker benefit plans have had a dramatic impact on the university college’s bottom line (it is the largest employer in the Synod) and these costs will continue to be a challenge. In addition CUCA is in the process of redefining its relationship with Concordia High School and seeking ways to address the \$266,000 accumulated operating debt of that area of its operation. Over the past few years staffing cutbacks have been made at the university college and further staff reductions appear to be on the horizon. Simply put, CUCA is not in position at this time to assume any increased debt relating to theological education.

Cost estimates provided to the Task Force from the University College indicate at minimum, CUCA would need to receive \$325,000 from the Synod to operate the present CLS alone as a formation centre for applied theological education and certification. As noted previously the Synod anticipates in the near future the total amount of money available for seminary training will be around \$308,000. It is also expected combining the CLS program with CUCA

may well have a negative effect on fundraising for seminary education as the seminary may well be seen as simply another program of the university college and direct support deteriorates.

Another important caution in the mind of the Task Force is the effect such a move will have on the “unity” of theological education received by seminarians. At present the 2 seminaries already have somewhat differing programs of study but it is generally held that in spite of those differences there is still much overlap and transferability between the two MDiv programs. Moving to a program with a university component of pastoral education which is concurrent with seminary formation at one site and the traditional MDiv at the other will only increase the educational distance between our seminaries and their programs.

While this alternative has some intriguing possibilities the Task Force is of the opinion that rather than pursue integration of seminary education with the university college, the Synod would be further ahead to work toward greater integration and cooperation between the seminaries themselves.

5. Recommendations

1. Lutheran Church–Canada and its membership be encouraged to continue and grow their support for seminary training as a core objective of the Synod.

It should be of no surprise Christ's church is assaulted daily by Satan, the world, and our own sinful flesh. Such a truth must lead Lutheran Church–Canada to recognize the unity she shares under the authority of the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions is truly a blessing from Christ. This ecclesiastical bond, voluntarily shared, by congregations, pastors and deacons, has mutually been agreed upon to walk together to carry out the ministry and mission given by Christ to his church. Instrumental in carrying out this task is the theological education provided by seminary training. Support for such a core objective of our Synod can only be fostered by those who make up her membership. It is essential the members of Synod continue to grow in their support of seminary education by recruiting pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers along with their continued financial support for cost-effective and sustainable education and the training process. Together as Synod we seek to carry out missions as mandated by Christ in the Holy Scripture and believed, taught and confessed in our churches. In this regard, the Task Force in its review of the requirement for Pastoral graduates, and with thoughtful consultation and feedback from the Synod Board of Directors, recommends sustainable degree program requirements should support the graduation of up to 12 candidates per year as a core seminary training objective of Synod.

2. Seminary education (MDiv Theological Diploma and other current programs) be continued at both Edmonton and St. Catharines sites

Historically, Lutheran Church bodies in North America have valued academic degrees for their pastors. LCC has accordingly received this heritage from LCMS. The people of our Synod have always assumed their pastors have a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. This confidence has instilled a trust in the scholastic integrity of their pastors. Granting an accredited academic degree (MDiv) and a Theological Diploma, which certifies the graduate for service as a pastor in the Synod, to men who have completed a full and rigorous academic program of study in preparation for service to the Lord Christ in his church continues to be the goal of seminary education in Lutheran Church–Canada.

3. The administration and operations of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary – Ontario and Concordia Lutheran Seminary Edmonton be integrated such that there would be a single president and administration, single budget and non-overlapping academic program for seminary education in Lutheran Church–Canada, and ultimately the two seminaries be amalgamated with a single Board of Regents.

During the 2005-2008 triennium the seminaries of LCC endured what might well be called “the perfect storm.” As reported earlier, both schools faced prolonged presidential vacancies, declining enrolments and significant reductions in giving. At both schools, large operating deficits were incurred and confidence in the seminaries’ ability to stay the course waned. All of this was compounded by the global economic crisis that began in late 2008 eroding the value of and returns from the investments held by the foundations of both schools. By the end of 2008 and in the months that followed, the outlook for cost-effective and sustainable seminary education in our Synod was bleak.

As the current triennium draws to a close, it appears both seminaries have weathered the storm and have emerged more or less intact. That they have continued to operate and indeed reverse some of the damage incurred in previous years, is a testament to their resiliency and to the high value the people of LCC place upon the seminaries.

Yet significant challenges remain and the *status quo* cannot be sustained indefinitely. If the 2005-2008 period was “the perfect storm:” violent, but comparatively short in duration, then the forecast for the years ahead is for more persistent, systemic challenges. To continue the meteorological metaphor, the times ahead look to be a time of prolonged grey skies, showers and cool temperatures rather than days of bright warm sun and robust growth.

Generally speaking, the membership in the congregations of the Synod is declining and greying, as is the donor base of the seminaries. The Synod itself, as reported earlier, is likely to reduce its subsidy of the seminaries by about 25% to balance its own books and it seems unlikely this shortfall will be easily made up from other sources.

In Appendix 1 of this report, the Task Force presents a “best case” scenario for seminary funding in the years ahead. Based on information gathered by the Task Force and historic averages the funds available for the seminaries are significantly less than the current costs of operations in the immediate future. What’s more, there is little evidence to suggest there is a quick revenue-based solution for this problem. Rather, to meet the challenges ahead, more will have to be done with less and efficiencies will need to be realized to maintain quality seminary education in LCC.

The Task Force believes, to best meet this new environment the Synod will need to adopt a more streamlined and responsive administrative structure for seminary education, leading to greater integration between the seminaries in their finances, their faculty and program offerings.

Simply put, going forward, to be cost efficient and sustainable our seminaries will need to speak with one voice, and offer an integrated academic program and do so with one faculty, even if that work occurs at two sites more than 3,300 km apart from one-another.

From its earliest days, the Task Force has noted institutional isolation as one of the major challenges facing our seminaries. In its first interim report to the Board of Directors, the Task Force highlighted this as an area of great concern and while some initiatives have been taken to resolve this issue there is much work yet to be done and even greater integration will be necessary in the future.

The Task Force believes the issues raised by Dr. Zeuch concerning differing visions for seminary training in LCC and Dr. Winger’s observations regarding confidence in the seminaries are related. Confidence among the people of the Synod is eroded when seminaries appear to be moving in separate directions and when there appears to be a spirit of competition rather than cooperation. Without a coherent vision for seminary education in LCC, the two seminaries will continue to operate on two solitudes. Leaving aside concerns about divergent theological approaches at the seminaries, a recent fiscal example well illustrates differing approaches to the issues confronting our seminaries and the potential negative consequences.

To reduce costs, the faculty and staff at CLTS have been asked to take decreases in compensation for the remainder of the 2010 – 2011 fiscal year. For some, this means assuming 25% of the cost of benefits and for others it means an outright reduction in salary. On the other hand, at CLS no such reductions have occurred. While it is commendable some are willing to make such sacrifices for the sake of seminary training, a piecemeal, reactive approach to the problems at hand will only further divide our seminaries, and make cost-effective sustainable solutions harder, if not impossible to implement. Burdens and blessings must both be shared.

In its earliest days, the Synod’s Board for Higher Education (BHE) served as a means to unite the seminaries and present a somewhat coherent vision for theological education in LCC. Since the BHE was disbanded as part of the 2002 reorganization of the Synodical structure, the Advisory Council (made up of the Presidents of the 3 Synodical schools, the Synod President and a representative of the Board of Directors of LCC) has been unable to articulate such a vision and our schools have drifted farther apart from each other.

To be sure while there were good reasons to remove the BHE from the structure of the Synod and while there are good reasons not to reinstitute it at this time – another layer of administration overtop of the current structures will

not likely improve cost effectiveness – uniting the administration and operations of our seminaries we believe, will contribute greatly to a unified vision and the development of coordinated and sustainable solutions to the challenges that will be faced in the years ahead.

Lutheran Church–Canada is not too small to support two locations of seminary training; it is however, too small to accommodate two visions for seminary training, two largely overlapping curricula of credit courses in the program delivery, and two separate administrative structures to support the requirement to graduate up to 12 candidates per year.

The Task Force has explored in detail the possibilities for outright corporate merger between the seminaries and has discovered there are at least two ways in which such an amalgamation may take place.

- Option 1 would involve approaching the Alberta Legislature via a private members Bill asking for an amendment to the Special Act which establishes the Edmonton seminary, allowing that Corporation to merge with the Ontario Letters Patent Corporation which establishes the St. Catharines seminary. This process while cumbersome and costly, would allow the seminaries to continue and amalgamate as “equals” with all rights and privileges intact, including in Edmonton’s case, the ability to grant degrees.
- Option 2 offers a somewhat more economical route to the same corporate destination. In essence, the Edmonton Corporation would, under the provisions of its Act, wind up its operations. According to the Act the assets of the Corporation would then revert to LCC, who would in turn, pass on those assets to the Ontario Corporation. What remains somewhat uncertain in this option is whether the Ontario Corporation would be allowed to offer degrees in Alberta or, alternatively, whether Brock University (CLTS currently does not have degree granting status, but offers the MDiv under a special arrangement with Brock University) would be willing to grant degrees to graduates from the Edmonton campus.

While these possibilities for amalgamation exist, and ultimately need to be pursued, the Task Force is recommending operational integration of the seminaries precede formal organizational integration. It is recommended work begin immediately to develop a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement between the Board of Directors and the seminaries’ Boards of Regents to begin the process of operational integration of our seminary programs. While there are many details of the document to be finalized, some of the key points are as follows:

1. The parties agree to work together with the objective of achieving a system of complementary cost effective, sustainable seminary education, consistent with a total budget of not more than \$1.5 M annually for the Seminaries.
2. The parties agree the seminaries will coordinate their activities so as to provide a full complement of training and educational services between them to individuals who wish to serve as pastors and professional church workers within the Synod such that there be no overlapping curriculum in the delivery of programs at each seminary notwithstanding course transfer credits and didactic practicum training.
3. The Parties agree the seminaries will coordinate their activities so as to avoid duplication of all administrative services available at each seminary, including but not limited to those for recruitment, registration, support and maintenance of training and educational services to individuals who wish to serve as pastors and professional church workers within the Synod.
4. The Parties agree the seminaries will establish systems that will facilitate academic enrolment of individuals in credit courses offered by one of the Seminaries, while pursuing their course of studies with the other seminary in accordance with the minimum on-site academic program residency requirements.
5. The Seminaries agree to consult with each other before finalizing an annual budget or initiating any hiring of academic or professional staff, thereby recognizing the integrated system shall be cost-efficient and sustainable with a full-time faculty work-load equivalent not to exceed five (5) professors, including the president, provost, or other designate, who will also be expected to teach as necessary.

6. One individual be appointed to serve as “President/CEO” to oversee the integrated seminary program and another individual be appointed as “Vice-President/Provost” to oversee operations at the other campus in consultation with the “President/CEO.”
7. The Parties agree to jointly explore other methods by which LCC and the Seminaries may cooperate together more closely including the use of advances in telecommunication technologies.
8. The Parties agree their Boards of Regents will meet on at least an annual basis with a purpose of reporting to LCC, the specific actions that have demonstrated cost and other efficiency measures of the preceding year.
9. The Parties agree that from the date of the signing of this Agreement, the Seminaries will investigate, plan and implement specific activities that show measurable efficiencies of a more the integrated system with a report submitted to LCC at the 2011 Annual Convention, and with additional measures reported to LCC before the end of each church year, including 2011, and then annually thereafter.
10. A joint-committee composed of Regents from both seminaries would be established to oversee the implementation of the agreement and to make recommendations to each Boards of Regents and as necessary to the Board of Directors of the Synod for action.

In as much as “Resolution 08.3.04 To implement a cost efficient seminary program for Lutheran Church–Canada” enables the Board of Directors to “implement a plan to fulfill this resolution” the Task Force would respectfully recommend action be taken immediately to develop such a memorandum of understanding and agreement between the seminaries and to begin the process of working toward operational integration at the earliest possible time.

4. The total full-time faculty workload equivalent not exceed five professors, including the president, who will also be expected to teach as necessary (Reductions to be achieved by attrition as much as possible).

One of the most important realities seminary education in LCC will face if it is to survive in the future is the need for greater cost effectiveness and financial sustainability. The Task Force commends the seminaries and the Synod for their efforts in recent years to contain costs and live within established budgets. However, as noted above, we are moving into a time where more will have to be done with less. Appendix 1 attached to this report presents what the Task Force believes to be a “best case” scenario for the funding of seminary education. In the immediate future we anticipate the funds available to our seminaries will decrease substantially. For example, the 2011 proposed budget for LCC reduces synodical support for the seminaries to \$364,000, with further cuts anticipated in future years. While it is to be hoped some of that short fall may be raised from appeals to donors, there are no guarantees these funds will be forthcoming now or into the future. The Task Force believes one of the hard realities of our times is a key ingredient to sustainability will be cost reduction through a reduction in the size of the faculty at our seminaries.

As noted above, over 70% of our seminaries’ budgets are consumed by salaries and benefits, and the costs of benefits are increasing dramatically. The only way to achieve greater sustainability in this situation is to reduce these costs. The Task Force, with some regret, recommends the total full-time faculty workload equivalent of an integrated seminary operation not exceed 5 professors, including the president. The Task Force is aware faculty retirements are on the horizon at both seminaries and, to reduce the pain of the proposed reduction in faculty size, recommends the vacancies created by these retirements not be filled. We would also remind the Boards of Regents of our seminaries, as regrettable as it may be, that more proactive measures such as those undertaken by Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (see page 6 above) may well be necessary if available revenue declines more quickly than anticipated.

An obvious concern is the effect such faculty reductions may have on the quality of education an integrated seminary operation is able to provide. However the Task Force believes by integration of operations and curriculum it will be possible to maintain high quality pastoral formation in LCC.

It has already been expressed the ATS accreditation of the CLS academic program(s), in particular, the MDiv degree, is an important component asset. The ATS accreditation evaluates programs and structures in the context of other theological programs, and assists in the development of the Canadian programming. In the case of CLTS, the

process of ATS accreditation, while underway, has not as yet, been achieved and it remains unclear when and if accreditation would be obtained given the current requirements of the ATS.

The avenue of accreditation permits a program to be refined and submitted formally with revision, and/or for re-accreditation at the discretion of the accredited institution. This provides CLS with an opportunity to revise its program under the current standards. There is a direct correlation in the success of an accredited program, the faculty resources required to deliver the program, and the number of students expected to be graduated each year. In the case of LCC, it has been recommended up to 12 graduating students per year in Canada would be sufficient to meet the needs of the obligations of LCC to train pastors in Canada. Given the class size and program course credit requirements, it would seem feasible with a five full-time faculty equivalent workload, where each faculty would deliver four to five courses per academic term. Further, it seems most reasonable to assume any extensions of the program structure, or accreditation of a program by CLTS, would need to be different enough from the CLS program to require either additional faculty be hired, or to alternatively require a significant increase the teaching load of existing faculty among the two seminaries to deliver different programs, both leading to the same degree (MDiv). It is required that a non-overlapping curriculum be adopted for delivery at each site of the seminary, to ensure program delivery can be met with the requisite numbers of faculty (and the president) recommended by the Task Force.

In the response to the Task Force concerning the academic curriculum of credit courses leading to the MDiv degree, CLTS reported 28 courses needing to be provided and CLS reported 31 courses. Some of these courses are supervisory in nature, while others were optional in the students' programs. However, the importance of the comparison here is there are far too many courses to be delivered by too few faculty to support two substantially different MDiv Degrees from the two seminaries. A comparison of the course descriptions completed by the seminaries, in response to the Task Force request for information, suggests substantial duplication in certain courses exists, and there would therefore be definite value and cost efficiencies in streamlining the curriculum of both seminaries. Offering two courses that are the same content in separate locations is an inefficient use of faculty and other resources, and it is a clear area for growth as one mechanism to provide sustainable cost-effective Lutheran Pastoral education in Canada.

The significance of offering advanced standing or transfer credit towards the MDiv Degree granted by CLTS and Brock University, respectively, in accordance with program residency requirements (*i.e.* residency means the minimal number of credit courses required by a student for the candidate to graduate from that particular program), must not be underestimated in establishing cost-effective and sustainable pastoral education by LCC.

In the curriculum review, it was also clear there were significant differences in selected courses offered currently in the seminaries programs. A total of 16 courses appear to support this data. These main differences, where a course exists at one seminary, but not at the other, have the potential to serve two purposes. First, they serve to differentiate the two degrees offered, one at CLS and the other graduating through Brock University. Second, they highlight the greatest potential area for transfer and joint teaching initiatives, where faculty at one institution teach the course using an alternative format so candidates at either institution can benefit from the credit course should it be offered in any particular academic term. Either way, these courses help determine autonomy likely required in the degree programming to warrant the offering of the MDiv Degree from the respective institutions.

In its simplest form, the requirements to graduate up to 12 candidates per year in an MDiv Program consisting of 28-31 total courses (only a subset of which need to be fulfilled under the program residency requirements at each seminary) should not require more than 5 faculty equivalent workloads, each with four to five credit course assignments per academic year. This is particularly true if the support and other components of the degree structure are in place to provide the students with the course credits necessary to graduate under the minimum program residency requirements, regardless of where the degree is granted from. To fulfill a degree, not all of the courses have to be offered by either seminary, because the use of distance education, or alternative teaching strategies can provide credits from other institutions that will meet degree requirements.

Careful curriculum review needs to take into consideration the content of the courses, the expertise of the faculty and a mechanism to streamline the credit courses required, to maximize the efficiency of the program, faculty, administration and staff required to deliver the academic program leading to the MDiv degree. Any changes in the program structure should be submitted to the ATS as a process of review under the current accreditation standards.

5. ‘Smart classrooms’ be used as much as possible to facilitate simultaneous joint classes between the two campuses.

The age is upon us that in the current teaching, learning and research environments the use of on-line computing resources and technology based teaching tools provide new and efficient ways to engage learners. The use of technology today in the process involves the simplest forms of voice communication in the same way it has for decades, to advancements in technology that allow voice, image and data all to be experienced at the same time in the teaching and learning environments. Many students are connected 24/7 while being educated, so they can be in touch with their families, their work, their learning environments and most are not unfamiliar with sharing and using their connected environments to their fullest potential. Therefore, the recommendations of the Task Force would not have as much value without promoting the use of alternative teaching and learning environments to support a more cost-effective and sustainable program delivery.

It is not the purpose of this recommendation to determine the ideal technology or type of learning platform that should be utilized at one or both seminary sites. Instead, the recommendation is self-explanatory, in that the need to share curriculum and faculty resources between two disparate physical locations where seminary education in Canada as recommended needs to happen. This will allow the most efficient and capable approach to sharing between our seminary sites, as well as the ability to share Canadian Lutheran education program content on par with the more than two hundred programs of theological education in North America now available. In particular, the option to broker credit courses with the St. Louis and Fort Wayne administered degree programs in the U.S., should be high priority learning investment opportunities for distance education, including the use of smart classroom technologies. These technologies also have the ability to showcase the faculty at the Canadian seminaries, providing yet another opportunity for outreach and sharing. We would be amiss not to identify that some of the programs at other institutions in the world provide for the on-line delivery of much of their MDiv program.

This recommendation is as much about connecting the seminaries for administrative and learning experiences, as it is about connecting the seminaries to other institutions of learning, for enrichment of the faculty, the students and the programs offered. While some institutions may boast about their extensive experience and high-end systems, others may focus on a simple print-based correspondence mode for courseware. In all cases, and the literature abounds with examples, the courses delivered fulfill a need, are often popular and their delivery mode aids in fostering outreach opportunities for the programs involved. Surprisingly, there is a limited amount of existing curriculum from either CLS or CLTS from the MDiv program being delivered in an alternative format and it remains unclear why this isn’t happening to a greater extent.

The streamlining of the curriculum from both seminaries, and the establishment of transfer credit from a requisite seminary as a requirement to meet residency needs, or the use of credit courses from another affiliated institution altogether, will provide an impetus to teach and to learn using alternative formats. Since both Brock University and CUCA have “smart classrooms”, it seems very reasonable the use of these classrooms be pursued rigorously as a mandate of both seminaries to help meet their administrative and curriculum sharing needs. These classrooms are for the most part, state of the art, and they are connected to established networks for delivering voice, image and data using high-speed videoconferencing. This includes the recording of course sessions for playback by students who miss a class, the use of podcasts for on-line audio sharing of regular and guest speaker lectures, as well as file sharing in an environment that immerses those taking courses in a learner centered approach for instruction. For the most part, these technological advances at the sister institutions are primarily standards based, and by the seminaries engaging more in their use to assist with their academic and administrative needs, each will benefit from maintaining the learning curve in the technology requirements, as well as the learning platforms, without having to maintain 100% the high cost of the technology or the services required to deliver various requirements of the seminary programs. This would be most cost-effective and likely it is sustainable. At some point in the future, once faculty are more familiar with the platforms for learning in these “smart classrooms”, extensions of existing, or stand-alone systems will be able to be supported at the seminary locations, as an investment in the teaching and learning environments.

The current use of desktop technology applications in the teaching and learning process at CLS is working. The e-learning platform adopted in association with the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) in the U.S. provides for on-line exchanges for lectures at a distance. The mode of program delivery doesn’t use smart classrooms *per se* for participation, but if connected such classrooms would be able to be used in the delivery format. This enrichment in

the teaching and learning environment is advancement for CLS in the on-line distance learning environment, and it should be examined for its feasibility in an expanded format with CLTS. It is important to mention the ability to expand and meet the standards of the room based system capabilities at CUCA and Brock University in comparison to Internet based desktop learning tools, are experiences these larger institutions grew from. To further develop the programs and the out-reach potential of the seminaries, it is recommended technology solutions at these larger institutions be shared, with a focus to adopt the use of technology as a mechanism of day-to-day operations for administration and the teaching and learning environments. Ultimately, the interactions will need to involve the use of more advanced room system technologies, and not be limited to the desktop computing solutions now being applied primarily by CLS.

6. Various administrative and support functions such as accounting, development and recruitment be centralized, and where appropriate these services be contracted through LCC or LCCFM.

With one seminary comes the challenge of looking after the needs of various administrative and support functions. It is the committee's recommendation the accounting function be centralized and carried out in Winnipeg by LCC. It is most important that very detailed budgets be formulated and line item expenses be enforced in a timely and regular manner to assure the cost efficiency of the seminary in the future.

It is paramount this budget be broken down in great detail including an allocation of all items towards the St. Catharines campus and the Edmonton campus. This allocation will be used to distribute income and expenses between the two corporations for legal purposes. However, one bank account in the name of the seminary could be used to record all operating income and expenditures.

With the financial records maintained by LCC, it will most importantly allow the seminary Board of Regents centralized and timely reporting tools to carry out their duties in maintaining budgetary discipline for the seminary. Monthly financial statements should be prepared by the 10th of the following month. This will also provide for the Board of Directors of Synod regular reports to carry out their needs with respect to Item 9 following.

To facilitate this centralized bookkeeping a designated contact at each campus must approve all invoices for payments and forward the same to Winnipeg. We suggest this function can be carried out by the receptionist on each campus who would be required to get the seminary president's approval on all items over a certain amount.

Likewise, development could be centralized with LCC personnel. It is also possible a recruitment office is set up in Winnipeg as recruitment is the work of the Church. Materials and information must be disseminated regularly to the two campuses.

Although we see all these functions carried out on a centralized basis, it is most important the seminary president has overall responsibility and control of these functions for the beneficial operation of the seminary.

The Board of Regents is responsible for the ultimate control of the seminary programs and expenditures on the advice of the seminary president. It is most important Regents are elected who have supervisory experience and are committed to the financial viability of the seminary.

7. Our seminaries begin a Distributed Learning MDiv/Theological Diploma Pilot Program (classroom, virtual classroom, and online learning), combined with its existing classroom-based short-terms and MDiv program.

Over the last decade or two, there has been a remarkable development in education at a distance through the use of computer technology and learner-centred educational methodologies. The general awareness of this fact no doubt gave rise to the fourth 'whereas' clause in Resolution 08.3.04 at the 2008 LCC convention.

This clause which said 'Whereas cost effective technological advances exist to creatively deliver theological education, including video conferencing, web-based delivery and distance education, . . .' is one of the statements that led up to the first Resolve which asks LCC to 'create a cost efficient seminary program for the training of pastors for Lutheran Church-Canada.' The 'Terms of Reference' later set forth for the Task Force by President Robert Bugbee further indicated the Task Force was also to investigate 'secular methods of delivery' in its efforts to recommend a cost-efficient seminary education.

The Task Force in particular reviewed distance education methods and part-time MDiv programs now implemented by other seminaries in North America. Aside from such programs now being implemented at Lexington, Multnomah and Wartburg Seminaries, the Task Force examined a pilot project already occurring at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Luther Seminary has put in place a 'Distributed Learning' model of seminary education which delivers two of the three academic years of MDiv seminary education by self-instructional online methods. The other academic year is completed by short-term intensives in a classroom setting on campus throughout the program. Included in this program is a local pastor in the field as mentor for supervising the variety of practical study, fieldwork, and clinical education that is done in the respective parish. This is particularly important for the student's spiritual formation in their worship and devotional life. These pastoral mentors also act as invigilators for exams. In addition, the local congregation where the student worships becomes a 'Teaching Congregation.' Distributed Learning students are part of a strong 'cohort identity' and 'have a clear sense of being part of the broader seminary community.' Luther Seminary's Pilot Program has been approved by the ATS and, according to their formative assessments, has been going very well.

Another important seminary program studied by the Task Force is provided by the Institute of Lutheran Theology in Brookings, South Dakota. Its program is similar to that of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, but it differs in that their distance learning program is delivered by the 'virtual classroom' rather than with self-instructional technology. In this methodology, the professor delivers his lectures in a classroom, and the lecture is distributed via the Internet to the students out in the field. Students are able to respond with comments and questions also by the Internet. The ILT began this program in the fall of 2009 with 11 students, and by the fall of 2010 there were 30-plus students enrolled. CLS in Edmonton is already a part of this program, providing such extended 'virtual classroom' experiences in conjunction with their regular classroom program. In this method of 'virtual classroom' delivery, the student is time-bound to a particular hour of the day. Nevertheless, if the student misses the 'virtual class,' he may be able to download a recorded version of it at his own convenience. The ATS has also sponsored a seminar on highly technical versions of the 'virtual classroom' method, where the instructor is on the screen much of the time and individual students appear in windows some of the time when making comments or asking questions. With such technology, students at a distance can raise their hands, draw illustrations, and do virtually any of the other things that are usually done in a classroom on campus.

At both seminaries mentioned here, there has been an online and part-time on-campus 'Community of Learning' established, with students as much as possible following through in one cohort. Students and instructors have their own continuing private discussion forums which they can access at any time, usually together with an online Learning Management System. Students also come together on average at least twice per year for short-term intensive courses where they meet in person, converse, and worship with one another, but it is also evident the students and instructors already get to know each other very well on the Internet itself. Luther Seminary says, "The online courses are structured to offer opportunities for cooperative learning, for greater reflection and for more meaningful interaction for students with one another and the instructor."

All other student services can normally be handled quite well via the Internet. There is much already available online for library services, including most journals, some of them on the American Theological Libraries Association (ATLAS) website, as well as a number of other sites. Many full text books are also online. Students can often also access local theological libraries, as well as local pastors' personal libraries. Failing all that, book loan programs are arranged through the seminary library. An online bookstore can be established by arrangements with websites like amazon.com. Student services like registration and admissions advising are in any case often handled these days via the Internet.

A part-time MDiv/ Theological Diploma program of this nature may be a very cost-efficient model to examine. Such a program would open up the MDiv/Theological Diploma program for prospective students who now cannot afford to attend on campus, thereby increasing tuition revenues. Many students at Luther Seminary in St. Paul have indicated they could not have studied to be pastors without the part-time 'Distributed Learning' program. CLS already has the minimum technology required for providing 'virtual classroom' courses concurrently with their regular classes. Little further expenditure would be required for CLS, although even better technology and Internet accesses can be purchased as resources or special funding sources may allow.

Further cost efficiencies can be achieved in the future with cooperative development of materials and implementation of ‘Distributed Learning’ courses in concert with Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and/or Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne. Both these seminaries have indicated they are very open to such cooperation. All of their 16 existing ‘Specific Ministry Program’ (SMP) courses are delivered online (4 of the 16 online courses at Ft. Wayne are hybrids of online and classroom learning), and all 16 SMP courses are given credit toward the 40 courses required for the MDiv degree at both seminaries. Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in particular is actively considering further online and short-term intensive courses for SMP graduates who wish to continue toward the MDiv degree.

If two academic years of the MDiv/Theological Diploma program are taken online, and the equivalent of one academic year is taken in short-term intensives on campus, such a part-time program could be completed by a student in six or seven years. Electronically saved ‘virtual classroom’ or individual self-instructional courses can also be used where full-time students in the classroom need only one or two additional courses not in the regular classroom schedule.

Such a part-time MDiv/Theological Diploma program is especially cost efficient and valuable for the prospective mature student with a family who needs to remain in his regular job while studying for the ministry. Our present system of theological education was designed for young single students who could easily move. It was not designed for married men with families, requiring them to move their children in and out of schools four times during his pastoral training. Costs of such a traditional seminary program are also increasing exponentially for the mature student. These matters also need to be addressed.

The final result of such a ‘Distributed Learning Program’ should not only be more cost-efficient for both the seminary and the student, but even more importantly, graduate more students for the pastoral ministry. An important goal, as we proceed forward into the future, is to find new ways for allowing especially more mature students with families to participate in the MDiv/Theological Diploma program and finally enter the pastoral ministry in our church.

8. In due course, a new name be chosen for the integrated seminaries.

Everything is in a name. A number of years ago, our seminary in St. Catharines took on the name “Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary.” This name reflects this seminary’s roots in Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, which had initially begun the St. Catharines seminary as an extension campus. The word “Lutheran” was nevertheless added to distinguish the St. Catharines seminary from the Ft. Wayne seminary. The word “Concordia” was retained, not only because of the long history of the name “Concordia” in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod institutions of higher learning, but also because of the Lutheran roots of the “Concordia” in the Book of Concord. The term “Concordia” not only reflects the concept of harmony, but also the theological content of our Lutheran Confessions. The term “Concordia” was the original Latin name in fact given to the Book of Concord.

Our seminary in Edmonton, established a bit later, took on the parallel name of “Concordia Lutheran Seminary” for similar reasons, but left out the term “Theological” so as to distinguish itself from the seminary in St. Catharines. Nevertheless, the word “Lutheran” was added so as to distinguish itself also from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Thus both seminaries added the name “Lutheran” to distinguish themselves from their sisters seminaries in the United States.

The name of an institution significantly reflects the identity of that institution. Therefore, The Task Force believes a change in the names of our seminaries would now be in order because the recommendations offered here are going to significantly change the nature and direction of the two, now rather distinct seminaries. For all practical purposes, the Task Force is recommending the two seminaries now become one at most levels of their governance and operation, that they become fully integrated. In other words, our seminaries are now to become one integrated seminary in two locations.

The ultimate goal of the Task Force’s recommendations as they stand is to give time for the seminaries to integrate themselves completely before finally also becoming one in their corporate structure. The actual change to one

seminary on two campuses in terms of their legal and corporate structure is more challenging and will take some time to achieve. As the integration occurs, the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of the new structure must be monitored and reported upon to the Synod Board of Directors.

Nevertheless, because the Task Force is recommending significant practical changes right now, the Seminaries Task Force at this time recommends we indeed begin referring to our seminaries as one entity, and the name should therefore change. We should give this new seminary a name that reflects its unified nature. Some suggestions have been, “Concordia Seminary-Edmonton”, and “Concordia Seminary-St. Catharines”, or even, “Concordia Seminary-Canada.” The Task Force is not recommending any particular name, only that a new name be forthcoming to reflect the *de facto* new reality of the integration.

Whatever the new name for this new structure may be, the present names of the seminaries would also remain for the time being for corporate and legal purposes, in order that existing covenants that the seminaries may have already entered into with other institutions can continue through to their required end. But the time given from now until the time when a new corporate and legal structure is also developed will give the seminaries the opportunity to shape their new responsibilities and reshape their existing responsibilities in terms of the operations of one seminary. The Task Force understands it is legally possible to have a new name while still retaining the old names for legislated legal requirements.

A new name for the new seminary will in fact reflect the essence of what the Task Force is recommending take place now in a practical manner, and ultimately in a corporate and legal manner: one seminary in two locations.

9. The Synodical Bylaws of LCC be followed, and if necessary be amended to allow a more direct relationship between the Board of Directors and the Board of Regents, such that current ambiguities noted by the Task Force be clarified.

When the Synod undertook to restructure its administration in the 1999-2002 triennium the Synodical Handbook underwent significant review and revision. However, Chapter 6 of the Synodical Bylaws, which focuses upon higher education, received the least direct attention. As reported above, the Board for Higher Education was removed from the structure of the Synod and many of its responsibilities were assigned by default to the Board of Directors.

In particular the Board of Directors is charged with “periodically review[ing] the internal administrative organization of the Synod’s institutions” (6.21.d) and also “The Board of Directors shall periodically review the institutional policies, programmes, and curricula to determine whether they are consistent with the stated objectives of the Synod’s educational system and its institutions” (6.37.c). The Task Force notes while these tasks are assigned to the Directors there are no mechanisms in place for the Board to actually carry out these functions. In addition, the Advisory Council (Synodical Bylaw 2.81) is given the task of studying problems and issues in the field of higher education and reporting its findings to the Board of Directors.

The Task Force respectfully recommends the Board of Directors in consultation with the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure review its responsibilities in regard to the educational institutions established by the Synod as defined in the current Synodical Handbook and implement necessary procedures to carry out the tasks assigned to the Board of Directors. It is a duty of the Board to act on this point on behalf of the Synod members that the Board represents.

Further, in reviewing the relationship between the Board of Directors and the Boards of Regents of the seminaries, the Task Force has noted areas where the Synodical Bylaws need to be clarified. It goes without saying that should a new structure emerge, revisions to the Synodical Bylaws will need to be submitted to reflect that structure. However, we draw particular attention to the following Bylaws where dutiful attention is urgently required regardless of whether other recommendations of this report are accepted:

- **6.61 Uniform Accounting Methods.** One of the challenges that confronted the Task Force as it conducted its investigations was to get a clear picture of the financial situation at each seminary. This is due in large part to the fact that while accounting methods used at the schools are similar, they are not uniform. Should the recommendations made herein regarding integration of the administration of the seminaries be adopted this

matter should be addressed; however, should that not be the case, this matter will need more immediate attention.

- **6.67 Objections To or Changes in Budget.** The Task Force reports that while the Board of Directors may “object” to either the capital or operating budget of the Board of Regents of a seminary and indeed may propose changes to budgets at the Synod’s educational institutions, those institutions are not required to submit budgets to the Board of Directors for review or comment. Hence, regardless of whatever structure emerges from this process, the matter of administrative and financial reporting to and from the Board of Regents and the Board of Directors needs to be urgently clarified.

10. Conclusion

The 1959 Act of the Senate and House of Commons that established Lutheran Church–Canada as a legal corporation lists as one of the objectives of the corporation:

“to promote education, instruction and culture, and to organize, maintain and carry on schools, colleges, academies, [and] **seminaries** ...”

So urgent was the desire for seminary education in Canada the Board of Directors of the fledgling corporation was directed to study the matter and “*memorialize the 1959 San Francisco Convention (LCMS) to seriously study the request for a Canadian seminary.*” (A. H. Schwermann, The Beginnings of Lutheran Church–Canada, page 23).

Seventeen years would pass before seminary education was a reality in LCC, but this was not for lack of effort or interest on the part of the leaders of what was then a federation of districts within the LCMS. Since the opening of CLTS in St. Catharines and the later beginning of CLS in Edmonton, LCC has realized many great and wonderful blessings as men have been trained and sent into the pastoral ministry by both seminaries. To be sure there have been great challenges along the way but at each step God’s grace has been more than sufficient.

The financial challenges which gave rise to the overtures submitted to and the resolution passed by the 2008 Convention of LCC have caused us to examine the entire matter of seminary education in the Synod and at the end of that process the Task Force is utterly convinced seminary education remains a vital and integral part of our life together in Christ.

Many have wondered if it is worth the cost. ATS president Daniel Aleshire in his book Earthen Vessels (page 145) offers the following answer:

“Is the work that these schools do worth the price tag? If theological education is a commodity to be produced at the least expense for the most recipients, then the question is legitimate. If, however, the goal is the preparation of religious leaders who are deeply formed in an understanding of faith, who can guide congregations in a culture that is less than convinced that religion is a cultural asset, who can lead in a context of significant change in congregational practice and can teach it to an increasing percentage of people who do not know the tradition or understand it, then theological education is not a commodity. The question about cost is really a question about value.”

It is our prayer the recommendations listed above will lead to a new day in seminary education where the support for and the sustainability of seminary education will increase; where our Synod will **value** seminary education as its founders envisioned. The Task Force also prays that while the changes recommended above will be challenging to implement, the seminaries themselves will embrace anew their mission and strive to work together in good faith to be good and faithful stewards of the treasures, talents and time entrusted to their care.

On behalf of the Task Force I would extend a heart felt word of thanks to the faculty and staff of both our seminaries and particularly to Dr. Manfred Zeuch and Dr. Thomas Winger for their candour, openness and patience as we have gone about our work. Thanks also to LCC President Rev. Dr. Robert Bugbee, the executive staff, and the members of the Board of Directors for their input, advice and prayer as we have developed our recommendations. We are also extremely grateful to each and every person, congregation or other entity who took the time to contact the Task Force with their ideas or suggestions or who provided input to us at our request. In particular we thank Dr. Gerald

Krispin of CUCA for taking the time to thoughtfully consider issues regarding relationship of the seminaries to the university college and to Rev. Dr. Edwin Lehman for his recall and research into seminary history.

As Task Force Chair I would like to thank all the members of the Task Force and their families for all their work and sacrifice over the past two years. Each of the Task Force members have brought unique gifts and perspectives to our deliberations and each have demonstrated a deep and abiding passion for our seminaries and the specific work we as a group were asked to do.

Above all else however, thanks be to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in whose name this work was begun, continued and is now concluded. May the work of this Task Force, and indeed all the work done in pastoral formation in Lutheran Church–Canada serve the primary goal of all pastoral training: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” – 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV).

In Christ

Respectfully submitted

Rev. Nolan Astley, chair
Task Force on Cost-Efficient,
Sustainable Seminary Education

Task Force Members

Mr. Howard Famme

Rev. Arron Gust

Rev. Robert Krestick

Rev. Colin Liske

Dr. Todd Sands

Appendix 1: Projected “Best-Case” Budget for Combined Seminary Operations

	CLTS 09/10	CLS 09/10	Projected income based on combined 5-year average.
Income			
Tuition	154,468	92,876	238,200
LCC Grant	205,200	205,200	308,000
Gifts	258,068	523,155	615,000
Foundation	35,248	100,101	141,800
Sales	30,943	6,696	31,000
Fundraising Events	21,160		21,000
Bequests		11,700	46,300
Other	40,630	19,333	60,000
Total	745,717	959,061	1,461,300
Total 09/10 Income		1,704,778	
Expenses			
Salaries & Benefits	550,236	683,538	1,011,300
Supplies & Services	211,720	202,663	450,000
Total	761,956	886,201	1,461,300
Total 09/10 Expenses		1,648,157	

Seminary Fund Balances (Equity)

	CLTS	CLS
Invested in Capital Assets	2,295,874	1,096,962
Endowments/Foundation	1,310,333	3,504,808
Student Aid/Foundation	1,000,956	
Student Aid/Seminary	179,259	128,718
Missionary Study Centre		207,509
Restricted Funds		4,974
Total	4,786,422	4,942,971
Long Term Operating Deficit	781,072	87,996
Net Equity	4,005,350	4,854,975