

THE STATEMENT

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We the members of the Confessional Ministerium have entered into this fellowship for mutual encouragement and accountability, as we work to fulfill the vows we made at our ordination.

We do so for our sake, for the sake of the congregations we serve, and for the sake of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. We are aware of forces within the ELCIC that would divert it from the traditional faith and practice of the Church catholic, thus we believe it necessary to confess and call attention to the following.



I.

We confess that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and the norm for the faith of the Church, containing all things necessary for salvation. As such the Bible is to be read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain canonical sense, respectful of the church's historic and consensual reading.

II.

We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures.

III.

We confess the Holy Sacrament of Baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to be the means through which individuals are brought into the body of Christ. We confess the Sacrament of Holy Communion to be the means by which the baptized believer is nourished by the reception of the true body and blood of Jesus Christ. Through these sacraments and through the rite of confession and absolution, the Christian receives forgiveness of sins.

IV.

We submit to and proclaim the unique and universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, humanity's only Saviour from sin, judgment and hell. By His atoning death and glorious resurrection, He secured the redemption of all creation. We proclaim this Gospel in the hope that all will come to Him in repentance and faith.

V.

We acknowledge and submit to the exercise of proper and Godly authority within the church by those called and set apart for the ministry of oversight. We also acknowledge that those called to this ministry, whether Pastors, Deacons, or Bishops, are to exercise that authority within the bounds of Scripture, Creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions.

VI.

We acknowledge the marriage relationship of one man and one woman as an order of God's good creation. This relationship is the proper place for sexual intimacy, the basis of the family, and the primary place where people are instructed and grow in faith. Children are to be welcomed as a gift to the marriage relationship. We repent of our failures to maintain and uphold this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence and support for those who are not married.

VII.

While we hope and pray the ELCIC will not choose to depart from the traditional faith and practice of the Church we believe it necessary, as leaders of congregations, to prepare for that possibility and prayerfully discern in which direction we must go in order that we might preserve our unity with the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We make this statement, aware of our complete and total dependence on the grace of God. We trust the Holy Spirit will complete what is lacking, lead and guide us, and our congregations in faithful discipleship.



THE CONFESSIONAL MINISTERIUM

*The Courage
to be
Lutheran*



WHAT IS THE CONFESSIONAL MINISTERIUM?

We are clergy within the Synod of Alberta and the Territories gathered together for mutual encouragement and desire to see reform within the ELCIC. We are deeply concerned for the direction the ELCIC has been taking towards a revisionist understanding of the gospel which expresses itself most obviously in the heated controversies regarding human sexuality and the attending profound gift of God in marriage given prior to the fall of our first parents.

Together we form the Confessional Ministerium to encourage one another in our faithfulness to the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, the Constitution of the ELCIC, and especially our ordination vows to the Church of Christ. We form the Confessional Ministerium holding each other accountable as brothers and sisters in Christ to preach and teach law and gospel and the theology of the cross as articulated in the Lutheran Confessions and not a theology of glory which resonates with the ideologies, mandates and desires of society in contrast to the gospel of our Lord.

We have informed our Bishops of the ELCIC, in order to be transparent in our intentions as a Confessional Ministerium. We pray and hope to encourage faithfulness by speaking the "truth in love" (Eph. 4:15), in our commitment to clarity of faith and doctrine, compassionate social action as a consequence of the gospel (1 Jn 4:19) and faithful exhortation and admonishment in our life together as disciples in Mission for Christ.

Accordingly, we intend to invite the clergy of the ELCIC to join with us and together we will follow where the Holy Spirit may lead us. We commit as signatories to the Statement of the Confessional Ministerium to stay within the ELCIC as a group as long as the ELCIC remains faithful to the gospel as historically articulated.

Furthermore, we commit to one another and to the ELCIC that we will resign from the clergy roster as a group when we agree that the gospel has been abandoned. We have informed the Bishops of the ELCIC of our actions in the hope that they will bless our intent to be faithful to the above in proclaiming Jesus the Christ as the only Saviour of creation in the gospel of grace as expressed by our Lutheran heritage in the church catholic.

THE CONFESSIONAL MINISTERIUM

Chairperson **Rev. Phillip Gagnon STS**
Vice-Chair **Rev. Karl Johnsen STS**
Secretary **Rev. Peter Van Katwyk**
Treasurer **Rev. Jane Mitchell**

For information contact:

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The Courage to be Lutheran Theological Conference

*June 5-6, 2009 Calvary Lutheran Church
Edmonton, Alberta*

Friday June 5, 2009

7 pm Welcome & Word of Prayer
7:15 pm - 8 pm **Robert Benne:**
Liberal Protestant Drift
8 - 8:15 pm Break
8:15 - 9 pm Q&A
9 - 9:15 pm Closing Hymns

Saturday June 6, 2009

9 am - 9:15 am Hymn and Devotion
9:15 - 10 am **Carl Braaten:**
What Does 'Being Lutheran' Look Like?
10 - 10:30 am Q&A
10:45 - 11 am Break
11 - 12 pm **Carl Braaten:**
What Dragons Are We Confronting?
12 - 1:30 pm Lunch (on your own)
1:30 - 1:45 pm Q&A
1:45 - 2:30 pm **Robert Benne:**
Are The ELCIC/ELCA Reformable? How?
2:30 - 2:45 pm Q&A
2:45 - 3:30 pm **Robert Benne:**
The Ethics of Leaving, The Ethics of Staying
3:30 - 3:45 pm Q&A
3:45 - 4 pm Break
4 - 4:45 pm **Carl Braaten:**
In Status Confessionis?
4:45 - 5 pm Q&A
5 - 6:30 pm Supper (on your own)
7:00 - 8:30 pm Holy Communion Setting One

Cost: \$40.00 for individuals, \$30.00 per person for church groups of 4 or more. Lunch and supper is not included.

Send registration & cheques to: Rev. Jane Mitchell, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 40 Holmes Street, Red Deer, Alberta T4N 6L6. Call (403) 340-1022

Note: Rev. Rolf Bjornstad will provide a sermon for June 7th based on the lectionary for those interested. Contact Rolf at rbjornstad@elcic.ca

