

THE STANDARD

Stand Firm in the Faith



REPORT ON ACTIVITY SINCE LCC'S 2022 CONVENTION

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025

LCC Board of Directors (BOD): 2024 in Review

In 2024, Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC)'s BOD met regularly in person and online. Highlights include:

- At the recommendation of the International Missions Committee (IMC), the BOD approved the establishment of a formal relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti (ÉÉLH) to support the Haitian church's need for theological education (see *The Canadian Lutheran* - March/April 2024 page 32).
- Rev. Jacob Quast was called to and accepted the position of Director of Domestic Missions. This position was highlighted as a priority at LCC's 2022 Synod Convention (For additional information on Rev. Quast, see *The Canadian Lutheran* - March/April 2024 page 18 and May/June 2024 page 31).
- The BOD approved the printing of a devotional book for the Canadian Armed Forces. The request from LCC's Military Dean, Rev. Don Schiemann, highlighted the need for materials for LCC pastors serving as chaplains. There are currently thirteen LCC pastors serving as Regular Forces or Reserve chaplains. The book is in the final stages of review before publication.
- LCC's Annual Meeting of Members (AGM) took place online on June 13, 2024. The 2024 LCC Annual Report was presented as part of the meeting docket (see *The Canadian Lutheran* - July/August 2024 page 17 for the full story and details on how to download a digital copy of the Annual Report).
- The BOD was pleased to issue a call on behalf of the congregations of LCC to Rev. Megersa Denu to serve as Missionary-at-Large to the Oromo communities in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia (see *The Canadian Lutheran* - May/June 2024 page 35).
- Throughout 2024, the BOD received action updates on the Synod's Strategic Initiatives. Arising from the planning process that began in 2022, these initiatives are helping prioritize the issues that are most critical to directing, strengthening, and sustaining LCC's overall mission and ministry (see *The Canadian Lutheran* - January/February 2023 page 19, January/February 2024 page 14, and pages 3 and 4 of this issue of *The Standard*).

2026 Convention Updates

LCC's 13th Regular Convention will be held at the Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre in Winnipeg from June 12-15, 2026, gathering under the theme "Together One: One Lord, One Faith, One Body" with its theme verse being Ephesians 4:4-6.

The start of business related to this synod convention will begin on March 20, 2025, with the first meeting of the Commission on Nominations and Elections (CNE). The CNE manages the nomination

process for elected positions at the synodical and regional levels, monitors the vetting process of nominees, and supervises the election of candidates to various positions at conventions of LCC.

The CNE's members are: Rhonda Kelman, BC; Rod Johnson, ON; Liz Schieman, AB; Reg Tiegs, ON; Dcn. Kathy Cornish, AB; Rev. Dr. Richard Beinert, MB (replacing Rev. Keith Hoveland); Rev. Kurt Lantz, ON; and Rev. Phil Washeim, BC.

A new convention webpage has been established under "Events" on LCC's website. News pertaining to LCC's Synod Convention will be released on an ongoing basis in *The Canadian Lutheran*, on CanadianLutheran.ca, and in InfoDigest.



SUMMARIES TO SHARE WITH YOUR CONGREGATION OR PARISH!

*(For Convention
Delegates & beyond!)*



Committee Updates

PERSONNEL

Interviews for the position of Associate Director – Family Ministries, which arose as a result of Resolution 22.3.03a at the 2022 LCC convention, have been conducted. An announcement of the successful candidate is expected in Spring 2025.

The 2025 Church Worker Compensation Guidelines were released for use by congregations. The committee reviews the guidelines on an annual basis to consider cost of living changes and other financial factors such as housing.

ARCHIVES

The Archives Committee continues to pursue two tracks:

- To provide materials to congregations for records management and archives preparation (*see page 22 this issue*);
- To explore options for the collection and retention of the records of LCC and her congregations.

The BOD approved the committee's proposal to undertake discussions with the East District Corporation Board regarding the transfer of ownership of the Malinsky (East District) Archives to LCC.

Additionally, the board approved the committee's recommendation to establish three archival administrative zones to receive archival material from congregations across LCC. The committee will now move ahead with a plan for implementation.

COMMUNICATIONS

A search for an event management app for the 2026 Convention has started. The use of an app in 2022 was well received and allowed delegates to communicate among themselves; receive timely updates to the convention schedule and documents; and highlighted exhibitors and sponsors.

Alex Steinke, LCC's Director of Communications, has returned to work from maternity leave as of January 1, 2025.

GOVERNANCE

The BOD's governance self-evaluation process was reviewed and recommendations submitted to the Board for implementation. Development continues on an annual work plan for each board committee to help coordinate the work of the committees. Also in development is a plan for orienting committees on their role at the beginning of each term.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) consultant Rev. Nolan Astley continued work developing relationship documents with LCC's listed service organizations (LSOs). The Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots (LAMP) completed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2024. To date, 11 MOUs have been completed and two more are in progress, helping to define relationships between entities in the synodical family.

RMMC Updates

The three Regional Mission and Ministry Councils (RMMCs) continued to meet regularly during 2024. Each RMMC assists their Regional Pastor by participating in:

- Mission and ministry planning;
- Support, and caring for congregations, pastors, and deacons in their respective region;
- Working with LCC's Director of Advancement to engage and encourage congregations to support the mission and ministry of our synod;
- Consulting with LCC's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in delivering financial support to missions and ministries in their region.

The Central RMMC met in February and September 2024. February's meeting focused on updates from each circuit. The September meeting had the dual focus of reviewing financial assistance requests and receiving synod updates from David Friesen, Director of Advancement, and Rev. Jacob Quast, Director of Domestic Missions.

The East RMMC met in September 2024 over two days, reviewing financial assistance requests, and receiving a synod update from Rev. Jacob Quast. The RMMC's subcommittees in the areas of domestic missions, congregational cooperation, parish services, finance, and communications also met and then reported updates and actions in their specific areas.

The West RMMC met in April in-person and online in September 2024. At the April meeting in Edmonton, the RMMC was blessed with two presentations, the first by Concordia Lutheran Seminary (CLS) Interim President, Rev. Dr. Joel Heck, entitled, "The Art of Asking Questions." The second was by Rev. Neil Stern (pastor, English-speaking members), Rev. James Kay (pastor, Nuer-speaking members), and congregation chair David Dyck on the two cultures worshipping together at Grace Lutheran Church (Edmonton). Rev. Mark Smith, Director of International Missions, and David Friesen provided synod updates, and there was also time for discussion on the developing role of the RMMCs in Synod's structure. In September, the RMMC focused on reviewing financial assistance requests.

Additional information about RMMCs can be found at Lutheranchurchcanada.ca/missions/rmmc/

ADVANCING MISSION AND MINISTRY IN LCC

The Purpose and Priorities Planning Process developed major goals and strategic initiatives focused on key areas of need, as defined by our members. The result was a shared vision for the future of our church body—to direct, strengthen, and sustain our mission and ministry today and into the future. This plan also provides a foundation for future development programs and funding initiatives.

Like all strategic plans, the initiatives are a work-in-progress. During 2024, some of the initiatives were completed and others have just begun (*see table below*). To provide input in any of these areas, please contact David Friesen, LCC’s Director of Advancement.



DISCIPLE-MAKING CULTURE

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| Develop congregational assessment and revitalization process to assist congregations at varying stages of development. | Congregations have been utilizing an assessment tool to measure three critical elements of congregational well-being: sustainability, adaptability, and balance of outward-inward focus. There are a few different paths that congregations can follow once they have completed this first step, including a focus on evangelism, mission outreach, or strategic planning. |
| Provide an ongoing series of education seminars for professional theological development. | The President’s Ministry Council (PMC) is working with pastors and seminaries to identify areas of need and develop seminars. |
| Work with congregations to identify and develop approaches to mission outreach in their area. | LCC’s three RMMCs continued to meet regularly during 2024 to review financial assistance requests; to receive various mission and ministry updates; and for planning, as the role of RMMCs continues to develop in our synodical structure. |
| Strengthen relationships between Director of Missions and partner ministries to build strong, coordinated outreach to Indigenous and underserved urban communities. | A draft framework has been developed for Indigenous outreach and collaborative work is ongoing with partner ministries, Indigenous communities, local congregations, and the LCMS. Work is also continuing in the area of language ministry and evangelism in significant urban areas. |

MISSION OUTREACH

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| Call a Director of Domestic Missions. | This is now completed. |
| Identify the top three underserved immigrant groups in areas where LCC has an existing congregation for possible mission expansion. | Current areas of focus are on Chinese ministry in the lower mainland of B.C., Oromo ministry in various locations across the country, and outreach to the Muslim community in southern Ontario. |
| Promote opportunities for partnership with individuals to support specific missions. | Engagement of individual donors is ongoing through the Director of Advancement and the Directors of Missions. Work is underway updating the Mission pages on LCC’s website to better reflect opportunities for support. |
| Identify three prospective mission fields for Indigenous ministry. | A joint meeting with BC Mission Boat Society, LAMP, the LCMS, and LCC leadership took place in September. Work is underway in Kitimat Village through Rev. Daniel Cunningham. Planning is underway for our Director of Domestic Missions to visit a few of the First Nations communities where BCMBS has already developed long-standing relationships. |

EQUIP LEADERS

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| Launch monthly Zoom calls on current, important topics, to be led by an expert chosen by Synod leadership, which are open and available to anybody within LCC in which to participate. | The PMC recognizes the need for lifelong education and formation for all church workers, and has begun working with the seminaries to develop a more comprehensive approach to this. These seminars will be a part of that comprehensive approach. |
| Develop new protocols within the Pastors with Alternate Training (PAT) program to train up pastors for unique, small congregation circumstances. | The Boards of Regents of both seminaries, in collaboration with the PMC are in the final planning stages of a multi-level extension of the existing PAT program as well as training and resources for lay leaders in congregations with an indefinite period of vacancy. |
| Define the role of Associate Director - Family Ministry* so that one can be called. *title change from Director of Young Adult and Youth Ministry | The scope of Role and Job Description were completed and BOD approved. After a call to the church at large for nominations, six candidates were interviewed. A call for the position is expected in spring 2025. |

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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| Implement a formal assessment of the RMMC model for regional mission engagement to best optimize its impact. | Each RMMC has been active in clarifying roles and responsibilities within their regions. Working groups across all regions are connecting together to share ideas. Representatives from each RMMC work with LCC leadership and the Director of Domestic Missions to determine the best use of resources. LCC’s Director of Advancement is also working with RMMCs to increase domestic mission support. |
| Identify key areas of synodical staffing needs and develop a staffing plan (to better serve congregations and members). | Once the Associate Director of Family Ministries is hired, LCC staffing levels will be aligned with current needs. Additional staffing needs required for upcoming initiatives continue to be reviewed. |
| Develop clear job descriptions and succession plans for all synodical positions. | The personnel committee continues to review job descriptions with a focus on succession planning for key positions. |
| Create a calendar of national events and activities to strengthen unity and inter-congregational relationships. | A review of web-based platforms to determine the best way to share event/activity information is ongoing. Discussion on type of events is in progress. A list of current and potential events and activities is being produced for review, within a broader strategic communications plan that is in development. |

FISCAL RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITY

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| Coincide Annual General Meeting with release of Annual Report, ensuring timely, accurate, and transparent information is being released from the previous fiscal year. | The AGM was held on June 13, 2024. The inaugural Annual Report was developed and made available for the AGM. It was also distributed to each congregation in September. Convention delegates were provided with speaking notes to share highlights with their congregation. Next year we will target to send the Annual Report out before the end of June. |
| Initiate the Campaign Readiness Study to determine the timing and scope of a national comprehensive campaign in support of current and future Synodical missions. | The Campaign Readiness Study was carried out between February 2024 and November 2024. It included the development of a preliminary Case Statement that was tested with a number of LCC members. The findings and recommendations of this study were presented at the LCC BOD meeting in October. |
| Develop and implement a synod-wide approach to encourage, engage, and increase congregational remittances. | Significant work continues on this comprehensive initiative involving the Director of Advancement, Regional Pastors, RMMCs, and most importantly, congregations. Emphasis is placed on communicating with congregation leaders utilizing in-person presentations, printed material, and current financial needs. Further development of an annual giving program is in progress. |
| Develop improved procedures to allocate and distribute financial resources to support domestic missions (and ministry). | LCC’s CAO continues to provide enhanced congregation analytics to assist RMMCs in making informed decisions on allocating financial resources. |

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

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| Identify at least one lay representative from each congregation to receive all communications from the national office. | LCC is connecting with convention lay delegates (or their alternates) to disseminate national information. There are two significant communications each year that we request delegates share and promote within their congregation: <i>The Standard</i> and the Annual Report. |
| Create an annual communications and direct mail calendar designed to engage congregations, laity, pastors, and church workers. | Defining the various communication items and timeframes is ongoing. This includes print, web, and other electronic media. A review of web-based platforms to determine the best way to share event/activity information is ongoing. A strategic communications plan is in development to identify priorities for the department, as well as establish communication methods and platforms that will impactfully serve LCC and its members. |
| Create annual report on mission needs and congregational remittances to increase awareness and response to support mission and ministry. | LCC’s Directors of Missions and Director of Advancement, in coordination with the CAO, are actively defining, developing, and delivering information needed by congregations to assist in their process of budgeting and support of LCC’s mission and ministry. |

ACTION ON CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS - Resolution 22.3.08a To Direct the Synod Board of Directors to Revisit Resolution 17.2.01 (Vicarage Placement Fund). Financial support for vicarage placement has been approved for inclusion in the allocated goals of the Together One campaign.

LCC NINE MONTH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Serve, strengthen, and equip congregations for bold, faithful, Christ-centred witness.

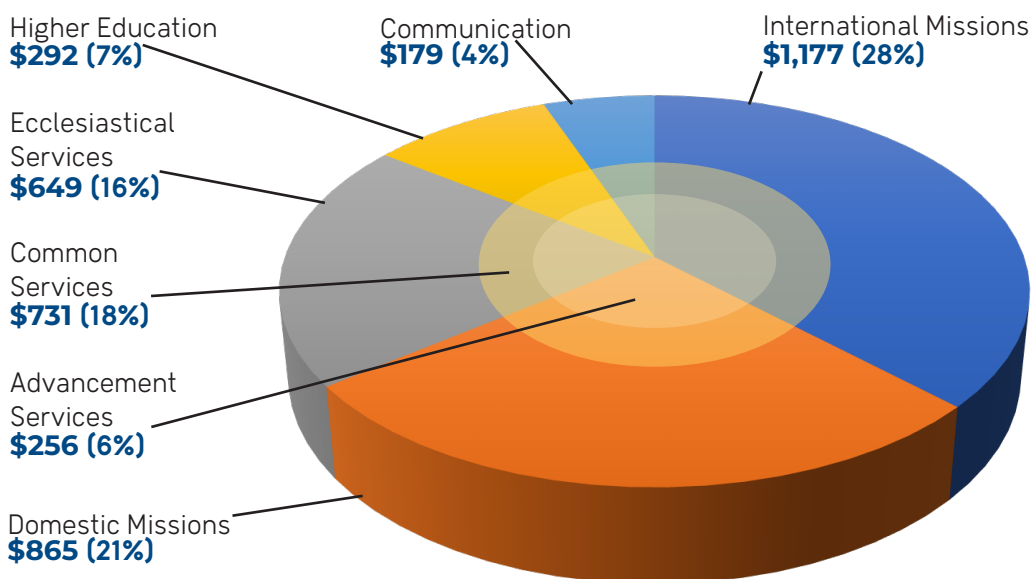


The church in convention, through the adoption of LCC’s Strategic Priorities and resolutions that were put forward, expressed overwhelming support to expand LCC’s mission and ministry of spreading God’s Word and supporting members. Based on the LCC Workplan for Fiscal Year 2025 (part of the Quadrennial Workplan) presented and adopted at the Synodical Convention in 2022, the following chart and table show the actual FY2025 budget approved by LCC’s Board of Directors in March 2024.

FY2025 runs from February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025. This budget covers all aspects of the work of Lutheran Church–Canada. The FY2025 LCC Budget has a total mission and ministry expenditure of \$4.152 million dollars.

PIE CHART EXPLAINED

Each of the pie pieces represents a unique part of LCC’s mission and ministry. The two inner circles represent those services that share their costs across all mission and ministry areas. Common Services include administration, human resources, office fixed costs, Board of Directors, investment fees, governance, and miscellaneous costs. Advancement Services reflect all costs associated with the development of financial resources across all areas and congregation services related to LCC’s support of Lutheran Foundation Canada.



| Program Area | Direct Services | Indirect Services | | Combined Costs | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | | Common | Advancement | | |
| International Missions | \$1,177,749 | \$272,302 | \$95,308 | \$1,545,359 | 37% |
| Domestic Missions <small>includes youth gatherings</small> | \$865,305 | \$200,063 | \$70,024 | \$1,135,392 | 27% |
| Ecclesiastical Services | \$649,852 | \$150,249 | \$52,589 | \$852,690 | 21% |
| Higher Education <small>(incl pastoral confs)</small> | \$292,000 | \$67,512 | \$23,630 | \$383,142 | 9% |
| Communication | \$179,971 | \$41,610 | \$14,564 | \$236,145 | 6% |
| Sub-total | \$3,164,877 | \$731,736 | \$256,115 | | |
| Total | 76% | 18% | 6% | \$4,152,728 | 100% |

SUSTAINING AND EXPANDING OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY

As Synod, LCC members are blessed to work together to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. The church also works together in acts of mercy to show the love of Christ to those in need. This work is done across Canada and around the world in every place God has called us to serve.

“A Christian lives not in himself... He lives in Christ by faith, in his neighbour through love.”
Martin Luther

Sustaining and expanding this work is accomplished through the faithful stewardship of LCC members and congregations. In conjunction with LCC’s synodical objectives, the following three goals were highlighted by members as most important to the future of our synod. Each of these goals has a human resource requirement and a financial requirement to fulfill.

DISCIPLE MAKING CULTURE

Serve, support, and equip congregations and partner ministries for mission and discipleship

MISSION OUTREACH

Pursue bold domestic and international outreach and ministry

EQUIP LEADERS

Recruit, educate, and support ecclesiastical, diaconal, and lay leaders for the Church

Two decisions of the church in convention were the need for a full-time Director of Domestic Missions as well as an Associate Director - Family Ministry. Our synod has also long recognized the importance of supporting Word and Sacrament ministry, especially in our smaller, remote communities. In addition, we are being presented with new opportunities for mission outreach in our most populous cities and First Nations communities, all for the glory of God and His saving name! All of these are focused on the above three goals.

The greatest source of financial support to accomplish our work comes from congregation remittances. The table below provides an overview of congregation remittances over the past five years.

The actual remittances in our current fiscal year FY2025 (February 2024 – January 2025) include amounts received in the first nine months up to the end of October 2024. The budget amount for FY2025 also reflects the nine month budgeted amount needed.

| Financial Year | (9 months) FY2025 | FY2024 | FY2023 | FY2022 | FY2021 |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Budget | \$1,762,500 | \$2,350,000 | \$2,200,000 | \$2,165,000 | \$2,060,000 |
| Actual Remittance | \$1,392,625 | \$2,114,765 | \$2,147,250 | \$2,172,798 | \$2,151,139 |
| Surplus (Shortfall) | (\$369,875) | (\$235,000) | (\$52,750) | \$7,798 | \$91,139 |

HOW YOUR CONGREGATION CAN HELP

For FY2025, the budgeted amount for congregation remittances was \$2.45 million. This is an increase from FY2024 and represents just under 60% of the total revenue required to accomplish the work we currently do, including some mission expansion. We thank those congregations who have increased their remittances and encourage others to prayerfully consider how they might also accomplish this going forward, through means with which they have been blessed. “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (Hebrews 13:16).