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## Consideration of the Affirmation and Appeal, with Appreciation for the Work of Norman J. Threinen

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## Consideration of the Affirmation and Appeal, with Appreciation for the Work of Norman J. Threinen

### WEBINAR I

Moderated by Stephen Larson with Panelists  
Gordon A. Jensen, Karen Kuhnert, and Donald W. Sjoberg\*

*Steve Larson*

Don Sjoberg, you worked with Norm Threinen over the years of his work with the Lutheran Council in Canada, so maybe you could share a little bit about your own remembrances and perspectives on Norm's ministry, his attention to detail, his recording of various meetings that he was a part of, and his role in the *Affirmation and Appeal* document.<sup>1</sup>

*Don Sjoberg*

Well gladly. I'm disappointed that Norm can't be with us. I think I can say that it's due to health problems. I've been in touch with him by phone and I know he feels badly because he would like to greet all of you, and to speak to you about that which is very dear to his heart. Norm Threinen was called as the Executive Director for the Division of Theology of the Lutheran Council in Canada and served from 1972 to 1984 in that capacity,<sup>2</sup> which came at the time that the Joint Commission on Inter-Lutheran Relations (JCILR)<sup>3</sup> was beginning merger talks (talks for the *three-way merger*, a merger of the three Lutheran Church bodies in Canada).<sup>4</sup> And the invitation to those talks came from *one* of the churches—the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, the ELCC. And so Norm stepped in. And he brought to that [the JCILR merger talks], as well as to the Council, an interest in church history *along with* his being a theologian. That's very important, because one of the tasks for him was to remember what had taken place in all of those conversations regarding what had happened—as Gordon Jensen just referred to.<sup>5</sup>

Now, unfortunately, that three-way merger did not happen, and that's reported elsewhere. Maybe one day we can reflect a little bit more about that. But the two-way merger [of the ELCC and the LCA-Canada Section] was an option. And so then began the two-way merger talks—this was the Call to the Lutheran Merger Commission.<sup>6</sup> And Norm served as the support staff for that. He was a detail-person, as has been mentioned.

Norm is a very gentle person. He was very careful in terms of reminding us of what the goals were, and working very much with us behind the scenes for all of the secretarial work—to see that it was done, and to see that there was a recorded history as well. Speaking about the recorded history, Norm is a writer. He has an interest in history. He edited a couple of books, one was *Towards Union: Merger Negotiations in Canada, 1972 to 1978*, which was a wonderful history of what had been discussed and agreed upon.<sup>7</sup> And so that is in the records. And then, at the initiative of the Lutheran World Federation, he did a study of Lutheran Identity in Canada. That was undertaken,<sup>8</sup> and he was a staff person supporting that. And then he also wrote compiling some of the presentations, as well as making his own contributions.<sup>9</sup>

It is also interesting to me that his predecessor [in the Lutheran Council in Canada], Pastor Lou Scholl, was a member of the Lutheran Church–Canada, and that was Norm's

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\* See the Foreword of this issue of *Consensus* for biographical information.

training. He was not only chosen because of our wanting a person from the Lutheran Church–Canada on the staff, but also given his background in theology and history. That was important to make that all tie in. And I say, as a staff person, he certainly was fair-minded, considerate, and effective. He is remembered with great appreciation for his services.

We could also list his many writings, and his interest in the history of Lutherans, not only in Canada but from where they came many years ago from Europe.<sup>10</sup> It is too bad that Norm cannot be with us.

*Karen Kuhnert*

We have a number of Norm Threinen's writings highlighted on our website.<sup>11</sup> As people scroll through, they will find some annotations from Gordon and also some annotations from myself. As well, there are his contributions to *Consensus - A Canadian Journal of Public Theology*.

*Steve Larson*

Don, you've been our point of contact with Norm in anticipation of this webinar, please extend our greetings and best wishes to him and his wife from this gathered group together this evening. Before we get to the questions in the CHAT, we have a Church Archivist and a Professor of Church History in our midst. This document, *Affirmation and Appeal*, was published in 1970. It's 52 years old. As you think back on it, both in its historical context 52 years ago and in its contemporary context, what are the themes and the issues that arise up from it for you?

*Karen Kuhnert*

Well, maybe making the tie-in with Dr. Threinen is a helpful way to start. I do have one of Dr. Threinen's books here in front of me, *Fifty Years of Lutheran Convergence: The Canadian Case-Study*, published by the Lutheran Historical Conference. I point out this book because Don mentioned what a careful historian Norm Threinen is. Because Dr. Threinen was careful in documenting history, you can actually use his history works as a resource to investigate accounts, and even to position your own thoughts, or to challenge the content.<sup>12</sup>

Gordon, I anticipate that you are going to talk about the *content* that makes up the *Affirmation and Appeal* consensus, but as Archivist, I'd like to talk just a little bit about the document called *Affirmation and Appeal*, the one we distributed.

It's obvious that I'm a female pastor. I came into Lutheran Church experience as a pastor in the time after the merger in 1986. The ELCIC is the only Lutheran church I have ever known in Canada and so I am a little bit dislocated in my reading of the *Affirmation and Appeal* because I didn't live in the pre-ELCIC time (I can see already that is true for a number of webinar participants tonight, and we are also among people who were in the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, or in the Ohio Synod, or had come to the ELCIC from the ELCC). But my experience is limited to the ELCIC.

So when I look back on the 1970 document—the *Affirmation and Appeal*, one of the things that stands out for me most powerfully is George Evenson's point on page seven when he encourages the JCILR Commissioners to not forget what Gordon called the "Why" of the Gospel as the most important thing.<sup>13</sup>

That "Why" of the Gospel is often lost in the history books because there are so many other details to cover. Sometimes we forget that the people that were gathering for these meetings were people of faith, of good-hearted faith—and of diverse theologies. We think of them as being of just two or three positions, and as somewhat stereotyped even.<sup>14</sup> And so

the *Affirmation and Appeal* document for me, begins with Evenson’s reminding everyone of the “Why” of the Gospel: the bleeding heart of the God who loves us is the central piece to remember in all of the meetings, in the negotiations, in our Confessional studies, in our theological studies, in the work of the church and so on. It could not actually be spoken of more often.<sup>15</sup>

The second thing from the *Affirmation and Appeal* document of note for me is the Exhibits Section. [In the *Affirmation and Appeal*] the JCILR provides a chronological index of all of the papers that the Commissioners looked at before 1970. That index of all of the papers gives us a glimpse into Canadian Lutheran theology and history in its wide diversities that—because such was never published in a thick book (like so many theologies are from *other* countries)—we can tend to forget that Canadian Lutherans actually have a history, we have a theology. It has grown and changed. It is more than any one synod or one region (east, west...), more than belonging to a certain piety or ethnicity, or as Gordon rejected, “conservative” or “liberal” viewpoint.

We can actually look back to these specific writers (all of these people individually and collectively), and think, “What does ‘the Gospel’ mean in Nova Scotia now?” “What does it mean in Montreal now?” “What did it mean in that specific year in Saskatoon, or at this time in British Columbia?” And we can fill out our current understanding of who we are, with the knowledge of what other *previous* generations understood ‘the Gospel’ to be in their contexts.

And, finally, as a pastor who has taught “Lutheran Confessions,” it never dawned on me to teach Confessional Lutheran theology to our new and upcoming generations—from the position of documents that *all* Lutherans in Canada could agree upon such as in the [1970, Canadian] *Affirmation and Appeal* document.<sup>16</sup> We tend, instead, to turn to much older (or newer) teaching sources, and definitely more dislocated resources (typically American and European), and in doing so we give our people acontextual theology.<sup>17</sup> I think free conferences would help us to understand some of that diversity and to mine our own riches and resources (as well as the resources of others)—and especially to mine the riches and resources of *our own diversities that have never been published* in a thick book.<sup>18</sup>

*Steve Larson*

Oh, thank you, Karen. Gordon, how would you respond to the *Affirmation and Appeal* on significant points?

*Gordon Jensen*

I would want to add four things in response to your question about the agreement called the *Affirmation and Appeal*, Steve. First, I think it reveals again the importance of, and the fruit of, people talking together over a long period of time. This document didn’t come out of the blue. It was in many ways fourteen years in the making, fourteen years of solid conversations. And I think it was made possible because they recognized the Gospel in each other’s positions. I think the two of these things together is important.

I think it was also important because the JCILR made an important decision in that it said that instead of trying to reach for organic merger right away, that it was going to take a first step by having altar and pulpit fellowship before they took the next step. In a way it provides a foundation, an agreement amongst all the groups saying, “We’ve agreed on this. In working, keep returning to this. We’re going to return to this consensus and not something before.” So it provided, I think, a very solid foundation.

And then, I think connected with that, is that it is very significant that the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod in Canada had come to a point where they were comfortable with proceeding towards altar and pulpit fellowship *with everyone*. This was extremely important because altar and pulpit fellowship for them was an acknowledgement that on the major and important matters, doctrinal agreement had already been reached. And we often forget that. That was a significant point of conversation.<sup>19</sup>

And I think it is so significant, if you really look at it, that six months before most of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod Canadian delegates signed it (the *Affirmation and Appeal* consensus in December of 1970), the LCA had already approved the ordination of women. And so, the Missouri Synod delegates were looking at this reality and saying, “That’s not going to deter us or stop us; we’re committed to this altar and pulpit fellowship together with the other Canadian Lutherans.” That’s something we often forget.

We often think that Women’s Ordination was the issue that has always scuttled things. Canadian Missouri Synod participants were very committed to the *Affirmation and Appeal* and went into the three-way mergers knowing about Women’s Ordination very well.<sup>20</sup> And I think the *Affirmation and Appeal* helped ground (put on more solid footing) long-term Inter-Lutheran cooperation.

Much of it had already been happening, in theological education, for example, at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon. I was in a class where we had students from the LCA, Missouri Synod, and the ELCC. We were all together, and I will say that this helped us to develop good theological nuancing and being aware of positions. It was so helpful!

I think it was also reflected in the sharing of Eucharist at National Inter-Lutheran Youth gatherings—that we could have that altar and pulpit fellowship through the LC-C.<sup>21</sup> I think it was also helpful in putting Inter-Lutheran Campus Ministry on a firm foundation—ministries like that of Steve Larson and the Schmidts’ and others, I think that we often overlook that. These things were done because with the *Affirmation and Appeal* they were *allowed* to be done. They were given a stamp of approval in many ways that wasn’t always there in the earlier years.

Finally, I think it’s crucial to realize (and it struck me looking back at the document) that there were all males on the committees—from all the representatives. And I look back and say, “We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go.” And they were all White males. So it is a reminder that we are “a church on the way,” I hope as well.

*Steve Larson*

Thank you, Gordon. So, Gordon, put on your Reformation theology hat. The first CHAT question that came in is on the question of the “*inerrancy of Scripture*.”

“Can Dr. Jensen review the difference between Luther and Melancthon’s belief about the *inerrancy of Scripture* versus *the Word of God*, (those ideas shape some of the fragmentation among North American Lutherans (the “new Lutherans”) [in contrast to “Old Lutherans”]), and, the effect of these on questions of social issues (human natural law as it relates to these issues) as these keep coming up in Canada as well.”

*Karen Kuhnert*

Gordon, before you go out and head into that, can you clarify what “New Lutherans” and “Old Lutherans” means. For years I saw mugs that said “Old Lutheran” and t-shirts that

were “Old Lutheran” and I thought, “One day I can’t wait to wear something that says ‘Old Lutheran’—without realizing that it means something entirely different than I thought.”<sup>22</sup>

*Steve Larson*

I’m an “Old Lutheran.”

*Karen Kuhnert*

No, (laughing) you are not!

*Gordon Jensen*

It’s interesting language because the “New Lutherans” [as framed above] are actually the oldest ones on the North American continent, and they trace back to Muhlenberg and the tradition that formed the Gettysburg Seminary and the Pennsylvania Ministerium—the first Lutheran organization in North America.<sup>23</sup> They were Lutherans in the new land, so they have the title “New Lutherans.” They also, probably, were “New” because they switched to the English language predominantly very early on.

The “Old Lutherans” were generally those that came after the events happening in Germany with the Unification Church in Prussia when they decided that they could not be in Prussia anymore. So—like the Buffalo Synod and the Wisconsin Synod and Missouri Synod—where they wanted to keep the “Old Lutheran ways” (in other words continuous subscription to the Book of Concord in the old tradition). The ones that came last were the “Old” ones, and those here first were the “New Lutherans,” just to further confuse us.

In regards to the question, I find it a fascinating one. So I respond first by saying that I find it extremely fascinating that any discussions or documents among the potential merger discussions (within the 1800s or the 1900s—from 1840 onward until 1914 almost), that the church constitutions etc. *say nothing about Scripture*. They don’t even have an Article on Scripture. It is all about the Unaltered Augsburg Confession! This was because it was understood that if you subscribe to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession you would be subscribing, in a sense, to the *Book of Concord’s understanding of Scripture*. Such a reference is found in a lot of constitutions, which say: Scripture is the sole source for teaching and doctrine.<sup>24</sup>

And I think that becomes important because—they were NOT talking about “without error” as “inerrancy,” (as its use has come to be in the 20th century and to the current time) rather, inerrancy meant: “*to be without fail*,” as in “the North Star without fail points us to the North.”<sup>25</sup> It actually came out of Galileo and others. The first time the phrase “*Scriptural inerrancy*” is used—that I found—is in relation to a constitution in the Norwegian Lutheran Church merger documents of 1914 (and that’s quite a bit later). This was influenced by the Norwegians because of a non-Lutheran Bible School that started floating the idea of *inerrancy* at the turn of the 20th century. The phrase’s use was actually started by two professors from Princeton Theological Seminary (so it is late coming into it), but it is *with an emphasis on pietism that they wanted to include “inerrancy of Scripture.”*

Many would point back to Luther and say, “He used the phrase (*Scriptural inerrancy*).” The whole irony is (for Lutheran history geeks like myself) that when I went back and looked it up—because I got to look at a dictionary from the 16th century that Luther used—I found that the whole Scriptural definition of *inerrancy at that time* was NOT “*without error*”—as its use in the 20th century had come to be—but instead “to be without fail.”

Luther meant it as “to be without fail” as in “the North Star without fail points us to the north.” It actually came out of conversations and the work of Galileo and others. So when



Luther would talk about “*the inerrancy of Scripture*,” he would say, “without fail Scripture points to Christ” (and that’s why many would say that Luther found Christ in every page of scripture; as in, *inerrantly* it would point to Christ without failing).

The other thing that Luther and Melanchthon did (because Melanchthon was influenced by Humanism—as was Luther to some degree), is that they were very careful to say that “Scripture was the authority *for teaching and doctrine*.” But, in the shock to many—then he also argued regarding morality that the authority *for morality* was to actually be natural human law.<sup>26</sup>

Now, Luther got this all the way back from Thomas Aquinas and the early medieval theologians. So, in that sense, and the reason they located it in human natural law, was because they wanted to insist and make clear that if Scripture were the only authority for morality and how we live with each other, then it wouldn’t apply to those who didn’t believe in Scripture (those who are not Christian). So Luther changed it—*clarified it*—so that as he understood it (as did the church of his time), that the basis of authority for morality was human natural law and that it was the responsibility—in very major way—that morality laws were set by the community, by civil authorities, for the whole community, not just Christians.

But when it came to doctrines and teachings of faith and spirituality, then Scripture was the authority. And we see that in the way that Luther, for example, deals with the question of Philip of Hesse’s bigamy. He doesn’t go and point to Scripture. He said, “If it did point to Scripture, I would have to justify Philip of Hesse’s decision for bigamy because there’s many examples of it.” He went instead to human natural law and asked the question, “What is best for the sake of society?”

So maybe the difference between the two is: the church authority asks the questions: “What’s best for the sake of the Gospel?” and civil authorities would ask: “What’s best for the sake of the community?” and the intersection of those is very important. And I think it has unfortunately divided us to a very large degree. For example, I think we have often divided social issues into two categories that Luther made into *three categories*:

1. What is of the *essence (esse)* of the Gospel? For Luther, that was only the things that are done by Christ that give life and salvation.
2. He also talked about *adiaphora*—and this is in the confessions as well—where you could do it this way or that way but it’s not of the essence of the faith.

But Luther also had a *third* category, and that was:

3. The *bene esse*, two Latin words meaning: for the *well-being of the church*.

I think we’ve often forgotten, as Lutherans, that many of these social and moral discussions should be located in that *bene esse* category—what is best for the well-being of the church and the well-being of society. And I think if we approached social and moral issues from that perspective, we might be able to converse a little more together—even if we may disagree on them. But we’d have in mind the common goal of what is best for *everyone* in society and how can we as church facilitate and support that.

*Karen Kuhnert*

When free conferences started in Eastern Canada with the ULCA and Missouri Synod (back even earlier than the 1944 Home Missions Conference), C. H. Little came back from giving a paper [among Lutherans] and he said essentially, “Oh my golly, our constitution doesn’t say anything about the Scriptures! So we have to put that in the constitution. Here is what I propose, everybody vote.”

So, the mindset at that time was so very different. That we didn’t even have a need to clarify Scripture in the 40s—in our constitutions!<sup>27</sup> Wild.

And later, when Dr. Lotz was saying goodbye to the Eastern Synod around the time of *Affirmation and Appeal*, he says essentially that we need to sit together [in free conferences] so we can talk about things; meaning, to find out what one another means [about “the inerrancy of Scripture,” etc.,] so as not to presume the position of morality based on posturing among people just because they belong to this denomination or that denomination.

*Steve Larson*

The next question in the CHAT is addressed “to Everyone” so if you want to read along, you could do that. It’s from **Ken Kuhn** in Winnipeg, Treaty One Territory and Homeland of the Metis Nation. **Ken Kuhn** expresses appreciation for Gordon’s review of the Free Conference tradition. Then he says:

“His appeal (Gordon’s appeal) moves the project from recalling history to having Free Conferences again. Yet our situation is different now (the formation of the ELCIC has also led to some more fragmentation, in Campus Ministry and other ministries we are engaged in ecumenical and interfaith relationships and around psychological and social issues in the context of secularization...). *Who would be a part of these free conversations and what would be the focus of “for the sake of the Gospel.”*”

*Gordon Jensen*

A very challenging question again. Just to follow up from the last one, I would like to say that I find it significant that even in the constitution of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod today there is nothing about “inerrancy of Scripture.” When it discusses Scripture, it just talks about it as the authority for teaching and doctrine. They cover that [inerrancy of Scripture] now in another document that came out in 1932 (*A Brief Statement*), and it is also in the ordination responses now; but not in the constitution.<sup>28</sup>

I think that what I want to say to Dr. Kuhn’s question is that, “Yes, we need to talk.” And that becomes crucial because the last attempt to talk, I would say, with Missouri Synod at least, (and it was—maybe—then even only half-hearted) was in 1999 at the ELCIC Convention. The motion was made essentially that “we begin conversations with the Lutheran Church–Canada, but we in the meantime begin with an interim sharing of altar and pulpit fellowship.” And I think most people realized that such would never happen if you put them in that order (out of respect for Lutheran Church–Canada’s position). But I still think we have sat in our own corners for too long, and as much as we may disagree, it doesn’t do any good sitting in corners. We have to start conversing, as difficult as it is.

I think we often forget how difficult those conversations were in the 1850s and 60s. I think we often forget how difficult those conversations were in Canada in the 1940s, especially after that lay-person’s attempt from Regina to bring about a merger that would have excluded all the clergy because the clergy were the ones that were dragging their heels [the



Stuermer Appeal].<sup>29</sup> So, those are difficult conversations, and social issues are very difficult conversations, but it seems to me that if we can have a commitment to meeting to converse with each other without the expectation of (as free conferences have had), of coming to some theological agreement, I think that might be the basis for some conversation.

And I would say, frankly, that I think it's an embarrassment that all Lutherans aren't talking to each other in Canada. Because what it does (I think we've seen) is it leads to further fragmentation, and that is NOT good for the sake of the gospel.

*Steve Larson*

Don, were you going to comment?

*Don Sjoberg*

I take a page from Ken Peterson, retired pastor, on some of his experiences working locally, as well as the common saying "think globally and act locally." And I think the best place to begin is neighbour to neighbour. To get to know one another as Lutheran pastors, as Lutheran churches; Lutherans *should* know one another in the same community *and* know what's best for the community.

Ask "What's best for the gospel here? How are we doing? How can we encourage one another?" Or, discover what other church there might be if there is another non-Christian building there, and get to know your neighbour. That's such a wonderful opportunity, to meet over coffee, and reflect on "How are things going?" and "What's important for you and in your community?"

And it starts there as it *always* begins with relationship. That's my key answer to it. Now, I'm way over the hill, out to pasture, and this is kind of nuts for me to get involved in that way, but I certainly see that as most important.

*Steve Larson*

You are not quite over the hill yet! The time says it's time to turn back to you, Bishop Don, to wind up with some words and to send us off with a blessing.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The writing of "Affirmation and Appeal" and *Affirmation and Appeal* are inter-linked and intentional. The phrase "Affirmation and Appeal" is used to refer to the consensus of agreements commonly affirmed among Lutheran participants in the JCILR process to the end of 1970. These were published together by the JCILR. The *Affirmation and Appeal* is the publication in which all the consensus content is published along with definitions, exhibits, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Affirmation and Appeal* Definitions - **LCIC**: The Lutheran Council in Canada, an agency of ELCC, LCA-CS and LC-C, for doing on behalf of these churches tasks delegated to it by them, constituted in 1966.

<sup>3</sup> *Affirmation and Appeal* Definitions - **JCILR**: The Joint Commission on Inter-Lutheran Relationships, composed of official representatives of ELCC, LCA-CS, and LC-C, a commission whose purpose is to promote unity among Lutherans in Canada. Its immediate concern is the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship among all Lutheran churches in Canada.

<sup>4</sup> The three participating groups in the three-way merger were the ELCC, the LCA-Canada Section, and the LC-C. Using definitions from the *Affirmation and Appeal* of 1970, these terms mean:

1. **ELCC**: The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, which became an autonomous church on January 1, 1967. Prior to that date it was the Canada District of The American Lutheran Church. The **ALC** (The American Lutheran Church, with headquarters at Minneapolis, Minnesota) affiliated with the ELCC.
2. **LCA-CS**: Lutheran Church in America-Canada Section, a federation of the Eastern Canada Synod, the Central Canada Synod, and the Western Canada Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, organized in

1963. The LCA had its headquarters at New York. The synods named previously as comprising LCA-CS are Canadian synods of LCA.

3. **LC-C:** Lutheran Church–Canada, a federation of the Ontario District, the Manitoba-Saskatchewan District, and the Alberta–British Columbia District of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, formed in 1958.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Sjoberg is referring to the presentation given by Gordon Jensen moments prior called “Confessional Lutheran Identities in the Canadian Context” as presented in this *Consensus* Issue.

<sup>6</sup> The Lutheran Merger Commission was not envisioned in 1970 when the *Affirmation and Appeal* was constructed and distributed.

<sup>7</sup> Norman J. Threinen, *Toward Union: Lutheran Merger Negotiations in Canada 1972–1978* (Winnipeg: Lutheran Council in Canada, 1979), 17.

<sup>8</sup> Norman J. Threinen, ed. *In Search of Identity: A Look at Lutheran Identity in Canada* (Lutheran Council in Canada, Winnipeg, 1977).

<sup>9</sup> See Dr. Threinen’s own reflections on the era in Threinen, Norman J. (2000) “The birth of *Consensus*—twenty-five years ago,” *Consensus*, 26, no. 1, Article 9, <https://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol26/iss1/9>. The *Consensus* Journal is searchable online at <https://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/>. All of the articles are open access and available online. To find all the *writings* by Dr. Threinen in *Consensus*, go to the link just provided and input “Norman J. Threinen” in the search space. Doing so will yield a short list of all writings by Dr. Threinen. Searching for “Threinen” in the search bar will yield all the writings by Threinen *and additionally* the writings of every author in which the name Threinen appears.

<sup>10</sup> Norman J. Threinen, *Landestreu, An Odyssey: The Story of a Family over Time* (Friesen Press, 2017). Threinen, Norman J. (1981) “From Catharine to Khrushchev: The story of Russia’s Germans,” *Consensus*, 7, no. 4, Article 3, <https://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol7/iss4/3>, for example.

<sup>11</sup> <https://canadianlutheranhistory.ca/sources> and <https://canadianlutheranhistory.ca/archives>.

<sup>12</sup> Threinen, *Fifty Years of Lutheran Convergence*. Norman J. Threinen, *A Religious-Cultural Mosaic: A History of Lutherans in Canada*. Lutheran Historical Institute Monograph Series, Number 1 (Vulcan: Today’s Reformation Press, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> *Affirmation and Appeal*, 7.

<sup>14</sup> References to “two positions” of stereotype today would still likely refer to gender and sexuality in the Orders of Ministry; in short, who is and is not permitted to attain or hold ordained ministry Office. References to “three positions” would still likely refer to matters of the three Church-body organizations in the 1970s– ELCC, LCA-CS, and LC-C.

<sup>15</sup> The why of the Gospel is challenging to articulate in only a few words. Sometimes an image is more articulate. In the background of Gordon Jensen’s Zoom screen image for this Webinar was a section of *Predella: Martin Luther Preaching* by Lucas Cranach the Younger. In this image, the blood from the heart of Christ (centered) is splashed on Luther and the community gathered. Luther, in his preaching at the pulpit, is pointing the people (men and women) to Christ on the cross in the midst of their lives. *Predella: Martin Luther Preaching*, Stadtkirche Wittenberg, painted between 1547 and 1548, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lucas\\_Cranach\\_d.J.\\_-Reformationsaltar,\\_St.\\_Marien\\_zu\\_Wittenberg,\\_Predella.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lucas_Cranach_d.J._-Reformationsaltar,_St._Marien_zu_Wittenberg,_Predella.jpg).

<sup>16</sup> Here Kuhnert is meaning “taught Confessions” in the ministry context, not as at a university or seminary.

<sup>17</sup> When Pablo Sosa visited Canada at the request of Debbie Lou Ludolph in 2009 for the Kanata Centre for Global Song, Sosa asked, “What is your song?” We Canadian Lutherans had no answer. The more fulsome story of the Argentinian “theologian, musician and composer” inviting Canadian Lutherans to better understand themselves *in context* is covered in “Singing Our Song: The History of Inshallah” as can be found at <https://luther.wlu.ca/news/2015/winter/singing-our-song-the-history-of-inshallah.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Note the many sources and resources for under-represented voices in the Endnotes in works by Karen Kuhnert in this Issue and in Karen Kuhnert (2022) “2SLGBTQIA+—Sexuality in Changing Canadian Lutheran Contexts and Identities,” *Consensus*, 43, no. 2, Article 7, <https://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol43/iss2/7>, and Karen Kuhnert (2012) “‘Only If’: Lutheran Identity in Canada,” *Consensus*, 34, no. 1, Article 3, <https://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol34/iss1/3>.

<sup>19</sup> The term “Altar and Pulpit Fellowship” in this era meant something specific and the *Affirmation and Appeal* addressed the potential misunderstandings directly. The *Affirmation and Appeal* Definition read,

*Altar and Pulpit Fellowship-has not always been understood in the same way. For many it simply meant the exchange of pulpits and the communing of members across synodical lines. In the six-point definition*

agreed upon by the LC-MS and The ALC, however, the requirements for fellowship are the same as for total merger. These six points have subsequently been accepted as a working definition for the discussions in Canada:

1. Congregations of the synods may hold joint worship services.
2. Pastors of one synod may preach from the pulpits of congregations in the other synod.
3. Members in good standing in one synod may commune as guests at the altar of congregations in the other synod.
4. Members may transfer their membership from congregations of one synod to congregations of the other synod.
5. Congregations of one synod may call as their pastors those who are on the clergy roster of the other synod.
6. Students may prepare for the holy ministry in the seminaries of either synod.

\* Points 5 and 6 have not been fully implemented by The ALC and LC-MS. Special guidelines have been prepared setting forth accepted procedure in both instances. Lutheran Union - presupposes unity and implies dissolution of the Lutheran bodies as presently constituted to form a totally new united Lutheran Church in Canada.”

<sup>20</sup> Women’s Ordination, when used with capital letters, refers to the item of business as addressed within the Lutheran Church bodies.

<sup>21</sup> At the youth gatherings of the time, Communion was done in a way that everyone could be included rather than done in ways that some would be excluded. This altar and pulpit fellowship was not the same as having an “Altar and Pulpit Fellowship” Agreement on the six points outlined in the document.

<sup>22</sup> The irony of a female Lutheran pastor wearing an “Old Lutheran” t-shirt is the image intended to be raised here.

<sup>23</sup> The Pennsylvania Ministerium is a later term for the Ministerium of North America founded August 26, 1748. Canadian Lutheran Pastor Samuel Schwerdtfeger joined the Ministerium in 1753 on arrival in North America in service to the Lutherans of York, Pennsylvania.

<sup>24</sup> “We believe, teach, and confess that the only true rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone...” Formula of Concord, Epitome, 1, In *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 486.

<sup>25</sup> For more, read: Gordon A. Jensen, “Luther, Inerrancy, and Translating,” Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, Minneapolis, MN, October 27–30, 2022. One of the first uses of the terms “inerrant” or “infallible” among Lutherans was not found until the 1914 Articles of Union in the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America. Their proposed constitution stated that Holy Scriptures were “the inerrant Word of God.” This was reflected in the subsequent predecessor bodies of the ALC. The LC-MS’s Brief Statement of 1932 laid out the LC-MS commitment to the term “inerrancy” as well. J. A. Bergh, *The Union Documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church with a Historical Survey of the Union Movement* (Minneapolis: Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1948), 58–59.

<sup>26</sup> See here Johannes Heckel, *Lex Charitatis: A Juristic Disquisition on Law in the Theology of Martin Luther*, Gottfried G. Krodel, translator and editor (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

<sup>27</sup> This time period prior to 1944 was another moment when there was a push for inter-Lutheran gathering and free conferences in the East, as recorded in the Minutes of the Canada Synod/Eastern Canada Synod. As in Endnote 22, the meaning of free conferences or Free Conferences has not always been understood in the same way. The status of the 1944 national gathering as just a “free conference” or a formal “Free Conference” created significant political struggles in a number of Lutheran contexts. Similarly the phrase “Lutheran Unity” appears straightforward, however the *Affirmation and Appeal* definitions list included the following: Lutheran Unity: is not to be confused with union or merger. It signifies a common underlying oneness (consensus) in articles of the Christian faith and in their application which permits total cooperation in all phases of planning and activity and is sufficient for union, if desirable. Unity among Lutherans is sought on the basis of their commitment to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. The MS/LC-C members and LCA/LCA-CS members were the most likely to not understand the implications of one another’s use of terminology.

<sup>28</sup> For more on the Brief Statement as it impacted the variety of Lutheran Church bodies operational in North America see E. Clifford Nelson, ed., *The Lutherans in North America*, 1975, Revised 1980, Fortress Press, 459ff. In any edition look for the phrase, “Brief Statement, 1932”. In the 1985 edition begin with the diagram called “Documents of Lutheran Unity 1919–1940.” This resource is edited by Nelson, but in collaboration with Theodore G. Tappert, H. George Anderson, August R. Suelflow, Eugene L. Fevold, and Fred W. Meuser.

<sup>29</sup> Threinen, *Fifty Years of Lutheran Convergence*, 4–7.