

OFFICE OF THE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT  
Rev. Nolan D. Astley

## **Constitutional Amendment Ratification**

### **Executive Summary**

In response to resolutions passed at the conventions of all three districts of Lutheran Church – Canada (LCC) held in 2015. The Synod’s Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS) has developed a revised structure for LCC which will reduce administrative costs by \$ 400,000 per year, make better use of human resources and will enable LCC to function effectively in an environment which has changed dramatically in the last 3 years. These proposed changes in structure were all adopted by the 2017 LCC Convention by a strong majority. Because some of these changes require amendment of the Constitution of LCC, a congregational ratification vote is necessary to approve the changes to the constitution. In order to be adopted the constitutional amendments must be approved by two-thirds of the congregations participating in the ratification vote.

The most significant of the changes are as follows:

- a. LCC will interact directly with each Member Congregation, pastor and deacon on all ecclesiastical matters, replacing their current interactions with one of the three Districts.
- b. Many ecclesiastical activities will be carried on by Regional Pastors and Regional Mission and Ministry Councils established within the Bylaws of LCC, replacing many of the ecclesiastical activities currently carried on by separately incorporated Districts.
- c. Synodical Conventions will move from a 3 year to a 4 year cycle.
- d. Every congregation or parish of the Synod will be represented at LCC Conventions as opposed to having representatives from each Circuit.

The most significant change to the constitution is the removal of **Article XII Districts and Their Regulation**. Instead of being assigned to separately incorporated districts, LCC member congregations will be divided into three geographic regions, each with a Regional Pastor and a Regional Mission and Ministry Council. The boundaries of the regions will be the same as the boundaries of the current Districts and the Regional Pastor will have the pastoral and ecclesiastical responsibilities now given to District Presidents. The Regional Pastors will not have to carry out the corporate responsibilities of District Presidents, i.e., serving as corporate CEOs, planning conventions every 3 years, presiding over their own corporate Board of Directors, and maintaining various ministry departments. It is anticipated that these changes will allow Regional Pastors more time to care for the congregations, pastors and deacons of their regions. The Regional Pastors will be elected at the national convention by members of each region. The Regional Mission and Ministry Councils will assist the Regional Pastor as well as the congregations, pastors and deacons of each region in carrying out their shared ministry. Because these changes relate to matters which are not of a confessional nature, the details of the operation of the duties of the Regional Pastor and other aspects of these changes are detailed in the Statutory Bylaws and the Synodical Bylaws of LCC. The Convention approved these changes to the Constitution by a 92% majority.

Further detail in regard to LCC’s structural changes can be found in the other documents prepared for this ratification ballot, as well as in the Workbook Supplement and Action Plan prepared for the convention.

Over the past 2 ½ years an enormous amount of time and effort have gone into developing the proposals for structural change in LCC and also to presenting those changes in a way that they can be implemented and become reality for the Synodical family. Great care has been taken so that in proposing changes we do not change what must not change in the Synod; that is, our confession of Christ, His inerrant Word, our subscription to the Lutheran confessional writings, and the clear objectives for which the Synod was created.

The Board of Directors of LCC, together with the CCMS, urges member congregations to give prayerful consideration to these amendments and exercise their right to vote on or before April 16, 2018. Ballots may be returned by email or via Canada Post. If ballots are being returned by mail they must be postmarked no later than April 17, 2018. Should you have questions or need clarification on the proposed changes to the Constitution you may contact the undersigned at the email address in the letterhead and answers will be provided as quickly as possible.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. John Ball". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

First Vice President  
Lutheran Church – Canada