

# 2012 Convention Highlights

- Two hundred and forty-eight delegates, visitors and guests gathered together at University of Alberta – Augustana Campus, from May 24 – 27 to make decisions about our life together as the Synod of Alberta and the Territories; to praise God with outstanding worship; to learn from each other and to enjoy amazing amounts of coffee and cookies!
- Abundant Life Lutheran Church of Calgary was welcomed as the newest congregation in the Synod. The mission of Pastor Peter Chau and the members of Abundant Life has led them to establish a connection with the University of Calgary in order to provide advanced education to their Asian seniors; and to develop a relationship with students in Hong Kong who are encouraged and supported as they come to Canada for education and ministry opportunities.
- The Chairperson of the Synod, The Rev. Tim Posyluzny was re-elected on the third ballot and the secretary of the synod, Brenda Visser, was elected by acclamation. The following were elected to the Synod Council for four-year terms: Paul McCormick (rostered, second term); Michael Harmon (lay, first term), Wayne Street (lay, second term), Mark Ree (lay, second term) and Gary Aicken (rostered, second term). Marla Mulloy was re-elected to the Board of Directors, Lutheran Theological Seminary.
- Friday afternoon, delegates, visitors and guests attended one of the following sessions: “Telling God’s Story with Our Canadian Voice”; “What in the World Are Lutherans Doing?”; “Renewing Our Mission with Justice”; “What Happens at Camp...Goes Everywhere!”; “Landscapes of Campus Ministry”; “What Resources Are Helping Congregations?”; “Pension and Benefits Seminary”; “Lutherans in Mongolia/Stories of God at Work in Colombia”; and “Youth Ministry”
- Stephen Wildfang and Pastor Kathy Martin provided an overall rationale for structural renewal in the ELCIC and introduced conversation about the possibilities related to various aspects such as “areas” and “area leadership teams”. Later the convention gave approval for the Synod to:
  - Develop petitions of governance compliance for the next convention that would allow for some of the restructuring plans to be realized;
  - Conduct a test project by provisionally implementing some of the aspects of the restructuring plan;
  - Engage in further conversation with the other synods and the national church in order to restructure for effective mission and for financial sustainability;
  - Continue to look for opportunities to work together with the B.C. Synod.
- Convention action directed Synod Council and the World Mission Committee to explore options that would enable continued financial support for the ministry of The Rev. Brian

Rude, missionary in El Salvador since October, 1988. Pastor Brian works to promote well-being, self-esteem and AIDS prevention. His ministry was recognized by the national church during the convention and celebrated by the Synod during the banquet. Watch for the announcement of further opportunities for your congregation to be involved in this ministry.

- Bringing Christ to our neighbours rather than trying to bring neighbours to church, was the focus of the keynote presentation by Karen Wilk, author of the book, “Don’t Invite Them to Church”. In her experience as a parish pastor, she discovered that loving our neighbours and offering them hospitality was an effective means of sharing Christ with others.
- The Turtle Award sought out those individuals and congregational ministries, who like the turtle, stick out their neck(s) in order to move ahead, and who have been innovative and creative in living out the Great Commission. Electronic voting declared the members of Shepherd of the Hills, Calgary, the winner; and Mary-Ann Stushnoff the runner up.
- Pastor John Lentz welcomed conventioners to the next Synod convention in 2014. The West Central Conference will provide volunteer hosting activities for the June convention. The assembly approved a motion that excludes a May date for the next convention. The exact date will be announced soon.