

# Consensus

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## Canadian Lutheranism, yesterday and tomorrow

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## Foreword

The early years of a church union are a golden moment to examine and utilize the past as a signpost for the road ahead, and the new Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada has that challenge and opportunity laid now at its doorstep. We have a history, indeed a varied and complicated one, that we dare not ignore. Otherwise, we risk being controlled and shaped by it at the unconscious level. The philosopher has put it aptly, "Those who do not learn their history are doomed to relive it". This issue of *Consensus* proposes to make its contribution to that on-going task of historical dialogue on the Canadian Lutheran scene and, by so doing, inspire others to join in this continuing challenge.

Various topics and authors are represented in this issue in very intentional kinds of ways. With respect to the authors, William Hordern and Norman Threinen are from western Canada, and Oscar L. Arnal and Matthew Diegel are from the east. Hordern analyzes critically the incompleteness of the recent merger by raising some critical theological questions. For his part, Threinen integrates Canadian Lutheran history into a broader Canadian context by emphasizing important junctures of that story. Diegel's article describes an example of United States influence in our nation's churches, and Arnal calls for a prophetic consciousness in the new church which grows out of past roots both Lutheran and Canadian. Likewise the sermons reflect a similar variety and historical import. The sermons, which bracketed the ELCIC constituting convention and the one marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, are important reflections at moments when past and future converge.

It is hoped that this selection of materials, along with the book reviews, will bring a mix of knowledge and challenge that

will assist in the common task of discovering the future through the sacred memory of the past.

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