



## Lutheran Study Centre

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**L. s. c.**  
**NewsLetter**

8th Edition  
September 2017

### Message from the Director, Dr Eric Trozzo

2017 is a busy year for those involved in Lutheran churches. It is a year filled with special events in many places, including several that the LSC has organized (more about those events will follow). Yet as I have attended events and seen pictures posted on Facebook from other events around the world, what has struck me is not so much how many wonderful events there have been (numerous and superb though they may be), but rather a profound sense of the depth of communion to be found. That is, I have gained new appreciation for connection that goes deeper than fellowship.

The Lutheran World Federation has spoken for some time about shifting its self-understanding from being a federation to being a communion of churches. This shift speaks to...

More locally, as the five churches of the FELCMS gathered in June and July this year, the excitement of being together was unmistakable. When there was time for small group discussions at the English language gathering, the groups all continued their conversations for 20 minutes beyond the end time: I joked with them that I had never witnessed that before.

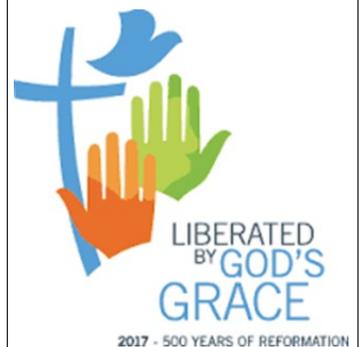
Yet the same thing happened again a few weeks later at the Chinese language gathering! This was more than a simple happiness to be together. It was a recognition of a deep belonging together in Christ. At each of the events, then, worship and Eucharist were shared together. None of the participants could recall all of these churches participating in sharing communion with one another before. Yet it was very much the natural movement of the time spent together for it to culminate in gathering around the table for the sacrament of the altar.

Communion is not about uniformity. The various Lutheran churches with which the LSC works are each unique. They have their own histories, practices, personalities, and particular theological interests. Yet I sense that in one another they are able to see a common rootedness in the gospel that is shaped by the Lutheran approach to theology; in this there is a unity between them. My hope is that this sense of unity in the Gospel might continue to grow.



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### Luther 500 Events

As part of the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, the Lutheran Study Centre organized events on behalf of the Federation of Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore. Three events were held: one in Bahasa Malaysia, one in English, and one in Chinese. Between the three events more than 225 people attended. Each of the events was three days, and celebrated the continued vibrancy of Luther's core insights for the life of the churches in Malaysia and Singapore today. It was also an important opportunity for fellowship between the member churches. The hope is that these events were not only a time to remember the past but also will serve as a springboard for future cooperation in ministry.

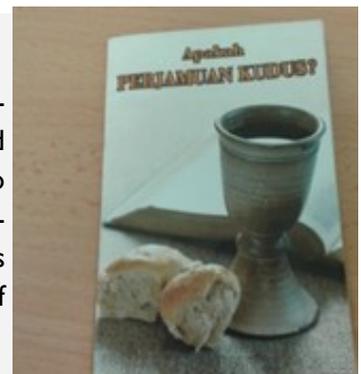


Speakers at the events included many local members, including Rev. Jollyfy Daniel, Rev. William Lo, Mr. Lawrence Hee, and Dr. Thu En Yu. International guest speakers included Rev. Greg Schiller from the Lutheran Church in Australia and Rev. Stephen Ju from China Lutheran Seminary in Taiwan. Each of the member churches also gave presentations about their history and current ministry. Many thanks, as well, to those who served on the planning committees for the events: Rev. Dr. Sivin Kit, Rev. Eliezer Vadivelu, Rev. Thomas Low, Rev. Joefrerick Ating, Pastor Madeos Angkanon, and LSC coordinator Davina Perreau.



### A New Tract

A translation into Bahasa Malaysia of the tract, "What is Holy Communion?" from The Lutheran Tract Mission in Australia was completed and printed in June. The tract is designed as a simple guide for lay members and visitors to help them better understand what it means to receive the Eucharist and its centrality in Christian practice. Copies are available at the LSC office. More tracts are being prepared for translation as well. Thanks is given for the generosity of the Lutheran Tract Mission for allowing these translations.





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### EGC Seminar

In preparation for its ordination service in August, the BCCM English requested that LSC provide a seminar for those being ordained. The seminar was a two and a half day introduction to Lutheran theology and the Book of Concord. Along with the three ordination candidates, several other pastors and seminary students also attended. May God bless the ministries of these servants.

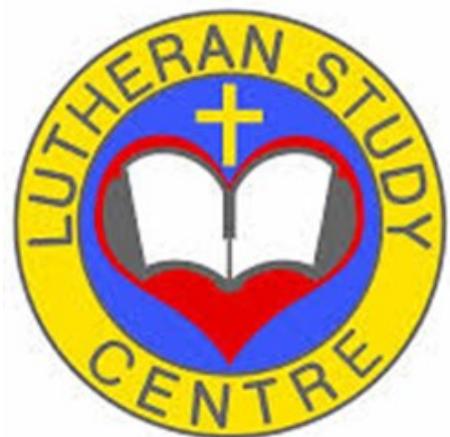
### Sermons about Martin Luther

Dr. Eric Trozzo has been visiting local congregations this year to help them celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. He has preached at a variety of congregations around Malaysia about Martin Luther and key themes from the Reformation. His visits have included Bangsar Lutheran Church, BCCM Kolombong English, BCCM KK English, BCCM Bundasan Charis, and BCCM Labuan English. He will continue to be available to speak about Martin Luther in English language services after the anniversary year is complete, as well.

### New Logo

#### We have updated our logo!

The logo is designed to lift up the role of LSC in promoting study, while at the same time remembering that it is study focused on the Word of God that we know most clearly in turning to the Crucified One. Thus the cross enlivens our study of theology and scripture, and through all of this we come to know and reflect God's love.





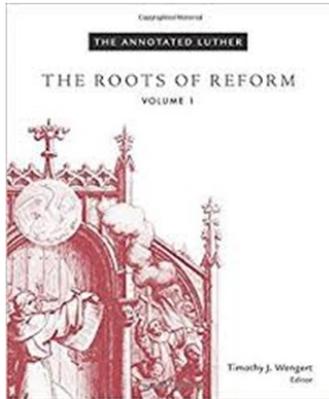
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### Book Review

#### **The Annotated Luther, Vol. 1: The Roots of Reform, edited by Timothy J. Wengert, Fortress Press 2015.**

This 500th anniversary year is full of new publications relating to Martin Luther. There are numerous biographies, for instance – more than I have had time to read yet, in fact. The new resource that I have used the most already, however, is The Annotated Luther series from Fortress Press, with five of the eventual six volumes now available. Some of the translations into English of Luther's writings in Luther's Works, which is the standard English edition, are now sixty years old. Aspects of how the language is used have changed in that time. Parts of those older translations can be somewhat challenging to understand for some readers today. With that in mind, The Annotated Luther series has updated the older translations, making them easier to comprehend. Even more, the editions also add new notations to provide the latest background insights into key texts of Luther's writings. Helpful new introductions and illustrations are also included. The volumes include some of the most important of Luther's writings. The five volumes released so far have the following themes: Volume 1, The Roots of Reform; Volume 2, Word and Faith; Volume 3, Church and Sacraments; Volume 4, Pastoral Writings; and Volume 5, Christian Life in the World. Volume 6 will be The Interpretation of Scripture.

The first volume is particularly timely to note, as it includes key writings from the early part of the Reformation, between the years 1517-1520. The volume includes a dozen writings that together give a solid picture of the theological concerns of the first phase of Luther's push for reform in the church. One of the important, and often over-looked, themes that emerges from this collection of writings is the centrality of pastoral concern in driving Luther's theology. As volume editor Timothy Wengert notes in his introduction, this particularly becomes clear in Luther's complaints about bad preaching in several of the texts, including The Freedom of a Christian and the Address to Christian Nobility. Meanwhile, several of Luther's own sermons are included as a counterbalancing example of preaching grounded in the gospel and focused on life empowered by God's mercy. This volume, then, provides an immensely helpful guide to understanding the theological element of Luther's reorientation of Christian thought and practice.

*Eric Trozzo*