



# Canadian Lutheran World Relief

## **Report to the ELCIC National Convention from Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)**

Guided by the vision of a world where people live in justice, peace and dignity, united in diversity and empowered to achieve their universal rights to basic needs and quality of life, Canadian Lutheran World Relief continues to serve Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) members as they seek to respond to the needs of the poor and marginalized in our world.

We sincerely thank members and congregations who have faithfully supported our work in community development, refugee resettlement and emergency relief through their financial gifts and prayers. Your continued generosity allows us to carry on this life-giving work.

In the past year, hundreds of thousands of people have worked with CLWR's help to make life better in their families and communities. Support for programming in areas of HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention, peace building and gender equity through the Quetzalcoatl project and the work of Pastor Brian Rude is also a part of this work.

The number of We Care program quilts and kits received at our office in Winnipeg is testament to the hundreds of congregations across this country where women and others in the church are sewing stitches of love and packing kits of basic necessities that bring invaluable relief to those who receive them overseas.

Purchases of Fair Trade coffee, tea and chocolate, or a fine handcraft at CLWR's Four Corners consignment sales continue to translate into new opportunities for producers and artisans who would otherwise have limited means to earn a living wage. We are grateful to Evangelical Lutheran Women for their demonstrated commitment to this program.

Over the past couple of years CLWR has cooperated with the ELCIC to place volunteers overseas through the International Volunteer Service and Volunteers in Mission. While the way in which we are doing this is changing, it has been fruitful for both the church members involved and those receiving their gifts of time and skill overseas.

Finally, we are particularly excited about ways in which we continue to explore how CLWR and the ELCIC can work in partnership to advance the overall mission of the church and at the same time support the specific work of CLWR.

**Lutheran World Federation, North America Report  
to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
2009 National Convention**

I. Introduction

It is my great honor to share with you information, challenges and hopes of The Lutheran World Federation North American (LWFNA) regional expression.

The LWFNA was only established in 1998, making it the youngest regional “desk” since the LWF formalized our becoming a communion of churches in 1990. The LWFNA is the only regional office not present in the LWF headquarters in Geneva and located in our region because of our uniqueness. The obvious reasons are having the smallest number of regional member churches (three), and the nature of our mission context and global relations around the world; the North American (NA) member churches have numerous bilateral relations with other member churches throughout the world. The LWF acknowledges that being a communion is both a vision and a task. For the last ten years, a deepening of relationships among member churches has been expressed in our region through the ministry of presence in decision-making bodies, sharing of information and resources in the areas of witness and proclamation, leadership development and congregational ministries to name a few. The NA member churches are The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (Canada) who continue to find new concrete and visible ways to strengthen our regional expression of the communion.

In the context that I describe LWFNA has experienced in recent years transition, connecting, and deepening relationships.

II. 2008 At a Glance

A. Transitions

After serving for six years, we celebrated and expressed our gratitude for the work and gifts of Ms. Kathy Magnus when she retired in December 2007. Since March 1, 2008, I have been serving as the Regional Officer for North America. I was born and raised in the Philippines (the Lutheran Church in the Philippines is also a member of the LWF) and as an ELCA ordained minister, I have served in parish and campus ministry, as well as the LWF Secretary for Youth in Church and Society at the headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. I am honored to know the ELCIC community deeper as I serve our region.

The United States of America based Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora has decided to return to their mother church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuanian, after many years of ministering to migrant Lithuanians abroad. This action reduced our regional membership to three.

The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad (EELCA) elected their new Archbishop, Rev. Andres Taul. In order to reconnect with various relations they have, including with their mother church in Estonia and the other NA member churches, they elected Rev. Hannes Aasa as general secretary.

## B. North American Regional Committee (NARC)

The NARC was established to advise and give direction to the LWF regional expression through the LWFNA. They meet three times a year; two conference calls and one face-to-face. Their meetings are also opportunities to share news, joys and challenges among NA member churches, and how we receive and reflect on LWF decisions and its implication in our region. The EELCA is now represented on this Committee by Rev. Aasa. This makes representation in this committee complete from member churches. The ELCIC is represented by Bishop Cindy Halmarson and Rev. Paul Johnson on this committee.

## C. Communion Formation

As one of The LWF global strategic priorities, communion formation has been a priority for our regional expression. The LWFNA led many workshops introducing and sharing LWF emerging themes that we can work on together in various member churches' events and conferences. However, in order to widen our reach by training key people for deeper knowledge and commitment to multiply their learning; we collaborated with LWF Geneva, The LWFNA, ELCIC, and ELCA to offer Ecumenical Courses:

1. The January term course "Being Ecumenical in a Globalized World" for seminarians is offered by the Department for Theology and Studies and was promoted and facilitated by the ELCA's Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations unit. The LWFNA accompanied 20 students from the United States to join several seminaries from the Global South in January 2009. We are hoping to be able to bring participants from ELCIC seminaries to the next class.
2. "A Communion of Communities: Being Lutheran in a Globalizing World" is a new course that will be offered to assistant to the Bishops and will be held in the LWF headquarters in Geneva, December 1–12, 2009. The Coordinating Team is composed of six people from ELCA, ELCIC and LWF. Rev. Paul Johnson and Dr. David Pfrimmer represent ELCIC on this team.

## D. LWF Council

National Bishop Susan Johnson was welcomed as a new member of the LWF Council in June 2008 in Arusha, Tanzania. She replaces former national bishop Rev. Raymond Schultz and will serve until the next assembly (see III). The council met around the theme "Melting Snow on Mt. Kilimanjaro—A Witness of a Suffering Creation." Some very important decisions made were food crisis, climate change, reinforcement of witness of ordained women, joining the ecumenical process to combat corruption, and calls for peace in Zimbabwe and the removal of HIV-related travel restrictions.

## E. New Publication: *Food for Life: Recipes and Stories on the Right to Food*

The LWFNA co-branded with the LWF Geneva and published this book in our region. We collaborated with the ELCIC Global Hunger and Development Appeal and the ELCA Global Mission and World Hunger Appeal to promote what we do together to end hunger in the world. This unique book is not only a cookbook but may be used as a resource on learning about the communion's commitment to world hunger and the people's spirit of resilience and hope. This is available through Augsburg Fortress Canada.

## F. Women and Youth

In 2007, a regional women's consultation was hosted by the ELCIC Evangelical Lutheran Women on the issue of *Human Trafficking*. The statement that was a result of the event is available on our website for your reflection and hopefully will lead to action as we continue to find ways to follow up on this issue until concrete steps, even small ones, toward justice are made. Ms. Priscilla Singh (India) concluded her ten years of service as the secretary for Women in Church and Society (WICAS). Rev. Dr. Elaine Neunfeldt (Brazil) began in August 2008 in this position. The current WICAS North American regional coordinator is Ms. Linda Bushkofsky, who is also the executive director of the Women of the ELCA.

The LWF Youth which was formerly known as Youth in Church and Society has been served by Rev. Roger Schmidt of Germany since late 2007. The change of the name was one of the results of a two-year evaluation and re-envisioning of the communion's youth work. Inspired by the 2008 LWF Council theme, The LWF Youth published a resource booklet on climate change. You may request a hard copy or download it at the LWF Youth webpage. You are invited to use this resource to mobilize, catch up on the "greening" initiatives of the communion, and join Lutheran youth around the world contextualizing their actions. As you receive this report, the regional "The LWF Youth Leadership Training; Engage, for the Americas (North and South)" has been held (April 2009, Nicaragua). Its aim is to increase youth participation in the life of the church especially in decision-making bodies in member churches. The ELCIC participated at this event.

#### G. Other Relevant Global Themes and Issues

##### 1. Renewal

In 2007, the LWF Council made a decision to form a Renewal Committee to more effectively respond to the changing world as we mature as a communion. Rev. Raymond Schultz serves as the chairperson of this committee. Proposals will be presented at the 2010 Assembly.

##### 2. Diakonia

Since 2001, various regional consultations have been held. As a culmination event and following up on the revised mission document, a global consultation on Diakonia was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2008. A concluding message was sent to all member churches and a diakonia handbook is currently in the process of being written. The region continues to reflect on the diakonia message in order to respond and contribute. Mr. Robert Granke, executive director of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, represented the ELCIC at this meeting.

### III. Looking Forward—From Winnipeg to Stuttgart

I am sure that many of you will remember the Tenth Assembly held in Winnipeg, Canada in the summer of 2003. The LWF Assembly occurs every six years and we are now busy preparing for the 11th Assembly, which will be held in Stuttgart, Germany from July 20–27, 2010. We will gather around the theme, "Give Us Today Our Daily Bread."

As part of our preparation, women, youth and regional Pre-Assembly Consultations will be held beginning in October this year. The North American Pre-Assembly is planned for January 2010 in Kitchener/Waterloo. The ELCIC Eastern Synod graciously accepted the task of hosting of this event. Various promotional communication and resources are being prepared to assist local congregations to celebrate our communion, reflect on the Assembly theme and topics, and pray for the communion. Here is the logo for the Assembly.

Prepared by the Rev. Teresita C. Valeriano



**Lutheran Council in Canada**  
**Report to the ELCIC National Convention, June 2009**

The Lutheran Council in Canada (LCIC) is a co-operative agency of Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC) and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). The agenda these past number of years has been centred in three areas: 1. Military chaplaincy; 2. Correctional Service of Canada chaplaincy; 3. Scouts Canada.

For the past several years the LCIC representative on the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy was the Rev. Dr. Bart Beglo, ELCIC. His term was completed this past year and the Rev. Hans J. W. Borch, ELCIC, was appointed for a two-year term. The LCIC Representative on the Interfaith Committee for Chaplaincy in the Correction Service of Canada is the Rev. Dr. Garry Dombrosky, LCC. The LCIC representative to Scouts Canada is the Rev. Michael Diegel, ELCIC, who was reappointed to a further two-year term.

The Interfaith committees are responsible for supporting the work of chaplaincy in the military and the Corrections Service of Canada respectfully. At the present time the chaplain general for the military chaplaincy is Brigadier General David C. Kettle, a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. The director general of chaplaincy in the Correctional Service of Canada is the Rev. Terry Richardson, an ELCIC pastor. ELCIC pastors serve in both of these services.

The Rev. Michael Diegel has responsibility for promoting and encouraging scouting in our churches. He prepares a bulletin insert to be used for Scout/Guide week. Previously this was printed and mailed to congregations desiring it. It is now available for downloading from the Internet.

For a number of years the LCIC published a directory of the Lutheran churches in Canada. With the advent of privacy legislation this service has been discontinued. A grant was received from FaithLife to assist in developing an integrated database using the existing data from the two churches. This is still in the development process.

The size of the council has been reduced to six members, all from Winnipeg, where both churches are headquartered. The current members from the ELCIC are the Rev. Susan Johnson, National Bishop, the Rev. Paul N. Johnson, and the Rev. Dr. Leon Gilbertson. The current members from the LCC are the Rev. Robert Bugbee, president, LCC, Mr. Dwayne Cleave, and the Rev. Rod Buck. The council meets once annually to hear reports and to consider items that are referred to it.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Dr. Leon C. Gilbertson,  
Secretary, Lutheran Council in Canada