

Narrator: *Previously, Lutherans have worked together to achieve independence for Namibia...abolish apartheid in South Africa...and negotiate peace between the government of Guatemala and its opposition. Through the Lutheran World Federation, we can address the issue of globalization and further God's all-encompassing mission in and for the sake of the world.*

For more information on globalization, see the Lutheran World Federation working paper, "Engaging Economic Globalization as a Communion," which inspired this dialogue. Download it from www.lutheranworld.org/What_We_Do/Dts/Globalization_EN.pdf

More perspectives can be found in "Horizons for the Reign of God: Discerning the Path of Sustainable Social Economics," a Social Statement adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada during its 1997 Convention. Available from the ELCIC's National Office by phoning 1.888.786.6707 extension 167 or 204.984.9167; or by emailing orders@elcic.ca



Communion and Globalization: How Economic Globalization Affects the Lutheran Community



Use this dialogue to help your congregation understand the importance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) hosting the Tenth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) under the theme "For the Healing of the World." Join LWF members around the world in discussing economic globalization and discerning how to respond to it. Four voices and a narrator raise challenging perspectives that ask us to explore how economic globalization affects people everywhere.

Narrator: *Some of the richest people on the planet are Lutherans. So are some of the poorest. Together, through the Lutheran World Federation, we are bound by word and sacrament into the wider communion of churches—a "holy community" that is called, gathered, and maintained through God's action. As they prepare for the LWF Assembly next July in Winnipeg, Lutherans around the globe are asking questions about globalization, or international economic integration, and exploring how Christians might respond to it.*

Voice 1: "Levi Strauss used to make all its jeans in North America. But they shut our plant and moved manufacturing overseas. They told us they had to keep the price of jeans low."

Voice 2: "One night, my neighbors and I and thousands of others banged pots and pans outside our president's home to protest economic policies in Argentina. Now we have a different president and our

economic crisis is worse. My salary is worth a third of what it used to be, and I can't get cash out of the bank. How can I buy groceries for my children?"

Voice 3: "I left my village to take a job in a factory. But when we women began to organize for better wages, the owners moved its factories to a country where workers cost less and don't speak up. Now I have no job at all."

Voice 4: "My people, who live in Orissa, India, never registered our land with the government. We were devastated when a corporation said it had title to our land and wanted to displace people in more than 100 villages in order to mine bauxite for aluminum."

Voice 2: "My boss here in Canada says shareholders want value, so he wants 12% profit this year. Now I need to pressure my sales people to meet unrealistically high quotas. It's funny. I know we are justified by God's grace through faith—but I feel like I spend my days justifying myself through my job and how much I make and how important I am."

Voice 3: "Jesus made it clear that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. But what do we do when globalization makes our neighbor our competitor?"

Voice 4: "I can't understand why North Americans insist on maintaining a life-style built on consumption when it has such huge implications globally. We need to realize that big houses, sprawling suburbs, and gas-guzzling SUVs have made us world leaders in the emission of greenhouse gases and global warming."

Narrator: *God is the ultimate provider of what we need, but the daily bread we pray for comes to us through human activities. Throughout human history, what is good and evil, righteous and sinful, constructive and destructive has been intertwined in our activities and institutions. That's certainly true of globalization. Some of us reap enormous benefits, while others find our communities and lands devastated by these forces. Many of us here at _____ Lutheran Church depend on globalization for our livelihoods. In fact, the financial support of the church itself depends on it!*

Voice 1: Economic globalization is not an "it." Globalization has faces and voices. As a part of the LWF communion of churches, we can listen to those voices. Our communion becomes "real people" when we meet face to face and share our perspectives and pain. In communion, when one suffers, all suffer.

Voice 2: By listening to voices from the 133 churches in the Lutheran World Federation, we can discover the perspectives of those who experience the effects of globalization differently than we do.

Voice 3: How should Lutherans respond to globalization? We won't know until all the voices have been heard. Before the July 2003 LWF Tenth Assembly in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Assembly delegates will explore comments and testimony from Lutherans around the world on globalization. During the Assembly, a group will study and debate what decisions and actions the LWF should take.

Narrator: *Acting in communion, we can advocate for policies and institutions that benefit all.*

Voice 1: By learning from one another, we can better discern how to work towards economic systems that serve the well-being of the whole household of God.

Voice 2: We can become a vital part of the body of Christ—the Church serving a broken humanity.

Voice 3: We can learn more about the dynamics and effects of economic globalization in our own community.

Voice 4: We can strengthen our relationships with our Companion Synod partners in _____ and learn more about how economic globalization affects them.

Voice 1: We can question and challenge practices that distort or violate God's purpose and harm those with whom we are in communion.

Voice 2: We can seek to hold institutions more accountable for their God-given responsibilities.