



Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

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Dear Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

In September I wrote to you regarding National Church Council's (NCC) evaluation of the 2009 ELCIC National Convention. For the majority of delegates the experience of convention was a positive one – the worship, learning, celebration and business contributed to their experience of a church *In Mission for Others: Signs of Hope*. Yet others expressed a very different experience of convention, one in which the business sessions of convention, and in particular the governance procedures used, left them feeling frustrated, isolated and silenced.

At that time I informed you of NCC's commitment to engage in a process to review Convention governance practices, in particular practices regarding petitions from congregations, and the terms of reference for the Committee of Reference and Counsel, in time for implementation for the 2011 ELCIC National Convention.

As part of their review, NCC noted that each Synod of our church uses a different procedure for their Reference and Counsel committee which contributes to the confusion regarding National Convention governance. NCC affirmed that as per Bylaw Part VI, Section 8, convention petitions received will not be published in the Convention Bulletin of Reports, but will be referred to the Committee on Reference and Counsel. NCC also developed new guidelines for the work of Reference and Counsel including the options available regarding the presentation of petitions/resolutions to the convention. The most notable of these is removing the option of a recommendation of "no action". For further information regarding the recommendations for Reference and Counsel please go to www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2010RC.pdf

I ask for your continued prayers for the leadership of our church as together we strive to be a church *In Mission for Others*. Let me again leave you with the blessing which was used as one of the theme verses for this past convention.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson, National Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada – *In Mission for Others*