

# ASSEMBLY NOTES

Eighth Biennial Convention – July 5-9, 2000 – Toronto, Ontario

Friday, July 7, 2000



## Registrations as of July 7, 9:00 a.m.

Clergy .....	206
Lay .....	161
Total .....	367
Non-delegates .....	119
<b>Total at Assembly .....</b>	<b>486</b>
Total eligible to be at Assembly .	540
Quorum .....	123

[www.easternsynod.org](http://www.easternsynod.org)

Check out the Eastern Synod's web page for updated news about what's happening in the Synod.

Also, check the Communication display. It gives a complete description of the items available from the web page and how to find them.

*Assembly Notes* will be posted to the website so that you will be able to print additional copies when you get home. We thank webmeister Wendell Grahlman for posting the *Notes* for us. ♦



Assembly notes is a publication of the Eastern Synod Communication Committee

## Budget Presentation

### Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

Treasurer Keith Myra presented an overview along the lines of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" entitled "Who Wants to be our ELCIC Messenger?"

The report was divided into two parts:

#### A. In brief 1998-1999

■ Nineteen percent of our regular benevolence gifts are used for ministry on the national level.

■ Twenty-two percent is used for funding for leadership, including support of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

■ Eleven percent is used for Canadian Missions – which is also supported by 19 congregations and emerging faith communities (Partners In Mission).

■ Nine percent is used to support Colleges and Universities Ministries.

■ Three percent was used for the 1998 Assembly (Convention).

■ Nine percent was used for administration including support of the new synod building and the new toll free telephone line (350 calls per month).

■ Almost 75 percent of operating costs are covered by (benevolence from) congregations.

In the last two year, contributions to GDHA have been the best in history but we are still below the national average. Contributions to Campus Ministry peaked in 1986 and the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary in 1988.

How are regular offerings affected by a special appeal? Income tends to remain relatively level. We ran a small surplus in 1998 and a small deficit in 1999. Synod is a ministry – ministering to the people.

Keith concluded with special thanks and a reminder to continue support.

#### B. Budget Information 2000-2001

■ One percent increase in budget.

■ Savings from restructuring will be achieved.

■ New building will save operating costs.

Anticipated Level 1 Priorities will be increased funding for campus ministry, deans, office staff and ELCIC

Anticipated Level 2 priorities will be increased funding for ELCIC, Campus Ministry, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, and Outdoor Ministry

#### Questions, Comments and Clarification

■ The size of the congregation does not seem to affect their proportional giving levels to Synod in Benevolence funds much from year to year.

■ A pastor from Kingston drew delegates' attention to a recent study that showed Christian churches each contribute about \$155,000 annually in economic benefits to their local communities; this is a "hidden ministry" that too few realize

■ With the purchase of its new building in Kitchener, the Eastern Synod will save an estimated \$75,000 in annual rent (which was expected to rise in coming years). Although this will be offset by about \$25,000 in physical operating costs (utilities, maintenance, etc.), the difference of about \$50,000 will still be significant. (The purchase of the building comes from other funds.)

*Laine Baggaley,*

*Lay delegate, Redeemer, Toronto, ON*

## The Bishop Said “What?”

The next question which is usually asked, is “What did the Bishop have to say?” In answer, I will try to hit the highlights of Bishop Pryse’s report.

Bishop Pryse spoke of a theological truism “universal can only be experienced in the particular” and its relationship to his work as Bishop of our Synod. This was demonstrated in his statement that “a large part of my work involves building bridges between the local and wider church expressions of the church” and sees that manifested in the fact that the “Eastern Synod is a deeply textured mosaic”.

Bishop Pryse spoke of some of the excitement he has experienced in the past two years, namely, the Synod Council’s New Beginnings visioning process – the development of a series of structural renewal recommendations and the purchasing of a permanent home for our Synod Office.

We all were reminded that the support to congregations and pastors is not exclusive to the office of Bishop but rather “the call to provide care and support is a function assigned to the entire body.”

Bishop Pryse spoke passionately on ecumenical initiatives, which are well underway in our Synod. He spoke of an “unwavering belief that God’s Spirit is calling and equipping the Christian church to seek the goal of visible unity.”

Concerns for the next biennium were in the areas of new models for congregational ministry, community service and outreach ministries. Throughout this portion of Bishop Pryse’s report, two key points stood out. The first referred to the development of new models for ministry – namely “new forms for ministry have evolved throughout the church’s history and that the work of the Holy Spirit is not limited by our rather narrow assumptions of what does and doesn’t constitute a valid ministry.”

The second point refers to community service and outreach. I was pleased to hear the comment “we need to encourage more such ministries to develop, knowing that in striving to faithfully serve our neighbour we really do encounter the Christ who said he would be present in the least.”

*Grace E. Schaefer  
St. Paul’s, Cambridge ON*

## Youth Voices

The Youth representatives from each Conference greeted the assembly with a huge “thank you” for giving them the opportunity to be nurtured, challenged, inspired, and given a voice at Assembly 2000. Each representative was given a voting card – not red or green – but yellow and pink so that on issues brought to the Assembly floor, the youth would have an opportunity to express their views.

They affirmed our church has a future and told everyone what they believe:

- ...that it is pronounced *Jobe* not *Job*.
- ...that burning bushes can talk.
- ...that there is a Holy Trinity.
- ...that it is an *offering*, not a tax deduction.
- ...that yellow and pink cards are cooler than green and red ones.
- ...that the Bible should be named the *New York Times* #1 best seller
- ...that the Bible makes for a better read than an effective paperweight.
- ...that the Ten Commandments are more than \$10 million.
- ...that Christmas and Easter are more than good reasons to shop.
- ...that Communion is more than just an excuse to drink before noon.
- ...that Sunday isn’t just a break from school.
- ...that God will protect me, not Superman.

*David Malina  
St. Matthew’s, Kitchener, ON*



**Which one is Kenn?????**



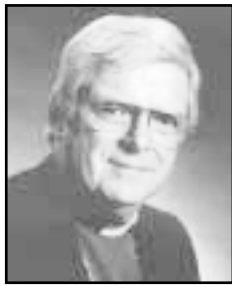
## YOUR CONGREGATION IN THE PICTURE



When the youth members from Transfiguration, Hamilton, returned from Halifax in 1998, they began to raise funds to go to Regina in 2000. In this photo they are holding a carwash.



Bishop Pryse



Archbishop Peers



Bishop Sartison

## Open Mike Time with Bishops Pryse, Sartison and Archbishop Michael Peers

This session was convened by Vice President Dorothy Frook and included questions prepared ahead of time.

### ■ Discuss the electoral vs appointment process for working committees.

- Appointment process is more positive.
- Consultation is involved for people with certain skills.

### ■ Full meaning of full communion with the Anglican Church.

- As much or as little as people choose it to be.
- It's a level for mutual support greater than what can be manifested by each church individually.
- We are not alone when we are in trouble.
- We must all take responsibility to make sure things happen as we want them to.
- We are not competitors; rather all together with one purpose to proclaim the gospel.

### ■ Altar/pulpit fellowship – advantages and disadvantages

- Insensitivity to size and power, i.e. USA much larger.
- Church vs church! Cannot be measured in numbers.
- Potential learning possibilities
- Must ask “What can I give?” instead of “What's in it for me?”

### ■ How to encourage young people in our churches

- Youth outreach? Family ministry?
- Integration of young people into assembly and youth gatherings as well as at church services.
- Sensitivity to youth in each parish on a needs' basis.
- Cannot be uniform across all congregations or dictated from Synod office.

### ■ Public worship – “I know what I like but I take what I get” (Archbishop Peers)

- Resources to be shared
- Liturgy – worship better than in 1960.

### ■ Commonality of the hymnal

- Canadian context (inclusive, prudent)
- Anglican/Lutheran (good contemporary material; middle of the road settings; user friendly).

### ■ New Beginnings

- Why are people afraid of change?

### ■ Ordination of homosexuals

- Referred by Bishop Pryse to Bishop Sartison
- Support needed to go hand in hand, day by day with the individual
- Follow Jesus with an Olympian message
- Higher, swifter stronger (rather than I'll go with you side by side).

*Wayne Pfeiffer  
Trinity, Ayton, ON*

## Sharon Morrice Describes Work of SWAP

Sharon Morrice, ES-ELW President, addressed the Assembly on the topic of Slum Women's Advancement Program. (SWAP). Sharon has always loved working with and for our children – providing daycare in her home, providing a home for a single mother and child who were in dire need, and her faith are only part of the story. Through ELW, Sharon has touched our hearts help women, children and families in India through SWAP. What started as a trickle of financial support

for SWAP coming into the Synodical Treasurer, turned into an avalanche because of the continued inspiration given to the officers of ELW.

How can we not be touched by the faces of small children picking through rags in the local garbage dump? How can we, as people of God, watch as young wives are sold or set on fire when (through ignorance and/or tradition) their husbands are dissatisfied with them for a small incident. We cannot.

Our community is not our church or

our town. As Christians we are called to serve the world, to stop injustice, to feed the hungry and to give hope to those who are living in poverty.

Through SWAP we have given a new life to people who were regarded as garbage and ignored by their own people in India. Praise be to God! The work of the Holy Spirit is alive and well in SWAP.

*Carol Butt, Lay delegate  
Holy Cross, Midland, ON*

## A Time for Learning and...a Time for Fun

On Thursday evening, participants in Assembly 2000 were treated to Part I of a special presentation by The Rev. Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Director of Faith, Worship and Ministry for the Anglican Church of Canada. Speaking on the Assembly theme “Jubilee...In Christ Called to a New Beginning”, she helped us to explore some of the traditional meanings of Jubilee and to consider what Jubilee might mean for our churches in Canada today.

She explained that the word *Jubilee* relates to a particular kind of trumpet blown only once every 50 years. When this trumpet sounded to declare a year of Jubilee, everything changed and all was made new. Prisoners were to be released, debts forgiven, land returned to original owners, and workers would

have a year of rest and celebration.

The speaker noted that Jesus began his ministry with Jubilee and everything changed for the people. She invited us to wonder with her about some “what if” scenarios that might be possible if Jesus were to sound the Jubilee trumpet among us today.

To help us contemplate where we are and what new beginnings might be possible in our Jubilee, she shared with us some images of the church – as a building, boat, mother, body of Christ, people of God, living stones, and river. She showed how each of these images can fire our imagination, but each also has a dark side. She then invited us to think about our home congregations and create our own images that would fit and to discuss these in small groups. From the excitement and sound level in the assembly hall, it soon became

evident that participants were having fun with this activity. This was further confirmed when some of the discussion groups shared their images with the whole assembly. More learning and fun (or maybe it was fun and learning!) took place as we engaged in some small group Bible studies.

This theme presentation was itself a new beginning. It was planned as a learning time within the framework of our Synod Assembly, to replace the Synod Colloquium which had traditionally been held the day before Synod Convention. Last night it appeared that this was one change that the assembled Lutherans were very happy with. Could this bode well for other new beginnings?

*Maaïke Froelich*

*Lay delegate, Trinity, London, ON*

## As We Travel Together: Anglican Archbishop Shares Ecumenical Insights

Three decades ago in Winnipeg, two struggling Anglican and Lutheran congregations made local history – first by sharing a building, then by growing into a unique exchange of clergy and worship traditions.

Today, the same Anglican minister who co-founded that partnership attends a different church every Sunday as the widely-travelled Primate of all Canada and has been seen (according to reliable sources) at more ELCIC conventions than many Lutheran clergy.

As we move closer to full Anglican-Lutheran Communion in 2001, Archbishop Peers is still just as passionate about forging ecumenical ties. With humour, candour and an inspiring generosity of spirit, he shared with Thursday’s afternoon gathering some of the aspirations, gifts, concerns, and challenges we face on our dual journey through Jubilee and into a new millennium.

At the heart of our life as the body of Christ, Peers challenged us to review

and renew what we identify as “church” – in our institutions, our stewardship, and in one another. What we “recognize as church is a profound thing,” he agreed, but if our definitions are too “cozy” they can also become obstacles to the larger community of faith.

Far from languishing in “the winter of ecumenism” – as a former Archbishop of Canterbury lamented not long ago – Peers believes that in Canada, we are entering a season of great potential for change and renewal. “Canadians are not afraid of winter; it kills germs, clears things off, teaches you to cooperate.”

Especially hopeful is growing evidence that Anglican-Lutheran dialogue is happening more and more through grass-roots initiatives among neighbour congregations, proving “ecumenism is not a ritual game played by theologians a million miles away.”

When it came to the residential schools issue, and pending litigations

that could well bankrupt the Anglican Church of Canada, Peers didn’t mince words or avoid the harsh implications of a shameful heritage that “rises up to face us and, in many cases, to face us in judgment.”

“This is an extremely serious time,” he added, one in which the spiritual and relational support of the ELCIC “means an enormous amount.”

Minutes later, during a lively open-mike session, he advised a questioner from the floor that Canadian Lutherans should be “grateful that you were not, 100 years ago, in a position of power where the government thought you would be an appropriate partner in the assimilation of aboriginal people.”

Sombre thoughts indeed, but Peers emphasized that by “grasping the nettle” and working through this unavoidable crisis, his church will discover strengths born of weakness and emerge in “a more authentic relationship” with the people it once injured.

*by Pauline Finch, lay delegate,  
St. Matthew (Kitchener) and a  
former Anglican.*