

ASSEMBLY NOTES

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

Final – July 9, 2000



Youth Delegates

We thank our youth delegates for their presence, assistance, dedication, and enthusiasm:

- Nadine Borch, St. Mark, Kitchener (K-W)
- Ryan Cruickshank, Our Saviour, Owen Sound (Georgian Bay)
- Michael Doan, St. Luke, Ridgeway (Hamilton-NF)
- Andrea Krats, St. Timothy, Copper Cliff (Northern)
- Alana MacKenzie, Zion, Pembroke (Ottawa-St. Lawrence)
- Katie Millar, Trinity, London (London)
- Luke Seamone, Trinity, New Germany (Atlantic)
- Andrea Spraakman, Holy Cross, Newmarket (Toronto).



Assembly notes is a publication of the Eastern Synod Communication Committee

Gifted and Beyond... Bishop Sartison Urged Us to Break Down Walls Around our Giving

Being gifted also means being thankful, and there were many profoundly felt thank you's on Thursday afternoon, in the last address that Rev. Telmor Sartison would give an Eastern Synod Assembly as its national church bishop.

Since the beginning of his tenure in October 1993, a great deal has happened in the Christian world, much of it hopeful and much of it challenging. In the ELCIC as well, change has been a continuing issue.

Mentioned all in one place, Sartison's list read like a host of essential people whose skills, resources, passion and faith have come together to make our church work. But more importantly, they work not only within our own structures but in and for the world, as a Christian family "that reaches beyond the walls."

As a gifted and giving people, Bishop Sartison reminded us that "we are not out to win our relationship with God...we have it." And that means we all come fully equipped to be and make disciples.

But we also have a lingering problem; being a community of faith that still isn't very sure of itself when it comes to giving. Comparing ELCIC Lutherans with Seventh Day Adventists (who invited him to their recent gathering at the Toronto SkyDome), Bishop Sartison noted that we do not impose tithing (giving a tenth of one's income) as they do; but "we still have the need" for funds to do our work and must find faithful,

distinctively Lutheran ways to address it.

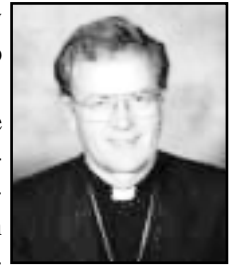
It's not that we lack grace, graciousness or concern, Sartison assured delegates, but that we need to go a little further, to trust God beyond our individual resources, to let go, to take risks for the message of the Gospel. As local congregations, our daily challenge should be "putting flesh on the words" of that Gospel.

Sartison also emphasized the positive steps being made in our encounters with other Christian denominations – particularly our Anglican and Roman Catholic colleagues – and with non-Christian faiths who share our increasingly pluralistic society.

He also encouraged the church to enter more openly into discussions of human sexuality and not to forget grace and faith when using words: "We need more than scripture quoted as bullets in a theological standoff," he challenged.

In parting, Sartison left some thoughts to consider in selecting his successor: first, we should take a cue from our Anglican colleagues in adopting the title of Archbishop; secondly, the new national leader of the ELCIC should be chosen according to what we need, not who we need – in that order.

*by Pauline Finch, lay delegate
St. Matthews, Kitchener*



Forum

New Directions for Adult Education

Traditionally, adult education has meant reading from the Bible, and then seeking to discover how the Bible relates to our life experiences. What would happen if we began the other way around?

The forum *New Directions for Adult for Adult Education* led by Jackie Nunns (chairperson of our Synod's Learning Ministry Sub-Committee) asked exactly this question. What if, instead of starting with the Bible, we began by reflecting on our life experience, and sought to discover what wisdom the Bible had about those experiences?

What if we were to gather together a small group with similar experiences – nurses, parents, recent retirees – to get

them to reflect theologically and biblically on their common experience? What if a group were to gather for a common experience – serving at a food bank, seeing a movie, or going on a study trip – and then take time to reflect theologically and biblically on that experience?

What if a request by a non-church group – for example people living with AIDS – to use the church for a meeting, became an opportunity to learn about biblical hospitality?

New Directions for Adult Education turned things upside down and provided some new possibilities for us.

Pastor Stephen Weber
St. John's, Waterloo

Forum

Footsteps and Crackers... Doing Justice Through Jubilee

There is a solidarity among all peoples that share this world – we have footsteps and eat some form of cracker (flat bread). *Footsteps and crackers*, however, became disturbing images for participants at the forum *Doing Justice Through Jubilee*.

Footsteps and crackers were used to illustrate the ever-growing gap between the rich and poor. In much of the world landowners are losing their land, accumulating horrendous debt, overusing land and resources, endangering their health, working themselves to death, and are in a downward spiral towards severe poverty and a seemingly hopeless reality.

TIRED FOOTSTEPS: an average Nike shoe cost around \$120. In Indonesia workers who make these shoes work long hours and only make

\$800 a year. Nike's profits equal \$795 million dollars a year. Mike Jordan endorsements for Nike bring him \$20 million a year.

BROKEN CRACKERS: \$40 million a year would adequately feed, clothe and educate the entire world; that is 8 percent of the \$320 billion/year that the U.S. spends on defense or 4 percent of the resources of the 200 wealthiest people in the world.

It seems to me that we need to stand firm in our footsteps. Jubilee calls us to stand together, march together and fight together. Somehow everyone – all God's creatures – deserves and requires crackers (food) to live, both physically and spiritually. Sadly, this is not the reality in which we live.

As people who follow Jesus' footsteps, we are called to take a stand; to

Forum

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is moving from retribution to reconciliation and restoration, from individual to community, from victims as peripheral to victims as central, from punishment to healing and reparation by means of meetings and conversations between the victim and the offender.

Chaplains Stu Schroeder and Bruce Schenk gave a slide and video presentation of this ancient way of justice and how it might be used today. I experienced a Restorative Justice Culture as a missionary in Papua New Guinea and I was impressed by the role of the church.

Here in Canada, a congregation could provide the meeting place and people to be welcomers, observers, and to serve refreshments, I could be a witness to the community of the concern to be part of the reconciliation process.

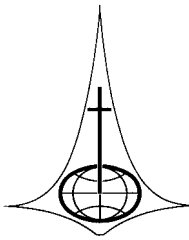
2 Corinthians 5:18

Pastor Doug Moore
Zion, Lunenburg

share and struggle with the poor and the rich so that the gifts God has given to the world are dispersed equally and enjoyed by all. Footsteps and crackers are simple images reminding us that justice and advocacy begin with us, at home. You eat and most walk every day – often taken these for granted – you may do more social justice than you realize.

So how do we go about doing justice through jubilee? We put our feet in the steps of Jesus and we pray/walk in God's way. We come to the table and eat bread (crackers) that is offered to everyone as a gracious gift. Christ's footsteps and Christ's body will free us, set us in hope-filled solidarity with each other, and set us in paths of new beginnings.

Pastor Kimberlyn McNabb
New Denmark New Brunswick



Lutheran World Federation

The Rev. Art Leichnetz (home church St. John,

Ottawa) told us that the LWF consists of 131 churches in 71 countries on six continents – 59.5 million Lutherans world-wide. The Lutheran church is a large church with big influence.

Canadian Lutherans are looking forward with great anticipation and excitement to the Lutheran World Federation Assembly to be held in Winnipeg in 2003. It will hopefully bring a stronger sense of community and mission to for all Canadian Lutherans to come together for God's work and mutual commitment.

The LWF is praying that youth will reclaim their role in the church.

We need to remember that everything we do in our own congregations, in our own synods, is a part of the LWF. We should also remember who else eats and drinks in communion as we do. We are all united.

Global Lutheranism is changing its face. The Lutheran World Federation sets an example for other groups. Lutherans stay to build communities of hope such as in Africa where AIDS is a great disaster. This is a sign that nations can join together to stop the hatred between them.

The LWF is about creating memories of God's future. By His grace, we are working to bring these memories together.

*Andrea Spraakman, Youth Delegate
Holy Cross, Newmarket, ON*

Offerings from our worship services will go to Global Hunger and Development Appeal. The offering on Wednesday evening was \$2,697.52 and at the Ordination service the offering was \$2,341.57.

Report on Elections

Nominations were received as presented by the committee for Synod Council and for Waterloo Lutheran Seminary Board of Governors. Nominations were then called for from the floor, and resulted in the following additions:

Synod Council term 2000-2004 – Lay: Sharon Morrice (K-W)

Waterloo Lutheran Seminary (WLS) Board of Governors term 2001-2004

Kurt Von Schilling (K-W)

Elected on the first ballot :

to Synod Council (term 2000-2004) – Lay: Virve Sandstrom (A)

to WLS Board of Governors term 2000-2003 – Lay: Rosemary Jacobsen (O-St.L); Clergy: The Rev. Andy Paulsen (K-W); The Rev. Bart Beglo O-St.L)

to WLS Board of Governors term 2001-2004 – Lay: Dr. Kimberly Dow (O-St.L); Dr. Janet Storch (ELCIC at large); Clergy: Bishop (Ret.) William Huras (K-W)

Elected on the second ballot:

to Synod council (term 2000-2004) – Lay: Rod Kruger (K-W); Clergy: Douglas Kramer (T); Rev. Judith Williams (K-W)

to WLS Board of Governors term 2000-2003 – Lay: Michael Baker (A); Clergy: Rev. Patricia Giannelia (T)

to WLS Board of Governors term 2001-2004 – Clergy: Rev Elizabeth Kuglin-Alyea (T)

Elected on the third ballot:

to Synod council term 2000-2004 – Lay: Carole MacNab (H-N); Clergy: Rev. Doug Schweyer (H-N)

to WLS Board of Governors term 2001-2004 – Lay: Kurt Von Schilling (K-W)

*Eleanor McLeod
Trinity, Walkerton*

A Finnish Lutheran Presence

We were honoured with a visit from Archbishop Jjukka Paarma, his wife Pirjo and Mr. Ilkka Makela from Finland. Archbishop Paarma is the 54th archbishop from the city of Turku. He brought greetings to us from Finland and from the 700-year old church in Turku. The archbishop reminded us that we all belong to the same family of Christ. Finland is a small country, and 85 percent of the population is Lutheran. The church and state maintain very close relations.

Some interesting facts about the church in Finland are: membership fees are levied by the state; religious education is taught in the schools and non-Lutheran students are taught ethical and philosophical issues; and parliamentary sessions begin with a church service.

In Finland, as in Canada, we Lutherans should continually strive to become better missionaries. We must LISTEN to people's needs and questions and seek to answer in Christian messages.

In the Apostle's words, "I trust that God, who has begun a good work in you, will also bring it to conclusion in the days of Christ Jesus."

Archbishop Paarma presented Bishop Pryse with a medallion, designed for the jubilee year of 2000, the "Year of Hope". Bishop Pryse also presented a gift to Archbishop Paarma..

*Diane and Henry Laamanen
St. Matthew's, Sudbury*

Jubilee Song To Make a Joyful Noise to our “Lord Bishop” by “the crew”

Chorus:	Chorus
Mike’s da b’y dat builds our church	
And he’s da b’y dat leads ‘er	Second Verse
And he’s da b’y dat catches da fish	Susan Johnson’s out a site!
And takes ‘em home to Jesus	Tryin’ to keep order
	Philip Heinze is over there
First Verse	Standin’ in da corner
Hip ya partn’r Tel Sartison	
Hip ya partn’r Guenter	Chorus
National Church has go a spot	
But we don’t want ta fill’er	

Open Mike Time

Treasurer Keith Myra introduced the topic “Benevolence/Apportionment/Special Appeals” and invited comments from the floor.

One request was that a “suggested amount” be asked of each congregation.

Another speaker said that some “Special Appeals” such as Angola and other areas where we see the stricken faces of starving children, tug at our hearts and make it easy to give. However appeals for institutions such as WLS it is harder for us to see a need. Can’t we put some passion in these worthy causes?

How about having congregations share successful fund raising methods with others perhaps on the internet?

The term “Benevolence” was raised again. Do people understand it? Why are we afraid to say “We need money for the ongoing work of the church.” If our members don’t understand the term or how the money is used, it is up to each of us to educate them.

My favourite suggestion concerned tithing. “The Joy of Tithing” – a blessing to the giver. If each of us tithed, there would be no need for Special Appeals. We would have sufficient funds for our work, and would all be blessed.

*Helene Oveson
Hope, Saint John*

Budget Projections

Highlights

Income:

- Based on assumptions
- majority from donations
- 1% benevolence increase

Total: \$2,196,400

Expenses:

- Restructuring costs
- One time moving
- Two level budget – high priority and nice to have extras

Total (with extras) – \$2,336,000

Discussion centred on the distribution formula for funding for conferences with emphasis on geographical distances and number of congregations in conference.

*Kenneth Kopke
Good Shepherd, North York*

Report of Synod Council for Saturday Afternoon

Rev. Fred Ludolph explained Trinity Village Care Centre. This 150-bed long-term care facility is currently in the process of expansion and rebuilding. Sixty units of Life Equity Housing and a 40-50 bed assisted care facility are proposed. Completion is expected sometime in 2001-2002.

Due to a change in the Ontario Government’s funding guidelines for new long term care facilities, the board of Trinity Village has requested that the \$450,000 loan made to Lutheran Homes, Kitchener Waterloo, be converted to a gift to the Trinity long term fundraising campaign. This would improve the long term equity position and improve the Board’s ability to raise the estimated \$14,500,000 required to complete the project.

After some debate about leaving the loan alone or converting the loan to a gift of equity, it was decided by the delegates that the loan should be converted to a gift.

*David A. Young St. John’s,
Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia*

More Trivia

1. Which person in the Eastern Synod recently completed the requirements for a Doctorate?
2. In how many languages and dialects is the gospel proclaimed in the Eastern Synod each Sunday?
3. What does CECF-ELCIC stand for?
4. What is Retired Bishop William Huras’s middle name?
5. Who is the longest-serving ELCIC staff person?
6. Which Synod staff person has the most experience planning Synod Conventions?