

Section 8 – Report of the Evangelical Lutheran Women – Eastern Synodical

Executive Officers

Eleanor McLeod, President [GB], Jan Scheidt, Secretary [H/N]
Janet Bennewies, Vice-Pres [KW], Maxine Hobden, Treasurer [T]



Evangelical Lutheran Women
Femmes Evangeliques Lutheriennes
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Inc

On behalf of the Eastern Synodical Evangelical Lutheran Women, it is my pleasure to extend greetings as you gather *In Mission for Others* at the Eastern Synod Assembly 2008. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this Assembly, as the dates conflict with the National ELW Convention who is meeting for their quadrennial at the University of Calgary. (The rest of the Board members, and a number of ELW members are delegates to the National ELW convention, as well.)

I wish to present to you the following report.

Eastern Synodical Board

Evangelical Lutheran Women met in May 2007 for convention and elected the following officers.

Synodical President	Eleanor McLeod	(Trinity, Walkerton)
Vice-President	Janet Bennewies	(St Peter's, Kitchener)
Secretary	Jan Scheidt	(Faith, Brantford)
Treasurer	Maxine Hobden	(Good Shepherd, Toronto.)

The Board is also comprised of the eight Conference Presidents, elected at their Spring Meetings.

Atlantic	Mary Wagner (New Germany, NS)	2007-2008
Georgian Bay	Audrey Orth (Listowel)	2007-2008
Hamilton-Niagara	Cathy Calvin (Hamilton)	2007-2008
Kitchener-Waterloo	Pauline Duench-Miller (St. Jacobs)	2007-2008
London	Sharon Fetter (Stratford)	2007-2008
Northern	Eula Van Horn (Sudbury)	2007-2008
Ottawa-St.Lawrence	Evelyn Swanson (Pembroke)	2007-2008
Toronto	Brit Missirlian (Don Mills)	2007-2008
National Director at Large:	Shirley Fingler (Pickering)	2000-2008

The National Director at Large for Eastern also attends our Board meetings.

God has blessed us with many talented, dedicated women to serve the needs of our synod.

The ES-ELW met in the spring and fall. Meetings are usually held at Camp Edgewood.

ELW FOCUS

The ELW emphases for 2006-2007, has been "Walking by Faith".

ELW wish to strengthen partnerships by:

- Increasing awareness of ELW's ministry within the church;
- Developing creative resources responsive to various communities;

- Being informed advocates for ELW in the church and in the world.

We are a Christ-centered community of women committed to nurturing our faith and spiritual strength, enabling us to be people of God in mission.

As women in mission, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we:

- Respond to the reality of the world around us by entering into the lives of others, sharing our faith and by expressing our faith in action;
- Support and affirm each other by accepting our differences, appreciating our varying abilities, mentoring and enabling each other;
- Develop leadership skills and avenues for sharing talents and creativity;
- Welcome all women and work toward justice and peace;
- Nurture our faith and spiritual growth through prayer, Bible study and care for each other.

Biennial Convention

The 11th Biennial Convention was held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo from May 25-27, 2007.

The total attendance was 180 plus guests. The theme was “Walking by Faith as Reflections of Christ”. Worship by Pastor Elizabeth Kuglin-Alyea, uplifting music by Debbie Lou Ludolph, Bible Study and forums were highlights of the convention. The Rev. Susan Johnson, Bishop’s Commissary was present for the entire convention and was Mistress of Ceremonies at the Saturday evening Banquet.

Achieving our Goals:

- We continue to have the support of the Eastern Synod, our Bishop Michael Pryse, and his staff. I provide written reports, and have been welcomed and given voice at the spring and fall meetings of Synod Council. The same applies at Conference Council.
- The Bishop or one of the Assistants report at the spring and fall ES-ELW board meetings.
- We appreciate the space allowed in the “Eastern Synod Lutheran”.
- A member of the ES-ELW board is assigned an article to write for each issue
- ESPRIT is the official magazine published quarterly and has been the winner of Canadian Church Press Awards of Merit in 1992, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2006.
- Our National ELW President is Betty St. Onge; Executive Director, Ruth Vince and Esprit editor is Catharine Pate. As Synodical ELW President, I am automatically a member of the National ELW Board, as well as Shirley Fingler, Director at Large. The Board has 14 members.
- ES-ELW has their own newsletter called “The Columbine”, which is issued spring and fall.
- We say a huge thank you to our new editor, Mrs. Waltraut Weingartner of Hamilton.
- An active roll is taken in the World Day of Prayer, ecumenical and local events.
- Participation in Fellowship of the Least Coin for WICC
- Support our seminary students through the Women’s Auxiliary to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

- Worship and Bible Study inspire and empower us to share the Gospel message with others.
- Nurture home and family life by educating Co-ELW’s with materials on Homelessness and Child Poverty in Canada, encouraging support for the food banks and putting pressure on all levels of government.
- Letters are written to Members of Parliament, taking a stand on important issues to our faith

- We encourage use of the Program Resources and Bible Study, available from the ELW Office.
- ELW has written an excellent stewardship resource -“What’s Enough?” and another on understanding homelessness entitled “No Place Like Home”. Other resources are available on the ELW website.
- Conference Executives are invited to a Training Session with the Synodical Board the year following a biennial convention. Training was provided to 26 members in Sept. 2007.
- Fall Leadership Training Packages are forwarded to all Co-ELW Program Coordinators
- Support CLWR & Alternative Trade, use fair-trade coffee, and display items for sale
- Quilts and various kits are assembled by congregational ELWs and sent to CLWR
- Monetary support is given to Chamanculo, Mozambique for a Human Rights and Health Project. CLWR and LWF work in partnership on this project.
- Thirty-five ES-ELW members gathered for lunch in August and presented our newly elected National Bishop Susan Johnson, with an ELW Recognition Pin, and offered support, prayers and best wishes.
- Each year Evangelical Lutheran Women Inc. gives a gift in support of the mission and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The annual monetary goal for Praise Offering is \$100,000. Since 1986 the ELW has given over 1.7 million dollars in support of the mission and ministries of the ELCIC.

Future Direction and Goals

- ELW Website
 - www.elw.ca has been completely redesigned. Check it out!
 - You may now subscribe to Esprit on line, as well as through congregational ELW.
 - The Praise Offering Service and other programs can be downloaded.
 - Contact rvince@elcic.ca to subscribe to the ELW e-Messenger via email.
- “Be not afraid” – Evangelical Lutheran Women meet for their National Convention at the University of Calgary, from July 10-13, 2008.
- Kelly Fryer, author – will be speaker on several occasions challenging participants to be people of God who are creative and active in responding to the needs around us in relevant ways – as individuals and as an organization.
- 12th ES-ELW Biennial Convention “Drawn to the Light” at Laurentian University, Sudbury May 22-24, 2009.

ELW Redevelopment Update

The National ELW has been in a redevelopment process for the last couple of years as it attempts to find viable ways to operate. Over the last couple of years there has not been enough income to match expenses. ELW staff, the National ELW board and others are attempting to find a path that is viable as well as sustainable for the organization. This is about finding ways that the ELW can continue to support an office, which in turn supports the tremendous ELW ministries taking place in congregations across Canada.

The following has been done:

- Information has been collected through surveys, focus groups, and conversations with many individuals and through assessment of the office systems.
- Assessment of above accumulation of information done by a strategic planning professional.

- An advisory group consisting of ELW National Board members, ELW staff, and ELCIC National Church Council members including the National Bishop and ELCIC national staff has met and begun a conversation.
- In order to operate in 2008, there was a reduction to staff salaries, which included a reduction in office hours and program cuts and travel. Further cuts are likely a reality in the 2009 budget. God is calling ELW into a new mission field!

What's next?

- The Advisory group will continue conversation. The National representatives of the ELCIC and ELW will work together.
- A recommendation will be presented to the National ELW board in March.
- The National board will determine if the convention delegates will need to vote on any redevelopment issues, and will inform all Co-ELWs in April if there is any major decision to be made so that there might be discussion amongst one another prior to convention.

The ELW asks for your prayers for the organization and its leaders at all levels, as we move forward asking “How is God calling ELW to serve?”

Eleanor McLeod,
ELW Synodical President