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September 21, 2012

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0N2

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

**Subject: A call for the Federal Government to take seriously the issue of poverty in Canada and to develop a Federal Anti-poverty strategy enshrined in legislation.**

Delegates representing more than 200 congregations from Nova Scotia to Sault Ste Marie, ON attending the July 2012 Convention of the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada noted that the federal government has not taken action with regard to the November 24, 2009 motion passed in the House of Commons: *“That with November 24, 2009 marking the 20 anniversary of the 1989 unanimous resolution of the House to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000, and not having achieved that goal, be it resolved that the Government of Canada, taking into consideration the Committee’s work in this regard, and respecting provincial and territorial jurisdiction develop an immediate plan to eliminate poverty in Canada for all...”* The delegates then passed a motion calling on the Federal Government to address the issue of poverty facing many Canadians by developing a Federal Anti-poverty strategy enshrined in legislation which includes a commitment for sufficient investment in social security and accountability for results.

Delegates also asked that delegates to the Assembly acquire and study the document *The Dollars and Sense of Solving Poverty* in their congregations and encourage their congregations and members to advocate for poverty reduction initiatives with their respective Provincial governments.

Canadians can not rest easy knowing that poverty continues to affect almost 10% of the Canadian population (3.2 million Canadians in 2009; The National Council of Welfare estimates the public cost of poverty is double what it would take to provide each Canadian family an income above the poverty line (“The Dollars and Sense of Solving Poverty” – Fall

2011). As people of faith and citizens of Canada we are morally bound to advocate with our governments on behalf of the poor.

As always, Prime Minister, you and all within the federal government are in our prayers as are all who serve in provincial and territorial governments. We expect that each level of our government will take action to enshrine anti-poverty strategies and legislation.

With all of God's blessings,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Michael". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M'.

Rev. Dr. Michael J. Pryse, Bishop  
Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
MP/sc

- c. The Honourable Thomas Mulcair, Leader of the Official Opposition
- The Honourable Bob Rae, Acting Leader of the Liberal Party
- Daniel Paillé, Leader of the Bloc Québécois
- Alison Redford, Premier of Alberta
- Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia
- Gregory Selinger, Premier of Manitoba
- David Alward, Premier of New Brunswick
- Kathy Dunderdale, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Bob McLeod, Premier of Northwest Territories
- Darrell Dexter, Premier of Nova Scotia
- Eva Aariak, Premier of Nunavut
- Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario
- Robert W. J. Ghiz, Premier of Prince Edward Island
- Pauline Marois, Premier of Quebec
- Brad Wall, Premier of Saskatchewan
- Darrell Pasloski, Premier of Yukon Territory