



# The Eastern Synod Lutheran Leaders' Edition

March 2015

## Welcome on Board!

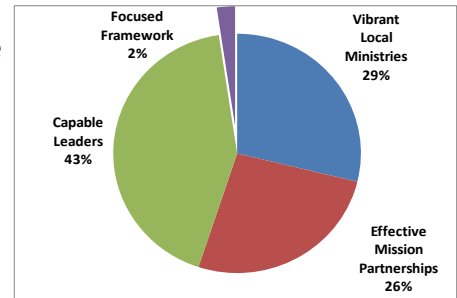
This is now just past the time when most of our congregations are having their annual general meetings and new congregational councils are elected. Whether you are a new or an old member, welcome on board! If you haven't served on the Congregational Council before and especially if you were elected the Chair of the Council for the first time, you may feel a little bit anxious. You are not alone, my friend! There are lots of books available for board members, but if you don't have time to seek them out, here is the link to [Bourinot for the Baffled; How to Chair a Congregational Meeting](#).

In the Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC we promise that—among other things—“we will keep congregations informed of news and developments that are relevant to them, communicate synodical initiatives to congregations and provide timely responses to requests for information from congregations.” This *Leaders' Edition* is another effort to keep in touch with you and spread the word. The *Leaders' Edition* is sent to the Council Chairpersons. You may want to delight your fellow council members by copying this to them, too.

The other regular communication tool is the monthly Eastern Synod Newsletter, which is sent by email to all the pastors and congregations, as well as those individuals who have subscribed to it. If you are not subscribed to it yet please, email or call us. Contact information can be found at the end of the letter. Please, make sure that either an electronic or a hard copy of the Eastern Synod Newsletter is available to all members of your congregation.

Due to funding challenges the Synod Council chose to stop publishing the Eastern Synod Newspaper a year ago, and instead contribute to Canada Lutheran Magazine. Canada Lutheran is a 34-page, full colour, award-winning magazine and the primary communication tool for the ELCIC. Encourage your people to subscribe it. To get your church started on a congregational subscription and for individual subscriptions, please contact Barb Wiebe at [canaluth@elcic.ca](mailto:canaluth@elcic.ca)

The little pie on the right —by the way— describes the synod budget. Communication is part of the Focused Framework slice. Thank you for your support!



## Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Eastern Synod

Speaking of the Covenant, 76 congregations have signed it. What difference does it make that we are in covenant? “I think it's an affirmation that we intend to remain in a relationship built on the pillars of mutual trust and accountability, that we support the vision of mission and ministry approved by the Synod in convention and that we are hopeful about the future of the church”, says Jeff Pym, Director of Stewardship and Resource Development.

“According to a quick review of the numbers, signing the covenant appears to have no correlation with increasing or decreasing the benevolence giving. In 2014 it had, however, a positive correlation with making a benevolence commitment and that we are happy for.” Jeff explains.

If your congregation hasn't studied and signed the covenant yet, please note that it is not too late to do it now.

“I'm very grateful for those congregations who have taken the time to discuss the Covenant and reflect on what it means to be in relationship with all of the partners who together comprise the Eastern Synod. As we move into this next year I will be inviting and

## Bulletin Inserts

Synod office has prepared a series of bulletin inserts for the congregations. The first one was sent out in February and it is our hope that it has already been handed out in your congregation. The second insert will be sent to you in April for your distribution sometime in May. The inserts give you a little glimpse to the ministries that you are supporting through benevolence.

## At a Turning Point

There comes a time in the life of a congregation when people realize the future is not going to look like the past.

The Eastern Synod has developed a process called Turning Point to help congregations identify a range of options and choose the future to which God is calling them. Guided by a pair of facilitators, congregational leaders and members participate in a methodical exploration of choices:

- The people: will we stay together as a congregation, seek a partnership, or disband?
- The pastor: will we have a pastor under full-time call, part-time call, or a shared-services agreement with another congregation?
- The property: will we retain our current land and building, sell it and move elsewhere, or look at another option?

If your congregation's future is in question you can contact Pastor Riitta Hepomaki to learn more about the Turning Point process.

### Update your contact info!

Please, make sure that we have contact information of your current

- Council Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Pastor/Interim Pastor
- Church Administrator

Send updates to Cathy Caron [ccaron@elcic.ca](mailto:ccaron@elcic.ca)

### Handy to note:

**National Convention:** July 9-12, 2015 Edmonton, Alberta. Online registration March 2-April 15, 2015.

[www.elcic.ca/In-Convention](http://www.elcic.ca/In-Convention)

Luther Hostel is now **Dubrick Summer Institute for Ministry**. June 9-11, 2015 Waterloo, ON. Deadline: May 15, 2015. To register: Contact Dan Phillips at [dphilips@wlu.ca](mailto:dphilips@wlu.ca) 519-884-0710 ext. 3498. More info on our [Newsletter](#)

### Leadership for Healthy Congregations Workshops:

May 23 Mahone Bay, NS

June 13 New Denmark, NB + Treasurers' Workshop

Sept. 19 Sudbury, ON

Oct. 24 Ottawa/Oreans, ON

**Parochial reports:** deadline for filing is March 31. If you missed the deadline, you can still send them to the National Office. Please, make sure that there are not missing years in the records.

## Health and Safety Awareness

It is important that congregations located in Ontario be aware that effective July 1, 2014, all employers are required to provide each employee (e.g. pastor, office secretary, custodian, music director, etc.) with "basic occupational health and safety awareness training" or they will be in violation of a new regulation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. This is an "if you do nothing, you will be in violation" type of regulation. The training is relatively brief (an hour or less) and can be provided using the Ministry of Labour's on-line "e-learning" modules, or by face-to-face sessions (group or individual) with employees. Additional detail and links to all of the on-line resources can be found on the Ontario Ministry of Labour website: [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

## Synod Staff

(contact info can be found at:

<http://www.easternsynod.org/content/synod-staff>

### Officers:

Rev. Dr. Michael Pryse, Bishop

Mr. Linda Grainger, Vice Chairperson

Rev. Wendell Grahlman, Synod Secretary

Mr. Keith Myra, Treasurer

### Assistants to the Bishop:

Rev. Douglas Reble

Rev. Riitta Hepomaki

### Office staff:

Ms. Sue Heimpel, Assistant to the Treasurer (part-time)

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Please, send your feedback, suggestions, questions, concerns to me directly: [rhpomaki@elcic.ca](mailto:rhpomaki@elcic.ca)

"The Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other." (Genesis 31:49)



Riitta