













Section 7

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Section 7 - Reports of Standing Committees and Ministry Directors

Report of the Mission Committee

Committee Roster

Anne Drouillard (Thames); Dorothy Frook (Georgian); Rev. Jun Gao (Central Toronto);
Rev. Stanley Johnstone (Ottawa); Rev. Sebastian Meadows-Helmer (Central Toronto);
Bishop Michael Pryse (ES-S); Rev. Tanya Ramer (Nith Valley); Peggy Read - Chair (The Bay);
Lynn Slack (Atlantic)

The past two years have seen excitement grow in Mission initiatives in the Eastern Synod! This is partially attributable to the generous funding provided by our National Church to each Synod, and I think, in great measure, to the innovative people of our Synod. We received over ninety grant applications for creative mission, projects involving better communication where we do our ministry, caring for the elderly, young women, children, education, food security, refugee support, community fellowship as well as ongoing and new ministries designed to reach those for whom our tradition of "normal" church is either unavailable or uncomfortable. We were excited and proud to be able to support the ministers of the Eastern Synod in their quest to make church for all people.

Four members of our committee also had the privilege of attending the ELCIC's CECF Board Meeting in Winnipeg with workshops facilitated by Dr. Craig Van Gelder. We were challenged, to put it mildly, to learn what adaptive change is, and to model it in our own lives and the workings of our churches. We were challenged to create experiments which would help us to help our congregations reflect on their ministry from the outside in, by helping congregational leaders to engage with their community leaders in mutual dialogue and to gain the perspective of those outside of the congregation in order to understand what is happening on the inside.

Adaptive change is about addressing fundamental changes in values that demand innovation, learning and changes to the system itself. Whether we like it or not, the church as we have known it needs to change to meet the needs of our changing world. What an exciting time to be ministers in our communities, Liberated by God's Grace!

2015 Mission Support Summary

	Congregation	Program	
Long Term Partnerships Total \$37,000	St. David's, Orillia	Program Support	
	Rhenish Church, Markham	Program Support	
	Westside, Barrie	Program Support	
Short Term Partnership Total \$5800	St. Paul Chinese, Unionville	Sunday Children's Services	
CECF Total \$140,300	St. Peter's, Kitchener	Television Ministry	
	Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo	Synodically Recognized Worshipping Community	
	Rhenish Church, Markham	Mandarin Mission	
	Redeemer, London	Church Sign	
	Trinity, Sudbury	Church Sign	
	Emmanuel, North York	Church Sign	
	CJI Total \$44,300	St. Paul's, Magnetawan	Fresh & Healthy
		Mt. Zion, Waterloo	Open Sesame
		Grace, Hamilton	Food Box
		Camp Edgewood, Eden Mills	Campership Funding
		Camp Edgewood, Eden Mills	Organic Gardens/Greenhouse
		St. Mark's, Kitchener	Community Ministry
		St. David's, Orillia	Breakfast Program
		St. David's, Orillia	Super Tuesday
		St. David's, Orillia	Youth Super Tuesday
		South Dundas, Williamsburg	Newborn Necessities
	St. John's, Arnprior	Children's Snack Pack	
Trinity Village, Kitchener	Support for Seniors (rent subsidy)		
Trinity Village, Kitchener	Support for Seniors (incidental allowance)		
	Total grants for 2015	\$227,400	

CJI= Compassionate Justice Initiative
CECF= Church Extension & Capital Fund

2016 Mission Support Summary

	Congregation	Project
Long Term Partnerships Total \$157,400	Good Shepherd, Barrhaven	
	Rhenish Foundation, Toronto	
	Rhenish, Toronto	
	St. David's, Orillia	
	St. Peter's, Kitchener	TV Ministry
	thirdspace, Waterloo	
	Westside, Barrie	
Short Term Partnerships Total \$79,050	Agricola, Toronto	Sign
	Agricola, Toronto	Website
	Bethany, Woodstock	Refugee Sponsorship
	Central Toronto Ministry Area	Website
	Christ, Peterborough	Kids Club Camp
	Christ, Peterborough	Refugee Sponsorship
	Edgewood	Promotion & Outreach
	Emmanuel, Toronto	Community Meal Outreach
	Grace, Hamilton	Website
	Grace, Hamilton	Sign
	Holy Cross, Burlington	Outdoor Banners
	Kanata Centre	Songs of Inshallah
	St. David's, Orillia	Jr Choir
	St. David's, Orillia	Free Community Breakfast
	St. John's Augsburg	Strengthening Community
	St. John's Bonnechere	Future Service Assistance
	St. Luke's, Kitchener	Breakfast Club
	St. Luke's, Kitchener	Website
	St. Mark's, Kingston	Community Faith & Film Night
	St. Mark's, Kingston	Interfaith Climate Change Act
	St. Mark's, Kingston	Refugee Sponsorship
	St. Matthew, Fredericton	Reach Out To Neighbours
	St. Matthew's, Sudbury	Becoming A Local Church
	St. Matthew's, Welland	Community Connections
	St. Paul Chinese, Unionville	Sunday Children's Services
	St. Peter's, Milverton	New Hope
St. Timothy's, Copper Cliff	Messy Church	
Transfiguration, Hamilton	Sign	
Trinity Village	Aging Mission Initiatives	

	Trinity Village	Opening Minds Through Art
	Trinity, New Germany	Helping Hands
	Trinity, Windsor	Website
	Westside, Barrie	Mobile Signage
	Westside, Barrie	Website
	Zion, Pembroke	Loaves & Fishes
	Zion, Sault Ste. Marie	Senior Dinner Ministry
	Zion, Sault Ste. Marie	Refugee Sponsorship
CJI	Dundas County Food Bank	Newborn Necessities
Total \$22,000	Grace, Hamilton	Good Food Box
	Lutheran Homes K-W	Impoverished Seniors
	Mount Zion, Waterloo	Open Sesame
	St. David's, Orillia	Youth Initiative Rte 66
	St. John's, Arnprior	Children's Snack Pack
CECF	St. Mark's, Kitchener	Community Ministry
Total		
\$104,600	Edgewood	Campership
	Mount Calvary, Ottawa	Labyrinth
	St. John's, Hamilton	
	St. Mark's, Chesley	Godly Play
	St. Paul's, Magnetawan	Welcoming the Stranger
	St. Peter's, Cambridge	Reconciliation
	St. Phillip's, Toronto	Good Food Market
	Two Rivers Ministry Area	
	Total of all 2016 Grants	\$363,050

CJI= Compassionate Justice Initiative

CECF= Church Extension & Capital Fund

Report of the Candidacy Committee

Committee Roster

Rev. Richard Brown (Nith Valley); Carol Christensen (Ottawa); Jennifer Clarke (ACC);
Rev. John Goldsworthy (Thames); Rev. Dr. Mark Harris (WLS); Laurie Knott - Chair (Thames);
Rev. Philip Mathai (Two Rivers); Rev. Daniela Mertz (The Bay); Dr. Rudolf Michaeli (Nith Valley);
Rev. Douglas Reble (ES-S); Rev. Heather Spencer-Stoltz (Georgian); Mark Weingartner (The Bay)

The Candidacy Committee (CCOM) is responsible for determining the readiness of individuals to enter the candidacy process and begin theological education, for endorsing candidates for a specific roster of the church, and forwarding a final evaluation of each candidate's qualifications and readiness for the ministry to the Synod for the use of the Examining Committee.

We continue to strive to adapt our process to accommodate more individualized programs of study. Our process is generally as follows:

Each student must complete a registration package and psychological evaluation prior to having a structured interview with members of the committee.

Based on this information and the results of the first interview a decision is made regarding endorsement for study.

The candidates receive an annual review and endorsement as they work toward internship. At the end of the process, recommendation is made to the Examining Committee.

Generally, a student will meet three or four times with CCOM and receive three endorsements while they are in the candidacy process. These endorsements are based upon written materials provided by the candidates themselves, evaluations, provided by contextual education supervisors, clinical pastoral education supervisors and internship supervisors, as well as interviews with CCOM and input from the seminary.

At the beginning of the process each student is assigned a relator to act as a liaison between the committee and the student. The relator's role is to help the student understand the endorsement decision and answer related questions.

I am grateful for the participation of all committee members. I am particularly appreciative of the leadership and guidance offered by the Rev. Doug Reble, Assistant to the Bishop and our faculty liaison, Rev. Dr. Mark Harris.

We ask for your prayers for all of our candidates for ministry.

Report of the Examining Committee

Committee Roster

Rev. Olavi Hepomaki (Central Toronto); Rev. Dr. Allen Jorgenson (Grand River);
Uli Kuebler (Two Rivers); Rev. Thomas Mertz (The Bay);
Bishop Michael Pryse - Chair (ES-S); Norma Yau (Thames)

The Examining Committee is constitutionally mandated to "examine candidates for ordination or for reception from other churches with whom mutual recognition of ministry has not been established and to present recommendations to the synod council."

The committee's examination process consists of two components, one written and the other oral, and is designed to fulfill the following statement of purpose:

- To explore one's vocation to the pastoral ministry;
- To reflect on pastoral identity and practice with a view to integrating identity and practice;
- To review and affirm responsibilities and commitments basic to the pastoral office.

In fulfilling this mandate during the past biennium, the committee has examined 9 candidates and subsequently recommended the endorsement of seven candidates for ordained ministry and one candidate for diaconal ministry. A record of those persons who have been endorsed can be found in the Report of Synod Council.

Report of the Professional Leadership Committee

Committee Roster

Rev. Riitta Hepomaki [ES-S]; Karen McRae [Two Rivers]; Kathryn Smith [Grand River]
Rev. Stephen Weber - Chair [Grand River]; Ellen Wolfe [Nith Valley]

The biggest change in our committee's work is that part of the compensation schedule for rostered ministers has become a national, rather than synodical, document. More than two years ago:

A working committee of Group Services Inc., with representatives from each Synod, undertook a project to harmonize the compensation guidelines that are currently unique to each Synod. The goal of this project was to simplify and clarify resources for treasurers, as well as to provide consistency for rostered employees across the ELCIC. The committee recognized that cost of living varies between and within Synods and therefore salary and housing were excluded from the project scope at this time. ("Harmonizing Compensation Guidelines" memo from GSI March 10, 2016)

Beginning in 2017, therefore, there will be two documents outlining compensation for rostered employees: one document from Group Services Inc. (the harmonized document "Employers Compensation Guidelines (Excluding Salary Scale) for Rostered Employees of the ELCIC"), and the other document contained in the report of the Eastern Synod Council at Synod Assembly ("Compensation Schedule for Pastors, Diaconal Ministers, Pastoral Supply, And Interim Pastors 2017-2018").

"Employers Compensation Guideline (Excluding Salary Scale) For Rostered Employees of the ELCIC" from GSI

Professional Expenses, Benefits, and Other Expenses (the sections moved from the Eastern Synod's Compensation Schedule into the new harmonized schedule), make minimal changes from the previous Compensation Schedule used in the Eastern Synod: vacation moves to 5 weeks at 11 years of ministry (previously 5 weeks vacation was granted after 15 years of ministry), and 6 weeks of vacation are granted for 21 years and beyond.

In addition to minor changes to vacation, the harmonized guidelines include a new sick leave policy to bridge the waiting period to short-term disability, and a new national supplemental pay program for those on maternity or parental leave.

This is how extended sick leave was treated prior to 2017:

Rostered plan members receive disability income from their congregation/employer for the first nine weeks of disability and must apply for income under the federal government's Employment Insurance program to bridge the time to complete the six-month elimination period before they are eligible for long-term disability. There are no national policies or guidelines for non-Rostered plan members; each employer is responsible for determining a policy on accumulation and approval of sick time.

Sick leave prior to 2017 generated unexpected costs for the congregation. Beginning January 2017 under the new National Short-Term Disability Policy,

there is a two-week waiting period where the congregation/employer continues regular salary when a member becomes disabled. The short-term plan follows for the next 15 weeks. If the disability continues into week 16, initiation to the long-term disability plan begins immediately; there is no gap period of government Employment Insurance. (<http://www.elcicgsi.ca/gsi/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/new-short-term-disability-program.pdf>)

The national supplemental pay program for those on maternity or parental leave will support young families with vocations in ministry and church work. The principle in providing this benefit on a national group basis is so that the cost will be shared equally across all congregations/employers, so that those with a plan member on leave are not faced with funding this leave by themselves, and so that congregations/employers will not avoid hiring people they anticipate might become parents in order to avoid the extra cost associated with maternity/parental leave. (<http://www.elcicgsi.ca/gsi/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/new-parental-leave-supplemental-pay-program.pdf>)

Our committee warmly welcomes these additions.

"Compensation Schedule for Pastors, Diaconal Ministers, Pastoral Supply, and Interim Pastors" of the Eastern Synod (Salary and Housing)

For the near future, the Professional Leadership Committee will continue to provide an annual Salary and Housing Compensation Schedule.

We have now met our goal set in 2010 "to raise the minimum salaries in the Eastern Synod to have reached the average, minimum base salaries of the other synods of the ELCIC." Therefore, the annual \$900 "catch-up" portion of each year's salary is no longer needed. We commend our congregations for achieving this goal.

In the 2 years since our last Synod Assembly, we have reworded the Compensation Schedule to make it more clear. Valuable input came from various congregations' questions; Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Doug Reble's suggestions; and Keith Myra our synod treasurer's advice.

Our synod lawyer reviewed the "Maternity/Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy" (http://www.easternsynod.org/sites/default/files/site-configuration/field_file/maternity-pregnancy_and_parental_leave_policy-december_2014_2.pdf) and "Procedure for Revising Terms of Call from Full Time to Part Time" (http://www.easternsynod.org/sites/default/files/content/procedure_for_revising_terms_of

[call_from_full_time_to_part_time.pdf](#)) and offered helpful suggestions which were incorporated by our Synod Council.

A wise bishop once told a seminary class that the most important decisions the church makes are decisions about people. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have been given this work. We pray that our contribution will be helpful.

Report of the Public Policy and Service Ministries

Ministry Director
Rev. Katherine Altenburg

As of this assembly, it has been almost a year and a half since I took over the position of Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries. In that time, part-way through our biennium, I have focused on two specific areas of learning and advocacy: i) right relationships with First Nations sisters and brothers post-TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) with its final report and its 94 recommendations and, ii) climate justice pre and post COP 21 which took place in Paris, December 2015.

Through my work as Director of Public Policy, and in conjunction with our Synod's Biennium Reconciliation Initiative, I can report to you that we are taking some good steps in our journey toward reconciliation and right relationships with First Nations peoples. I can report that awareness of our common history is being learned, tentative relationships are being formed, that we have adopted a posture of listening to the experience and current realities of First Nations peoples, and that advocacy through our partner KAIROS Canada is taking place. In all these incredibly important endeavours, I have attempted to learn with you and to pass along my information to you. You will hear more about these endeavours during our assembly through our Biennium Reconciliation Initiative Task Force.

Our abuse of the earth has become the defining issue of our time. On Care for our Common Home, Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si'" addresses the urgent need for all of us to act for the good of creation, both individually and collectively. We need to look at our own consumption and consumerism, to advocate and push governments and corporations to invest in greener, cleaner energy, and to challenge our personal and corporate addiction to fossil fuels. "Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home... Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded." (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 2015). COP21 in Paris was the culmination of years of work where almost 200 countries realized and hammered out agreements to work collectively to ensure a future for our children's children. Now more than ever we have the ability to work together as global citizens; to act on behalf of the earth and on behalf of the most vulnerable - those who are already experiencing the consequences of global warming. We can listen to and learn from young people and from indigenous voices calling us to care and calling us to action.

As we move out from this assembly, I will continue to learn and to share what I learn with you. It is my fervent hope that you will do the same for me and will continue to keep me in your conversations and in the actions you undertake in Christ's name for the earth and its

people. My hopes and aspirations for our next biennium is to continue to help us all walk with First Nations sisters and brothers toward reconciliation. There is a long road ahead of us and we won't get there overnight, but we will get there. My hope is that we continue to advocate on behalf of this earth through our individual and collective actions, using such resources as the ELCIC's "Stewardship of Creation." It is my hope that, together, we will walk with and work with the most vulnerable in our communities for God's shalom. For we are liberated by God's grace. Thanks be to God!

Report of the Stewardship and Resource Development Ministries

Ministry Director
Jeff Pym

The Question

From time to time a congregation will ask me what stewardship program I recommend. The one I suggest most often is called New Consecration Sunday, and is fully described in the book *New Consecration Sunday, Revised Edition* (2007) by Herb Miller.

In the first chapter of the book Miller lays out the rationale for his approach:

In other words, national research indicates that people whose churches repeatedly raise the question "What percentage of your income is God calling you to give?" contribute three times more dollars per year than people whose churches only take offerings . . .

So whether we are talking about individuals giving to their congregation or congregations giving to their Synod, the same question applies: "What percentage of your income is God calling you to give?"

Individual Giving

In my report to the 2014 Assembly I mentioned "Nurturing Generous Giving", a day-long workshop for congregational leaders that had been offered throughout the Synod in 2012-13. Only one of those workshops was conducted in the past biennium, in the fall of 2014.

My impression is that when it comes to encouraging generous giving among their members, many congregations would rather not rock the boat. Despite the fact that most churches report being chronically short of the money needed to cover the basics, let alone carry out ambitious ministry programs, asking members to give more is not the preferred option.

In fairness, the statistics from the past three decades show that while membership and participation in Eastern Synod congregations continues to decline at a steady rate (roughly 1% per year, on average), total giving continues to increase. Per capita giving has grown throughout this period at a rate faster than the rate of inflation. In other words, those of us who remain in the pews give ever-increasing amounts of money.

Unfortunately, averages obscure the real picture. There are several big problems lurking in most congregations.

- The majority of money given to congregations comes from a small minority of its members. In a typical congregation, a group comprising 30-50% of the nominal members give, in total, about 1% of the money that comes in on the offering plate. The other 50-70% of the members, the ones who are active in other ways as well, carry 99% of the financial load.
- If we drilled down even further we would see that something very close to the 80/20 rule applies: nearly 80% of the money is donated by 20% of the people. And these tend to be people over the age of 70. Most congregations are one or two funerals away from financial disaster.
- Shrinking membership and participation means that we cannot rely on per capita giving forever. As consultant Loren Mead said many years ago: "Our problem isn't per capita giving - it's not enough capitas."

Congregational Giving

As I write this we have just finished adding up the totals from congregational giving in 2015. For the first time in several years we saw an increase in giving to regular (undesignated) benevolence compared to the previous year. This is cause for great celebration. We should all take a moment to give thanks to God for the generosity of our members that enables us to carry out our calling to be a church *In Mission for Others*.

The Treasurer's reports to the Assembly, both written and verbal, will undoubtedly provide the numbers that tell this good news story in greater detail.

Over the past 2 years Synod staff, working as an ad hoc "Benevolence Task Force", have invested considerable time and money in different ways of reaching out to congregations and individual members to portray the Synod's ministries in a more compelling way. Two of the more prominent of these efforts was a series of four bulletin inserts and a narrative budget for 2016 (called "Our Ministry Story 2016") which were distributed to all congregations in 2015. These projects were very much a team effort, and I am deeply grateful to my colleagues for their contributions on these and other activities mentioned in this report.

For two years we have challenged congregations to become Fair Share givers. In the Synod as in a congregation, the financial burden is not shared equally. The top 28% of congregations contribute 70% of all benevolence dollars.

To even out the effects of membership size, we calculate benevolence giving as a percentage of each congregation's reported revenue. Those who are in the top half by that measurement are considered Fair Share givers. Those in the bottom half are challenged to increase their giving until they take on a fair share of the financial load.

When we did these calculations we found, to our surprise, that some of the smallest (by membership) congregations in the Synod contribute the largest share of their total revenue - and vice versa.

Unfortunately 7 of our congregations contributed zero dollars in either 2014 or 2015 in regular benevolence offerings.

What percentage of your congregation's income is God calling you to give in support of the ministries of the wider church?

Synodical Covenant

At the 2012 Assembly we introduced the “Covenant Concerning the Life and Ministry of the Eastern Synod, ELCIC”. In the years since then we have encouraged congregations to study the document and adopt a motion authorizing their Council and officers to sign the covenant on their behalf.

As of March 7, 2016, when this report was written, the results for congregations are as follows:

Returned a signed covenant:	98
Declined to sign:	2
No reply	86
Percentage signed:	51%

There will be time on the Assembly agenda for a discussion of the Synodical Covenant.

Congregational Leadership Workshops

Pastor Riitta Hepomaki and I offered “Leadership for Healthy Congregations”, a day-long program for congregational council members, 11 times in 2014-15. More than 400 people participated in the program, representing almost half the congregations of the Synod.

In 2016-17 we will offer a new program, “Apple Tree”, which focuses on the topic of mission:

- What do we mean by mission?
- What is the mission to which God has called our congregation?

Stay tuned for information about an Apple Tree workshop coming to your ministry area.

Generous Giving Practicum

In October 2016 the Synod will host a 2-day event for pastors and deacons/deaconesses serving in congregational ministry. The focus will be on helping rostered leaders to nurture a culture of generous giving in a community of faith. The word “practicum” captures the spirit of the event: all of the workshops will be aimed at developing practical skills that leaders can use in their ministry.

Report of the Worship Ministries

Ministry Director
Debbie Lou Ludolph

Within this worship ministry, synod has worked in partnership with congregations (providing guidance and resources), Waterloo Lutheran Seminary (worship discussions, and the Kanata Centre), and the Program Committee for Worship (ELCIC). As a communication tool, the synod website worship page has provided information on worship resources, conferences, and worship events within the synod and abroad. Thank you to Kathryn Smith for her contributions to this website work.

As the Director of Worship Ministries, much of my time is spent planning and reflecting with worship teams and modelling worship that embodies spirited discipleship through worship at Assembly, Ordinations, and Waterloo Lutheran Seminary events. In addition, supporting worship and music workshops, advising pastors and congregations on contextual possibilities, and partnering with other ministry areas to point to or develop resources for worship is part of this work.

Report of the Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Ministry Director
Rev. Joel Crouse

Our Programming

“Where are the youth?” This is a common question we hear when talking with people about the importance of youth ministry in our Synod. We may not see the numbers we saw in the 1950s, but the youth are present in the majority of congregations. Earlier this year the Eastern Synod Youth and Young Adult Ministry Committee (ES-YAYA) surveyed 189 congregations concerning this question. We have numbers from our parochial reports but we wanted to find out how many youth show up at church at least once a month. This is what we found:

Active Youth and Young Adults in the 17 Ministry Areas:	3155
Birth to Grade 5:	1324
Grades 6-8:	552
High School:	515
Attending CLAY:	147
Post Secondary Attending Home:	214
Post Secondary Attending Away:	403

We have an evidence-based answer to the question, “Where are the youth?” They are here. They are actively participating in the life and mission of the church throughout the 17 Ministry Areas of the Eastern Synod. They participate in congregational programming. They attend our summer camps. They actively seek out communities of faith in their post-secondary lives. They are not gone.

Over the last number of years the ES-YAYA Committee has made some difficult decisions about where to focus its support for ministry initiatives. This recent survey, which breaks the numbers down further by area and congregation, proves that our efforts are reaching the

youth and young adults who want to be reached. Not every congregation has youth - 31 congregations reported that they are "geriatric congregations." But every congregation has a responsibility to serve those who come through the door. We have a responsibility to teach the story of our faith, engage in challenging questions, and build a place of welcome and support. This is especially true for those congregations surveyed who have active youth.

Congregations reporting active youth participation recently received a resource package funded by the generous support of your benevolence dollars and the Patricia Watts Endowment Fund. This package reaches every age range and helps to build up our faith in a real way. Toddlers learn about the Seven Teachings of the Anishinaabe and how they relate to our Lutheran Christian understanding of grace. Elementary school-aged youth learn about the wisdom from world religions and how people from different religious backgrounds talk to each other in a positive way through the voice of a grandmother who wrote Sacred Stories. High School youth learn how to live in relationship with equality and respect through an evidence-based program called 'Safe Dates'. This program will help to address the root causes behind bullying, sexual abuse, and missing and murdered indigenous women.

We are shaping the future of our church through the minds of our youth. We do not live in isolation as Lutherans in Canada. We are committed to living truthfully as Lutherans within Canadian society, with honesty, integrity and pride.

Our Summer Camps

Fifty years ago our summer camps were filled with Lutherans. Twenty-five years ago we started renting our facilities to new-line Christians and secular groups to help make ends meet. Today all three of our summer camps rent out their facilities to new Canadians from different religious traditions. This makes good fiscal sense. But more importantly, this shows our confidence in who we are as Lutheran Christian Canadians and how our faith informs our actions.

Lutheran Camp Mush-a-Mush Society, Lutherlyn Camp and Conference Center, and Edgewood Camp and Conference Center are still viable expressions of ministry within our synod and continue to offer an outdoor ministry experience for all those involved.

Mush-a-Mush is a particularly vibrant example of camping ministry that has never run a deficit budget. This is due, in large part, to the dedication of volunteers in the surrounding area who encourage this ministry. It is a very basic facility but had the highest number of campers out of the three camps in 2015. During the last biennium, the Eastern Synod purchased the 35-acre piece of property on the road leading into the camp. This decision increases the potential development of the property for the future. And more importantly, owning this piece of property now insures private access to the property as well as increasing the safety for the children who enjoy the camp.

Lutherlyn has had a difficult time over the last few years due to some staffing issues. Thanks again to the dedication of volunteers, Lutherlyn has found its way out of the trouble it has experienced and is rebuilding itself. Situated on Golden Lake, Lutherlyn has wonderful beach frontage, plenty of land and incredible potential as a children's camp. The enrolment, however, for 2015 was the lowest of our three camps. During the last biennium, the Eastern Synod attempted to sell a separate piece of property called Hoffman's Beach. This piece of property was purchased prior to the existing camp property. This property has not yet been sold.

Camp Edgewood is close to Guelph. The last two years have been very trying for this camp. Last summer the Ministry of Environment issued a Provincial Order for Edgewood to fix the septic issues it has been facing. The Board has worked diligently to get an assessment completed and a formal application submitted on deadline. We are now waiting for the Ministry of Environment to review the application and give us the green light to proceed with the work that needs to be done. The most expensive items on the list are the decommissioning of two old systems and the installation of two new ones. We anticipate the the ministry will grant us the approval to proceed by the time you are reading this report and we will start digging. Planning for summer camp 2016 is well under way. Edgewood has raised approximately 80% of the funds needed to complete the work that must be done. Over the last biennium, Edgewood received approximately \$45K in crisis funding loans from the Eastern Synod and they owe approximately \$47K to the redevelopment designated fund.

At our last funding meeting the Eastern Synod Youth and Young Adult Ministry Committee recommended to change the longstanding block funding allocations given to our three Eastern Synod camps. For over a quarter of a century Edgewood has received 60%, Lutherlyn has received 20%, and Mush-a-Mush has received 20% of the funding available for outdoor ministry. This split made sense when Edgewood had year-round staff people and a budget in excess of \$400,000.00.

In recent years, Edgewood has experienced significant changes and challenges. They have readjusted their operations for the sake of continued ministry. They have made tough decisions for the sake of mission and are moving forward with greater fiscal responsibility.

After careful consideration of the vision for our three camps, combined with 2014/15 statistics, the following allocations for 2016 were approved by Synod Council at their last meeting in 2015:

Property insurance for all three camps will be paid by the Synod. An amount of \$25,000.00 has been budgeted for this purpose.

Each camp will receive \$12,133.72 for 2016. A 13th month payment of \$933.36 is subtracted from that amount because our synod budget is aspirational. Beginning March 1, 2016 each camp will receive quarterly grants in the amount of \$2,800.09.

Each camp will pay rent to the Eastern Synod in the amount of \$600.00 for 2016 which they will receive back in funding but is necessary due to the new incorporation process.

Given the analyses of the three camps and the changes that have taken place over recent years our committee overwhelmingly believes that this is a truer distribution of the gifts that have been given for outdoor ministry.

Our Student Ministries

We now fund nine student ministries across our synod. Our recent survey also suggests that these student ministries are well placed. Post-Secondary students can find a welcoming community in Halifax, Montreal, two locations in Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Waterloo, London, and a web-based community known as Lutherans Connect based out of Toronto but separate from the newly funded student ministry on Ryerson Campus.

Our Eastern Synod Vision for Mission reminds us that "we will be challenged by ongoing evaluation of our various ministries, mindful that God may lead us to end some of them and begin others." Throughout the years the ES-YAYA committee has been committed to this vision and the challenges that come with it.

Our committee was confronted with a difficult challenge when it had to make a decision between a 68-year-old student ministry and a new expression that was gaining momentum on Wilfrid Laurier University campus. Both were Lutheran expressions of student ministry. Intentional conversations were being held around programming redundancy, identity confusion, seminary/university relationships, and issues surrounding new ways of recruitment. After careful consideration the ES-YAYA Committee made the following recommendation to Synod Council at the April meeting in 2015: “that the Eastern Synod Council support thirdspace_ as the synodically recognized student ministry at Wilfrid Laurier University”. The Eastern Synod Council spent considerable time reflecting on this and voted unanimously to approve the recommendation.

This was not an easy decision. LCM-Waterloo had valuable ministry that was appreciated for over 68 years. This ministry would not have been possible without the dedication of Anne Woolner, Rev. Patricia Jackson, Rev. Becky Klages, Rev. Fred Ludolph and the many faithful people who served this expression of student ministry throughout the years.

LCM-Waterloo had reserve funds in excess of \$300K. These funds were a collection of donations; rental income, personal gifts, and Eastern Synod grant funds that had accumulated over the years. LCM-Waterloo recommended that \$281,861.00 be added to the Eastern Synod Youth and Young Adult Endowment Fund to help ensure the future of ongoing campus ministry initiatives. They also recommended that \$22,202.91 be dispersed by our committee using the following criteria:

A bursary for youth participation in Indigenous, Truth and Reconciliation learning contexts.

An honorarium for Indigenous, Truth and Reconciliation learning workshops that will include youth & young people.

Facilitating learning opportunities for young people in Indigenous, Truth and Reconciliation contexts (may include transportation, rental of learning facilities and subsidizing cost of food for learning events).

Because of their grace-centered use of these funds we can make ministry happen in new ways. This additional support will add to the viability and historic vibrancy of our synod’s ministry to students on the WLS/WLU campus and throughout our synod.

Our Other Youth Ministry Initiatives

Our committee wants to be where the energy and excitement is happening in a real way. For this reason we are committed to supporting those initiatives that want to happen because of effective leadership. Some of the initiatives include: a dynamic confirmation camp at Edgewood that is well attended and has the added bonus of leadership training for our young adults; an ecumenical youth gathering called EPIC on the South Shore of Nova Scotia where large events are held at Mush-a-Mush; the Anglican-Lutheran Stewards of Creation youth group in Southern Ontario whose numbers are well beyond what we could do on our own; and new this year is support for an emerging youth program in Sudbury. All of these youth initiatives want to happen and our recent survey confirms it.

Because of the generosity of LCM-Waterloo’s gift to Truth and Reconciliation learning contexts we were able to send young adults to a Six Nations Retreat and provide transportation for an Area Confirmation Learning event for Nith Valley Area.

Our Thanks

Over the last number of years we have been blessed with the dedication of a number of members who will be leaving the committee at the end of this year because they have reached their maximum number of terms, age, or are moving on to larger church opportunities. I would like to thank Vicky Roth, Sophie Ruprecht, Ben Bestvater, Catherine Polvi, Philip Vandersleen and Linda Grainger. Their leadership has been profound in the life of this committee. The committee would also like to thank the many people that make youth and young adult ministry a reality in the Eastern Synod. To the staff, volunteers and generous donors, we say thank you! Your efforts in this important area of ministry have been greatly appreciated. To the current members of the ES-YAYA Committee I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for your spirited discipleship. You are a sign of grace for the Eastern Synod.

Report of the Womens' Ministries

Ministry Director
Cathy Calvin

There is an old saying that goes "idle hands are the devil's workshop". Fortunately for the women of the Eastern Synod, that statement does not hold true, for there are many things happening in congregations, areas, as well as Synod wide for women. I am blessed to be just a small cog in a very big wheel.

"Singspiration-Making a Joyful Noise, held in May, 2015 was a huge success and we were so grateful for the leadership of the committee, Debbie Lou Ludolph and Pastor Heather Spencer-Stoltz. What seemed a really simple, fun, theme grew into much more in the end, and I think that all those who participated were more enriched (and educated) by the Mini Ode Kwewak N'gamowak (Good Hearted Women) singers we had amongst us at the event. Thanks in part to the grant from the Women of Faith Fund we were able to sponsor 14 women from that group to spend the day with us. From the comments I heard from the group, the experience was just as good for them as it was for us. We will be looking for ways to continue to include them or some other aboriginal women in our next ventures.

We already have a theme and venue for our next event on May 26-28, 2017. "Helping Us Grow Spiritually" or "HUGS" will be held at Kempenfelt Conference Centre in Innisfil (near Barrie). We have engaged two keynote speakers Brenda Byers and Ruth Smith Meyer, and Reverend Anne Anderson will be our worship leader. Look for promotional and registration material to be out by December of this year. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar!

The first of a series of workshops sponsored by Women's Ministry entitled "If You Plant a Seed" took place St. John's in Hamilton for the Bay Area Women's Fall Meeting. We have taken the workshop created for Singspiration and added some other materials and devotions to it to cover a ½ day event. In offering it to any congregational or area ministry group anywhere in the Synod, we hope to try to fulfill some of the leadership-training gap that we have experienced since the demise of ELW. We hope to have had a session in southern, northern and eastern Ontario by the time 2016 ends. We received a grant from the Women of Faith Fund for travel and related expenses, some equipment and workshop materials, which will help make this happen.

We have met and exceeded our goal for the Women of Faith Scholarship Fund at the Seminary. We had to raise an additional \$8,000 to supplement the \$12,000 grant received from Women of Faith Fund in order to generate revenue from which to award the scholarships for deserving female students from the Christian Studies and Global Citizenship undergraduate program. I was pleased to present the first scholarship on February 5, 2016 to Sydney Marshall, a fourth year double major in Christian Studies and Global Citizenship and Spanish. Sydney will be one of the first graduates of the program as well this year.

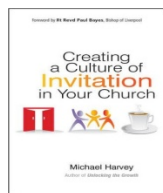
Our committee is committed encourage the women of the Synod to participate in the Reformation Challenges set forth by the ELCIC. We have picked two of the challenges that we feel most can easily do with their congregational groups. The first we have chosen is to do with the planting of 500,000 trees. We have issued the "Toonies for Trees" Challenge to all women's groups to put out a jar or box in their congregation to start collecting Toonies, which will can be presented at the 2017 HUGS event or sent into Synod office (which ever is more convenient). We will ensure that all the monies will be presented at the National Convention in 2017. Promotional materials were emailed and mailed out to each congregation in the Synod to help facilitate this. The second, to do with the 500 scholarships for ELCJHL schools, will be rolled out next year.

Report of the Witness and Evangelism Ministries

Ministry Director
Rev. Mark Van House

In the ELCIC Evangelism Ministry is up to each synod. The past 2 years there has been a shift in focus for our synod from "Back to Church: A Season of Invitation", to developing a "Culture of Invitation." The other component is that I've encouraged Healthy Congregations as a foundation to developing a congregation of invitation. Both Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Riitta Hepomaki and myself are trained Healthy Congregations Facilitators. Along with in person seminars by Michael Harvey I've offered congregations A Culture of Invitation YouTube Seminars. 2 of these are:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovkyGvqYRVU>
<https://vimeo.com/epicentervideos/logos/video/61132257>



An unlocking the growth Seminar: **INVITING PEOPLE TO STAY - THE SECOND INVITATION.** Back to Church Sunday surveys after 6 months shows that 85 to 88% of those invited on Back to Church Sunday do not become regular attenders of the church to which they were invited. Inviting People to stay Topics include: The Ten Keys to keeping; The reasons people don't come back a second time; The Seven Phrases that turn away; Turning failure into a friend; Back to what?; From Simon to Simon Peter; 12 steps learning tool. Websites for Michael Harvey and A Culture of Invitation: <http://www.unlockingthegrowth.com/> & <http://www.cultureofinvitation.com/>

The past 2 years I've led a Season of Invitation seminar in one of our synod congregations and have branched out to synods in the ELCA with SKYPE sessions for both congregations and Synod staff. Former Eastern Synod pastor Olaf Baumann, in consultation with Bishop Michael and myself, is holding a culture of invitation seminar with Michael Harvey in his new call in an ELCA congregation in Port Angeles, WA. I supplied information on a Culture of Invitation and Healthy Congregations to our other ELCIC Synods. I've also offered to consult with and assist them on Witness/Evangelism Ministry but have received no response from my inquiries.



Through the Witness/Evangelism Synod Blog <http://easternsynod.org/ministries/witness-and-evangelism/> and Synod Face Book I've shared ideas for congregations about various Witness and Evangelism activities. One of these is Café Church or Coffee with the Clergy, an opportunity to invite people from the congregation, and encourage them to invite a friend(s) to meet at a local coffee house that serves Fair Trade Coffee — the Biblical way to go. These gatherings can be structured for what best fits the congregation and community:

http://cafechurch.net/index.php?module=pagemaster&PAGE_user_op=view_page&PAGE_id=3&MMN_position=27:27 - My thanks to Pat Lovell for information on Café Church.

Another example is a post in January of 2015. An article in the Christian Century: Parents Role in Teens & Young Adults. It highlighted that while Pastors, Sunday School and Youth Ministry play a supporting role, parents are the key factor for the majority of teens and young adults remaining active in religion.



On May 19th of 2015 a Webinar was offered on Evangelism and Immigrants/Migrants, with panelists: Rev. Irene Ty, Dr. Girma Bekele, and Rev. Jonathan Schmidt of the Canadian Churches Forum. This was one of 6 in a series of World Council of Churches Webinars on Evangelism in the lead up to a North American Conference "Reclaiming Evangelism: Celebrating Change and Collaboration":

<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/world-council-of-churches-evangelism-webinars>



In the area of technology and Witness/Evangelism and Welcoming the stranger/neighbor, another offering was "Social Media is Your Church's New Greeter - Social Media as a Relational Connection Point (RCP)." This was a post by Justin Wise (<http://justinwise.net/>) entitled "7 Ways to Think Differently About Your Church Social Media Content." It challenged congregations, small and large, to think about social media as

one of the ways we both welcome people to our congregations and engage in web conversation. Thank you to Pastor Dawn Hutchings for the original post on Facebook. Through the Witness/Evangelism Synod Blog and Facebook posts, additional information has been shared on: [www.facebook.com/MessyChurchCanada]; Fresh Expressions Canada [www.freshexpressions.ca/]; ReChurch[www.rechurchnow.com/]; Building Faith [www.buildfaith.org/]; Godly Play resources [www.godlyplayresources.com/].
Matthew 28:19