

These
boots
are made for
walking
...together
See p. 4

July 7, 2013

JOINT ASSEMBLY *Daily*

Water was both a symbol and the focus of a prayer service on Parliament Hill. PHOTO: THE REV. MONIKA WIESNER



CAT'S EYES

*Whose cat watches his
master on a webcast?*

2



GRACIOUS VOLUNTEERS

*What would we do
without them?*

3



LUTHERAN GENEROSITY

*Help for
flood victims*

11



Today's Instagram assignment

Farewells

#farewells
#jointassembly
#anglicanjournal

Yesterday's Instagram assignment

Onthehill



TRINA GALLOP



ASHLEY MOORE

Quote

of the Day

"How wonderful it is to be able to leave here together feeling like we're coming back to wholeness."

—ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson in her closing remarks to the delegates at their 14th Biennial National Convention



Yesterday's poll results

Do you wish this Joint Assembly was longer?

38% Yes **62% No**



SIMON CHAMBERS

Friday's caption winners

On the last day, we have a three-way tie for the caption contest.

1. *Father, Son and Holy Spigot*
—Sarah Chandler.
2. *The only form of resource extraction we can agree on.* —Bill Clarke
3. *Now at Joint Assembly—nose piercing.*
—Christine Hills



AMY HAMILTON

'Fred's good!'

The primate cat, Mr. Tim, watches a live stream of the Joint Assembly at the Hiltz family home in Scarborough.

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Editor:

Archdeacon A. Paul Feheley

The editor welcomes your comments:

editor

@national.anglican.ca

Cell: (416) 451-8474

or drop your comments off at the Anglican Journal booth



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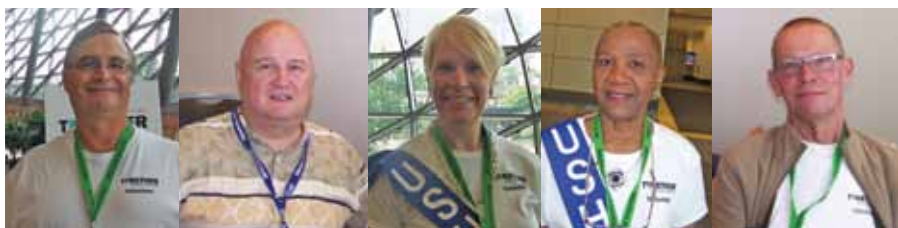
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The smiling faces that make it all run smoothly. Left to right: the Rev. Rick Durrett, Dominique Boucher, Cathy Kochendorfer, Maureen Gibson and Allan Liimatainen.

PHOTOS: DIANA SWIFT

Volunteers extraordinaire

Unsung heroes of Joint Assembly

THEY'VE been training for weeks. Some are local, others from out of town. They are Lutherans and Anglicans, clergy and laity, young and old. They are the roughly 100 volunteers who help run the complex machine that is Joint Assembly.



"We all share the common goal of having every delegate and visitor leave with a positive experience of their time here."

—Jamie Tomlinson, co-chair of the Joint Local Arrangements Committee.

And whatever their background, they work as one. "We all share the common goal of having every delegate and visitor leave with a positive experience of their time here," says Jamie Tomlinson, co-chair of the Joint Local Arrangements Committee.

He and his colleagues have been planning logistics for a year and a half.

Volunteers meet and greet at the airport and drive delegates to their hotels. They are ushers, directing attendees around the vast Ottawa Convention Centre, and help them navigate the details of registering and getting access to Wi-Fi. Volunteer stewards help in the Joint Assembly Office, assist at sessions and help prepare for the banquet. They're also part of the set-up and take-down crews.

Sometimes volunteer work pays off in ways over and above the satisfactions of

making a historic convention work smoothly. Sister Anne Keffer, a retired Lutheran deacon from New Hamburg, Ont., reconnected with her old friend Deaconess Aggie Casselman. "I hadn't seen Aggie since deaconess training in the early 1960s," she says.

Meet Dominique Boucher, an Anglican from Toronto, and Allan Liimatainen, an Ottawa-based Lutheran. They sit together at the registration desk, Dom handling Wi-Fi access, Allan handling registration. "It's been fantastic," says Dom. "People are very understanding and never get angry, even when they have struggles with Wi-Fi." Adds Allan: "The registration has been so well planned that I've never had more than [a few] people lining up at one time. People love the venue."

For Lutheran Cathy Kochendorfer, volunteering as an usher was a way to add another dimension to attending Joint Assembly with her husband, Larry, a bishop in Edmonton.

Adds usher Maureen Gibson, a retired Bell Canada employee who lives in Ottawa, "It's a good way of extending the volunteer work I already do for my home parish."

The Rev. Rick Durrett, rector of Ottawa's Church of the Resurrection and lead usher, greets people as they approach the escalator in the convention centre. "I felt this was a historic meeting and I wanted to be part of welcoming people to Ottawa," he says.

And welcomed people did feel, thanks to the volunteers. They can be justly proud of their hard work. —Diana Swift

Comments

from the floor



PHOTO: DIANA SWIFT

Shane Bengry and Sean Beahan

The two strikingly garbed clergy, both with the department of communications in the diocese of Brandon, mix and mingle during an evening break. "Joint Assembly is very exciting," says Bengry. "Even in the mundane detail work of motions, which may seem boring, you feel the love of the Holy Spirit moving. There's so much friendship and co-operation. And it's great to spend time with Lutherans." —D.S.

Comments

from the Hill



PHOTO: DIANA SWIFT

Steve Martin

Hailing from the town of Mayo, Yukon, Martin added Celtic sartorial flair to Saturday morning's event on the Hill. A member of the Anglican parish of St. Mary's With St. Mark Mayo in the diocese of Yukon, Martin came to the public witness gathering because water is such a contentious issue in Yukon. "A lot of communities don't have a safe water supply, and it's going to get worse with all the northern mining projects and damming for electric power," he says. —D.S.

Historic joyful moment

‘We are being called to go where no church has gone before’

BISHOP Lydia Mamakwa wiped away tears of joy, while Archbishop David Ashdown and Archbishop Fred Hiltz swayed as a hymn was sung, minutes after General Synod on July 6 gave its unanimous concurrence to the creation of an indigenous diocese in northern Ontario.

“This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad,” a beaming Hiltz said as members gave a standing ovation and extended applause when the resolution passed.

Approval of Resolution B001 means that the diocese of Keewatin will cease to operate on Dec. 31, 2014, but will continue as a legal entity until Sept. 30, 2015, at which time Ashdown will end his term as diocesan bishop and metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of Rupert’s Land. Other remaining parts of Keewatin will be “redeployed” to other dioceses. The diocese of Rupert’s Land has agreed to absorb Keewatin’s southern region churches.

This means “there will be no increase in the number of dioceses,” states the resolution.

Prior to the vote, several representatives of the diocese offered reflections about the resolution.

“This is a historic moment,” said the Rev. Amos Winter, from Kingfisher Lake, Ont. “God is surely in control and he has guided this moment...We are being called to go where no church has gone before... Let us unite as the people of God.”

The new northern Ontario diocese—whose name will be determined by aboriginal elders and other church and community members in September—will cover 16 First Nations communities belonging to Treaty 9 around Kingfisher Lake, north of Sioux Lookout. Mamakwa, who was elected in 2010, is the current area bishop.

There was a standing ovation and extended applause when the resolution was passed. Mamakwa embraced Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, and presented him with a pair of moccasins



Walking together PHOTO: ART BABYCH

as a gift. The primate promised to wear them as a sign of the church’s commitment “to walk together” with indigenous Anglicans. He paid tribute to Mamakwa’s leadership, describing it as “so inspiring and effective.” He noted her capacity to engage with both elders and youth.

Hiltz also paid tribute to Ashdown, calling him “a courageous leader...[who] worked so hard for this day to come.”

In an interview, Ashdown noted that the resolution also passed unanimously at the diocesan and provincial levels. “That says it’s very much the will of God. The spirit is moving, and the church recognizes the work of the Spirit,” he said.

—Marites N. Sison, *Anglican Journal*

Five recommended resolutions passed

Improvements to continuing education and long-term disability plans

BISHOP Phillip Poole, chairman of the Anglican Church of Canada’s pension committee, introduced resolutions on the church’s pension and continuing education plans. The five resolutions, recommended by the trustees, were previously presented to the pension committee and the Council of General Synod.

“Most of the changes relate to compliance with changes in provincial pension law,

and some are housekeeping details,” said Poole, of the diocese of Toronto. The plans are domiciled in Ontario. All the resolutions, A180 through A184, were carried.

Resolution A180 concerns an application to register the church’s continuing education plan as a charitable organization to ensure that funds disbursed to recipients will have tax-free status.

Resolution A184 involves an amend-

ment to address the large unfunded liability in the church’s pre-2005 long-term disability plan. It allows for the purchase of an insurance product to cover the liability, and for a church administrator to work with the insurance carrier to manage claimants.

Bishop Poole expressed gratitude to the trustees and to Judy Robinson, director of pensions.

—Diana Swift, *Anglican Journal*



Delegates line up to express opinions on marriage canon. PHOTO: ART BABYCH

Marriage canon controversial

Same sex vote slated for 2016

GENERAL Synod on July 6 approved a resolution that will bring the issue of same-sex marriage to a vote at the meeting of the Anglican Church of Canada's governing body in 2016.

At its triennial meeting here, General Synod passed Resolution C003, asking the Council of General Synod to prepare and present a motion to change the church's Canon 21 on marriage "to allow the marriage of same-sex couples in the same way as opposite sex couples."

Moved by the diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island members Michelle Bull and Jennifer Warren, the motion was approved by a two-thirds majority of the orders of bishop, clergy and laity. Using clickers—a handheld electronic device—25 bishops, 72 clergy and 101 laity voted in favour of the resolution; 11 bishops, 30 clergy and 27 laity were opposed.

The resolution asks that this motion include "a conscience clause so that no mem-



Algoma Bishop Stephen Andrews introduced amendments to the original motion.

PHOTO: ART BABYCH

ber of the clergy, bishop, congregation or diocese should be constrained to participate in or authorize such marriages against the dictates of their conscience."

It also sets additional criteria contained in amendments introduced by diocese of Algoma Bishop Stephen Andrews and Dean Peter Elliott, diocese of New Westminster. The amendments, approved by a vote, state that the 2016 motion should include supporting documentation that:

- "demonstrates broad consultation in its preparation;
- explains how this motion does not contravene the Solemn Declaration;
- confirms immunity under civil law and the Human Rights Code for those bishops, dioceses and priests who refuse to participate in or authorize the marriage of same-sex couples on the basis of conscience; and
- provides a biblical and theological rationale for this change in teaching on the nature of Christian marriage."

Several members stood up to speak for and against the resolution.

"Those of us who believe that same-sex relationships are a normal and natural part of God's creation, and are blessed by God, are having to turn away same-sex couples against the dictates of our consciences," said Bull. "We're having to say no to people when we believe God wants us to say yes.

We have to choose between obedience to the church and what we believe is obedience to God..."

Bob Durham, diocese of Algoma, described the resolution as "prematurely conceived," saying that what the church has debated in past General Synods was the blessing of same-sex marriage and not same-sex marriage itself. "One is a pastoral response; the other would be a sacramental rite," said Durham. "Blessings are not the same thing as marriage."

Leona Moses, diocese of Huron, spoke out against the motion and said she was representing the views of all six Anglican churches on the Six Nations Reserve. She explained that, "Traditionally, we look to seven generations before we make up our minds about what we should or should not do today."

The resolution was voted upon twice, after the primate Archbishop Fred Hiltz, acknowledged that he had made a procedural error.

Some members pointed out that Hiltz failed to ask whether the house was ready to close debate on the resolution. Some members also intended to request a vote by orders, but Hiltz said he was unaware of it. "I own that mistake," he said, expressing concern that "a number of people within the family are feeling angry that due process was not followed." —**Marites N. Sison**



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



SIMON CHAMBERS



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



Praying on Pa

'We need to let the government know

HUNDREDS of Anglicans and Lutherans in Ottawa for Joint Assembly converged on Parliament Hill on Saturday morning for a prayer event intended to draw attention to the issue of access to clean water, particularly in aboriginal communities.

Led by Lutheran and Anglican youth, the event gathered people into circles of 12 on the walk in front of the Peace

Tower on Parliament Hill. Volunteers held long ribbons of turquoise cloth that sparkled in the sun and cascaded down the steps like a waterfall. The ribbons were later carried through the crowd after the service.

The prayer service was led by Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Susan Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in Canada, and Lydia Mamakwa, area bishop for northern Ontario region. There were prayers for the rivers, for people who make their living from the water and for people who cross oceans. There were also prayers for the responsible use of water in urban and rural settings.

Heather Werboweski, 17, from First Lutheran in Winnipeg, told the Journal



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



JESSE DYMOND



ART BABYCH



SIMON CHAMBERS



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



SIMON CHAMBERS



JESSE DYMOND

Parliament Hill

Now that we are the people of this land'

that she thinks the event will have an impact. "Now more people are aware that it's an issue and so I hope they will more consciously think about the water that they use and think about the people who don't have the resources that we do."

Deb Roberts, a member from Christ Lutheran Church in Regina who attended with her 14-month-old daughter Rowan, said the event was a great idea. "It shows

solidarity working together for the Lutherans and the Anglicans and for everybody with the native people...We all are treaty people...water is an issue for all of us, so we should all have the same rights and the same access to water.

Bishop Adam Halkett of the diocese of Saskatchewan said, "The water is being damaged, so it's going to affect our grandchildren. It's affecting us already today, so

we need to let the government know that we are the people of this land. We didn't sell anything...We shared a lot of this land and water is also a part of that."

Bishop Susan Johnson said the event was "a wonderful opportunity to be on the Hill and to make this really significant gesture and statement right at the foot of our nation's capital."

—Leigh Anne Williams, *Anglican Journal*

Comments from the floor



PHOTO: DIANA SWIFT

Susan Seifert

For Seifert, a lay Lutheran delegate from Hanover, Ont., attending Joint Assembly was an easy decision. "I am very interested in the wider church, and this is particularly exciting because it's an opportunity to be part of a historic event," she says. Can she tell the difference between an Anglican and a Lutheran delegate? Not without seeing the colour of their lanyard, she admits. "They're very similar to talk to." —D.S.

The Ven. David Edwards

Hailing from the diocese of Fredericton, Archdeacon Edwards has been deeply affected by the missional words and call to service at the assembly. "These relate to my job," he says, adding that he hopes to take the missional message home to his diocese, where he is parish development officer. "I was also greatly moved by the service for the translation of the Bible into Inuktitut," Edwards says. —D.S.



PHOTO: DIANA SWIFT

The Diocese of The Arctic (booth 510) holds a draw each day. Friday's winner is Bill Clarke from the Diocese of Ontario. Bill, please pick up your prize at our booth. Everyone else, come enter the daily draw!



National indigenous guitar player, Mark MacDonald PHOTO: ART BABYCH

At last!

Walking the dream of an indigenous church

WITH Archdeacon Sid Black at the helm, the presentation by the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples kicked off with a couple of rousing Gospel-style tunes sung and played by Bishop Mark MacDonald, NIGP ("national indigenous guitar player").

The audience joined enthusiastically as Bishop Mark, in clerical collar and fringed buckskin jacket, led them in "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" and "I am Satisfied with Jesus."

Spirits were particularly high in view of the synod's vote just minutes earlier in favour of the creation of a new indigenous diocese in the northern part of the current diocese of Keewatin. "This has been a glorious, wonderful day, all about dreaming and a vision and fidelity," said Black.

The Rev. Ginny Doctor, the church's

indigenous ministries co-ordinator, introduced a Church House video production capturing the spirit of the seventh Sacred Circle gathering, "Walking the Dream," held at Pinawa, Man., in August 2012.

Indigenous people have been seeking to create a sovereign, self-determining identity within the Anglican church. "The dream begins at Sacred Circle. There it is put forth, it is explained, it is nurtured and it has grown," Doctor said, adding that the 2012 circle attracted more than 200 intergeneration people, both indigenous and non-indigenous.

The presentation featured a second video on Sacred Circle and indigenous spiritual values, which was produced by indigenous youth in two short days.

Hoping that the video sends a clear message, co-producer Sheba McKay said, "We all had the same dream. Sometimes our voices may not be heard, but we have a voice."

In his reflection on past injustices, Bishop MacDonald said that we should not forget the past, but "use the past as a stepping stone to a better tomorrow, to create a better way of life for the church and for the nation." —Diana Swift, *Anglican Journal*



Archdeacon Sid Black PHOTO: BRIAN BUKOWSKI

CoGS

Initial meeting held

ARCHDEACON Michael Thompson, the national church's general secretary, underscored the importance of the work that's before the Council of General Synod (CoGS) at the initial meeting of its newly elected members on July 6.



CoGS—the church's governing body in between General Synods—is “vital to the effective functioning of the national church,” said Thompson. The work is made more important by the fact that

the Anglican Church of Canada is ushering in a period of “change and renewal,” he said. “It is both a challenging and adventurous time.” During their meeting here, General Synod, the church's governing body, approved resolutions that will bring about “structural changes” to the church's governance and ministries.

An important piece of work facing the new CoGS when it officially meets in November is the approval of a budget for 2014.

To give members a “head start,” four teleconferences will be arranged with General Synod treasurer Hanna Goschy and himself, said Thompson. “We want the process to have lots of visibility,” said Thompson, adding that this process will empower new members to fulfill their roles effectively.

At its meeting, CoGS also held elections for various positions. Dean Peter Wall, diocese of Niagara, was elected as the church's representative to The Episcopal Church in the United States' National Executive Council. Cynthia Haines-Turner, diocese of Western Newfoundland, was elected representative to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Church Council. Melissa Greene and Bishop Jane Alexander were elected as officers of CoGS.

—Marites N. Sison, *Anglican Journal*

“It is both a challenging and adventurous time”

—Michael Thompson, general secretary of the ACC.



Faith, worship and ministry committee member Louise Peters pours oil as she discusses work on new baptismal liturgies. PHOTO: ART BABYCH

Revised liturgies and resources

Faith, worship and ministry presents three new reports

THE faith, worship and ministry committee gave General Synod members an overview of its work in the past triennium, and three resolutions relating to its work were passed.

“The role of faith, worship and ministry is to help Canadian Anglicans to live out our faith thoughtfully, prayerfully and with commitment,” said committee chair Canon Andrew Asbil, who compared its work to connective tissue in the body.

Bruce Myers, the church's co-ordinator for ecumenical relations, highlighted a joint Christian education project with the Roman Catholic Church in Canada and dialogue with the United Church of Canada on new models of unity to which the two churches might be called.

Bishop Linda Nicholls said that in this triennium the ethics sub-group of the committee has worked toward developing policies on abuse, sexual violence and screening for ministry.

Canon Eric Beresford spoke about the strides that have been made in building relationships and trust between African and North American bishops in a series of dialogues intended to help heal divisions in the Anglican Communion.

A liturgical task force has been working to revise common texts and to gather new liturgies and resources. For example,

said Louise Peters, the task force has been identifying liturgical needs around baptism, such as the need for an appropriate rite for an interfaith family or when a parent is not a Christian.

General Synod members approved three motions from the FWM committee:

- Resolution A140, which asked General Synod to receive the Final Report of the Primate's Commission on Theological Education and Formation for Presbyteral Ministry and adopt Competencies for Theological Education for Ordination to the Priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada.
- Resolution A141, which asked General Synod to receive the Jerusalem Report on diakonia (the ministry of service) of the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission and refer it to the Joint Anglican-Lutheran Commission to co-ordinate study and response. (The report has also been presented to churches in the Anglican Communion and Lutheran World Federation.)
- Resolution A142, which asked General Synod to receive *The Church: Toward a Common Vision* (produced by the Faith and Order Commission, World Council of Churches) and commend it for study to the Anglican Church of Canada.

—Leigh Anne Williams, *Anglican Journal*



SIMON CHAMBERS

Relationship

Toasting each other at the closing banquet, Anglicans and Lutherans celebrate four days of fellowship



PHOTO: DIANA SWIFT

Comment: *Lindsay Brewster*

Lindsay is a Lutheran youth delegate from Surrey, BC Synod. "Before, I didn't know that water was such a big problem in Canada. But after coming to this, I realize how important it is," says Lindsay, whose home parish is Mount Olive Lutheran Church. What she learned at this event will help her raise awareness of this pressing issue at home. —D.S.

General Synod 2016 to be held in Toronto

THE July 6 session of General Synod 2013 ended with an expression of thanks by Archbishop Colin Johnson of Toronto to the diocese of Ottawa for hosting General Synod 2013. He also invited members to attend General Synod in Toronto in three years' time.

Johnson gave five tongue-in-cheek reasons for holding the 2016 synod in Toronto, the most practical being that delegates have to connect through Pearson Airport anyway, and not the least being that "Toronto may be a place you love to hate, but the Bible says to love your enemies." Then there's Toronto's

"media icon" mayor, Rob Ford, he said.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz then thanked outgoing prolocutor Robert Falby, a lawyer and canon law expert, for his many services to the church. Prolocutor since 2009 and chancellor of the diocese of Toronto, Falby received an honorary doctorate from Trinity College in May for his devotion to the church. The primate praised Falby's "wisdom, wit, insight, pragmatism and deep love of this church."

The newly elected prolocutor is the Ven. Harry Huskins of the diocese of Algoma.

Hiltz offered special thanks to Dianne

Izzard, assistant to General Secretary Michael Thompson and the Church House's lead staff person in planning the complex meetings of General Synod and Council of General Synod. He said that Izzard, who will retire next spring, had "the spirit of both Martha and Mary," the hospitality of the former and the devotion to Christ's teachings of the latter.

The closing motion of thanks was delivered in the form of a prayer led by the Ven. Ansley Tucker and Canon Gene Packwood of the diocese of Calgary.

—Diana Swift, *Anglican Journal*

THE ANGLICAN FOUNDATION (AFC) invites you to answer a daily question for some nifty prizes. Get a ballot from **Booth 205**, fill in the answer and place in the basket at the AFC display table.

YESTERDAY'S QUESTION: In response to Vision 2019: "to respond to human need by loving service", what four projects does the Foundation's Kids Helping Kids Fund support? **Answer:** homework clubs, breakfast programs, palliative care, summer and choir camp.

Winner: Elaine Young (Pick up your prize at booth 205)

Prize: Pair of tickets to a 2013-14 regular season of the St John's Ice Caps in NFLD and lunch or dinner for two at Ches's Famous Fish & Chips Restaurants



THE ANGLICAN FOUNDATION QUESTION FOR JULY 7:

In which dioceses are all parishes members of The Anglican Foundation? (Answer in tomorrow's **JOINT ASSEMBLY Daily**.) Prize: Dinner for 2 at The Pantheon Greek Restaurant on the Danforth in Toronto.

Delegates support structural change

ELCIC opens door to smaller, less frequent National Conventions

THE Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) has taken the first steps toward significant structural changes aimed at cutting costs and making the denomination more nimble.

Delegates to the National Convention voted 225 to 19 in favour of repealing several sections of the ELCIC's constitution, many of them dealing with the way the denomination is governed and administered, with the intention of embedding them in the church's bylaws instead.

"I think it's a strong signal of our willingness to move forward," National Bishop Susan Johnson said in an interview following the vote. "I think it feels like a church open to change."

Constitutional amendments require the approval of two successive National Conventions, which currently meet every two years. Bylaws can be changed after one reading by that legislative body.

"Moving more items to the bylaws allows us as a church to be able to adapt more quickly to our changing environment and landscape, since bylaws are easier to amend," states a background document prepared by the ELCIC's structural renewal task force.

Because moving the governance rules from the constitution to the bylaws is itself a constitutional amendment, the decision



Lutheran delegates applaud a motion on the floor. PHOTO: SIMON CHAMBERS

needs to be ratified by the next National Convention in 2015, which will take place in Edmonton.

If the constitutional change gets a second nod in two years, delegates can then consider a proposal to reduce the size and frequency of the National Convention. Currently each of the ELCIC's 502 parishes is entitled to send at least one lay delegate to the gathering. Regionally selected pastors, diaconal ministers and youth representatives make up another 212 possible delegates. A related proposal would see

the National Convention meet every three years instead of every two.

Still another proposed change would see the creation of a new category of church membership called "synodically recognized ministries." Currently the only way to be an official member of the ELCIC is to formally belong to an ELCIC congregation. The change would allow new or declining Lutheran communities unable to meet the current criteria for congregational status to still be full ELCIC members.

—Bruce Myers, *Anglican Journal*

Generosity

Lutherans pass the hat for flood victims

A spontaneous offering was taken at the ELCIC's National Convention to assist victims of recent flooding in southern Alberta. More than \$8,200 was raised in addition to \$25,000 pledged by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America when the hat was passed among the approximately 275 delegates on Saturday afternoon. The money will support flood victims through Canadian Lutheran World Relief. —B.M.

'We are the Church'

'We're coming back to wholeness'

A N emotional ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson concluded Saturday's business session by thanking Lutheran delegates "for coming here and being the church."

"We all know the last few conventions have been very challenging and difficult," Johnson told delegates, choking back tears. "And many of us have walked away from them feeling hurt and sad and a variety of other things, including me. How wonderful

it is to be able to leave here together feeling like we're coming back to wholeness."

Delegates responded with a standing ovation.

The ELCIC's last two National Conventions were marked by a sometimes rancorous debate over the blessing of same-sex marriages, which the church authorized in 2011, prompting about 30 congregations to leave the denomination. —B.M.

The day in photos

Here and there at Joint Assembly on July 6th



ART BABYCH



BRIAN BUKOWSKI



SIMON CHAMBERS



SIMON CHAMBERS



SIMON CHAMBERS



SIMON CHAMBERS

Together for the love of the world