



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



LIVING OUR FAITH



ON THE COVER (*From top left*):

(1) Members of the MNO Synod participating in the Winnipeg Pride Parade. (2) Rev. Barbara Groote and Cathy Kochendorfer with their friends from the Good Shepherd Seniors Centre in Soacha (adjacent to Bogotá) Columbia. (3) Kathy Weisbrod with an anniversary banner she made for St. Mark's, Markinch, SK. (4) Happy campers at Camp Lutherlyn, ON. (5) John Reiche celebrates in the balcony of Grace, Rankin, ON. He is the sixth generation of those who first worshiped at Grace.

Table of Contents

2	From our National Bishop	20	Relational Leadership
4	Mission Statement	24	Compassionate Justice
5	Our Vision Priorities	28	What Happens When You Give
6	2022 National Office Highlights	29	Praise Appeal
12	Healthier Church	30	#myELCIC
16	Effective Partnerships	32	National Office



Message from the National Bishop

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus!

I love reading through the ELCIC Annual Report. It is such a great reminder of the mission and ministry that is being carried out across our church and through our partners in Canada and around the world.

We are making a difference—YOU are making a difference—in so many ways as we live out our call as followers of Christ. As you look back on the 2022 ELCIC Annual Report, I hope you will be as inspired as I was to read about the work of our members, our congregations, our communities, our synods, the National Office, and our partners.

The story lifting up our work in the area of Effective Partners (pg. 16) shares this quote from me: “Despite limited resources and being a medium-size church, we know our church is far more effective when we work with our partners [and that includes you!]. Together we can accomplish much more, strengthen relationships and work towards becoming a healthier church.”

I feel this so strongly. I am so grateful and give thanks for the many ways you serve our church, our community, one another.

It is an honour to be called to serve you as National Bishop. I love our church and I’m proud of what we do and what we stand for. We pray fervently, we work for justice passionately, we face challenges head on, and we embrace the future with hope. We give thanks to God for the grace we have received and strive to share that grace with the world in great need. *Soli Deo Gloria!*



National Bishop Susan C. Johnson

+ *Susan C. Johnson*



ELCIC Mission Statement

The mission of this church, as an expression of the universal Church and as an instrument of the Holy Spirit, is to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to people in Canada and around the world through the proclamation of the Word, the administration of the sacraments and through service in Christ's name.

ELCIC Vision Statement

God's grace and unconditional love calls us to be a diverse, inclusive community that celebrates all and upholds life-giving relationships.

Our Vision Priorities

As a National Church, we are called to focus on:

- ...striving to be a **Healthier Church**
- ...seeking to cultivate **Effective Partnerships**
- ...encouraging **Relational Leadership**
- ...leading with **Compassionate Justice**



2022 National Office Highlights

JANUARY

27: The Youth and Young Adult committee (YAYA) of the Eastern Synod hosted a webinar with ELCIC member Kata Kuhnert who shared her reflections on her participation at COP 26 as part of The Lutheran World Federation delegation. In partnership with the BC Synod, the ELCIC hosted a second webinar on February 19, 2022,

featuring reflections by Kata, as well as former LWF COP participants Jeff Buhse and Erika Rodning.

31: National Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Linda Nicholls shared a joint message encouraging members of both churches to observe the annual United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week, February 1–7.

FEBRUARY

6: ELCIC congregations were encouraged to lift up Global Mission Sunday, an annual emphasis affirming the importance of Global Mission in the whole ministry of the ELCIC. Global Mission is one way the ELCIC is able to grow and strengthen relationships with its partner churches.

17-18: The Joint Anglican Lutheran Commission (JALC) met online February 17 and 18.

An invitation from the
**Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Canada and the BC Synod**


Three young adults of the ELCCC have attended recent COP (Conference of the Parties, United Nations) conventions regarding our climate emergency. They have agreed to speak about some of their experiences at those COP events in a Zoom meeting. They will share their thoughts on how faith organizations can address the climate crisis. We hope you will attend.

Lutheran Young Adults for Climate Justice


Saturday, February 19
12:30 pm EST to 2:00 pm EST

There will be no charge.


Our National Bishop Susan Johnson will open the occasion and our three panelists will be:



JEFF BUHSE is a member at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Winnipeg and led the privilege to represent the Lutheran World Federation at COP18 in Durban, COP20 in Lima, and finally COP21 in Paris to witness the signing of the Paris Accord. Jeff initially became involved with the Climate Justice Movement as a youth delegate at the LWf General Assembly in Stuttgart, Germany in 2010 and hasn't looked back. He has spent 7 full terms on the ELCC National Church Council as the MNIO Lay Representative, as well as many synodical and congregational committees and tasks over the years. Jeff currently works as the Chief Operations Officer for his wife's artisanal candle company and has a 13-year-old girl too. Married Parents.



ERIKA RODNING is from Edmonton, Alberta. She attended COP 25 in Madrid, Spain, as part of the Lutheran World Federation's youth delegation. She is a Clinical Dietitian, is currently pursuing her Masters of Public Health in Health Policy and Management. She is interested in and has past involvement in the areas of preventive health, global health, food security, international development and sustainability.



KATARINA KUHNERT is an early career circumpolar climate scientist who represented the LWf at the 2021 COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland and was previously a delegate at the 2015 ync2015 Future of Life in the Arctic events in Stockholm, Sweden. She is a non-indigenous Canadian living north of the Arctic Circle in Inuvik, Northwest Territories. She has worked on Inuvialuk, Gwich'in, and Northern Métis lands. She has worked on Indigenous change, monitor permafrost environments, approaches to conservation, and support circumpolar youth.

A Climate Justice Action Group event sponsored by the ELCCC

PRE-REGISTER AT: <https://bit.ly/3Grvc3>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the meeting.

FEBRUARY



JALC provided a brief report for convention, along with a recommendation for a new three-year mandate that includes Lutheran, Anglican and Moravian representatives.

25: The ELCIC, though its partnership with Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), called on its members to respond through prayer and financial support to the urgent humanitarian needs in Ukraine.

27: ELCIC congregations were encouraged to lift up Diaconal Sunday, celebrating witness expressed through service (*diakonia*) and leadership offered by the ELCIC Diaconal Ministers.

MARCH

MARCH

2: Bishop Susan invited ELCIC members—individually or as part of a small group study—to join in a weekly Lenten devotional study using the Gospel texts for Ash Wednesday and Sundays in Lent, along with select days from *Praying the Catechism*.

7: The ELCIC's National Church Council (NCC) issued a statement joining with the World Council of Churches, The Lutheran World Federation and the Canadian Council of Churches in calling for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and global solidarity with all people in Ukraine.

11: The ELCIC joined with inter-faith partners in a statement on the pandemic.


APRIL

9: The ELCIC joined with ecumenical and public sector partners in calling on NATO to reduce nuclear risks.

11: ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson and Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls shared an Easter message reminding us of the hope, joy and promise in the risen Christ.

22: The ELCIC joined with ecumenical partners in a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs urging Canada to protect Freedom of Worship, and access for all religions to places of worship in occupied East Jerusalem.

22: ELCIC and Anglican Church of Canada leaders issue a joint Earth Day message for April 22.

 2022 ELCIC Lenten Study

For the last few years, we have been sharing National Bishop Susan Johnson's vision for a four-year emphasis on *Living our Faith*—as together we pray, read, worship and love.

During this third year, we are focusing on *worship* with the goal of deepening our experience in worship when the community gathers (either in person or online) and deepening our individual practice of devotion.

You are invited to participate in a weekly Lenten devotional study using the Gospel texts for Ash Wednesday and the Sundays, along with select days from *Praying the Catechism* for your personal or small group study.

Most recently, our National Bishop wrote a revised and expanded version of *Praying the Catechism*, a book originally authored by her father, Rev. Donald W. Johnson. Although the revised version is recommended, either version of this publication can be used for this Lenten study.

WEEK	PRAYING THE CATECHISM	GOSPEL READING
Ash Wednesday	Confession (Day 86, pg. 200)	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Lent 1	Temptation (Day 11, pg. 32)	Luke 4:1-13
Lent 2	Lament (Day 22, pg. 58)	Luke 13:31-35
Lent 3	Hardship (Day 39, pg. 98)	Luke 13:1-9
Lent 4	Forgiveness (Day 38, pg. 96)	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
Lent 5	Generosity (Day 79, pg. 185)	John 12:1-8
Holy Week	Redemption (Day 23, pg. 62)	Luke 22:34-23:56

READINGS:

Please note page numbers refer to the 2021 edition of *Praying the Catechism*.

- Read the appointed Gospel lesson and reflect on what you hear God saying. If you are meeting with a group, discuss this.
- Read the text of *Praying the Catechism* and reflect on what you have read. If you are meeting with a group, discuss this.
- Pray the suggested petitions alone or together.



APRIL



Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls and National Bishop Susan Johnson

National Office Highlights

MAY

National Bishop Susan Johnson and Synod of Alberta and the Territories Bishop Larry Kochendorfer attended the church leadership meeting of the Americas, in Chile. These meetings are part of a hope to bring together the North America region and the Latin America and the Caribbean region of the LWF.

29: The ELCIC joined with the Anglican Church of Canada in lifting up the seventh Sunday of Easter as Jerusalem and the Holy Land Sunday.

JUNE

Zion Lutheran Church in Lunenburg, NS celebrated their 250th anniversary with both National Bishop Johnson and Eastern Synod Bishop Michael Pryse in attendance. Zion, Lunenburg is the oldest, still operational congregation in our church.

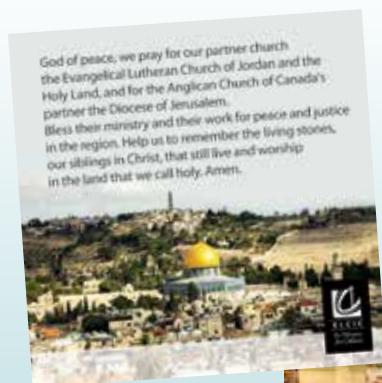
For the third year in a row, a record number of ELCIC congregations and members signed up to use the resources from the ELCIC Summer Sermon Series which ran from June 5 to September 22, 2022. Almost 470 individuals from across the

church, and also from our partners, signed up their congregations to use the sermons from our National and Synod Bishops and Assistants to the Bishops.

15-16: The 2022 ELCIC National Convention was held online for the first time.

In her address to the national convention, ELCIC National Bishop apologized to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community for, “the ways we have not lived up to our commitments and the ways we have treated you in the past and even now.”

MAY



JUNE



National Bishop Susan Johnson apologized to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community at the 2022 ELCIC National Convention.



20: ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson wrote to the church to lift up National Indigenous Peoples Day, a day “intended to strengthen and encourage us in daily practices and actions for truth, healing and reconciliation.”

30: The ELCIC joined with its partner CLWR in asking its members to consider donating to those suffering from hunger in sub-Saharan Africa, where over 50 million people are affected by the hungry crisis in the region.

JULY



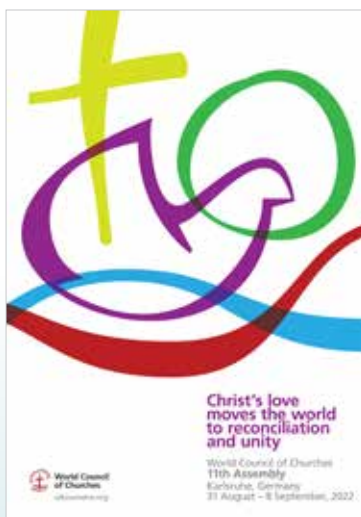
Carmen Ramirez, Assistant to the Bishop, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

JULY

22: The ELCIC announced a new position at the National Office with responsibility for diversity, equity and inclusion.

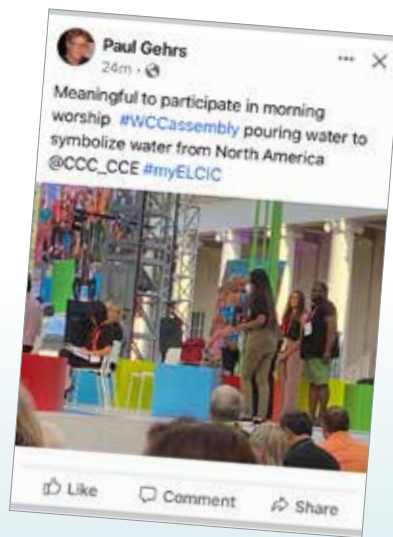
AUGUST

23: The ELCIC National Bishop wrote to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations encouraging resolution of the Stoney Knoll First National land claim.



AUGUST

31-Sept 8: The 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) took place in Karlsruhe, Germany, under the theme—Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity. The ELCIC was represented by Bishop Susan Johnson as a delegate and Rev. Paul Gehrs as an advisor. At the invitation of the WCC, Trina Gallop Blank participated as part of the communications team.



Trina Gallop Blank (third from left) was part of the communications team at the 11th Assembly of the WCC.



Bishop Susan Johnson and Rev. Paul Gehrs at the 11th Assembly of the WCC.

SEPTEMBER

September marked the beginning of the fourth and final year focusing on Love. We are called to live generous lives. Love includes community and service. Love encompasses all. *And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love* (1 Corinthians 13:13).

20: The ELCIC joined with ecumenical partners to host a webinar entitled Thursdays in Black: Working Together to End Gender-based Violence in Canada.

OCTOBER

16: National Bishop Susan Johnson and Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls invited members of the two churches to “pray, give, learn and advocate for food security everywhere” on World Food Day.

SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

6-18: ELCIC members Kata Kuhnert and Jackson Ashby were part of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) youth delegation to COP27, with Jackson participating online and Kata attending in person. KAIROS Canada and For the Love of Creation jointly hosted a delegation to COP27 that included Canadians and international partners, with a focus on lifting up marginalized voices.

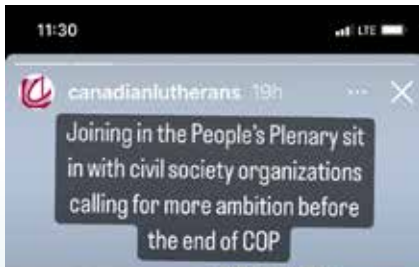
DECEMBER

National leaders of the Anglican Church of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Presbyterian Church in Canada and United Church of Canada shared an ecumenical Advent meditation series, reflecting on the four themes of hope, joy, peace, and love. The meditation and conversation series, *What are*

we Waiting For?, addressed challenges facing Canadian churches.

National Bishop Susan Johnson and Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls shared a Christmas message that was recorded from Manger Square, the city centre of Bethlehem. 📺

NOVEMBER



Kata Kuhnert at COP27.



A Christmas message from National Bishop Susan Johnson and Anglican Church of Canada Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls.



Signs of the Times
God's Love Includes Everyone

Finding the Good Path
The Cost of Discipleship

What are we waiting for?

EVERY MONDAY DURING ADVENT, the national church leaders of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the United Church of Canada will release an ecumenical Advent meditation and conversations reflecting the four Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love, and addressing challenges facing the Canadian church.

EVERY THURSDAY DURING ADVENT, listeners are invited to join in a live discussion, via Zoom, with one of the leaders on that week's Advent theme. Attendees to the gathering will be able to ask questions during the online conversation.

To receive the meeting link for each event and receive email reminders of each week's gathering events, visit Advent2022.ca



HEALTHIER CHURCH

Sharing a campfire at Camp Lutherlyn.



Back to the great outdoors

The COVID pandemic put a serious halt on 'camp life' as most knew it. Unable to house guests in-person for the better part of two summers, three Lutheran camps across Canada underwent some significant changes and are ready to roll for the 2023 camping season.



"A season without campers?" you ask. "Preposterous."

That was the reality faced by countless summer camps across Canada, not only once, but twice as the 2020 and 2021 camping seasons were put on hold due to pandemic cautions.

But, with gratitude to their many financial supporters, many faith-based, Lutheran camps were able to keep their lights on, doors open and water running as the two-year hiatus finally came to a close in time for the 2022 camping season.

"If you remember back, the pandemic was only supposed to be two weeks," said Camp Lutherlyn's board chair, Janice Verch. "That obviously wasn't the case. Everything as we knew it came to a halt for the 2020 and 2021 seasons. We did have a good first year back in 2022, despite some people's reluctance to being

back in groups. But we are seeing high interest and are excited for what's coming in 2023."

For Lutherlyn, a children's/family camp situated two hours west of Ottawa, timing of the shutdown was peculiar. The camp had just hired a business consultant and had been in a re-design process of implementing a new business model for its future vision. But with campers unable to physically attend camp, the two 'down' years saw some major changes, including the moving of some buildings and re-developing the beach area.

"We had just started to get our feet wet with that and then COVID hit," Verch added. "The feeling we have right now is that we are excited to see the results of that really blossom through the planning that we did many years ago now."

In order to pull off the renovations, Lutherlyn relied on a number of grants, while running fundraisers, including a '100 X \$100,' to which 100 separate donors provided \$100 to the camp. Synod-owned, Camp Lutherlyn leases its property off the Eastern Synod.

"Our operations have a mission and values that are in keeping with the Synod," Verch said. "It's a partnership. A big part of our mandate is to support outdoor ministry. Over time, we have told the Synod that we would be financially independent, in not requiring funding from the Synod. We have many regular donors who either send their donations through their congregations or directly to Camp Lutherlyn."

Similarly, at Camp Kuriakos in Sylvan Lake, Alberta, it's the funding that has kept the outdoor ministry afloat through the pandemic years.

"Donations have certainly been up since COVID, which has really sustained us considering all we went through during the pandemic," said Kuriakos assistant director Paul Kopjar. "That congregational support really has made a difference. Specifically, we receive donations from individual congregations, of both Lutheran and Anglican denomination."

"If we had known right away that it would be 18 months of lockdowns, we probably would have done things a little differently," Kopjar laughed. There was a lot of planning, re-planning, and planning again as things wore on. Summer 2022 was much more normal. But hopefully 2023 will be the next step in people coming back and being comfortable with programs. Registration seems to be doing great this year, so we are looking forward



Camp Lutherlyn photos: Janice Verch

Making memories at Camp Lutherlyn.



Camp Kuriakos

Outdoor fun at Camp Kuriakos.



Lisa and Ad van Dijk

Recent Luther Village renovations included the creation of a new community deck and fire pit area, and a brand-new dining hall and kitchen in what was formerly a games cabin.



to having a bunch of families back at camp."

Over at Luther Village in Kenora, Ontario, a similar set of circumstances led to some major projects around the camp's grounds. New co-executive directors Lisa and Ad van Dijk inherited a difficult situation.

"With zero returning staff members there was certainly a learning curve for 2022," Lisa van Dijk said. "When we took over, the summer shop was literally falling into the lake, many cabins needed to be levelled, while others needed new roofs. And during COVID, you're losing so much of your income from not running kids camps and school groups, so you're just trying to maintain."

With most of the significant projects having been completed for 2022, van Dijk and company were treated to another shocking discovery just in advance of the summer season.

"Our beloved dining hall building was falling apart," she recalled. "There were holes in the floors, and pieces of plywood were covering them up. It was in such a state of disrepair that the health inspector would not pass it as a kitchen anymore, therefore it was closed all of last year. So, it was like, 'Woo-hoo, COVID is over, camp is open, we're all ready to go, but our dining hall is closed'. So that meant no kids camps or school camps."

For van Dijk, it was a summer of adaptations, which included a makeshift staff and volunteer dining area, the handwashing of dishes, the creation of a new community deck and fire pit area, and renovations on a brand-new dining hall and kitchen in what was formerly a games cabin.

"Sure, in an ideal world, we would have built a brand new, beautiful log building in the existing space, and it would be fantastic, but that's like a million dollars," van Dijk laughed. "We just want to ensure we are best using the money we can raise. We thoroughly appreciate our remittance funding from the MNO Synod on a monthly basis, and have also successfully applied for the ELCIC's Luther League Legacy Fund and the MNO Synod's Margie Kvern Music Scholarship."

With ongoing fundraisers planned at Camp Lutherlyn, Kuriakos and Luther Village, there is no shortage of Lutheran outdoor ministries for those looking to help support through monetary donation. 📧

Natural faith connections

In the spring of 2021, my husband and I decided that we would buy a trailer and get a yearly spot at Luther Village (LV) for the summer.

Spending more time at LV was a very positive experience. We felt very welcomed by the community that have camped there for years, spending time with family in an environment that allows people to be themselves. Everyone is welcome regardless of background, religious or not.

The camp offers a way for people to connect with their faith and appreciate the marvels of God's creation. If you have ever seen a sunset over Dogtooth Lake, it's hard not to believe in the power that created that.

When we saw that LV was looking for a new executive director and knowing they had not yet hired a maintenance manager, we approached the Luther Village Board to see if they would con-

sider us, if we applied as a management team.

We officially began this new adventure as the new executive director team on Jan. 10, 2022.

I, Lisa, have spent the past 25+ years working in youth ministry within the Lutheran church in our MNO Synod. I have also spent 25 years working in the restaurant/hospitality industry.

Luther Village has always held a special place in my heart, whether working in the kitchen, volunteering, camping or participating in 30 Thanksgiving weekend retreats!

When I think about the theme for this summer *From Generation to Generation*, I think about our sons Cody and Byron who spent their first summer at LV when I worked there in '97, and how that love of LV has been passed down to them, and in turn they are sharing it with their friends.



HEALTHIER CHURCH

I, Ad, have a long history at LV. My first time was a winter College & Career retreat in 1990. Who knew that weekend would turn into a lifelong connection to LV?

Mostly, I have been involved by volunteering countless work weekends (and spending a summer on staff), assisting LV with multiple repair and maintenance projects.

We are both looking forward to working as the executive team at LV. We will do our best to make your experience at camp a positive one. —**Lisa and Ad van Dijk**



Lisa and Ad van Dijk, executive director team of Luther Village, Kenora, ON.



National Bishop Susan Johnson (back row, 4th from right) with fellow Thursdays in Black Ambassadors, gather for a group photo in front of a tapestry supporting the campaign against gender-based violence, at the World Council of Churches' 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Mike Dubose/MCC

The ELCIC's Global Engagement

"We are a National Office, but we are nothing without our partners."

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada values the life-giving relationships of its many partners here in Canada and around the world.

The ecumenical work and interfaith witness of the ELCIC is felt in every corner of the globe. With roughly 95,000 members, the ELCIC is sometimes seen as a small church among the world's Christian churches. However, ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson sees it differently, and is often quick to remind others that in terms of participation within the wider church community, it functions more like a "medium-size church."

"Despite limited resources and being a medium-size church, we know our church is far more effective when we work with partners," Bishop Johnson wrote in a recent column for *Canada Lutheran*—the official magazine of the ELCIC. "Together we can accomplish much more, strengthen relationships and work towards becoming a healthier church."

Three examples of that partnerships include the World Council of Churches (WCC), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC). Actively involved in the mission and ministry of all three organizations, the ELCIC has been able to continue its growth and outreach through working partnership with churches of other denominations and faith backgrounds.

“Absolutely fundamental to the WCC and the ecumenical movement are relationships,” said 2022 WCC Assembly Moderator Dr. Agnes Abuom. “We encounter one another—in all our uniqueness—and recognize a neighbour in the stranger, unity in the midst of our diversity.”

One of the ways that the ELCIC has embodied its commitment to participation in the wider church and its presence in global ecumenical circles was the significant involvement of ELCIC members—including Bishop Johnson—at the 11th Assembly of the WCC, September 2022, in Karlsruhe, Germany.

The ELCIC National Bishop was elected to the WCC’s Central Committee (150 members), which meets every two years and serves as the main decision-making body between assemblies. She was also voted into the smaller Executive Committee (25 members). The Executive Committee is the WCC’s governing body, with members from churches in every region. It meets twice a year to monitor ongoing work, supervise the budget and deal with policy matters referred to it by the Central Committee.

Similarly, Bishop Johnson will be in attendance at the LWF’s 13th Assembly in Krakow, Poland in September of 2023. She will serve as an advisor to the three voting delegates travelling to the gathering on behalf of the ELCIC.

“All are called by Christ’s love to repentance, reconciliation and justice in the face of war, inequality and sins against creation,” delegates to the WCC’s 11th



Alban Hillert/WCC

**“We encounter one another
—in all our uniqueness—and
recognize a neighbour in the
stranger, unity in the midst of
our diversity.”**

—2022 WCC Assembly Moderator Dr. Agnes Abuom

World Council of Churches (WCC)

Organized 1948, the WCC’s 352 member churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 120 countries and territories throughout the world, represent over 580 million Christians.

- called to the goal of visible unity
- engage in Christian service
- promote common witness
- foster renewal

<https://www.oikoumene.org/>

The Lutheran World Federation

Founded 1947, the LWF includes 149 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 74 million Christians in 99 countries. To be Lutheran is to be evangelical, sacramental, diaconal, confessional, and ecumenical.

- Dignity and justice
- Compassion and commitment
- Respect for diversity
- Inclusion and participation
- Transparency and accountability

<https://www.lutheranworld.org/>



assembly stated in their message, 'A Call to Act Together' posted online on September 8. "We will find a strength to act from a unity founded in Christ's love, for it enables us to learn the things that make for peace, to transform division into reconciliation, and to work for the healing of our living planet."

The ELCIC also maintains a strong partnership with Canadian advocacy and humanitarian organization KAIROS and Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), while working closely with its five synod and global mission partners in Argentina, Cameroon, Colombia, Guyana, Peru and the Holy Land.

In 2022, the ELCIC joined with CLWR in three major emergency relief appeals. The ELCIC called upon its members to respond through prayer and financial support to the urgent needs of those suffering due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, the hunger crisis in



Canadian Lutheran
World Relief®



The ELCIC joined with CLWR to respond through prayer and financial support to the urgent needs of those suffering due to the ongoing war in Ukraine.



Sub-Saharan Africa and the catastrophic flooding in Pakistan. Together with CLWR, the ELCIC has responded where there is great need for relief efforts around the world.

"We are a valued partner because we participate fully," Bishop Johnson said of the ELCIC's many partnerships in her address at the 2022 National Convention. "We are valued because we take our turn in providing leadership. We are valued as we work to maintain our financial support. We are valued as we are seen being mediators. These partners are here for us as well, praying for us, supporting us, walking with us." 📖

The ELCIC maintains a strong partnership with Canadian Lutheran World Relief, supporting humanitarian relief for global events such as catastrophic flooding in Pakistan.



 **THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES** | **LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ÉGLISES**
CHRIST · COMMUNITY · COMPASSION | CHRIST · COMMUNAUTÉ · COMPASSION

The Canadian Council of Churches

Founded, 1944, the CCC includes 26 member churches representing virtually all Christian traditions and 85 percent of Christians in Canada.

- brings member churches into encounter with one another
- leads in Canadian peace organization
- provides a safe place for immigrant churches
- undertakes and promotes theological study
- participates in dialogue with people of other faiths
- studies and acts on conditions that involve moral and spiritual principles

<https://www.councilofchurches.ca/>



Going online

Business as usual? No, not quite. With the world growing rapidly comfortable with live-streaming, the 2022 ELCIC National Convention and National Church Council took their gatherings to Zoom.

The last number of years have been challenging from a meeting and gathering perspective. Unable to physically meet in-person throughout the pandemic, meetings, conferences, gatherings and conventions quickly found a place to gather via online streaming platforms, as the world came to learn the many wonders of 'Zoom'.

The ELCIC's constitution requires that it hold a National Convention at a regularly appointed time to conduct the business of the church and vote on matters such as election of officers and National Church Council.

At the beginning of the year with the spread of OMICRON becoming increasingly present, the decision was made to hold the 2022 ELCIC National Conven-



For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them. – Matthew 18: 20.

tion in an online format. Delegates gathered on Zoom from July 15-16 to attend multiple three-hour plenary sessions under the theme 'Let There be Greening.'

"Things went rather smoothly," said convention manager Kyle Giesbrecht. "Not having to move 150-180 people around the country, while working out accommodations and food was nice. But that said, there were some other tricky aspects, like making sure that people knew how to use their computers properly, had access to the login information, and that email servers and our online filesharing programs were up and running."

Now knowing the capabilities of an online gathering, Giesbrecht says that the 2023 ELCIC Special Convention (held as part of Assembly 2023, a joint gathering with the Anglican Church of Canada) –will also be offered as a hybrid event, with delegates being given the option to participate from home.

"Only a handful of people are registered as a virtual attendee at this point," noted Giesbrecht. "But it is giving people an option that we have never had before. If they want to be a part of certain discussions and decision making, they still can, but it's just in a different way."

Youth delegate Ben Lukenchuck shared his reflections on the 2023 online convention, the first time the ELCIC has ever held a national online convention.

"From a functional perspective, the work that needed to be done, constitutionally, for the ELCIC, was effectively undertaken," the 28-year-old said. "But the true value of any kind of national gathering is not necessarily the work that gets done, per se, but rather the incidental, in-betweens that come up. Certainly, there is something a bit lost in that whole interaction. Sure, I saw people on their screens, some numbers, some blanks screens on Zoom, but it's not really the same community-building aspect that you do get in-person. You miss some of those incidental interactions on the virtual format."



Let there be greening

2022 National Convention

JULY 15-16 • ONLINE

"We want to be in-person...but virtual attendance is giving people an option that we have never had before. "

–ELCIC Director of Finance and Administration and Convention manager Kyle Giesbrecht





NCC meetings moved to Zoom during the pandemic and have continued doing so on a hybrid basis.

The Eastern Synod youth delegate made it clear that great care was taken to connect fellow youth participants via Zoom gatherings in advance of convention. Lukenchuck—who tuned in alongside his wife, Rebecca Wong—was also involved in an online group chat with other youths as convention moved along.

“I’ve become a Zoom major now, as we all have lately, and that went fine,” the convention rookie said. “There was a virtual


conference app that was overlayed on the Zoom platform and it was pretty much flawless. We really didn’t have any technological issues on our end. The ‘What’s App’ group chat was a nice touch as well. The odd time there were a couple muting and un-muting problems, but nothing on my receiving end.”

Alongside the large-scale national convention, the ELCIC also undertook its National Church Council (NCC) meetings via a hybrid format in 2022.

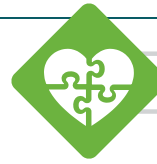
For Nova Scotia-based NCC member Rev. Kimberlyn McNabb, the option to participate from home was greatly appreciated.

“Living in Atlantic Canada especially, after COVID, they have cut the number of flights going West,” said Rev. McNabb. “It has always been a lot of time. I lose a day on either end to go to NCC, just because of the way flights work. So being able to do [the meetings] in three days, as opposed to five full days, it is super helpful for me, my schedule and my congregation.”

Having been re-elected to NCC for a second term of three years at last summer’s national convention, Rev. McNabb will now have the opportunity to take in a few more online gatherings.

“Zoom has worked very well for me,” she added. “I can see what’s happening in the room. When we split into conversation groups, there has always been three or four of us who have been on Zoom to make our own discussion group; it’s been perfect. If it was just one person at home, it might have been a little awkward, but I felt included because there were always at least a handful of us tuning in.” 

Two generations in Prairie Fire



RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

While having young adults in musical leadership in the MNO Synod is a tradition going back to at least the 1980s, it was just over 20 years ago that the music leadership group at the time came up with the name Prairie Fire and a new legacy began.

Under the leadership of then-assistant to the bishop, Rev. Elaine Sauer, the group transitioned from Campus Ministry leadership to Youth and Young Adult Ministry. The group began travelling, taking the monthly worship to congregations throughout the synod while also continuing the tradition of assisting with the planning and leadership of retreats, and advocating for youth and young adult ministry.

When 16-year-old Zak Skakum, Messiah, Winnipeg, became the newest member of Prairie Fire in the fall of 2021, he not only joined this long history of youth and young adult leadership in the MNO Synod, but he also became the first child of a former Prairie Fire member to join the team.

Zak's mom, Teri Skakum, was part of the group who named, and formed, Prairie Fire as it has been known and recognized for the past 20+ years. (Zak's dad, Russ Skakum was part of the music ministry team in the early 1990s before it became Prairie Fire.)

When asked why he was interested in being a part of Prairie

Fire, Zak replied it was because of his love for music, and that church has always been a place that has supported and encouraged him in his musical development. Hearing stories of his mom's time in Prairie Fire as well as from Bishop Jason Zinko, who was a member of Prairie Fire at the same time as Zak's mom, also influenced Zak's desire to be part of the group.

While Zak's musical future is unknown (he plans to pursue musical studies in university with the goal of becoming a music teacher) one thing is certain—following in the line of many Prairie Fire members before him, he is part of a history of strong leadership development in the synod; a history that has raised up many young people who have gone on to be leaders in their congregations, the wider church, their communities and the world.

—Teri Skakum and Zak Skakum



Top: Prairie Fire then—2001. Back row from left: Chris Buffie, Bishop Jason Zinko, Daniel Jordan. Front row: Teri Skakum, Connor Trueman, Leslie Osadchuk.

Bottom: Prairie Fire now—2021. From left: Deacon Michelle Collins, Jon Kostna, Zak Skakum, Shayna Bellingham, Alyssa Houde, Eden Scherger.



Teri Skakum



COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE



Rev. Jeremy Langner

The earth is calling. How will we answer?

With global warming on pace to hit record highs, it is time to take a deeper look at how we as congregations and as individual members of the body of Christ are contributing to the ongoing climate crisis.

At the 2019 ELCIC National Convention, delegates adopted a resolution for the ELCIC to be carbon neutral by 2050. A lofty goal, and one that cannot be achieved overnight, the ELCIC has opted to begin the process of cutting down emissions by 50 percent by the year 2030. Should the initiative be approved at the 2023 Special Assembly, much change will be needed across the ELCIC going forward. As Rev. Jeremy Langner explains, those changes may not be quite as difficult as some may imagine.

"This is a major challenge for us as a church," the Winnipeg-based pastor says.

"Most of our congregations use large, energy inefficient buildings that are only occupied for a couple hours a week before sitting empty. So, the question of 'how we as a church can serve as good stewards' keeps coming up. And it's a very important issue for us in the church; how do we respond to the climate crisis in a faithful way?"

Rev. Langner says there are three serious ways to consider making a positive impact.

"People can sometimes feel very helpless, as we are part of a larger society where what we do as individuals can only go so far," he says. "But when enough individuals act in a certain way, then the market and the economy and the larger society responds. Three of the key areas that individuals can focus on to reduce their carbon footprint would be reassessing their transportation, their diet/intake and the energy they consume in their home."

A few suggestions that Rev. Langner would make on the side of transportation would include the use of a bike, public transit, an energy-efficient or hybrid vehicle, as well as reducing one's air travel.



COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE

Young voices on racism

Dialogue is a tool to seek mutual understanding and to build community. Young Voices on Racism started with three racialized persons looking for a safe space to dialogue issues of race.

We, Anglicans and Lutherans, have been gathering online on a weekly basis since Fall 2020 to unpack our concerns, with new friends sometimes joining our circle.

"This space is unique because with friends it's not planned, but this is dedicated to have nuanced conversations about racism with the intent to get something out of it. We are able to dive into tough topics about experiences of racism with a level of comfort and honesty that I have not been able to discover elsewhere."

"The church needs to have these crucial conversations about racism because everyone should be having them. The church holds a special place for such discussions because of our commitments to grace and love, community and care. While these discussions can become vulnerable and difficult, being among people with a foundation of care and community is a positive way to explore these topics."

"The church is becoming anti-racist when we

start including more diversity like the inclusion of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour concerns into sermons, newsletters or just the daily word."

"When people hear about Lutherans and Anglicans, I want them to say 'Oh they are on the anti-racism train,' that anti-racist and our denominations are synonymous. It would be such a profound change when I tell someone I'm Lutheran and they know we stand for racial justice."

—Rev. Chung Yan Lam



Group members Li Xiu Guo, Rev. Chung Yan Lam, Emily Walker and Freddy Sourial.



TOP: Climate scientist and ELCIC member Kata Kuhnert.

BOTTOM: Kuhnert shared her experiences at COP27 on the @CanadianLutherans Instagram account.

He says that eating local, avoiding highly-processed foods, purchasing items from farmers' markets or fruit/vegetable stands are ways for people to not only help the planet, but also contribute to healthier lives for our bodies.

And in terms of energy efficient living, Rev. Langner suggests the use of a carbon calculator to help assess one's carbon footprint. While making the switch to solar panels, an air-sourced heat pump, an energy efficient furnace or better insulation are also some of the first steps for those looking into the efficiency of buildings they own.

"There really is a lot that people can do," he shares. "And not all of these suggestions require a lot of money either. Something like changing your diet might even cost you less, while providing you with great benefits. The thing that we start to realize is that these sacrifices are actually healthier for us too. It's helping the planet and also contributing to healthier lives for ourselves and our bodies."

Rev. Langner belongs to the ELCIC Task Force on Carbon Neutrality, which also currently includes Louis Gigeure and Adele Buckley, along with Rev. Paul Gehrs as staff support.

Kata Kuhnert assists the group in discussions surround her work as a circum-polar climate scientist in Canada's far north.

"We have to act morally on this issue. That means we actually need to look at the way that we as churches and people contribute to the climate crisis," Kuhnert says.

The ELCIC's Task Force on Carbon Neutrality has been working to help educate members and congregations on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with Canada's targets, but according to Kuhnert, that is just the very tip of the iceberg.

"The Task Force is doing great work within the ELCIC to facilitate meaningful conversation about reducing our greenhouse gas emissions in line with Canada's targets," she adds. "We should be some of the most ambitious people in the country because we love the land, and we love our neighbours. If we care about our international community, including that of Lutherans around the world, we need meaningful action now. The timeline is so short."

From November 7-19, Kuhnert was in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt actively participating in the 27th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—also known as COP27. That experience reminded her of the role of the church in helping address climate change while enacting climate justice for all—including that of our future generations.

"This is both faith-based and faith-led action," Kuhnert continues. "Our faith is actually land-based. Our creation story puts us as having been formed from the earth from God's hands. We are made of the earth and experience kinship with the earth. We love the land and are tasked with caring for it and creation.

So, then we have to be doing this work in loving and ambitious ways with the care for our communities and our neighbours at the forefront of our minds."



Climate action at Hosanna

Hosanna, Edmonton, was first certified as a Greening Congregation in 2009 as part of the ELCIC's Stewardship of Creation program. Since then, the congregation has worked hard to increase its energy efficiency, while reducing its carbon footprint and use of single-use paper and plastic products.

In 2014, 1970s-era furnaces were replaced with new energy-efficient units. The cost of this project was about \$34,000, raised by the congregation.

The next phase began in 2016, part of a more extensive church building renovation, including installing wider doors with automatic openers, upgrading washrooms and installing acoustic tiles.

Sustainability upgrades started with changing old lighting to LEDs. Hosanna also replaced many aluminum slider-style windows with more efficient styles. Three additional furnaces, not part of the previous work, were replaced with more efficient units.

The cost of these renovations came to approximately \$145,000,

not including volunteer labour.

Hosanna was able to access grants for roughly \$75,000, and the congregation provided the rest. The sustainability efforts resulted in a reduction in power consumption of about 38% from pre-renovation levels.

In 2020, Hosanna needed to replace its aging roof. The estimated cost was approximately \$250,000.

An alternative was provided to Hosanna in the form of a spray foam roof, adding an additional R14 insulation value at an overall reduced cost. This roof upgrade ended up costing approximately \$130,000 and was funded by a bequest from a member.

The most recent part of Hosanna's sustainability plan involves the installation of solar panels on the roof of the church. The project consists of an array of seventy 450-watt solar panels capable of generating 31,500 kW of peak power for a projected total of 32,600 kWh/year.

This amount of generation should allow the church to generate 100% of its electrical power as



COMPASSIONATE JUSTICE

averaged over the year. As a result, the church expects to be a net exporter of electricity in the summer and an importer in the winter.

The completed system cost about \$65,000 to install (approximately \$1.93/watt). The congregation raised over 50% of the funds for this project, and the remaining amount was matched by the church's sustainability fund.

The expected carbon offset from the solar panels will be about 21 tons per year. Over the 30-year projected lifespan of the system, it should provide benefits to the environment of the equivalent of 10,470 trees planted, 509,900 kg of CO₂ reduction, or 5,963,250 km driven by an electric vehicle. .

Hosanna would eventually like to become a net-zero facility. That goal is still a ways off and will likely require government legislation and policy changes to better support small energy producers.

—Rev. Dr. James Hendricksen



Rooftop solar panels on the flat-top roof.



Installing energy efficient lighting in Hosanna's sanctuary.



New high-efficiency furnaces at Hosanna.

James Hendricksen

What happens when you *Give...*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) functions through **THREE** major expressions:

locally as congregations, **regionally** as synods and **nationally** as the ELCIC.

Each expression of the church has unique ministries as well as ministries which are shared with the other expressions.

When you give to the ELCIC, you help support ALL the expressions of the church!

\$63,231,908

was used by **CONGREGATIONS** to fund local ministries. Your weekly offering supports the work of your congregation and its ministry.

\$3,194,158

was shared to support the ministry done through **ELCIC SYNODS**. This includes supporting congregations and leaders within your synod.

\$812,343

was sent through the synods to the **NATIONAL CHURCH** to support the wider mission of the ELCIC.



In 2020, ELCIC members gave over **\$66,426,066**
in regular offerings to support the Church through
these three expressions of the ELCIC.



Your support helps us carry out the national ministries of the wider church

While themes for the ELCIC Praise Appeal may have changed over the years, the original intent of the appeal, which first began in 2011, remains the same.

"By supporting the ELCIC Praise Appeal, our members are in partnership to help enable the ministry of the national expression of the church," says ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson.

The ELCIC Praise Appeal helps support ministries such as:

- ✦ Our partnerships with KAIROS and the Anglican Church of Canada as we work in the areas of homelessness, affordable housing and responsible resource extraction.
- ✦ Our partnerships with The Lutheran World Federation and Canadian Lutheran World Relief as we work to support refugees and displaced people around the world.
- ✦ Our partnerships with churches in Argentina, Peru and Jordan and the Holy Land.
- ✦ Growing our call to spiritual renewal through initiatives such as Living our Faith.
- ✦ Fostering our relationships with other denominations and faiths in Canada through the Canadian Council of Churches, and around the world through the World Council of Churches.



Help us continue this work by holding an ELCIC Praise Appeal service and donating a designated gift to the ELCIC Praise Appeal. ELCIC congregations are asked to designate one Sunday a year to highlight this appeal at a time that works best for your local context.

Find out more at: elcic.ca/PraiseAppeal

#myELCIC

Connect with others across the ELCIC and share what being Lutheran means in your life and the life of your church.





Share your selfies, social media posts and photos, using the hashtag #myELCIC.



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We thank all who assisted with this annual report.

Your contributions underline how we are making a difference in so many ways as we live out our call as followers of Christ.

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LIVING OUR FAITH