



Appendix A: Lutheran World Federation

You do make a difference!

Colombia: Her name is Marta and she is six years old. She lives in war-torn Colombia in an internally displaced persons camp. Her family fled their home and whole way of life when their village erupted in gunfire. You, through the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in cooperation with the Lutheran Evangelical Church of Colombia, provide Marta and 500 other children with a healthy meal once a day, medical attention for 1100 families in the camp, clean drinking water, and seed money for her parents to begin a small business. *Together we do make a difference! Because of the LWF, Marta and her family have hope.*

Russia: There was no training in Russia for Lutheran pastors during the time of the Soviet Union. The seminary in Novosaratovka is doing its best to educate a whole new population of pastors, youth workers, church musicians, and catechists. With your support, the LWF is educating new leadership for the church. *Together we do make a difference! Because of the LWF, eight men and women are able to begin seminary each year.*

Zimbabwe: This week in Zimbabwe alone, 3,000 people will die of AIDS. Over 780,000 children in Zimbabwe are AIDS orphans. Through the LWF, you care for orphans and give hope by providing school fees, clothing, and food packets. Last year we offered AIDS prevention workshops for 5,243 people in Zimbabwe. *Together we do make a difference!*

Accompanying those affected by the Tsunami: While the world reeled at the devastation and loss in Asia following the December 2004 tsunami, the LWF was and is present through immediate support for those in our member churches, the current Department for World Service programs and through Action by Churches Together – the ecumenical agency that both the LWF and World Council of Churches use in disaster relief work. We were there immediately and will remain for years to come as rebuilding of lives, communities and churches continues. *Together we do make a difference!*

Thank you

On behalf of the Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, and the three other LWF member churches in North America (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diaspora, and the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad), I bring you greetings and offer thanks for your ongoing support of the work of the LWF.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and its predecessor bodies have been prominent in the LWF since its inception in 1947 when 47 Lutheran churches around the world responded to the devastating human need in post war Europe. Early in the life of the LWF, two North American church leaders served as presidents of the LWF: Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America and subsequently of the Lutheran Church in America, served as president from 1957-1963; and Fredrik A. Schiotz, president of The American

Lutheran Church, served as LWF president from 1963-1970. We continue to be blessed by the work done in those early years. Today we celebrate the election in 2003 of ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson as LWF president. Bishop Hanson will serve as president until the Eleventh Assembly of the LWF in 2010. The ELCA is a church with historically close connections to the global Lutheran family—a family of nearly 65 million Lutherans in 138 church bodies in 77 countries!

Who are we?

The Department for World Service (DWS), the LWF international relief, rehabilitation, and development agency, maintains 24 service programs, and emergency operations in 31 countries with over 50 international staff and 5,500 local staff. This makes you part of one of the largest humanitarian assistance agencies in the world! We are able to be in these places of need because of your gifts to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. Thirty cents of each dollar given to the World Hunger Appeal supports the work of the LWF.

In addition to hunger funds, the LWF has an endowment fund established to ensure that the witness and ministry of the LWF is sustained and expanded. The ELCA Foundation manages the fund for contributions from ELCA members.

The Department for Mission and Development focuses on promoting and strengthening the life and witness of the member churches. Support is guided by three main aims: 1) to build the capacities and competence in the member churches; 2) to expand understanding of mission; and 3) to strengthen member churches with financial, material and human resources.

The Department for Theology and Studies utilizes some of the best scholars to write on issues and concepts that confront twenty-first century churches. What makes the LWF distinctive is a living faith that engages the challenges our human community faces today.

The Office for International Affairs and Human Rights advocates for justice, peace, the transformation of cultures of violence and oppression, and strengthens the advocacy capacity of member churches.

The Office for Ecumenical Affairs is the main instrument in relations with other churches and church organizations at the international level.

Tenth Assembly

In July 2003, the LWF gathered in assembly in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for the Tenth Assembly under the theme “For the Healing of the World”. In the 56-year history of the LWF, this was only the second time an assembly has been held in North America. Hundreds of ELCA members were able to participate as delegates, advisors, visitors and volunteers at the Assembly. At the close of the Assembly, the ELCA was privileged to host the Post-Assembly Visitation Program in many locations across this church. The richness and depth of those visits continues to shape our lives individually, in synods and in congregations.

There was great disappointment as visa issues prohibited many African and Asian delegates and visitors from attending the Assembly and Post-Assembly program. The whole Assembly grieved the loss of those voices in the deliberations and fellowship.

The Assembly Message, which provides the direction for the next seven years of the LWF's work, was forwarded to each member church body with the commitments and recommendations to the churches. The introductory paragraphs of the 18 page report include these words:

"The world's multiple ills are evident around and within us; as Lutheran Christians we profess that in this world we cannot escape from these ever-present manifestations of sin and evil. We may yearn for definitive solutions to sin and evil, but are left with partial glimpses of what God, the ultimate healer, promises us. God promises 'a new heaven and earth' (Isaiah 65:17 and following) in which suffering, sickness, and dying are no more. Living in light of that promise, we realize that amid the brokenness and suffering, God *is* effecting healing in our lives and our world, in mysterious and unexpected ways, using human beings as his healing agents. God's abiding commitment to the world—to be with us—gives us the courage to name and seek healing for the wounds, scars and diseases, and to bear witness to the healing that is occurring. We have done so in this Assembly with a deepening sense of communion with one another, and in the confident hope that God's promises as revealed through Scripture *will* be fulfilled!"

The full text of the Assembly message can be accessed via the LWF Web site: www.lutheranworld.org.

Council members

The following ELCA members have accepted leadership roles in the LWF during the years of 2003-2010:

Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson, President
Pr. Emmanuel Grantson, Council member
Ms. Abigail Zang Hoffman, Council member
Pr. Barbara Rossing, Council member

Ms. Linda J. Brown, Council Advisor
Pr. Rafael Malpica-Padilla, Council Advisor

Ms. Belletech Deressa, Consultant
Pr. Randall R. Lee, Consultant
Pr. Charles S. Miller, Consultant
Pr. Eric C. Shafer, Consultant

ELCA members serving on the LWF Geneva Staff:

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the gifts of ELCA members who currently are on staff in Geneva. The Rev. Karen Bloomquist is the director of the Department for Theology and Studies, and Ms. Sarah Padre serves in the finance office of the Department for World Service.

Being a communion of churches

At the LWF Tenth Assembly in 2003, a decision was made to change the name of the LWF. We are now "The Lutheran World Federation, a Communion of Churches". The LWF provides the table where we, as member churches, come together to pray, sing, dialog, learn, discuss, agree and disagree. What

does that mean for us in the ELCA? What do we have to learn? What do we have to share? How can we hear and learn from our brothers and sisters in the South about evangelism and outreach? How will we rethink our use of this church's resources? How will we learn to make shared decisions? Can we rejoice that while we may be separated by oceans, significant land mass and culture, we are indeed a healthy, creative family with our sisters and brothers in the LWF?

Regional Office for North America

LWF regional offices were initiated in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and North America to assist member churches in giving life to the vision of Lutheran communion. In 1997 the North America office was begun with funding from the LWF, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the ELCA. A joint agreement between these three bodies continues to provide shape, oversight and financial resources for the office. Headquartered in the Lutheran Center in Chicago, the North America Regional Officer's responsibilities include interpretation and education about LWF, building and nurturing relationships and communication between and among the four member churches in North America for the purpose of mission, facilitating the sharing of gifts of LWF members with the North America churches wherever possible, and assisting in fund raising related to the LWF Endowment Fund.

Conclusion

The ELCA continues to make significant contributions to the mission and work of the Lutheran World Federation. These include many contributions that individuals, institutions and units of the ELCA make in leadership, study, and service within the LWF. The contribution also includes strong financial support for the LWF as we make our common witness and service. We work together in emergency humanitarian assistance, sustainable development, evangelism, communication, Christian education, theological education, ministry with women and youth in church and society, studies and theological reflection, advocacy with international affairs and human rights, and in continued attention to ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue.

Through God's grace, we are able in *communion* to share our pain, joy, burdens, and gifts and in that process begin to understand what Luther was describing when he explained what occurs through the sacrament of the altar: "...through the interchange of Christ's blessings and our misfortunes, we become one loaf, one bread, one body, one drink, and have all things in common. In this way we are changed into one another and are made into a community by love."

We are a complex, multi-faceted Lutheran family who together, all 65 million strong, do make a difference! As Lutherans, our call *is* for the healing of the world. May our actions and the deep, vibrant faith of the people of this church help make it so!

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

Kathy J. Magnus, *regional officer for North America*