

Joint Assembly 2013 Daily Report

An unofficial digest of the proceedings of the First Joint Assembly of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and the 40th Session of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada

Wednesday, July 3, 2013

Joint Session #1 Wednesday Afternoon

1. Opening

The Joint Assembly opened with a celebration of the Eucharist. Archbishop Fred Hiltz presided, leading the Assembly to renew their baptismal vows. In her sermon, National Bishop Susan Johnson challenged people to share our faith with each other during our time together, and reminded us that Jesus didn't come because God so loved the Church, but because God so loved the world.

The Venerable Bruce Myers, Ecumenical Officer, ACC, and Pastor Andre Lavergne, Assistant to the Bishop, Ecumenical and Interfaith, ELCIC, welcomed local ecumenical and interfaith guests

2. Joint Report – ACC Primate and ELCIC National Bishop

National Bishop Johnson and Archbishop Hiltz addressed the Assembly together, celebrating highlights in full communion life and to challenging us into deeper expression of our Waterloo Commitments. There has been a growth in shared ministries, mutual learning, and initiatives in public witness for social justice and advocacy over these twelve years, both locally and national. Opportunities for future collaboration and cooperation continue to emerge. Some will be discerned together in this Assembly. The two leaders highlighted events such as the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth Gathering (CLAY), the National ELCIC-ACC Worship Conference, and joint witness to the Millennium Development Goals.

3. Community Building

Members were taught how to use the 'clicker' (electronic voting) technology and were led into community building exercises at their mixed Anglican-Lutheran table groups.

Joint Session #2 Wednesday Evening

4. Welcomes

Elder Annie Smith-St. George welcomed the Assembly to the traditional Territory of the Algonquian People, offering reflections on the healing that comes when we work together in unity, and a prayer of gratitude for the gifts of the Creator and for this gathering.

Registrations were announced: ELCIC with 129 lay and 128 rostered members as voting delegates; ACC with 41 bishops, 110 clergy and 133 lay members as voting delegates.

The Primate and National Bishop welcomed special guests: the Reverend Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Director of Unity, Faith, and Order for the Anglican Communion, the Reverend Canon Kenneth Kearon, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, the Reverend Martin Junge, General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Most Reverend Katherine Jefferts-Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Dr. Patrick Fletcher, Theological Advisor to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ms Jennifer Henry, Executive Director of KAIROS, the Reverend Elizabeth Jones, United Church of Canada member of the Anglican United Church Dialogue, and The Reverend Dr Karen Hamilton, General Secretary Canadian Council of Churches.

5. Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The Reverend Jamie Scott, a United Church member of the Ecumenical Working Group on Residential Schools, reflected on his several decades of experience in listening to the stories of former students of the Indian Residential Schools. The TRC process is about facing the fundamental brokenness at the heart of our nation. This process sets the table for years to come and the healing journey will take decades. Following the presentation, the Primate invited a time of silence, after which he offered a prayer for the journey of truth telling, healing and reconciliation.

6. Keynote Presentation: *Birth of a People for the Love of the World: The Pentecost Paradigm for an Inside-Out Church*

Dr. Christopher Duraisingh challenged the Assembly to reflect on the theme in which it is brought together. God's mission is bringing about our reconciliation, bringing us together for the love of the world, turning us inside out, together the body of Christ, broken for the life of the world. For us to adopt being this way is not about making mission a 'project.' It is a posture of being: a way of life that can critique and dismantle destructive dominant powers.

7. Presentation on Homelessness and Affordable Housing

The Reverend Laurette Glasgow, Special Advisor for Government Relations, ACC, and Matthew Brown, Youth Missioner for the Diocese of Ottawa, helped the Assembly to put a face on homelessness. The stories of homeless persons were spoken, interspersed with information and statistics about mental illness, economic 'downsizing', family violence and racism, and with words of Scripture. They introduced the Joint Declaration on Homelessness and Affordable Housing being brought before the Assembly.

8. Night Prayer

The Assembly departed the Plenary Hall in song, to gather in the mezzanine lobby to pray for those concerns that emerged in the work of the day.