

synergy

together in mission



Canadian Lutheran
World Relief

Eastern Synod | 2024



“...and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

—Revelation 22:1-2

Dear friends,

Greetings on behalf of the Board and staff of CLWR on the occasion of the 2024 Eastern Synod Convention! We are proud to be partners in ministry with the ELCIC in mission for others, as together we respond to God’s love in Christ by serving others.

Let there be greening is not only a call to action, but it is a prayer and promise. An expression of the new life made possible when we come together in partnership with those in need. And we are continually inspired by all of you throughout the Eastern Synod for your commitment to the work of justice and peace and your faithful response to live out God’s call to care for creation.

As the world has faced disaster, growing conflict, and continued food insecurity, you have responded with urgency, generosity, and faithfulness. I wanted to share with you just a few of the many good news stories happening in our world as a result of your kindness.

We are uplifted by the creative ways in which your congregations have been working together in the life-saving mission of resettling

refugees in Canada and creatively using CLWR resources to support our work around the world. We are continuing to add to our growing list of resources, including new Bible studies every month and activities for Vacation Bible School. And, inspired by your generosity, we recently launched the Apple Tree Fund, a long-term impact fund that will ensure sustained and significant impact of major gifts from churches and individuals while creating a lasting legacy of compassion and hope.

I hope that during this gathering, you will visit our display to learn more about these initiatives and to hear more stories of the impact your generosity has made.

Our thanks to the individuals from your Synod who have served on our board in recent years, and to all the pastors, deacons, lay leaders and congregations of the Eastern Synod for your partnership in ministry. May God bless this gathering, and may God bless your ministry.

Karin Achtelstetter, Chief Executive Officer

East Africa | Responding to the hunger crisis

Last year, conflict, climate change and hunger put countless lives at risk in East Africa—violence in Sudan and severe drought in countries like Somalia displaced millions of people internally as well as across borders.

Sudanese refugees forced to cross into Chad due to armed conflict in Sudan had limited access to food, water, shelter or sanitation. Households headed by women, as well as young children and people with disabilities were especially vulnerable.

Lutheran congregations across Canada responded quickly to this crisis. St. John’s Lutheran Church in Arnprior, ON, for example, organized a chili and soup fundraiser in February 2023 to raise

donations from congregation members. “Given recent world events, we decided to designate that all monies be used for emergency food in order to take advantage of the 4x matching [by the Canadian government],” said St. John’s Outreach Committee member Cathy Zimmerling.

Thanks to the generosity of congregations like St. John’s, CLWR partners were able to provide emergency food to displaced families like Khadidja’s (cover), in addition to fixing water supplies and distributing hygiene kits and shelter materials.

Cover Image: Conflict forced Khadidja Mahamat Saleh to flee across the border from Sudan to Chad with her family. PHOTO: LWF CHAD



St. Philip's congregation members and GRIT project guests listening to speakers at the reception. PHOTO: CLWR

West Bank | Expanding opportunities

Last June, St. Philip's Lutheran Church in Etobicoke, ON hosted a reception celebrating the work of CLWR's GRIT project, which supports women and people with disabilities in the West Bank secure their futures through technical education and training.

The reception was an opportunity for congregation members to meet and share stories with ten representatives from seven training institutes across the West Bank who were on an international knowledge exchange trip to Canada.

The GRIT project has been working in partnership with these institutes to reduce barriers for women by expanding and improving training programs, providing scholarships, arranging apprenticeship opportunities, and much more.

Thanks to the support of the Canadian government, and congregations like St. Philip's across the country, thousands of women in the West Bank are making their career dreams come true!

Ukraine | Helping children cope with trauma

The conflict in Ukraine, ongoing for over two years, has been particularly traumatic for children, many of whom lost their sense of control over their surroundings.

Barbara Körozsi is a therapy dog trainer whose dog Doxa works with children at a shelter for the displaced in Berehove, Ukraine. The children play with Doxa, who brings them comfort, builds self confidence and teaches them to trust again. Deciding what Doxa will do and directing her with commands provides children with a sense of control in a safe space.

Barbara recalls one family with two children: "When they arrived, [they] were afraid of any noise that sounded like the war... They wouldn't go anywhere without their mother. But when they started to interact with Doxa, they began to open up... They now come without their mom. They don't cry but play and have fun."

Thank you for helping children in Ukraine reclaim their childhood!

Just as a single apple seed can
one day become an orchard,
a legacy gift to our
APPLE TREE FUND
will turn into life-saving
hope & help across regions
for decades to come.



Find out how you
can plant hope
clwr.org/appletree

Cows x 4 = 1 Pastor | Rev. Dr. Kimberlynn McNabb

It was the mid 1980's and there was famine in Mozambique. CLWR sponsored and advertised an appeal where one cow became four. At that time there was a young teenager at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Owen Sound, ON, who was captivated by this idea of one becoming 4. Brilliant!

I was that teenager. It was the first time I had heard anything like this appeal. I was excited! It sounded like a miraculous deal, the multiplying of cows, like Jesus multiplied the loaves and fish. Cows for Mozambique became a youth group project.

I was very captivated by the project, so much so that I researched the kind of cows that live in Africa, to enable the drawing of a cow head (with crazy horns) to go in the bulletin announcement. The youth group had a spaghetti supper with part of the proceeds going to purchase cows. The supper was well attended and people were generous with donations.

With such abundance at hand, the youth group decided that a bigger herd of cows was possible, the youth group decided to take responsibility for leading an entire Sunday worship service. We had a musician, readers, communion assistants, prayer givers, ushers, acolytes, and no preacher.

The youth group decided that I was preaching. They teased me that it was

because I talked a lot. It was really because I liked talking about God and pondering and debating bigger life questions. I was also passionate. I loved God. I loved cows. I loved abundance. I loved helping others. And so, my 15 year old self wrote a sermon. It was written in ballpoint pen on the back of boxboard from a cereal box that had been cut in thin strips, like a newspaper column. Some words were underlined, others highlighted in pencil crayon to help with the delivery of the message.

It was my first sermon to a congregation. I was terrified and excited all at the same time. I persevered because I did it for the COWS.

A herd of cows was raised by the youth group project for CLWR and by the time they reached Mozambique there were four herds.

CLWR's project did something else too, it captivated a young person to dream big and participate in the miraculous when facing daunting issues like famine; it excited and directed a passion for sharing abundance and good news; and it set a young person on the path to being a preacher and a pastor.

Rev. Dr. Kimberlynn McNabb, ordained 26 years, is pastor at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Halifax, NS.



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