

## ANGLICANS, LUTHERANS TO CELEBRATE RELATIONSHIP

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On a beautiful Sunday morning in July of 2001, in an arena at Kitchener-Waterloo, members of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) General Synod and delegates to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) National Convention, along with many local members and friends, came together to celebrate the Full Communion relationship between our two churches. There was great jubilation in the congregation, and at the end of the morning, during the recessional music, the then Anglican Primate, Michael Peers, and the then National Bishop of the ELCIC, Telmor Sartison, were dancing in the sheer joy of the moment.

Six years have passed. In many ways our two churches are closer than ever. In other ways we realize that there are many differences yet. But, most importantly, we continue to celebrate the Eucharist together, in the full communion which is Our Lord's desire for all Christians, and we work together in many and various ways, including the full exchange of clergy. There have been and remain numerous instances of ELCIC pastors serving Anglican congregations and ministries, and ACC priests serving ELCIC congregations and ministries, as together we seek to make the best use of the gifted people which God has given us.

On a Thursday morning in Manitoba, the longest day of the year, and National Aboriginal Day, also known as 21 June 2007, our two churches will meet once again, as both bodies hold their national assemblies in Winnipeg. We will spend the day together at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., celebrating our relationship, giving thanks to God for it. In a day structured as a Eucharistic (thanksgiving) service, about 1,000 of us will sing together, pray together, study together, and feast together, at a shared luncheon and most especially at the Lord's table.

The featured speaker for the day will be Dr. Sallie McFague, Distinguished Theologian in Residence at the Vancouver School of Theology. Her most recent book is *Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril*. The focus for the day is water, that which gives us life both literally and spiritually.

The National Bishop, Raymond Schultz, and the Primate, Andrew Hutchison, will share in presiding, in the Thanksgiving for Baptism, that which makes us one, and in the celebration of the Meal which keeps us one. Everyone will be assigned to a table group for the day, half Anglican, half Lutheran, with other factors to keep it all interesting, and each group will spend the day together as we worship in Holy Communion, song, prayer, Scripture, study, and share food together. It promises to be a rich day of fellowship, of growing together, as we give thanks to God for our Full Communion relationship six years in, and recommit ourselves to this shared journey into which Christ has called us.