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– A Communion of Churches**

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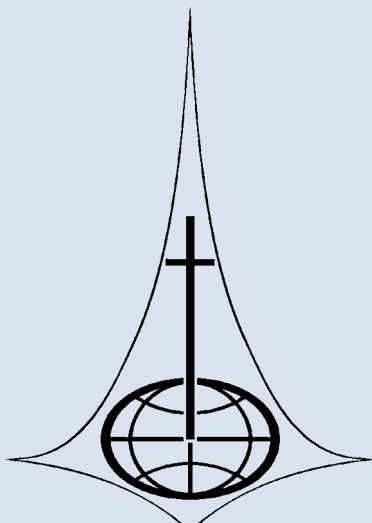
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## LWF Churches in Latin America Seek Deeper Communion Relations



At the 2007 meeting of the Latin American Church Leadership Conference in Chile, bishops and presidents of the LWF member churches in Latin America adopted a plan to evaluate the process of regional cooperation among the churches over the past ten years.

*(Photo)* Participants in the conference visited projects of the local LWF member churches. Rev. Juan Pedro Schaad (holding paper) from the Evangelical Church of the River Plate, with children at the “Sala Cuna El Sembrador,” a community day-care center in Santiago de Chile, which is run by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile. © ALC/N. Giese *(See page 7)*

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The general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko, has called for revival of the vision of peace in the Holy Land and revitalization of the search for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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A typical hot afternoon in Chamanculo “D”, a shantytown near the fashionable suburbs of Mozambique’s capital, Maputo. The group of 12—ten women and two men—break up into smaller teams of two or three and map out the area and blocks of houses they will be visiting today.

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### Third Meeting of the Lutheran-Mennonite International Study Commission

The third meeting of the Lutheran-Mennonite International Study Commission took place from 18 to 22 June 2007 at the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France. Co-sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Mennonite World Conference (MWC), the mandate of the present Commission is to hold conversations that focus on the condemnations of Anabaptists in Lutheran confessional writings and their applicability to MWC member churches to-

day. The Commission intends to present its final report to the LWF and MWC for possible action by the end of 2008. Its final meeting will take place in Strasbourg from 3–6 June 2008.

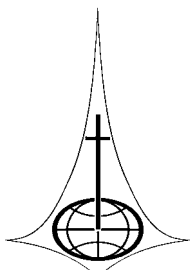
The communiqué from the 2007 meeting of the Lutheran-Mennonite International Study Commission, including references to papers and texts that were discussed is posted on the LWF Web site at: [www.lutheranworld.org/LWF\\_Documents/LWF-Lutheran\\_Mennonites\\_20070622.pdf](http://www.lutheranworld.org/LWF_Documents/LWF-Lutheran_Mennonites_20070622.pdf)

### LWF Studies' Book on Poverty and the Mission of the Church in Africa

**"So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts its mouth"** (Job 5:16) is the title of a Lutheran World Federation publication focusing on *Poverty and the Mission and the Church in Africa*. Produced in the *LWF Studies* series, 01/2007, the publication brings together presentations and reflections from a September 2006 LWF Department for Mission and Development (DMD) consultation on poverty and the mission of the church in Africa, and a Department for Theology and Studies (DTS) seminar in Arusha, Tanzania. Participants in the meetings included representatives from the LWF member churches in Africa and Northern partners.

The 180-page publication is co-edited by DTS director, Rev. Dr Karen Bloomquist and Rev. Dr Musa Filibus, LWF/DMD area secretary for Africa. In its preface, Filibus expresses the hope that what is shared in this book will inspire churches publicly to denounce impoverishment and to work toward better alternatives for the suffering masses in Africa and globally.

Copies can be ordered from: The LWF Department for Theology and Studies, 150 Route de Ferney, P. O. Box 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. Tel. +41 22 791 6111, Fax +41 22 791 6626, or [uli@lutheranworld.org](mailto:uli@lutheranworld.org) The price is CHF 18, EUR 12 or USD 15 plus postage and packing.



# LWF President Congratulates Pope Benedict XVI on 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday

## A Ministry of Vision and Friendship

CHICAGO, United States of America/GENEVA, 13 April 2007 (LWI) – In a letter of congratulations to Pope Benedict XVI for his upcoming birthday, the president of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Bishop Mark S. Hanson, writes “I pray that your ministry of vision and friendship as Bishop of Rome and primate of the Roman Catholic Church will continue for many years to come.” The Pope will celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on Monday, 16 April.

Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, notes that the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1999 signing of the historic Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification is only two years away. He expresses his desire that the 2009 celebrations “will take into account the magnitude of this declaration for our communions today and likewise capture the urgency of our work together tomorrow.”

*The full text of the letter follows:*

### Letter to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI

Your Holiness,

On behalf of the Lutheran World Federation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, I am greatly pleased to send you birthday greetings today, on the advent of your 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. I pray that your ministry of vision and friendship as Bishop of Rome and primate of the Roman Catholic Church will continue for many years to come.

I was delighted once more to meet with and hear Walter Cardinal Kasper deliver your congratulatory greeting to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran World Federation only two weeks ago in Lund, Sweden. Your fine words were important for members of the LWF to hear—our calling of a “common witness” is truly “a gift of the Holy Spirit,” as you stated so well. I want to thank you as well for your reference to the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification between our two communions, and specifically to the call for deeper understanding of the nature of the Church, its sacraments and its ministries. I am reminded that the 10-year celebration of this historic declaration is only

two short years away. My desire is that celebrations in 2009 will take into account the magnitude of this declaration for our communions today and likewise capture the urgency of our work together tomorrow.

At the Lutheran World Federation meeting in Lund, I spoke of what it means to be a communion of Lutherans living in the midst of global complexities today. In that meeting I placed the urgency of our time before the members present. I noted that the question for the next 60 years is the same question which brought our forebears together 60 years ago: Where is God leading us now? How do we love and serve our neighbor today? I believe Lutherans and Roman Catholics throughout the world are blessed by these relationships and these essential questions, and I thank God for your leadership at this time.

In God’s Grace,

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson  
 President, The Lutheran World Federation  
 Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church  
 in America

## African Envoys Laud Religious Leaders’ Role in Peace and Development

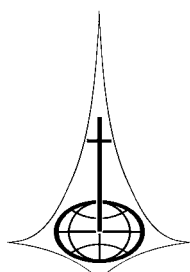
### Interfaith Women’s Group on Solidarity Visit to Nordic Countries

STOCKHOLM, Sweden/GENEVA, 3 May 2007 (LWI) – The head of African diplomats accredited to Sweden emphasized the role of religious leaders in the search for peace and development in Africa, during a recent meeting with an interfaith women’s group on a study visit to the Nordic countries. “Peace is a pre-condition for everything and the role of religious leaders cannot be overemphasized,” Ambassador Mary Mubi, dean of African Ambassadors to Sweden, told women representatives of the Inter-Faith Action for Peace in Africa (IFAPA), a pan-African initiative started by Rev.

Dr Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

Mubi, Zimbabwe’s envoy to Sweden spoke on behalf of 17 other African ambassadors who received the IFAPA group in the country’s capital, Stockholm. The women drawn from 11 countries were on an awareness-raising visit from 16 to 24 April to Sweden, Norway and Finland, in the context of their campaign, “A Mother’s Cry for a Healthy Africa,” launched in 2005.

Inaugurated in October 2002, IFAPA brings together representatives of Africa’s seven major faith tradi-





The IFAPA women's delegation held a two-day workshop in Geneva, to which other groups involved in peace and reconciliation issues were invited. Left to right: Ms Marie-Hélène M. Tumba, Geneva-based "Couleurs Afrique"; Ms Joyce Kamoto, IFAPA-Zambia; and Ms Thabisile C. Msezane, IFAPA-South Africa. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman

tions—African Traditional Religion, Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism—in collaborative peace building initiatives.

## Challenges for Women and Children

The women's study visit with representatives of local authorities, government ministers, diplomats and civil society networks in the Nordic countries was aimed at highlighting development issues pertinent to women and children in the African context especially the challenges of conflict. The group also sought co-operation and support toward capacity building in leadership development in order to address issues that would ensure a "healthy" Africa.

Ms Carin Gardbring, the program's coordinator in the Nordic countries, and her African counterpart, Ms Merab Mulindi, stressed the significance of the interfaith initiative in breaking bridges of division and in constructively building bridges that enhance understanding and trust across faith and religious divide.

The visit to Sweden under the auspices of the Church of Sweden featured interactive sessions with representatives of United Nations organizations working with Africa in different areas including gender, democracy, peace building, reconciliation and integration. Seminars and workshops were also held with representatives of peace movements, faith communities and development agencies.



Ms Mehrab Mulindi, IFAPA women's desk coordinator. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman



Prof. Fatima Z. El Kebir (left), IFAPA-Algeria; and Ms Pravina Varajidas from Mozambique. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman

Rev. Lennart Molin, associate general secretary at the Christian Council of Sweden, and a female Imam in Stockholm, Ms Suad Mohammed, stressed the significance of inter-religious initiatives with all groupings in understanding issues of unity and the challenges of diversity. This is the "responsibility of religious leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," they noted.

Ms Margareta Grape, director of International Affairs, Church of Sweden, commended the IFAPA women's campaign as a way of working on the identity of bearers and actors of peace in the context of the United Nations Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

## Norway: IFAPA Commissioner Advocates Negotiations

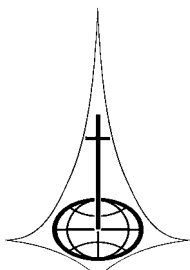
In Oslo, Norway, the president of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, Kjell Magne Bondevik said the notion of coalition governments provided valuable experiences that should be adopted to promote peace and equity. Bondevik, an ordained pastor of the [Lutheran] Church of Norway is a former Prime Minister of Norway. He is a member of the IFAPA Commission, inaugurated in June 2006 in Kigali, Rwanda.

During a seminar with the IFAPA women's delegation, Bondevik identified power sharing and cooperation between governments and faith organizations as major challenges to today's societal structures. He advocated the good use of compromises, dialogues and negotiations by various groups to avoid conflict.

At a separate meeting, Ms Guro Katharina H. Vikør, Ambassador for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, challenged the "mothers of Africa" under IFAPA to draw up specific concerns relevant to their countries and involve non-governmental organizations and the private sector in their plans toward achieving peace in conflict-affected parts of Africa.

## Finland: Call for Solidarity

At a seminar on interfaith understanding and women's empowerment in peace processes in Helsinki, Finland, IFAPA Commission member, Mr Pär Stenbäck said the IFAPA model represents a future for





Left to right: Ms Carin Gardbring, Sweden, IFAPA coordinator Nordic region; Ms Margaret Arach, IFAPA-Uganda; and Nigerian journalist Ms Brenda Akpan. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman

Africa, and was proof that it was possible for religious leaders to work together. The former government

minister called for solidarity between the Nordic countries and Africa on the initiative.

Mr Leo Siliämaa, deputy director of FinnChurchAid, expressed concern about the spate of conflicts due to the struggle for power and political leadership in Africa, and urged interfaith communities' active involvement in dialogue and in providing tools that would enable peace to thrive.

In discussions with the IFAPA representatives, Ambassador Ilari Rantakari in Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, advocated closer collaboration between the formal and informal sectors ensure effective participation toward peace building.

*(Nigerian journalist Ms Brenda Akpan accompanied the IFAPA women's group to the Nordic countries and contributed this article for LWI.)*

## Rwanda's Interfaith Commission Project to Benefit Thousands with Clean Water

After the Nordic countries' visit, the IFAPA women held a two-day seminar in Geneva, focusing on the role of women in peace building and conflict resolution. In the context of the seminar, LWF General Secretary and IFAPA convenor Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko (left), and Mr Niels Christiansen (right), vice president of the global food and beverage company Nestlé, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for financial and technical assistance to an IFAPA water project in eastern Rwanda.

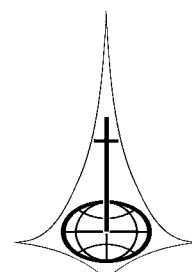


*(Photo right)* Speaking at the signing ceremony, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador Venetia Sebudandi (center)

expressed gratitude on her government's behalf for the grant and interfaith partnership, saying access to clean water was one of the major priorities. She particularly welcomed the IFAPA women representatives at the signing, and commended their goal of strengthening women's capacity to initiate programs targeted at healing in post-conflict situations. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman



*(Photo left)* Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko (left) and Mr Niels Christiansen (right) shake hands after the 26 April MoU signing. The Interfaith Commission of Rwanda, one of IFAPA's networks, will receive from Nestlé through the LWF, a grant of around USD 357,000 to provide clean water to over 53,000 people in Kirehe district, eastern Rwanda. © LWF/IFAPA/H. Putsman



## French Lutherans and Reformed Agree to Unity Process

Joint Synods Receive Proposal for United Protestant Church of France by 2013

SOCHAUX, France/GENEVA, 24 May 2007 (LWI) – The Evangelical Lutheran Church of France (EELF) and the Reformed Church of France (ERF) have agreed to start discussions that will lead to the creation of a United Protestant Church of France by 2013.

The unifying process was agreed during the first joint synod sessions of the EELF and ERF in the context of their respective national synod meetings held from 17 to 20 May in the eastern town of Sochaux, near Montbéliard, France.

The bridge-building process between the two churches started in 2002 when several congregations and regional synods requested their national committees to work toward a “stronger and more visible communion between our churches.”

At the recent joint synod sessions, the committees presented their proposals for the uniting process, which would lead to the establishment of one church with “different confessional regions” by 2013. Therefore, the Lutheran and Reformed identities will be preserved in their historical regions.

The synods also adopted a statement on the theme of the evolution of family relationships, titled “Word, Parenthood and Hope.” The statement declares that there is no “Christian family pattern” and reminds churches: “Rather than deploring a mythical golden era for families ... we want to pronounce a blessing on all men, women and children living together.” “We are joyful every time men, women and children live in love, solidarity, sharing and commitment each for the other.”

The EELF, a member church of the Lutheran World Federation since 1947 has 40,000 members, mostly in the Montbéliard and Paris regions, while the ERF has 300,000 members in all of France, except for the Alsace-Lorraine and Montbéliard area.

Commenting about the proposed union, the EELF president Rev. Joël Dautheville affirmed, “The message of the Reformation is still relevant to today’s world.”

The president of the ERF national council Rev. Marcel Manoël noted that the “French religious landscape has become very complex,” which makes communication difficult.



French Reformed church leader Rev. Marcel Manoël (left) and EELF president Rev. Joël Dautheville, after the uniting process decision was voted. © D. Cassou

The EELF and ERF pastors already study together at the Protestant Institute of Theology (Paris and Montpellier), jointly managed by both churches.

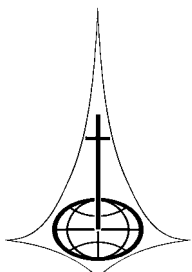
The Lutheran and Reformed traditions trace their origins back to the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The EELF and ERF’s move toward unity follows a similar process by the Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (ECAAL) and the Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine (ERAL), which in 2004 formed the Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace and Lorraine (UEPAL). In order to give better expression to the churches’ common identity in the name UEPAL they changed their names subsequently to the Protestant Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (EPCAAL) and the Protestant Reformed Church in Alsace and Lorraine (EPRAL).

Gérald Machabert, a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France and editor-in-chief of its monthly magazine, “L’Ami Chrétien” wrote this article for LWI, with additional input from Ecumenical News International.



The joint synod farewell worship was held at Montbéliard’s St Martin’s Church, the oldest Protestant church in France. © G. Machabert



## LWF Member Churches in Latin America Seek Deeper Relations as Communion

### Church Leadership Conference to Evaluate Regional Cooperation

*SANTIAGO DE CHILE, Chile/GENEVA, 13 July 2007 (LWI)* – “Our relations have matured, as has our cooperation with each other. The development in the spirit of ‘comunio’ has changed us and now we have to see where the path we have embarked upon will lead us.”



*At the COL conference in Chile, LWF Council adviser Mr Alfonso Corzo reports on the January 2007 LWF Renewal Committee meeting; on the right, Rev. Dr Gloria Rojas, COL moderator. © ALC/N. Giese*

The moderator of the Latin American Church Leadership Conference (Conferencia de Liderazgo – COL), Rev. Dr Gloria Rojas, used these words to describe the plan to evaluate the process of regional cooperation among the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) member churches in Latin America over the last ten years. The motion on the planned evaluation was unanimously adopted by the bishops and presidents of the region’s 14 LWF member churches meeting from 16 to 20 April in Santiago de Chile, Chile.

The decision provides for an external evaluation, to be concluded by December 2007 and submitted to the next conference of church leaders at the end of March 2008 in Lima, Peru for discussion and action.

Rojas, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH), hopes that such an evaluation will involve systematic cooperation and the regional process of growing together as a community of churches in Latin America, and that it would also result in the naming of future opportunities and tasks.

“Conducting an evaluation is important for our own process in Latin America,” stated Mr Alfonso Corzo from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia. Corzo is an LWF Council adviser and represents the Latin America and

Caribbean region on the LWF Renewal Committee. The outcome of the evaluation might also impact on reflection with respect to the renewal process in the LWF, “which concerns us as a global communion.” The changing ecumenical environment is just as important for the renewal process as the changes in conditions and relationships within the Lutheran communion. Both have implications for the renewal process, said Corzo.

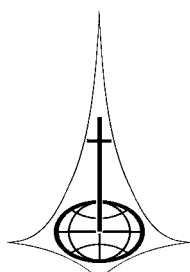
According to Rev. Martin Junge, area secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean in the LWF Department for Mission and Development (DMD), it is most important “that the LWF member churches in the region understand themselves as churches in a common process, and that they seek to analyze this with professional assistance, in order to further deepen the process.” Certainly this evaluation constitutes a challenge in terms of its methodology and yet, in Junge’s view, it contains a significant potential for further implementation of the decision of the 1990 LWF Eighth Assembly in Curitiba, Brazil in: that the LWF member churches should understand themselves as a communion.

At their meeting in Santiago de Chile, the bishops and presidents of the Latin American LWF member churches further decided to draw up a position paper with respect to the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation on 31 October 2017. It will include proposals on how to celebrate the anniversary at regional level, and would be presented to the COL in 2008.

“The Reformation does not belong to us alone. It connects us with other Protestant Christians, indeed, with many Pentecostal churches in the region, who consider the Lutheran Reformation as part of their tradition,”



*Costarican Lutheran church leader Rev Melvin Jiménez (center) chaired a COL panel discussion with church representatives from Chile, (left to right), Rev Dr. David Muñoz, Rev Eduardo Cid, panel chairperson Jiménez, Rev. Roberto Mosher and Rev. Georges Abed. © ALC/N. Giese*





Nicaraguan Bishop Victoria Cortez Rodríguez (left), LWF vice president for Latin and the Caribbean, and the region's area secretary Rev. Martin Junge, during a break session at the COL meeting. © ALC/N. Giese

stated the COL vice-moderator, Rev. Melvin Jiménez, also president of the Lutheran Costa Rican Church (ILCO). The ILCO leader hopes that it will be possible “to move toward this anniversary with the Roman Catholic Church too, and highlight its importance for Latin America.”

The LWF Latin America and the Caribbean region extends from Mexico in the north to Chile and Argentina in the south. It encompasses 16 member churches—including 14 in Latin America and two in the Caribbean—as well as nine recognized congregations, with a total membership of some 842,000 Lutherans. These churches have very different backgrounds, with some founded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by immigrants particularly from Europe, others by missionaries from the United States and Europe, while others have local roots.

## Canadian Lutherans Elect First Woman as National Bishop

### Susan Johnson's Election Reflects Commitment to Be an Inclusive Communion, Says LWF General Secretary

WINNIPEG, Canada/GENEVA, 27 June 2007 (LWI) – Delegates to the 21–24 June Eleventh Biennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) elected Rev. Susan C. Johnson to a four-year term as ELCIC National Bishop. Johnson, assistant to the bishop of the Eastern Synod, was elected on the sixth and final ballot for the position.

Bishop-elect Johnson will succeed Raymond Schultz, who leaves office on 1 September 2007. Schultz was elected national bishop in 2001 and re-elected in 2005, but announced his retirement for personal and health reasons.

Schultz is a member of the Council of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) serving on the Program Committee for Ecumenical Affairs and Constitution Committee, as well as chairperson of the LWF Renewal Committee. Johnson is a Council adviser.

Congratulating Johnson, LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr. Ishmael Noko said the ELCIC election results were an indication “that the Lutheran communion is indeed translating its commitment to be an inclusive communion. The ministry of the church is one shared by women and men.”

Speaking to *Lutheran World Information (LWI)*, Noko called upon members of the Lutheran communion to uphold Johnson in their prayers as she



Rev. Susan C. Johnson, newly elected ELCIC National Bishop. © ELCIC

prepares for installation as ELCIC national bishop.

Johnson, 49, has been assistant to the bishop of the ELCIC Eastern Synod since 1994. She was ELCIC vice president from 2001 to 2005.

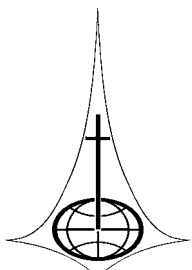
“I’m just overwhelmed and honored by this incredible honor,” said Johnson. “I promise to be all that I can to help us together to be *In Mission for Others*.”

Of the ELCIC five synods, two are led by women—Bishops Cynthia Halmarson of the Saskatchewan Synod, and Elaine Sauer of the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod.

Bishop-elect Johnson has been an LWF Council adviser since 1998, serving on the Program Committee for Ecumenical Affairs until 2003, and currently on the Program

Committee for Theology and Studies. She has served as a member of the LWF North American Regional Committee and of the LWF Leadership Development Task Force, as well as on a variety of boards and committees at national and synodical level.

In other deliberations, the ELCIC Convention defeated a motion to encourage the church's five synods to develop ways “to best minister to people who live in committed same-sex relationships, including the possibility of blessing such unions.” The motion received 181 votes in favor and 200 votes against by secret ballot.





The Convention also adopted an environmental stewardship initiative “Stewardship of Creation” which will include the establishment of an accreditation process for congregations wanting to be recognized as “green congregations.”

The ELCIC is Canada’s largest Lutheran denomination with 174,555 baptized members in 620 congregations. It joined the LWF in 1986.

Further information on the ELCIC Convention is available at: [www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2007-Winnipeg/default.cfm](http://www.elcic.ca/In-Convention/2007-Winnipeg/default.cfm)



ELCIC National Bishop Raymond L. Schultz presides at the closing worship service of the church’s Eleventh Biennial Convention in Winnipeg. © ELCIC

## LWF Publication: Faith and Human Rights – Voices from the Lutheran Communion

*Faith and Human Rights – Voices from the Lutheran Communion*, a new publication of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), documents the experiences and concerns of some members of the Lutheran family working for human rights in their different contexts, and how their work relates to their faith principles. Published by Lutheran University Press, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA) under the auspices of the LWF, the 188-page volume, No. 51/2006 in the *LWF Documentation* series, is co-edited by Peter N. Prove and Luke Smetters, LWF Office for International Affairs and Human Rights.

In the book’s introduction, Prove says the contributions serve as recognition that the authors and many other Lutherans around the world “are fully part of the struggle for human rights, for the human dignity that those legal principles seek to protect and promote, and for the neighbor in need.”

The co-editors point out that human rights, and the related instruments and mechanisms are tools for the

promotion of justice and protection of the dignity of all human beings, each of whom bears the image of God. They underline the LWF’s recognition of human rights as an important part of a holistic Christian ministry.

The LWF Documentation is available at USD 14 plus postage costs. To order copies contact Lutheran University Press, P. O. Box 390759 Minneapolis, MN 55439 or [publisher@lutheranupress.org](mailto:publisher@lutheranupress.org)

Copies of the German edition *Glaube und Menschenrechte: Stimmen aus der lutherischen Gemeinschaft, LWB Dokumentation 51/2006* can be ordered with the publisher Verlag Kreuz GmbH, Liebknechtstr. 33, 70565 Stuttgart, Germany.

For further information, contact [info@lutheranworld.org](mailto:info@lutheranworld.org) or write to the: LWF Office for Communication Services, 150 route de Ferney, P. O. Box 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, Tel. +41/22-791 61 11, Fax +41/22-791 66 30.

## The Apostolicity of the Church: Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission Document

*The Apostolicity of the Church* is the title of the current study document of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity. With this document, the Commission completes the 1995-2006 fourth phase of the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue at the global level. The study document of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) is aimed at contributing toward deepening communion between the Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran churches. The document has been sent to the respective churches of the mandating bodies and to the wider public of persons and groups engaged in the ecumenical movement.

In the book’s introduction, Commission co-chairpersons Lutheran Bishop Dr Béla Harmati (Hungary) and Roman Catholic Archbishop Dr Alfons Nossol (Poland) state the commission’s hope that the study “will open fresh perspectives in the area of ecumenical ecclesiology and will throw light on pathways along which significant steps may be taken toward the goal of full communion

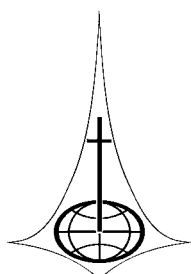
between the Catholic Church and the Lutheran churches of the world.”

The study document points to further steps toward the visible unity of the Lutheran and Catholic churches by treating (1) the New Testament witness as foundational for the apostolicity of the church, (2) the apostolic gospel and the elements of the church’s apostolicity, (3) the apostolicity of the ordained ministry, and (4) ways in which faith and teaching are maintained in the truth of the apostolic gospel.

*The Apostolicity of the Church* is published by Lutheran University Press (Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA) under the auspices of the LWF and PCPCU.

To order copies, please contact Lutheran University Press, P. O. Box 390759 Minneapolis, MN 55439 or [publisher@lutheranupress.org](mailto:publisher@lutheranupress.org) Price is USD 12 plus postage costs.

For further information, please contact the LWF Office for Ecumenical Affairs, [sgr@lutheranworld.org](mailto:sgr@lutheranworld.org)



## LWF General Secretary Reiterates Maundy Thursday Prayer for Holy Land Christians

### Noko: Easter Story Marked by Concrete Harsh Realities

GENEVA, 5 April 2007 (LWI) – The General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko reiterated a recent LWF Council call upon the member churches to pray on Maundy Thursday for Christians in the Middle East and for their continued presence and ministry in the region.

In a message on 5 April to Christians and churches in the region, Noko pointed out that the landmarks of the Easter story for the people and churches of the Holy Land, “are not ... imagined or remembered images, but daily concrete realities” in increasingly harsh circumstances. He noted the Christian presence throughout

the Middle East was rapidly declining “due to emigration provoked particularly by occupation, conflict, abandonment and the loss of hope for a better future.”

Endorsing a recommendation of its Program Committee for International Affairs and Human Rights at the end of the 20–27 March Council meeting in Lund, Sweden, the LWF governing body urged the LWF member churches to pray on Maundy Thursday for Christians in the Middle East.

The LWF member church in the region is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

*The full text of Dr Noko’s message follows:*

### Message from the LWF General Secretary to Christians and Churches in the Holy Land

On this Maundy Thursday, as we contemplate the sacrifice of Jesus in atonement of all humanity’s sins and we await the joyous resurrection, our thoughts also turn to the Holy Land in which Christ’s ministry on earth was fulfilled and his blood offered for us all.

For our sisters and brothers in the churches of the Holy Land who strive to follow in Christ’s footsteps and to proclaim the gospel in that region, the landmarks of the Easter story are not - as for most of us - imagined or remembered images, but daily concrete realities. Equally real and practical for them are the increasingly harsh circumstances in which they struggle to continue their lives and ministries in that region. Throughout the Middle East, the Christian presence is in rapid decline—due to emigration provoked particularly by occupation, conflict, abandonment and the loss of hope for a better future.

The LWF Council, meeting in Lund, Sweden, on 20–27 March 2007, expressed its deep concern about the emigration of Christians from Palestine and the entire Middle East and called on LWF member churches to pray about this matter on Maundy Thursday. Therefore on this Maundy Thursday, in the hope affirmed by the resurrection, we pray for the Christian presence and witness in the Holy Land and for their continued ministry in the land that was witness to the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko  
General Secretary  
The Lutheran World Federation

Geneva, 5 April 2007

## Anglican-Lutheran Commission Welcomes LWF Statement on Episcopal Ministry

### Future Meetings to Include Strategies for Closer Cooperation in Diakonia

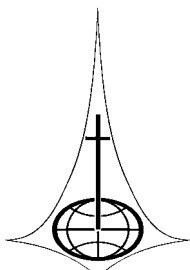
WHITE POINT, Nova Scotia, Canada/GENEVA, 4 June 2007 (LWI) – Representatives of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Anglican Communion attending the second meeting of the Third Anglican – Lutheran International Commission (ALIC-3) welcomed the recent LWF statement on the episcopal ministry, and commended it for study in the context of Anglican – Lutheran dialogue.

The 14 to 20 May ALIC-3 meeting was held in Nova Scotia, Canada, hosted by the Anglican Communion in cooperation with Anglican Bishop Fred Hiltz of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

In a final communiqué, the Commission said it viewed the LWF’s March 2007 Lund statement on “Epis-

copal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church” as a useful reference point for its own ongoing discussions on the ministry of episkopé. The LWF Council adopted the historic statement at its 20–27 March meeting in Lund, Sweden, which also commemorated the Federation’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The English statement is published online at: [www.lutheranworld.org/LWF\\_Documents/LWF\\_The\\_Lund\\_Statement\\_2007.pdf](http://www.lutheranworld.org/LWF_Documents/LWF_The_Lund_Statement_2007.pdf) The French and Spanish versions are also available.

The Commission also had extensive discussions on the proposed draft for “An Anglican Covenant” and offered a response from the perspective of the document’s potential impact on ecumenical relations



between the two communions. The Commission encouraged the LWF to respond to the draft.

As a result of its deliberations on the ministry of diakonia, the Commission said it plans to include in its future meetings a block of time devoted to strategies that would help the Anglican and Lutheran churches work more closely together in common witness to address issues such as HIV and AIDS, as well as poverty.

The Commission members were welcomed by National Bishop Raymond Schultz of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, and received a greeting from the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Andrew Hutchison.

The LWF and the Anglican Consultative Council established ALIC-3 to continue the dialogue between Anglicans and Lutherans on the worldwide level, which has been in progress since 1970. The first meeting of the current phase of the commission was held in January 2006 in Moshi, Tanzania, hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

Canadian Anglican Bishop Fred Hiltz and Rev. Dr Thomas Nyiwe, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon co-chair ALIC-3.

*The full text of the 2007 ALIC-3 communiqué is available on the LWF Web site at: [www.lutheranworld.org/What\\_We\\_Do/OEA/Bilateral\\_Relations/OEA-Anglican\\_Lutheran-2007-EN.pdf](http://www.lutheranworld.org/What_We_Do/OEA/Bilateral_Relations/OEA-Anglican_Lutheran-2007-EN.pdf)*

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Six-Day War: An Occasion to Revive Vision of Peace in Holy Land

Time for Members of House of Abraham to Recognize Each Other as Sisters, Brothers

GENEVA, 8 June 2007 (LWI) – The General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, has called for revival of the vision of peace in the Holy Land and revitalization of the search for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In a statement on 8 June during the week marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Six-Day War and the occupation of the Palestinian territories he stressed “it is time for the members of the House of Abraham—Israeli and Palestinian; Jew, Muslim and Christian—to recognize each other as sisters and brothers, to refrain from instrumentalizing holy scriptures to achieve political goals, and to work together for peace in the Holy Land.” Without peace with justice in the Holy Land, he said, there can be no true peace in the world.

The momentous events of the Six-Day War and the occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967 fundamentally altered the modern history and politics of the Middle East, and continue to reverberate today, the general secretary explained. For this reason, the LWF Council at its meeting this year in Lund, Sweden, had noted the forthcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the war, and had called for actions by the international community for an end to the occupation, and for the LWF member churches to join ecumenical coalitions for that purpose.

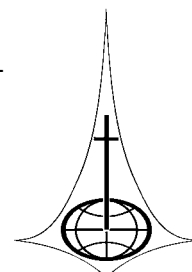
“The violence and suffering of occupation is a bitter legacy of Israel’s military triumph 40 years ago,” the general secretary continued, “and brings misery and despair to entire communities, as well as entrenching displacement and dislocation. The military legacy of 1967 fuels the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and feeds



*At the 2005 LWF Council meeting hosted in Jerusalem/Bethlehem by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), an LWF delegation met with political leaders in Israel and Palestine. ELCJHL Bishop Dr Munib A. Younan (left), after the meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas (right). © LWF/J. Brooks*

resentment and tensions throughout the Middle East and beyond.” He noted, “Its consequences for the unity of the global village are deep and pervasive. It drives a wedge between Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land and throughout the world. It threatens the future existence of an indigenous Christian presence in the land of Christ’s birth,” Noko stated.

The occupation of the Palestinian territories is based on presumptions and ideologies that identify exclusively with one branch of the House of Abraham against the other, Noko said. These ideologies and the methods, by which the occupation is maintained, undermine everything contained in the promise, whereby God gave the land to the children of Abraham, and refute the authority



by which the promise was made. The occupation entraps both the occupied and the occupier as well as all people of goodwill who yearn for peace in the Holy Land. After 40 years of being trapped, the time has come for release. "A release from occupation must be achieved for the sake

of both peoples, for the dream of two states living side-by-side in peace to become a reality, and for the sake of peace in our global village," Noko concluded.

*The full text of the statement by LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko follows:*

**Statement by Rev. Dr Ishmael Noko, LWF General Secretary on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Six-Day War and the Occupation of the Palestinian Territories**

This week we mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1967 Six-Day War, and of the occupation of the Palestinian territories. These momentous events fundamentally altered the modern history and politics of the Middle East, and continue to reverberate today. Meeting in Lund, Sweden, in March this year (on the occasion

on presumptions and ideologies that identify exclusively with one branch of the House of Abraham against the other. These ideologies, and the methods, by which the occupation is maintained, undermine everything contained in the promise and refute the authority by which the promise was made. The occupation entraps both the occupied and the occupier. It entraps both families of the House of Abraham. It entraps all people of goodwill who yearn for peace in the Holy Land. After 40 years in this trap, the time has come for release. A release from occupation must be achieved for the sake of both peoples, for the dream of two states living side-by-side in peace to become a reality, and for the sake of peace in our global village.



*The choir of the Talitha Kumi School in Beit Jala, West Bank, during a graduation ceremony. © LWF/M. Brown*

It is time for the members of the House of Abraham-Israeli and Palestinian; Jew, Muslim and Christian-to recognize each other as sisters and brothers, to refrain from instrumentalizing holy scriptures to achieve political goals, and to work together for peace in the Holy Land. This anniversary should be an occasion for all parties, all the children of Abraham, and all people of goodwill, to revive the vision of peace in the Holy Land and to revitalize the search for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This *kairos* moment should finally be grasped and held. For there can be no true peace in the world without peace with justice in the Holy Land.

of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Lutheran World Federation) the LWF Council noted the forthcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1967 war, and called for actions by the international community for an end to the occupation of the Palestinian territories and for LWF member churches to join ecumenical coalitions for that purpose.

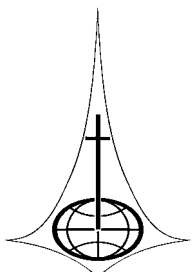
Geneva, 8 June 2007

The violence and suffering of occupation is a bitter legacy of Israel's military triumph 40 years ago. It brings misery and despair to entire communities. It entrenches displacement and dislocation. It fuels the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and feeds resentment and tensions throughout the Middle East and beyond. Its consequences for the unity of the global village are deep and pervasive. It drives a wedge between Jews and Muslims in the Holy Land and throughout the world. It threatens the future existence of an indigenous Christian presence in the land of Christ's birth.



*Patients in the waiting room of the LWF community emergency care center in Turmus'ayya village north of Ramallah. Implemented in partnership with the village council, the center is a new addition to the health services of the LWF Department for World Service program in Jerusalem. © LWF/C. Granberg*

This occupation-by one branch of the Abrahamic family against the other-represents something fundamentally opposed to the promise whereby God gifted the land to the children of Abraham. The occupation is based



## LWF World Service to Set Up Office in Chad

An Immediate Response to a Neglected Crisis, Says DWS Director Hitzler

GENEVA, 5 July 2007 (LWI) – The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Department for World Service (DWS) is opening a field office in Chad. An emergency coordinator will be in the region during the second week of July to establish office in eastern Chad, near Koukou, in the conflict-affected region bordering Darfur, western Sudan. Focus will mainly be on the large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who fled cross-border violence spilling over from Darfur.

The decision to start operations in the north central African country follows an LWF-led joint assessment mission to eastern Chad from 23 May to 8 June 2007 on behalf of Action by Churches Together (ACT) International. The LWF is a founding member of the Geneva-based ACT, which coordinates churches' response to emergencies worldwide.

World Service will be working in Chad in close cooperation with ACT members Norwegian Church Aid, Church of Sweden and Christian Aid. An initial ACT Appeal for Chad issued on 29 June targets some USD 1.95 million from the ACT partners to respond to the needs of over 121,000 displaced people at a number of sites in the Dar Sila district. The intervention will include site management, community services, protection, psycho-social support, and the installation and management of water and sanitation facilities. The situation is particularly difficult during the June to September rainy season.

Commenting on the new LWF operation in Chad, DWS director Rev. Eberhard Hitzler points out that the decision to act immediately after the assessment is a "response to a so far rather neglected humanitarian crisis." He notes that "while even the Darfur crisis does not get the expected international public attention, there is almost no attention given to the humanitarian



Members of the joint assessment team walk into a village in eastern Chad during their eight-day visit. © ACT International

crisis in the neighboring countries." Preparations are also underway for additional staff to support the larger planned intervention.

The conflict in Darfur "impacts heavily on civilian population in the neighboring countries especially Chad. As is the case in any conflict it is the women, children and the elderly who are most affected," Hitzler told *Lutheran World Information (LWI)*.

The ACT Appeal highlights the need to accord urgent attention to the protection of vulnerable women and children, and to prioritize the inclusion of women in the planning for site management and other site-related activities.

The current ACT Appeal covers a period of six months till the end of December 2007, with plans to continue as the DWS program is developed. The planned programs in the appeal will also be extended to the surrounding villages to ensure that IDPs and local populations enjoy a similar standard of service provision to minimize any potential conflict between various populations.

The DWS director expresses gratitude to all the ACT/LWF partners who have "made the timely response possible" and appeals for "further support."

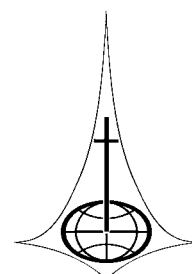
According to the 2006 UN Human Development Index, around 80 percent of Chad's 10.1 million people live below the poverty line. They are mainly subsistence farmers and livestock herders.

The Department for World Service is the LWF's internationally recognized humanitarian and development agency. In addition to its Geneva-based offices, it currently works in 36 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin and Central America and Europe, through four regional and 15 country programs and emergency operations.

A photo essay about the ACT assessment mission is available on the ACT Web site [www.act-intl.org](http://www.act-intl.org)



The area has large numbers of IDPs who fled cross-border violence spilling over from Darfur, Sudan. People face the risk of dire health and sanitation conditions especially during the rainy season. © ACT International



## FEATURE: Like Ambulances

### Mozambique: LWF AIDS Activists Bring Hope to Communities

MAPUTO, Mozambique/GENEVA, 10 July 2007 (LWI) – A typical hot afternoon in Chamanculo “D”, a shantytown near the fashionable suburbs of Mozambique’s capital, Maputo. The group of 12—ten women and two men—break up into smaller teams of two or three and map out the area and blocks of houses they will be visiting today.



Left to right: With sun hats and bottled water, LWF activists Alice Muyanga, LWF/DWS staff Lionar Cossa and Maria J. Mahlelela begin their house calls in Chamanculo “D”. © LWF/DWS Mozambique/D. Mavunduse

Alice Muyanga, Alice Filipe Hunguana and Maria Julio Mahlelela are among the women in the group of community-based HIV and AIDS activists on their regular home visits in the township. The Mozambique country program of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Department for World Service (DWS) supports the group, known as *activistas*.

“This is our work ... we make house calls,” says Mahlelela, fondly referred to as Mama Maria within the community. “We do not have an office where people can come to us for help, our offices are the people’s homes,” she explains.

The *activistas* provide home-based care to people living with HIV and AIDS. It is a multi-faceted task of counseling, training on nutritious diets, and ferrying patients to and from hospital for treatment. They also address the issue of stigma within the community by publicly talking about the virus and AIDS.

The Chamanculo township is divided into four districts—A, B, C and D—with a total population of over 800,000 residents. The LWF *activistas* cover Chamanculo “D”, with some 80,000 people.

#### Civil War

Mama Maria explains Chamanculo’s meaning—“huge bath”—coined in the late 1970s when the area was

flooded. The gradual influx of thousands of internally displaced persons fleeing the 1976–1992 civil war put further pressure on the township’s poor infrastructure. After the war, the people did not return to their original homes. Chamanculo—comprising tiny houses, some with brick, mud or tin walls with iron sheet roofing, or simply straw with plastic roofing, built along narrow dust roads—became home.

There are many young adult men and women sitting under tree shades or simply walking around.

“That is the sad story of Chamanculo,” says Hunguana. “Poverty here is real. Unemployment is very high, the housing conditions are terrible, no running water, toilets or electricity, and on top of that we have HIV and AIDS to deal with ... those are the challenges we have to face as we do our work,” she notes sadly.

#### Family Support

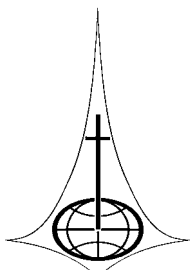
The *activistas* currently support around 100 people in the area. It is difficult to go into homes and simply talk about HIV and AIDS without addressing the other issues that the families face, explains Hunguana. Human rights issues, sexual rights and violence at home are important subjects, for which the *activistas* receive training through DWS Mozambique.



The Cumbe siblings support their sister Caroline (left). © LWF/DWS Mozambique/D. Mavunduse

Today, the three care-givers find Caroline Siveriano Cumbe, a former domestic worker in South Africa, lying on a mat under a shade.

“We were shocked when she first came [home],” says her sister Maria Julia, one of the seven siblings who live in the Cumbe household and look after their



ailing sister. “We knew she was sick, but did not know the extent to which her body had wasted away,” she explains. None of the household members are formally employed, they make a living doing odd jobs including selling small items.

The *activistas* are happy with Caroline’s condition. “She is very lucky [to have] her family around to support her emotionally and psychologically,” Hanguana remarks.

“I know my sister finds her strength in me. I know the struggles and pain she is going through, I have been through that, and I encourage her to hold on,” says her brother Atanasio, also living with HIV and getting help from the LWF-supported group. He is one of the first people to be included in the LWF Chamanculo “D” housing project for people living with HIV and AIDS. A total of ten houses comprising two large rooms, as well as a pit latrine and shower room have been constructed.

For the past two-years, Alice Muyanga has been paying home visits to 28-year-old Olinda Antonio a mother of one, currently living with her sister.

“I am very happy to see her so strong and fending for herself,” says Muyanga, recalling the first visits when Olinda could hardly walk, and a medical nurse had to come in regularly. Now when the *activistas* visit it is to provide emotional support “and make sure she sticks to her treatment plan, and that she is eating nutritious food,” Muyanga explains.



Julieta M. Novela and her sister have pulled together resources that enable them earn some income. © LWF/DWS Mozambique/D. Mavunduse

refused to take care of her and also sold most of her personal property. In Maputo, the *activistas* facilitated Novela’s antiretroviral treatment including transportation to and from hospital.

“I am feeling much better since I started the treatment,” says Novela. Together with her sister’s family, they have two sewing machines, which they use to make clothes to raise money for the family’s basic needs.

Satisfied with Novela’s condition, the LWF-supported care givers return to the community center to regroup and update each other on their visits and plans for the next day.

## A Sewing Project

Julieta Marule Novela, 43, and her two children previously lived in Gaza. They moved to Chamanculo after her eldest son, upon learning of her HIV status,

## Addressing Stigma

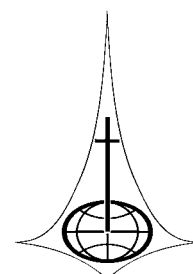
*Activista* Alice Filipe Hanguana was the first person in the community to come out publicly about her HIV status. Her openness and frankness has helped in reducing the stigma within Chamanculo “D.” She says many people living with HIV do not want others to know about their status, “because AIDS is still seen as a moral issue rather than a health issue.”

Five-years ago, it was difficult for the activists to move around in the community to visit people affected by the pandemic. “Some people would slam their doors in your face,” recalls Mama Maria. “Now people come willingly to us wanting our help ... some come at night,” she notes.

As activists, “we assure people that we are there for them. Some of those whom we approach later on become activists.” A smiling



One of the Novela sisters has taught the rest of the family members how to sew, in order to raise much-needed additional income. © LWF/DWS Mozambique/D. Mavunduse



Hunguana adds, "We are like ambulances, on call 24 hours."

*\*The LWF/DWS Mozambique program is community-based, spanning five of the country's ten provinces. One of its key objectives is to support communities to reduce risk and vulnerability to HIV and AIDS, and alleviate the impact of the epidemic on communities.*

*\*\*Zimbabwean journalist Diana Mavunduse wrote this feature article for LWI during a recent visit to Mozambique. Mavunduse is the communications coordinator for the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, the relief and development agency of the Anglican Church of Canada.*



*For AIDS activist Alice F. Hunguana, a day's work includes providing information on the type of food that should be eaten, how to prepare it and enrich it. She also listens to families' concerns about other issues that affect them. © LWF/DWS Mozambique/D. Mavunduse*

**\*This article is part of the ongoing LWI Features on Healing focusing on the LWF Tenth Assembly theme, "For the Healing of the World." The series highlights the relevance of the Assembly theme in the different contexts of the worldwide Lutheran communion by presenting proj-**

**ects and activities aimed at promoting reconciliation and healing. This theme continues to be an important aspect of LWF's work even after the 21-31 July 2003 Assembly in Winnipeg, Canada.**

## Finland: Sudanese Anglican Ordained in Oulu's Lutheran Cathedral

**Amos Manga**, a Sudanese deacon of the Episcopal (Anglican) Church of the Sudan who emigrated to Finland was ordained into priesthood according to the Anglican rite in the Oulu Lutheran cathedral on 10 June. This was the first time that such an ordination was taking place in Finland.

Manga's ordination was officiated by **Suffragan Bishop David Hamid of the Anglican Diocese in Europe** (Church of England) and Bishop Samuel Salmi of the Diocese of Oulu, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF).

Manga serves as an assistant curate in the Anglican Church in Finland, with



*Newly ordained Sudanese Episcopalian Amos Manga. © M. Itkonen*

responsibility for the spiritual needs of Episcopalian Sudanese living in Oulu district.

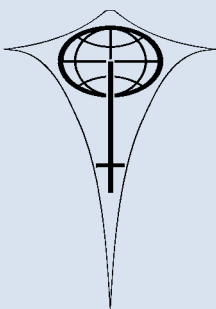
Whenever required, he will also work elsewhere in Finland.

In the past few years the ELCF Oulu diocese has been very active with Lutheran-Anglican relations, with cooperation much needed because of immigration.

Cooperation is based on the 1993 Porvoo Common Statement between Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches and British and Irish Anglican churches.

*(ELCF Church Information Center)*

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