

BRINGING CARING CONVERSATIONS TO OUR CONGREGATIONS ~ 4

A clergy and laity event hosted by the Kitchener/Waterloo Conference

Grace and peace to you.

A **Caring Conversations - 4** event is being offered as a bridge into the 2004 Eastern Synod Assembly. It will take place on **Saturday, March 6, 2004**, at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Kitchener. At CC 4 we will explore the ***Reconciling in Christ - Affirmation of Welcome*** motion which is to come before the 2004 Synod Assembly.

At CC 4, we shall look to the experience of other congregations, communities and synods which have embraced an *Affirmation of Welcome* and we will examine the particular *Affirmation of Welcome* statement which is to come before the Eastern Synod Assembly.

Sponsored by the K/W Conference, CC 4 will be especially helpful to pastors, congregational council members and leaders, and any people attending the 2004 Eastern Synod Assembly or contemplating the *Affirmation of Welcome* motion to come before us there.

This CC 4 invitation is being extended to clergy and lay people of the Kitchener/Waterloo Conference and four neighbouring conferences —Toronto, Hamilton/Niagara, London and Georgian Bay.

ELCIC's Caring Conversations

In the spring of 2002, we —Pastors Mark Harris and André Lavergne— spoke at the regular monthly gathering of Kitchener-Waterloo clergy on our experience initiating and leading "Caring Conversations" in our parishes. "Caring Conversation" is a model overwhelmingly affirmed by the 1999 Regina convention, wherein "members of the ELCIC ... are able to listen to the experiences of gay and lesbian people and their families." Our experience with Caring Conversations, in our own communities, has been very, very positive.

Caring Conversations ~ 1, 2 & 3

Out of the spring 2002 meeting, there came several requests that a fuller day be offered to encourage and to help parish pastors to initiate the Caring Conversations process in their own congregations. As a result, Caring Conversations ~ 1, a clergy in-service day, sponsored by the Kitchener/Waterloo Conference, was held in October, 2002. In the course of this clergy gathering, there emerged a consensus that a second day-long event be offered, this one to include both clergy and lay people. Caring Conversations ~ 2 was held in February, 2003. With the encouragement of people who attended Caring Conversations ~ 1 & 2, we put together a Caring Conversations ~ 3 event which took place in October, 2003. At that event, we modeled a *Caring Conversation* proper.

CC 4 ~ Agenda

9:00 - 9:30 am	Arrival. Registration. <i>Coffee is on!</i>
9:30 - 10:00 am	Gathering Worship — Dean Stephen Weber (K/W Conference) presides and Pastor Bill Shafer (St. Stephen, Kitchener) preaches at a gathering Service of Holy Communion.
10:00 - 10:15am	Welcome. Introductions. Housekeeping.
10:15 - 11:00 am	<i>Reconciling in Christ... Affirmation of Welcome...</i> What do they mean? Emily Eastwood
11:00 - 11:15 am	Questions and Answers
11:15 - 11:45 am	Advent's Eastern Synod Assembly <i>Affirmation of Welcome</i> motion Michael Mills and Fred Roth
11:45 - 12:00 nn	Eastern Synod Council Reflections on the <i>Affirmation of Welcome</i> motion Phil Heinze
12:00 - 12:45 nn	Brown-Bag Lunch
12:45 - 1:30 pm	Congregational experiences with an <i>Affirmation of Welcome</i> Tom Doherty, Jon Fogleman, Laura Mann, Ted Pope
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Four conversations with... Tom Doherty and Ted Pope Jon Fogleman, Laura Mann & friends Michael Mills and André Lavergne Emily Eastwood and Mark Harris
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Whole-group Conversation
3:00 pm	Closing Prayer. Godspeed.

Caring Conversations ~ Website

In connection with these Caring Conversations events, a web page has been created called *Bringing Caring Conversations to Our Congregations*. Go to the website of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, New Hamburg www.telc.ca and click on "Caring Conversations." You will find seven sections offering many helpful resources and links...

1. Caring Conversations ~ K/W Conference Workshops
2. Caring Conversations ~ Workshop Materials
3. Caring Conversations ~ Erwin Buck: Studies on Homosexuality and the Church
4. Caring Conversations ~ Eastern Synod Context for Conversation
5. Caring Conversations ~ ELCIC Context for Conversation
6. Caring Conversations ~ Canadian Context for Conversation
7. Caring Conversations ~ Selected Online Resources

CC 4 ~ Our Leaders

Muriel Burke is the 2004 Synod Assembly delegate, member of the Congregational Council and Coordinator for Assisting Ministers, Lectors and Servers at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Guelph.

Pastor **Tom Doherty** has served at Augsburg Lutheran Church, Brampton, for six years. A resident of Richmond Hill, he is married to Maryann. They have three children, Ryan, Matthew and Rachel. Tom is an accomplished vocalist (tenor) and musician.

Emily Eastwood is a lifetime Lutheran, story-teller, organizer, sometime stand-up comic, and would-be pastor who in 2002 resigned as national credit manager of a U.S. manufacturing company to direct the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program of Lutherans Concerned/North America. A graduate of Texas Lutheran College, she has also studied at Lutheran seminaries in Gettysburg, PA and St. Paul, MN. She and her partner of 15 years, Jan Bailey, live in Minneapolis and are members of the first RIC congregation. Emily travels throughout North America working with congregations, synods, and organizations considering the RIC program.

A member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Guelph, **Dianne Fogleman** is a friend and strong support person for gay and lesbian people and an advocate for their acceptance in mainstream society.

Pastor **Jon Fogleman** has served at St. Paul's, Guelph, since 1981. Recently retired from National Church Council, he serves on the Eastern Synod's Examining Committee and teaches at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. Jon has earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation, South Bend, Indiana. He serves on the Colleague Covenant Forum faculty, Hinton Rural Life Center. Jon is married with 2 grown children.

Recently retired as Dean of the Chapel, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, and a former member of the ELCIC's National Church Council, Pastor **Mark Harris** serves with Pastor Tanya Varner in a team ministry at Mount Zion Lutheran Church, Waterloo. Mark is working on a Doctor of Ministry degree (liturgical studies) at the University of Toronto.

In his sixth year as Assistant to the Bishop, Eastern Synod, **Phil Heinze** works in the areas of convention management, communication, specialized ministries and service (justice and compassion) ministries. A member of Reformation Lutheran Church, Kitchener, he is married to Carolin. They have three children and an empty nest.

Together with Pastor Nadine Nicholds, Pastor **André Lavergne** serves at Trinity Lutheran Church, New Hamburg. André is a member (on leave) of the ELCIC's Program Committee for Worship, represents the ELCIC at the Consultation on Common Texts and, together with Pastor Wendell Grahman, maintains Lift Up Your Hearts www.worship.ca, the ELCIC's acclaimed Worship & Spirituality web site.

Laura Mann is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Guelph, where she serves on the Congregational Council. She was a delegate to the 2002 Eastern Synod Assembly. Laura is on staff at the University of Guelph and has two grown sons.

Michael Mills, Vice-President of the Ontario Society of Artists and the ELCIC's 2002 Companion of the Worship Arts, serves as Pastor at Advent Lutheran Church, a multicultural congregation in Toronto. Advent became a *reconciling* parish in 2001. Michael is currently chairing the planning team for *Breaking Bread, Breaking Boundaries*, the ELCIC's 2004 National Worship Conference.

A member of Augsburg Lutheran Church, Brampton, **Ted Pope** is a professional engineer. A resident of Caledon East, Ted is married to Elizabeth. They have two children, Matthew and Mara.

Fred Roth is congregational chairperson of Advent Lutheran Church, Toronto, and a member of the congregation's Caring Conversations Task Force.

Bill Shafer is the pastor of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Kitchener. Bill has served on various synodical committees. He has been Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, and served on the ELCIC's Board of Pensions. Bill is celebrating his 25th anniversary of ordination this year.

Connie Shaw is a friend of the congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Guelph, where she is regular in worship and a leader in social justice issues for the congregation.

Dean of the Kitchener/Waterloo Conference, Pastor **Stephen Weber** serves in a team ministry with Pastor Doug Kranz at St. John Lutheran Church, Waterloo. The Webers—Steve, Janet and their son Kyle—serve as a foster family for Waterloo Region Family and Children's Services.

Ellie Weston is a long-time member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Guelph, and is active in her congregation and in the Kitchener-Waterloo ELW.

CC 4 ~ Registration and Notes

1. Please confirm your interest by Friday, February 27, to Pastor Steve Weber, Dean of the K/W Conference. Pastor Weber may be reached by e-mail at rev.weber@stjohnslutheran.on.ca or by phone at (519) 886-1880.
2. Please provide the name of your congregation together with the names of participants.
3. By Monday, March 1, we should have a list together of participants. Should you wish to car-pool, drop us a line and we will help to identify others attending from your area. In the interest of good stewardship, we invite you to car-pool wherever possible.
4. The event will take place at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Kitchener. St. Stephen is located at 248 Highland Road East. Major nearby cross-streets are Stirling (to the south) and Queen (to the north). For specific directions, please call (519) 744-2521 or e-mail wshafer@golden.net.
5. There is no cost for the day. The K/W Conference will supply coffee, tea & juice. Please remember to bring a brown-bag lunch.
6. Please convey this invitation to people in your conference who may not have access to electronic mail.

CC 4 ~ Welcome!

We hope that you can join us on Saturday, March 6, at St. Stephen, Kitchener. Please register early to assist us in planning.

Further information is available from either of the undersigned. Simply drop one of us a note.

We look forward to greeting you on March 6 and wish you and your congregation well in your Epiphany journey.

All blessings.

André Lavergne lavergne@telc.ca and
Mark Harris mharris@mzlc.ca

Caring Conversations ~ Reminder

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