

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

The following activities are suggested as ways congregations can support the companion relationship:

1. Pray for each other.
2. Learn about each other.
3. Communicate
4. Visit
5. Support mutually agreed projects
6. Share our God-given resources

The month of May has been declared Companion Synod Month. Check the Synod website at [www.sasksynod.elcic.ca](http://www.sasksynod.elcic.ca) for available resources.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There are two main ways in which congregations or individuals can support the Companion Synod Program financially:

Patagonia Mission Sponsorship - Support identified for the Patagonia Mission will help IELU and the ELCIC to maintain the ministries in the cities of Bariloche, Esquel, Cushamen and Comodoro Rivadavia.

Copa de Leche - The ELCIC will direct funds to IELU specifically for support of the Cup of Milk program.

Please indicate how you would like the funds allocated and forward to:

ELCIC Saskatchewan Synod  
714 Preston Avenue  
Saskatoon, SK S7H 2V2

## CSP COMMITTEE

For further information, contact the ELCIC Saskatchewan Synod office:  
E-mail: [smckeown-closs@elcic.ca](mailto:smckeown-closs@elcic.ca)  
Phone: 306.244.2474

The Synod can direct you to a member of the Companion Synod Committee:

Pastor Greg Kiel, Swift Current (Chair)

Arlene Schick, Estevan

Bob Edwards, Buchanan

John Matity, Regina

Monica Johnson, Saskatoon



IGLESIA EVANGÉLICAL LUTERANA UNIDA (IELU)  
IN ARGENTINA

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA  
(ELCIC) SASKATCHEWAN SYNOD

## COMPANION SYNOD MONTH MAY



*Compañeros en la Fé*  
*Companions in the Faith*

## May is

### Companion Synod Month!

Each May, the Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) marks Companion Synod Month. It is a special time to reflect on our relationship with our companion synod in Argentina - Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Unida (IELU), or the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Although we are partners with all of IELU, our relationship focuses on the communities of Esquel, Cushamen and Comodoro Rivadavia in the Patagonia region of southern Argentina. The ELCIC's financial support – much of it originating from Saskatchewan congregations - makes it possible for IELU to maintain pastors to minister to the needs of Lutherans and others in these communities.

#### ESQUEL

---

Esquel is a city of about 30,000, nestled at the foot of the Andes mountains.

Pastor Sergio Utz now lives in Bariloche and commutes 300 km's to serve Esquel and Cushamen as well.

Recent building activity included repairs to the church and the adjacent congregational hall, and the continuing construction of a new pastor's residence on the church property. This will greatly enhance security.

In 2004, the congregation established a Copa de Leche, or Cup of Milk project for children, similar to the one underway in Cushamen for several years.

#### Youth participant to Argentina Lyneah

**Kuffert** said: *"Everyone had different stories and they all affected me, no matter if it was a happy story about their children or a very upsetting story about how the people were*

*trying their hardest to prevent a company from coming into their lives and town because it could harm them."*

#### CUSHAMEN

---

It was in Cushamen that the Copa de Leche or Cup of Milk program began. It is largely an initiative of church women, as it was started by IELU's women's group and given strong support by Saskatchewan ELWs. In addition, local women support the program by baking the bread and preparing the milk.

Cup of Milk started as a program to supplement the nutrition of children during the school break, when they no longer received the meals provided by the schools. In 2005, the congregation extended the program to Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year, in addition to the winter break program. The program includes games and crafts, as well as nutrition, making it an important community event that enhances the nutrition of more than 80 boys and girls.

**Companion Synod trip participant Mildred Kerber** after a long day travelling to the mission point said: *"It was a long trip but well worth it!"*

#### COMODORO RIVADAVIA

---

Pastor Gustavo Gomez serves the congregation St. John the Baptist in Comodoro Rivadavia, an industrial city of about 70,000 people, located on Argentina's southern Atlantic coast.

Pastor Gustavo is busy rebuilding the health of this congregation, through regular worship services, visiting of members, confirmation classes, and children's activities.

The congregation continues to sponsor a day care on its property.

**Youth participant Bethany Hoppe** said: *"why did I find myself jealous of these people, a part of me wanting so much to rip up my return ticket and just work in this daycare for*

*good. I wanted to stay and be part of this giant extended family"*

*"I went on this trip and I didn't know what I was going to get out of it. The whole time I was there I kept seeing things that we should be doing here in Canada, things that would revive our churches. I felt like I had very little to offer these people. It is amazing what they are accomplishing in Argentina and they deserve every bit of support they receive. Words cannot describe how welcome and at peace I was there. Everyone should go, it seems so far away but all you have to do is get on a plane. If a couple people from every congregation could go down there they too would see what a difference we could make, here and there."*

#### Geography of Argentina

Area: 1,100,000 square miles

Capital: Buenos Aires (pop 11,802,000)

#### People

39,144,753 people; white (97%); Mestizo, Indian and others (3%)

Major languages: Spanish; Italian, English, German, French

Religions: Roman Catholic (90% with fewer than 20% practicing); Protestant (2%); Jewish (2%) Life expectancy: Men, 72 years; women, 76 years

Infant mortality: 15.66 deaths per 1000 live births 51.7% of the population lives in poverty

Currency: pesos

Per capita income: \$11,200