

August 27, 2010

Dear Friends,

Once again, may I say how humbled and honoured I am to be elected as your bishop. I am grateful for the trust and confidence that you have placed in me and I pray daily that God will grant me the wisdom, strength, courage and humour to serve faithfully and wisely.

Even though the synod convention at which I was elected took place back in May, I did not assume office until August 1<sup>st</sup>. I must say that I was quite taken with how well my first two days on the job went – how nice to start with a long weekend!

Since then, however, the pace has quickened, the day-timer is filling in, and the work has begun in earnest. Even amidst the concerns and difficulties among churches, pastors, and the synod, there is much joy, commitment, enthusiasm and faith. This is God's church and we are called to be faithful in our tasks, joyfully serving and being bearers of the good news in Christ through word and deed.

One of my priorities for ministry is to visit with as many of you as possible – to be with you at worship, conventions, meetings and congregational events. As you will see from the accompanying schedule, I am seeking to be present among you as often as I can, hoping that by so doing our mutual ministry can be strengthened and our burdens shared.

### **August Moments:**

This August has also been a time of celebration in our church. Courtenay Reedman was ordained for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on Friday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at her home church of Hills of Peace, Kamloops. She has accepted the call to serve Benediction, Delta, and her service of Installation will take place on Sunday, August 29, at 3:00 pm.

In addition, Judy Whaley has completed her colloquy and has been issued a Letter of Call for Specialized Ministry in the Northwest Conference. Her service of Consecration will take place this fall; the date is still being finalized.

Our Synod has also been blessed with the presence of Rev. Fran Schmidt, ELCIC missionary to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Peru, our companion Synod. Fran visited with a number of congregations as well as Surrey Urban Mission during her time here in BC. She also served as the assisting minister at Courtenay Reedman's ordination.

Then there is CLAY! Who cannot be moved by the energy, enthusiasm, faithfulness, willingness to serve, commitment and piety of a thousand youth and leaders who descend upon the biennial national youth gathering? (CLAY stands for "Canadian Lutheran and Anglican Youth" gathering.) One of the tremendous perks of this job is that you have to – and get to – attend this youth gathering. This year's theme was "Hands On." Since this marked the first time that we were officially conducting a joint Anglican and Lutheran gathering, the Lutheran bishops were paired with an Anglican counterpart. Each pairing was given 15 minutes to address the gathering, focusing on the daily theme. I was paired with Bishop Sue Moxley from Halifax and our theme for the day was "Hands that hurt; hands that heal." I had an absolute blast at the convention. I tried to visit with as many of our BC youth groups as I could, and also had ample opportunity to engage in conversation with youth and leaders from across this nation. The Anglican bishops, youth and leaders to whom I

spoke were effusive in their praise about the gathering and were absolutely committed to ensuring that even more Anglicans could attend the next gathering. (The last figures I saw in the week leading up to the gathering indicated that approximately 900 Lutherans and 100 Anglicans were registered.)

### **CLWR Refugee Office Relocates to BC Synod Office**

We are delighted to announce that the CLWR Vancouver Refugee Office has rented the downstairs of our synod office. Fikre Tsehai, regional director, is joined by support staff Elizabeth Galvez and Senait Biadgilgn. We all look forward to increased collegiality and awareness of each other's ministry. A word of thanks also goes to Mt. Zion Lutheran, New Westminster – our landlords – for their continued support and financial graciousness that enables our office to conduct its administrative affairs as financially responsible as possible. CLWR's partnership will greatly assist us in that endeavour as well.

### **Synod Council meets in early September**

With the significant staffing changes facing us as a synod (that is, with the inability of our synod to continue to fund the position of Assistant to the Bishop) I have asked Synod Council to move its previously scheduled November meeting to that of Sept. 2 to 4. We need to spend time reviewing our synod's goals and priorities, and make plans for how we can best attend to the ministry that has been entrusted to us. We will review core services, establish priorities for myself as Bishop as well as that of the Bishop's office, Deans, and synodical Standing Committees.

### **Congregations in Transition**

(my apologies if I have missed important information)

- Benediction, Delta Rev. Courtenay Reedman's installation takes place on Sunday, August 29
- First, Vancouver Rev. Richard Hergesheimer has returned from leave following eye surgery
- Living Faith, Sechelt In call process
- New Life, Vancouver Rev. Sam Voo will return from leave on October 1<sup>st</sup>; Rev. Dr. Eddie Kwok has served as interim for the English ministry for the past several months
- Van. Chinese, Burnaby Rev. Vickie Wong has resigned and is temporarily without call
- Mt. Olive, Surrey Rev. Peter Hanson returns from sabbatical
- Peace, Abbotsford Rev. Christoph Reiners returns from sabbatical; Rev. Katalin Janko has served as interim
- St. Paul, Maple Ridge Rev. Bob Goos has announced his retirement effective Nov 1
- St. Paul's, Pr Rupert Intern Fleming Blishen returns to LTS after completing; Intern John Boyd arrives this fall to assist in serving Prince Rupert, Lord of Life mission, Sandspit, and Mt. Zion, Smithers; Mt. Zion continues to explore staffing options for future years
- Ch of St. Paul, Barriere This new Shared Ministry (United, Anglican and Lutheran) held their service of organization in May of this year
- Faith, Kelowna Rev. Wallace Loge concluded his interim ministry in August; congregation is reviewing ministry needs and exploring staffing options; Rev. Patricia Giannelia will serve as vice-pastor

May God's peace be with you all,

Bishop Gregory Mohr



## **Bishop's Schedule for SUMMER and FALL 2010** (as of Aug. 27/10)

Fall is the busiest time of year for meetings and events, which include four conference conventions, synod and national council meetings, plus the LTS Board of Governors' meeting. In addition, I am working diligently at trying to visit as many congregations as possible. My Sunday schedule is now fully booked with work or family events through to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in December.

- Aug. 6      Ordination of Courtenay Reedman, Kamloops
- 7          Meeting with Anglican Bishop Barbara Andrews, Kamloops
- 7          Christ, Kelowna; council meeting
- 8          Faith, Kelowna
- 11        Meeting with Fran Schmidt, missionary from Peru
- 18-22     CLAY, National Youth Gathering, London . . . Ontario.
- 26        SUMS Day Camp closing concert
- 29        St. Peter's Estonian, Vancouver
- 29        Installation of Courtenay Reedman at Benediction, Delta;  
Dean Marlys Moen to preside
- 31        Constitution committee meeting
- 31        Financial committee meeting
- 31        Teleconference meeting, Faith, Kelowna
  
- Sept 2-4    Synod Council meeting
- 8-11     National Church Council meeting; Bishops' meeting; Winnipeg
- 16        Joint GV and LFV ministerial; viewing Alban Institute's Webinar on "Crunch Time in the Small Church"
- 18        Reinhardt/Hay wedding
- 25        GV Conference Convention, Our Saviour, Richmond
- 26        Vancouver Chinese, Burnaby
  
- Oct. 1-2    SI Conference Convention, All Saints, Kelowna
- 3        St. John's, Oliver
- 4-7      First Call program, Saskatoon
- 9-13     A few days of holiday; probably at The Farm
- 15-16    VI Conference Convention, Faith, Powell River
- 17        Faith, Powell River
- 23-26    Bishops' meeting; Montreal
- 30        LFV Conference Convention
- 31        Benediction, Delta
  
- Nov. 5      Shepherd of the Valley, Comox
- 5-6      Hope, Nanaimo
- 7        Trinity, Port Alberni
- 14-15    LTS Board of Governors' meeting
- 21        Oops! I thought I had already booked this Sunday, but it's still available. Phone lines are open!
  
- Dec. 5      Church of the Cross, Victoria
- 12        Oakridge, Vancouver