



January 2012

Some Mohr Jottings

Newsletter from Bishop Dr. Gregory Mohr of the BC Synod
bcsynod@elcic.ca ~ 604-524-1318

Special Interest Articles:

- 2012 Study Conference
- 2012 BC Synod Convention

Individual Highlights:

Michael Harvey Workshops	2
Synod Convention	2
Faith, Burnaby "A Service of Leave-taking"	3
Nominations needed	3
Godspeed and Thank you	3
Calendar	4

"Rejoice always. Again, I say, rejoice." Such words easily could be heard as flippant or naïve if it weren't for the fact that Paul faced countless difficulties, challenges and hardship. Yet in the midst of all this, he continued to keep his eyes focused on the centrality of the gospel message – that Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

In our region of this Christian church – our BC Synod – we face diminishing numbers and aging populations; we not only wonder what the future might hold for us but whether or not there is a future for us. More and more, the church is seen as irrelevant to our world; we live in an increasingly secular age. Theological discourse is missing from much of our world's conversation.

Yet it is here that God has placed us. It is here that God calls us. We are a gospel people and we have a gracious word to share with those around us – a word that is spoken, yes, but also a word that is lived. We do so with joy, a far different word from that of mere happiness. Joy infuses our lives, our message, and our service. In Christ, we are made new. In Christ, we have been set free. In Christ, we freely serve. In spite of church arguments, dissolutions, severance, and statistical challenges, we persevere – for this is Christ's church, not ours. We do so joyfully; again and again, we shall rejoice.

2012 Study Conference – February 12-15

with guest speaker Rev. Susan Engh

For this year's study conference, our presenter will address the topic of congregational ministry in the community context. How can we be engaged more fully in the public life of our communities? How do we help people engage their gifts in the world? Rev. Engh will talk about building capacity, bringing people into leadership, and strengthening relationships in the congregation and community.

More broadly, she will help us think through what it means for us to be the church in a 21st century context. This has import not only for parish pastors but for diaconal ministers, chaplains, retired pastors and all church workers.

(Just a reminder to congregations: according to the bylaws of the synod [Bylaw 4, Section 13] "all ordained ministers serving under call shall attend all conventions of this Synod, the annual study conference and the meetings of the conferences to which they belong." Also, if you do not already do so, may I encourage your congregation to cover the cost – or a significant portion thereof – for any retired pastors in your congregation.)

Since the Study Conference is to operate on a cost-recovery basis, there needs to be a slight increase again this year. We were hoping to keep the prices the same but our projections do not afford us that possibility. The following registration fees include travel equalization.

\$380 for the First Registrant (normally the Pastor or Senior Pastor of the congregation)

\$275 for each additional registrant OR for Retired, Chaplain, Deacon, Intern, parish worker, etc.)

\$75 for theological students registered with BC Synod CTCL

Michael Harvey workshops – May 4 and 5, 2012

Last year, Michael Harvey led workshops in Kelowna, Vernon and Langley on becoming inviting congregations. Over 20 of our congregations participated in these workshops.

This year, Michael will again travel the country from coast to coast. He will be in Kelowna on Friday, May 4 (sponsored by the Anglican diocese) and in the lower mainland on Saturday, May 5 (sponsored by us). Here is what Michael proposes for this year's workshops:

Unlocking the Growth Seminars continue to emphasize invitation but at their heart, they encourage discipleship across the full 52 weeks of the year. In Seminar Two, we look at simple and effective ideas for increasing the number of people becoming regular attendees at the church to which they were invited.

Topics include:

The reasons people don't come back a second time
7 phrases that turn people away
Turning failure into a friend
From Simon to Simon Peter

More details will follow with respect to place, time and registration information.

Synod convention – May 10 to 13, 2012 - New Westminster

On Thursday, May 10, we gather under the theme "A Covenant People: In Mission for Others." This year's convention will be held at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, New Westminster. The local arrangements committee has been meeting since the fall and I know that they will welcome you warmly and do everything they can to make this convention a time of blessing for us all. Joanne Solomonson (from Church of the Cross, Victoria) is our convention manager, having previously worked as the chairperson for the local arrangements committee for the 2010 synod convention.

While the completion of the agenda is some ways off, I do anticipate that we will begin with worship at 7:00 pm on the Thursday. We will conclude with worship on Sunday morning.

The fees for this year's convention are as follows:

Fee #1 - \$430 (For Lay delegates and rostered ministers serving parishes)

Fee # 2 - \$200 (For rostered ministers serving specialized ministries, on leave from call, retired and diaconal)

For Visitors - \$75

The delegate registration fees include travel equalization as well as accommodations at the Executive Plaza hotel on North Road for those travelling from outside the Greater Vancouver district.

As stated in our constitution and bylaws (Bylaw 2, Section 2) voting membership shall consist of:

- one lay delegate from each congregation officially recognized by this Synod. Congregations having more than 100 baptized members may have one lay delegate for each additional 200 baptized members or major fraction thereof.
- ordained and diaconal ministers on the roster of the Synod who are members in good standing of their respective congregations
- one youth delegate from each Conference who is elected or appointed by his/her Conference and who is a member in good standing of a member congregation.

ordained ministers of a church with which this Church has a full communion agreement and who are serving in this Synod under the provisions of that full communion agreement.

Faith, Burnaby – “A Service of Leave-Taking”

On Saturday, January 14, approximately 75 friends and former members of Faith Lutheran, Burnaby, gathered for one final worship service and for a time of reminiscing. The congregation had voted to dissolve this past November but wanted to wait until after Christmas to hold this final worship service. It was a poignant and sad occasion, yet one that enabled people to remember days gone by and to share memories and stories with folks whom they might not have seen for quite some time. It also was a time to give thanks for what that place and those people have meant to them over the years.

Two former pastors of the congregation joined Interim Pastor Don Johnson and myself in participation in the worship service. Several others from the lower mainland also worshiped with us that day.

Prior to its closing, the congregation left a significant legacy for the church: the continuation of a pre-school (that has served that area for 50 years!); the establishment of a seminary bursary for a BC student; an endowment for the Renewal and Redevelopment of congregations' fund; and its share of the property (jointly owned with Vancouver Chinese Lutheran) has been vested with the BC Synod to serve as a legacy for ministry and mission.

Nominations needed

There are a number of vacancies on our synod program committees and we need help finding people interested in serving in this way. For a brief overview of the areas of responsibilities for each of the committees, check the synod website (www.bcsynod.org), click on Documents and open the “BC Synod Constitution and Bylaws.” Scroll to the last part of the document and look for Bylaw 12, Standing Committees.

While membership in the committees might vary throughout the course of the year, here are the vacancies that I currently have listed:

Campus Ministry	- Lay member
Communications	- 2 to 4 Lay and Rostered members
Faith and Society	- Lay member from either Peace River or Northwest Conferences - Rostered minister
Missions	- Rostered minister from the Greater Vancouver Conference - Rostered minister from either Peace or Northwest Conferences
Specialized Ministry	- Lay member
Stewardship	- Lay member from Greater Vancouver Conference - Rostered minister from Southern Interior Conference - Rostered minister from Vancouver Island Conference
CTEL (Theol. Ed'n)	- Rostered minister from Lower Fraser Valley Conference
Worship	- Rostered minister from Southern Interior Conference
Youth	- Lay member from Greater Vancouver Conference

Godspeed and Thank You

It is with deep regret and sadness that I must inform you that our office secretary, Ashley Russell Moore, has submitted her resignation, effective early March. She and her husband Michael will be moving to Dawson Creek, where Ashley's family lives. I think I speak for so many of you when I say that we will miss her warmth, enthusiasm, and joy at working for the church in this way. She will be greatly missed.

An announcement calling for applications will soon be sent to congregations.



British Columbia Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

80 E 10th Avenue
New Westminster,
BC
V3L 4R5

PHONE:
604-524-1318

FAX:
604-524-9255

E-MAIL:
bcsynod@elcic.ca

We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.bcsynod.org

Bishop's Schedule for WINTER/SPRING 2012

Jan	3	Ordination service for Fleming Blishen
	4-8	Bishops' study conference (ELCA & ELCIC), San Diego
	10	Synod convention worship planning
	11	Campus Ministry committee meeting
	14	Closing worship service for Faith, Burnaby
	15	Meeting: Vancouver Chinese, Burnaby
	17	Call committee meeting, Trinity, Delta
	21	Meetings: Faith, Kelowna and All Saints, Kelowna
	22	Worship and congregational meeting: Our Saviour, Richmond
	25	Officers' meeting
	29	Worship: Spirit of Life, Vancouver
	30-1 st	Meetings: Grace, Dawson Creek
Feb	5	Worship and Call meeting: Living Faith, Sechelt
	11	BC Synod Examination committee: colloquy
	12-15	Study Conference for Rostered Ministers, lay professionals, students
	18	90 th birthday celebration for Pastor Carl Johnson; Mt. Zion, New West.
	26	Worship: Trinity, Delta
March	2	Lutheran Theological Seminary capital campaign, Hope, Nanaimo (also on Mar 3 at Church of the Cross, Victoria)
	4	Worship: Christ the King, Surrey
	8	Conference of Bishops' meeting
	8-10	National Church Council
	15-18	(tentative) events and Sunday worship in the Okanagan area
	22-25	Synod Council meetings
	23-24	All Synod committee meetings
April	1	Worship: Matsqui (Palm Sunday)
	6	Good Friday
	8	The Resurrection of Our Lord
	15	Worship: Peace, Abbotsford
	19-21	Lutheran Seminary Board of Governor meetings, Saskatoon
	27-28	Lutheran Seminary capital campaign events in lower mainland
May	5	Michael Harvey event re hospitality, place TBA
	10-13	BC Synod Convention, hosted by Mt. Zion, New Westminster
	24-26	Alberta and the Territories Synod Convention
June	1-3	Peace River Conference convention (tentative date) at Chetwynd