



May 2011

Some Mohr Jottings

BC Synod Bishop's Letter

Special Interest Articles:

- Legal Settlement and Future Development
- Congregations in Transitions
- ELCIC National Convention and other upcoming events

Individual Highlights:

Congratulations Grads!	2
2011-2012 Interns	2
Call Processes Underway	2
Congregations and Ministries in Transition	2
ELCIC National Convention	2-3
Rostered Ministers Study Conf.	3
Confirmation Camp	3
YAK	3
Wedding Bells	3
Spring-Summer Schedule	4

Legal Settlement and Future Development

To God be the glory! Very late on Tuesday evening, April 19, representatives of Christ the King Lutheran Church and the Officers of the BC Synod, in the presence of members of the board of Surrey Urban Mission Society, signed a legal agreement that results in a discontinuance of the litigation brought against the Synod, Bishop Preibisch, and the former Treasurer of the BC Synod.

In a spirit of cooperation and an abundant sense of hope of what future redevelopment on that site might look like, all those gathered around the table that night were imbued by a gracious and life-giving Spirit. Throughout the lengthy negotiation process, we tried to stay focused on what could be rather than what has gone before.

There are several key components to the agreement:

- Christ the King Lutheran Church and the BC Synod shall enter into a joint Corporation agreement in order to facilitate the redevelopment of the site;
- Christ the King Lutheran Church is received as a recognized member congregation of the BC Synod;
- a place for SUMS' ministry at that site has been secured, both during this interim period as well as upon the completion of the new facility
- At the conclusion of the redevelopment title will be transferred from the joint corporation to Christ the King Lutheran Church.

To help us celebrate this significant event, Jonquil Hallgate, director of SUMS, went to the kitchen and brought back a bottle of sparkling apple juice and one of champagne.

Equipped for Renewal: The Inviting and Welcoming Church

Challenging. Inspiring. Unsettling. Encouraging. Those are just a few of the words people used to describe the presentation of Michael Harvey, an Anglican layperson from England, who spoke about hospitality and welcome on May 6 and 7 in Vernon and Langley. Founder of the "Back to Church Sunday" movement, Michael reminds us that reaching out to others is as simple as saying nine words: "Would you like to come to church with me?" He is adamant that "success" is not to be measured by how many people attend following such an invitation, but by one person inviting another. We are called to extend the invitation; the yes or no is "God's bit," says Michael. God simply asks us to invite.

Approximately 35 people from Lutheran congregations in the Southern Interior attended the event held in Vernon on the Friday evening; a further 85 people from 21 congregations attended the event in Langley on the Saturday, including representatives from two Vancouver Island congregations.

In his quintessential British humorous style, Michael challenged our defenses and excuses, causing us not only to laugh at ourselves but to remind us of who we are as the people of God.

Watch for more information about "Back to Church Sunday." It is typically held on the last Sunday in September.

Congratulations Grads!

Congratulations to the graduating class of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon and, in particular, to Barbara Groote and Fleming Blishen of the BC Synod. We pray for God's continued guidance and grace to be upon them as they begin their new ministries.

Interns for 2011-2012

Two interns from Lutheran Theological Seminary once again will be calling the BC Synod home for upcoming school year. Karen Stepko (from the Saskatchewan Synod) will be serving with Rev. Jim Whaley in St. Paul's, Prince Rupert and Lord of Life mission, Sandspit while Melissa Hoehn (also of the SK Synod) will join Rev. Lyle McKenzie at Church of the Cross in Victoria.

Call Processes Underway

Three congregations are currently actively engaged in the call process:

- St. Paul, Maple Ridge is well into the interview process
- Living Faith, Sechelt, is identifying the names of potential candidates for a half-time position
- First, Vancouver, is also identifying the names of potential candidates for a full-time second pastor

Other Congregations and Ministries in Transition

Pastor Vida Jaugelis of Oakridge, Vancouver, has accepted a full-time position as chaplain with Fraser Health. The congregation will soon begin preparing the congregational profile and an interim pastor is being sought.

Faith, Burnaby, continues its discernment process as they consider whether or not to dissolve the congregation. Please continue to lift them up in prayer during this difficult and painful journey.

"Oliver Lutheran Centre – A Ministry of the BC Synod, ELCIC" is the new name for the ministry in Oliver, following the dissolution of St. John Lutheran Church. Many of the former congregation will join Our Redeemer, Penticton, although monthly worship services with Holy Communion will continue to be held in the church.

Vancouver Chinese, Burnaby, extended a call to Rev. Dr. Eddie Kwok, to serve alongside Pastor Richard Hung. The Installation service for Dr. Kwok will take place on Saturday evening, May 28 (tentative).

ELCIC National Convention

"In Mission for Others: A Covenant People" shall be the mission statement under which we will gather at this summer's national convention in Saskatoon, from July 14 through 17. Many of you will have seen the communication from National Church Council's meeting in early April that addresses two of the primary items for consideration – that of the Study on Human Sexuality and of the Structural Renewal Task Forces' recommendations. If you would like to see that document, you will find it on the national website at www.elcic.ca, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on "A Letter to the Church from National Church Council."

In terms of the Structural Renewal recommendations, these will be published in the Bulletin of Reports. Basically, they will provide the "broad brush strokes" of how this structural renewal will look like. Since it takes two conventions to implement constitutional and bylaw changes, this summer's motions will pave the way for those changes to take place.

At the Synod conventions in 2012, each Synod will then need to vote on the specifics of the structural renewal recommendations. In order for there to be any change in the number or makeup of synods, a synod must first vote in favour of such changes.

Please pray for all the delegates who will be in attendance at the convention as they seek to discern God's call for ministry among us. Pray for the unity of the church, that as brothers and sisters in Christ we might listen respectfully to one another, be gracious in our disagreements, and above all, seek to glorify Christ in our actions and words.

Speaking of Which...

Since we're talking about the 2012 Synod convention, now is the time to mark down the dates and place: May 10 to 13, 2012 at Mt. Zion, New Westminster. The convention manager is Joanne Solomonson, who previously served as the Local Arrangements Chairperson for the 2010 convention in Victoria. Norma Houde of Mt. Zion is this convention's Local Arrangements Chairperson, and Joanne and I recently met with Norma, Pastor Marlys Moen, and many of the members of the Local Arrangements Committee to begin planning for the convention.

Rostered Ministers Study Conference

This year's Study Conference was again held at Charis Camp, just east of Chilliwack. The planning committee worked hard at trying to establish a time of renewal and rejuvenation alongside the learning and study. Our guest speaker was Rabbi Dr. Robert Daum, director of the Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre at UBC. Dr. Daum helped us understand the Biblical narrative from his perspective as a Jewish rabbi. Well-known in the Vancouver area for his accessible yet extremely insightful presentations, Dr. Daum engendered a tremendous amount of conversation and dialogue. We are also grateful to Bishop Marlin Aadland who led an early Monday morning Bible study that had participants asking if we could book him to do the same thing at every Study Conference.

Another highlight for many was the opportunity for "Peer to Peer Conversations," wherein participants addressed certain topics and shared their ideas for ministry pertaining to these topics. There are many and diverse gifts among the pastors, deacons and lay workers in our synod and these peer-to-peer conversations helped us learn from each other.

Confirmation Camp

For over 25 years, a Confirmation Camp program has been jointly operated by Lutheran congregations in our synod. It offers a week-long experience of catechetics, recreation, worship and community building. This program is intended to complement other forms of ministry, for the benefit of young people poised at a new phase of faith and life.

This year's Confirmation Camp runs from August 22 to 27, using the facilities of Nanoose Bay Pentecostal Camp (near Nanaimo). Registration before June 30 is \$325. For more information about the program, please contact this year's confirmation camp deans:

Rev. Kristen Steele (Shepherd of the Valley, Langley)

604-530-1311; kristen.svlc@shaw.ca

Rev. Cliff Reinhardt (Spirit of Life, Vancouver)

604-874-2212; spiritlife@shaw.ca

YAK

A "Young Adult Konference" will be held this fall (Oct. 21-23) at Timberline Ranch, just north of Maple Ridge. This is a new endeavor in our synod and is the creation of Rev. Murray Halvorson (Trinity, Delta) and friends. The theme of the Konference is "There's an app for that."

Geared for those 19 to 30'ish, the registration cost of \$175 per person includes accommodations, meals, workshops, activities and guest speaker. Registration is due by August 30th (you'll get a free YAK t-shirt!). Registration forms and info is now on the Synod website at www.bcsynod.org. Also, check out the YAK event page on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=125457010865454>

Wedding Bells

Please join me in extending our best wishes and prayers for God's abundant love and joy to two young couples who are getting married this summer:

- Ashley Russell (our secretary here in synod office) and Michael Moore, whose wedding will take place on June 4, and
- Rev. Thomas Keeley and Deaconess Marie Frick (Dunbar, Vancouver), who will celebrate their wedding on July 9.



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See us at:

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Bishop's Schedule for SPRING and SUMMER 2011

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| April | 24 | Easter Worship, Good Shepherd, Coquitlam |
| | 26 | Call Committee meeting, First, Vancouver |
| | 28 | Task Force reviewing ministry of Bishop/Synod |
| | 29-30 | Trinity, Port Alberni; congregational workshop along with Bishop Cowan |
| May | 1 | 20 th Anniversary Banquet, Vancouver Chinese, Burnaby |
| | 2-4 | Board of Governors, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon |
| | 5 | SUMS Annual General Meeting |
| | 6 | Study Conference planning meeting and debrief |
| | 6 | Synod Convention 2012 planning meeting |
| | 7 | Equipped for Renewal: The Inviting and Welcoming Church |
| | 11-15 | A few precious days of holiday |
| | 16-23 | Study Leave (course on "Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times") |
| | 26 | Officers' meeting |
| | 27-28 | Preaching and attendance at New Westminster Diocesan convention |
| June | 5 | Worship, Matsqui, 108 th Anniversary |
| | 9 | Meeting, Grace, Dawson |
| | 10 | Peace River Conference convention at Mackenzie |
| | 12 | Worship, Peace, Fort St. John |
| | 26 | Worship, Faith, Powell River, 40 th Anniversary |
| July | 3 | Worship celebration, Victoria, Anglican cathedral, in recognition of 10 th Anniversary of Full Communion agreement |
| | 10 | Task Force reviewing ministry of Bishop/Synod |
| | 13 | National Church Council Meeting, Saskatoon |
| | 14-17 | ELCIC National Church Convention, Saskatoon |
| Holidays: July 24 through August 21 | | |
| Aug | 25-26 | Attend portion of Confirmation Camp |
| Sept | 7 | Conference of Bishops' meeting, Winnipeg |
| | 8-11 | National Church Council, Winnipeg |