



Some Mohr Jottings

January 2013

BC Synod, 80 East 10th Ave, New Westminster BC V3L 4R5
www.bcsynod.org bcsynod@elcic.ca 604 524 1318

Renewal and Redevelopment of Congregations

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This is exciting! We have 13 pastors signed up to be part of the first “clergy cohort” for the renewal and redevelopment process. We also have a number of congregations ready to participate in the congregational portion of this process, and we know that there are still a few more who will be making a decision at their upcoming annual general meeting.

Engaging this whole process begins with the statement -- and the recognition -- that “God is at work in our world.” Then it quickly moves to the following two questions: “What does it mean to be the church in this 21st century?” and “To what is God calling us?” This is what forms the underpinnings of a multi-year conversation and engagement for the renewal and redevelopment of our ministry as congregations and as individuals. Our Synod has chosen to enter into this long-term process by engaging the consulting services of Dr. Alan Roxburgh. Some of you heard him speak at last May’s Synod Convention; others of you have listened to one or both of the orientation sessions held this past fall. Dr. Roxburgh will help us get at the question of “What is God up to in our world?” and provide us with a framework for moving beyond the questions and into action.

I believe that this process is vital for our church communities and I encourage you and your congregation to seriously consider participating in it. (Note: it is not a “program”; it is an intentional, action-reflection process that helps inculcate Christian practices and discernment. It is not something that is done once and is concluded. It is something that becomes part of our way of life as Christians.) We have designed this process to be phased in over a number of years; that is, there are multiple points at which pastors and congregations can enter into the process. If your congregation is not at a point where you want to engage the process this year, that’s okay. The task force, synod council and I as your bishop are all committed to ensuring that this process is a multi-year initiative and will be available for all congregations over the coming years.

We often ask what is to become of the church? We are faced with challenging situations. The church’s role in its communities is profoundly different from that of decades gone by. Habits and patterns that once “worked” for us no longer seem adequate, appropriate or useful. Processes such as this renewal and redevelopment process help us to reflect, discern, listen (to God and to one another) and step out in faith and hope.

Part of your discernment as a congregation is to decide when the most appropriate time might be to engage this process. Not everyone will want to or be ready to participate on the first or second go-rounds. However, my hope is that all of our congregations - including our Shared Ministries - will actively engage this process sometime in the next 4 to 6 years. There will be multiple points of entry for this

process and the cost to participate is minimal, as the result of a significant gift given to the Synod for mission and development.

I also want to point out that with this initial clergy cohort, several of our pastors will be trained to serve as coaches for this and subsequent groups. In other words, built into this process is the commitment that, over time, we train our own facilitators. That way, we do not need to rely on an outside consultant year after year. It truly becomes *our* process. An outside consultant is vital for helping provide insight and initiative; however, over time, it is important that there be an organic pulse to this process and that there be leadership raised up within our own synod.

One of the things I particularly like about this process is how it immerses us in the study of Scripture whenever the group gathers, whether it is the clergy cohort or the congregational guiding team. Another important thing I've noticed is that there is a strong emphasis on listening - to each other and to God.

New Video Resources for Renewal and Redevelopment Process

We know that there were some technical problems with the October congregational orientation event, some that occurred on our end and some that occurred on the receiving end. As a result, Dr. Alan Roxburgh and I recorded 3 new videos to serve as introductory pieces for councils and congregations. They are now posted on our synod website at <bcsynod.org>.

Rather than recording a one-and-a-half hour presentation, we created 3 shorter videos. This affords you the possibility of showing one video at a council or committee meeting (perhaps even after church) and then asking questions such as, "So what did you hear? What jumped out at you? What did you learn?" as well as the quintessential Lutheran question: "What does this mean for *us*?" In other words, spend some time talking about what you heard and reflecting upon the points raised.

Then show the second video at your next council meeting and so on.

A fourth video also is on the website. This is very similar to the presentation Dr. Roxburgh made at our 2012 Synod Convention, where he discusses the Four Types of Congregations. See where you place your congregation and engage in conversation with others from your congregation. Once again ask yourselves the question, "What does this mean for us?" Also begin asking, "What is God up to in our neighborhood?" and "To what is God calling us?"

BC Synod Report for Annual General Meetings

By mid-January I hope to send out a one or two page report from the BC Synod that can be included in your Annual Reports. I'll also have a financial update ready for you with respect to the financial commitments that each of your congregations made at Synod Convention. It is important to remember that the BC Synod, in its very essence, is the ministry of your congregation and not some adjunct organization. This is our work, our ministry, together.

New BC Synod Editor for Canada Lutheran

I am delighted to announce that Deaconess Judy Whaley has been selected as the new BC Synod editor for the Canada Lutheran. Submissions of ideas or articles can be sent to her at Deacjudy09@yahoo.ca. Judy and her husband Jim live in Prince Rupert, where Judy works for the school district.

Study Conference for Rostered Ministers and Lay Professional Workers

Douglas Todd, award-winning journalist with The Vancouver Sun, is this year's featured speaker for the annual Study Conference, held April 7 through 10 at Charis Camp, Chilliwack. Todd is the two-time winner of the Templeton Award for Religion Reporting, which is given to the top religion writer in the secular media in North America. He also won accolades for his 2008 book "Cascadia: The Elusive Utopia -- Exploring the Spirit of the Pacific Northwest."

Registration forms for the Study Conference will be available in February. The event begins with dinner on Sunday evening and concludes with lunch on Wednesday. As per the bylaws of the church, all Rostered Ministers under call are required to attend.

1 Wedding and 3 Retirements

The marriage of Rev. Lori-Anne Boutin and Mr. Robert Crawford will take place on Saturday, February 2nd, at First Lutheran, Vancouver. May God grant them immeasurable joy, peace and love.

Three of our BC Synod pastors have recently announced their retirements. We give thanks to God for their ministry among us and pray that their retirements also may be filled with new challenges, opportunities and joy:

- Rev. Carol Dennison (Faith, Powell River) retired at the end of December 2012
- Rev. Ron Sedo (Shepherd of the Valley, Comox) retires at the end of January 2013
- Rev. Richard Hergesheimer (First, Vancouver) retires at the end of June 2013

Other Pastoral Changes

Rev. Jennifer Wilson (Bozeman, Montana; ELCA) has accepted the call to Trinity, Delta. Start date has yet to be determined.

Matthew Senf was Ordained on Saturday, Nov 24, having been called to serve Lutheran Urban Ministry Society on a part-time, non-stipendiary basis.

Rev. Brian Krushel (Hills of Peace, Kamloops) has accepted the call to serve the two-point parish of Barriere Shared Ministry and Clearwater United Church. The Barriere congregation is a partnership between the United, Anglican and Lutheran Churches.

Rev. Kim Staus concluded his Intentional Interim Ministry position at Gloria Dei, North Vancouver, at the end of December. He and Stephanie have now moved to Oliver in the Southern Interior.

Those currently serving as Interim Pastors are:

Rev. David Lefsrud	Benediction, Delta
Rev. Art McCaughan	Trinity, Delta
Rev. James Buenting (Anglican priest)	Faith, Kelowna
Bishop Gerhard Preibisch	Gloria Dei, North Vancouver
Rev. Katalin Janko	Mt. Olivet, North Vancouver

Thank You!

Each year I send out a list of vacancies for our synod committees so that Conference conventions can solicit names and pass those along to Synod Council for appointment. This year, you have responded enthusiastically! 13 NEW appointments and 7 re-appointments were made. Thank you, all, for being willing to serve in this way.

A listing of all committees and their members can be found on the BC Synod website!

E-Communiqué

Our National church office regularly sends out an E-Communiqué that is filled with information, resources, links and ideas. This month's e-communiqué provides information for:

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Epiphany devotions
- Lenten resources
- Youth Global Encounter (trip to Peru) sponsored by CLWR
- and so much more

If you have not yet subscribed to E-Communiqué, then go to www.elcic.ca, click on Resources, then on E-Communique. Follow the instructions for subscribing.

Peru

The following announcement comes from Rev. Tyler Gingrich, Youth Engagement Coordinator for CLWR:

In May 2013, Canadian Lutheran World Relief will take a group of young adults (ages 18-35) to Peru to experience its unique culture and see first-hand the development and environmental projects it supports on behalf of Lutherans in Canada. This Global Encounter experience will give participants the opportunity to witness work in which CLWR engages through its partner organization, Diaconia, as well as visit a Lutheran congregation, and cultural sites. For more information about how you can get involved, check out <http://www.clwr.org/Get-Involved/YouthGPeru.htm> (Deadline for applications is January 28th.)

Bishop's Schedule for Winter and Spring 2013

Jan	8	Renewal and Redevelopment Task Force meeting
	19	Meeting: Living Faith, Sechelt
	19	Council meeting: Faith, Powell River
	20	Worship: Faith, Powell River
	20	Meeting: Shepherd of the Valley, Comox
	26	Ordination for Larry Kochendorfer as Bishop for Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Edmonton, AB
Feb	2	Wedding: Rev. Lori-Anne Boutin and Robert Crawford
	3	Worship: Mt. Olive, Surrey
	4-7	Study Conference for Synod of Alberta and the Territories, Canmore, AB
	17	Worship: Mt. Zion, New Westminster
	18	Renewal and Redevelopment: 1 st Clergy Cohort meeting
	20	Renewal and Redevelopment coaches' meeting (tentative)
	21-23	Canadian Mission Consultation, Winnipeg
March	2	Renewal and Redevelopment: Congregational Guiding Teams, Group 1 (Lower Mainland; Place TBA)
	7	Conference of Bishops, Winnipeg
	8-9	National Church Council, Winnipeg
	16	Renewal and Redevelopment: Congregational Guiding Teams, Group 2 (Southern Interior; Place TBA)
	17	Worship: Deo, Salmon Arm
	24-31	Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter: Worship participation still to be coordinated
April	7-10	Study Conference, Charis Camp, Chilliwack
	14	Worship: Grace, Dawson Creek
	26-28	Synod Council meeting, Surrey
	26-27	Joint Synod Committee meetings, Mt. Olive, Surrey
May	4-5	Our Redeemer, Penticton: 50 th Anniversary Celebrations
	10-12	Board of Governors' meeting, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon
	17-24	Holidays
	26	Redeemer, Vancouver: 100 th Anniversary Celebrations
June	2	Worship: Matsqui, 110 th Anniversary Celebrations
	9	Worship: Ascension, Nelson
	14-15	Joint Convention: Peace River and Northwest Conferences, Prince George
	16	Worship: Our Saviour's, Prince George
July	2	National Church Council, Ottawa
	3-7	National Church Convention, Ottawa