

Faith and Society Committee

The Faith and Society Committee will be meeting in April and their report will be handed out at the Convention.

Missions Committee

“WHAT IS GOD UP TO IN THE BC SYNOD???”

BC SYNOD MISSIONS COMMITTEE, 2014-2016 REPORT

*What is God up to in our communities?
How can we learn what the Spirit is doing in our world?
What experiments can help us get to know and journey with our neighbours?
How can we learn from engaging with our neighbours?
How can we re-imagine being church in a creative and fun way?
What ideas give you energy and joy?*

In 2014, the BC Missions Committee decided that it needed to change. Change the way we have understood mission. Change the way we work as a committee. Change the direction that we have been taking as a committee. So in Nov 2014, we had a face-to-face meeting with Bishop Greg that focused on *“Dreaming and Visioning”* and *“Planning for our Future: Discerning and Acting.”*

However, we knew that we first needed to look backwards before we could see a new path forwards. We looked at what we value and appreciate about the mission in our synod, as well as the areas of growth in the way we do mission, and our new dreams for the future. What we value most in our synod is the culture of empowerment and openness, working together with other denominations, and the commitment to the growth of new faith communities in spite of failures. We appreciate that mission is practiced, not only preached, and is about being brave and exploring new ways of being and living as church.

How do we think we could grow as a synod? More opportunities to connect and build relationships with those unknown to us or ‘different.’ Be brave in our practice of living with those on the periphery of society. Experiment more, and not be afraid to fail. Collaborating with other congregations and erasing isolation and competition.

What dreams and visions inspire us? Joining forces with other congregations. Harnessing the power of small group ministry to create real connections. Inspiring more congregations to be involved in the missional renewal process. Moving beyond a warm and fuzzy church to opening our doors to counter-cultural change. Connecting better with people of all backgrounds. Renewing urban mission. Being accountable to one another as a church in mission with each other. Moving beyond protecting our assets to sharing what we have. Experimenting with new ways of forming faith communities.

For the long-term, we see a need for systemic change especially in area ministry, and embedding the mission renewal practices of listening, seeing, and sharing our stories. We

also understand that we need to change the way we communicate, empowering one another, living together in a community with more engaged lay leadership.

What tangibly resulted from this meeting? Question and Answer articles about mission topics in the Canada Lutheran. Educational pieces about CECF Funding for the BC Synod. Opportunities to share our stories, especially at the 2015 Study Conferences. As committee, we are committed to being the change we wanted to see, and not just spending time talking about it.

After breaking new ground, we were ready for more change, and followed up with another face-to-face meeting in Nov 2015 with the Assistant to the Bishop for Missional Renewal, Kathy Martin. The Missions Committee was open and ready to be inspired by the ideas of missional renewal to change the way we do business, to recreate what we do, and to transform why we do it. With Kathy's guidance, we decided to focus on one area we could make a real difference: CECF grants.

CHURCH EXTENSION AND CAPITAL FUND (CECF) GRANTS

One important role of the Missions Committee is to make available each year one-time grants to support mission projects applied for by congregations and ministries of the synod. The funds come from our synod's allocation of the annual interest generated by the CECF. Projects that were funded since the last convention include:

- \$4,000 for a community ecumenical youth ministry in Penticton;
- \$370 for a hot lunch outreach program in Maple Ridge;
- \$4,000 for pastoral outreach to the north;
- \$32,800 for the Friends Indeed program at First Lutheran, Vancouver (two years);
- \$10,000 for Prince Rupert missional internship program;
- \$3,375 for summer day camp in White Rock;
- \$400 for coffee outreach program in Sechelt;
- \$17,200 for outreach at Faith, Kelowna;
- \$4,500 for Faith Forming Faith training in Delta;
- \$5,000 for Mustard Seed Family Support program in Prince Rupert;
- \$500 for free lunch program in Nanaimo;
- \$8,000 for costs to assist congregational redevelopment in Oakridge, Vancouver.

In 2015, we received a lot more funding for grants than ever before (from around \$20,000 to \$70,000), and we were able to finance all grant applications. This is due to an historic grievance of the BC synod being addressed by the CECF board. The formula for the distribution of interest was revised to create greater equity across synods. As well, in light of the shifting realities of church planting, the board has been redirecting capital from the purchase of land towards experiments across the synods to help us learn together how God is moving us forward in mission in this day. It was some of this capital that enabled us to create the position of Assistant to the Bishop for Missional Renewal.

As a committee, we have felt the nudge to see how God is moving us forward to help our churches re-imagine being church in creative and fun ways. The committee has reworked the CECF grant application to better reflect a missional emphasis to fund neighborhood and community experiments and learning opportunities that: **explore what God is doing in our neighborhoods; seek to develop relationships with others in our community; encourage participation in God's mission in the local community; and encourage action and reflection learning.** We are also more intentionally facilitating the sharing of missional stories, experiences, and learnings with the rest of the synod and wider church. We hope to inspire curiosity in exploring the surprising places that God is active in our communities by changing the emphasis from funding mission projects to supporting missional experiments.

MISSION AND CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT

Along with financing missional experiments, the Missions Committee also has the role of supporting the missions of new faith communities.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Surrey: Emmanuel continues to be the only congregation in our synod under the care of the Missions Committee that bears semblance to a traditional mission congregation. It had been receiving mission support for several years until last year when various challenges, including to membership and finances, resulted in their Pastor, Henry Guo, having to leave his call. They currently receive no ongoing financial support and maintain ministry with the help of Sunday supply, through which Pastor Henry continues to maintain involvement in the congregation. Much remains unclear about the future of this tenacious Chinese ministry. But we continue to seek creative ways to address their future and encourage their faithful spirit.

Congregational Support: The Missions Committee administers the line in the synod budget designated for congregational support (approximately \$20,000). In 2014-15, the support went entirely to support Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Surrey. In 2015-16 the funds were split between an emergency allocation for SUMS and support for the North Thompson Shared Ministry.

GLOBAL MISSIONS

The BC Synod has a companion church relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Peru (IL-P). As there is no longer a missionary from Canada living in Peru, it has been difficult to communicate with our companion church due to language barriers. The synods where these companion relationships are best working are those where there is personal connection and interaction, and a commitment to journeying together through accompaniment and not on relationships that are based on differentials of power and

money. A member of our committee, Elina Singh, is on the ELCIC Global Mission Task Force, networking with other synods, and discerning the call to engage in world missions.

As a committee that has limited financial and human resources for Global Mission, our growing edge is to better network with our companion church in Peru. We are in need of identifying persons within our synod (hopefully able to speak Spanish) who hear and respond to the call to creatively engage with our partner church, and to deepen our relationship with a church that remembers us and keeps us in their prayers. While it is important to see our neighbors within our community, we also need to keep in balance the understanding that the God at work in this world also calls us to learn from and journey with those whom we do not always see before us.

Respectfully submitted,

BC Synod Missions Committee Chair, Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford

BC Synod Mission Consultant, Eric Krushel

Committee for Theological Education and Leadership (CTEL)

The Committee for Theological Education and Leadership (CTEL) is responsible for the registration, endorsement and accompaniment of candidates seeking to become ordained or diaconal ministers in this church.

The committee tasks are described in the Candidacy Manual, a document prepared under the auspices of the ELCIC Program Committee for Learning and Ministry (PCLM) for use in all synods. Each meeting of the CTEL is attended by a representative of the PCLM.

Each candidate submits an initial dossier of registration information which is followed up by a structured interview with two members of the CTEL. If the candidate is endorsed, the CTEL assigns that person a relator who keeps up a direct line of communication with the applicant.

Each applicant is supplied with a detailed list of requirements and expectations that includes required seminary courses, growth in personal spirituality, a psychological evaluation, one quarter of Supervised Pastoral Education and a supervised internship/residency/ field experience. Each candidate provides the CTEL with an annual report of learning goals in January which is followed up by an annual interview in February. Ongoing endorsement recommendations are made at March meeting.

Supervision of some aspects of the process are shared with the seminary in which the applicant is taking courses. Those shared areas include the field placement and Supervised Pastoral Education, which are requirements for the applicable degree. Applicants are required to have CTEL endorsement in order for the seminary to enrol them as degree candidates. Each meeting of CTEL is attended by a member of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) faculty.

Files for each candidate are maintained with absolute confidentiality and kept in a secure location at the Synod office.

The CTEL meets normally in March and October. The March meeting focuses on the candidates' developmental progress; the October meeting focuses on administrative matters arising out of the March meeting.

CTEL also has access to some limited financial assistance for candidates.

The current registrants with the BC Synod are:

Ordained Ministry

Jon Eriksson
Sue Palmer
Seth Perry
Aneeta Saroop

Diaconal Ministry

Sara Bjorgan

The current membership of the Committee is comprised of:

Hugo Nunez Angel, Kelowna
Ann Baty, Victoria, Secretary
Glenn Harvey, Nanaimo
Pr. Raymond Schultz, Nanaimo, Chair
Pr. Marvin Svingen, Nanaimo
Pr. Jennifer Wilson, Delta

Bp. Greg Mohr, *ex officio*
Dr. Kristine Ruffato, LTS
Rosalene Saleski, PCLM

Although the membership of the CTEL does not represent all regions of the Synod, it's members exhibit the skill sets required for specialized personnel administration. In the interests of saving travel money and ready access to the files, the members, with exceptions, are clustered close to the Synod office.

Raymond Schultz
CTEL Chair

Worship Report to the 2016 BC Synod Convention

The Synod Worship Committee members are Peter Clark, Sylvia Duncan, Jon Eriksson, Rev. Patricia Giannelia, Rev. Vida Jaugelis, Karla Paciejewski, Lorraine Reinhardt, and Synod Council liaison Rev. Fleming Blishen. We have met, in person and via conference call, two times since the last Synod Convention.

Our newsletter, *Sounds of Joy*, is published twice a year. It is distributed by email through the Synod Office to congregations, pastors and others who have indicated they would like to be on our mailing list. Vida Jaugelis serves as editor, with articles written by members of the committee, and occasional contributions by others in the Synod. Thanks to Vida for her excellent work.

We have commissioned Fleming Blishen to create a processional cross which will be introduced at the Synod Convention 2016. Another commission for the Synod Convention 2016 is choreography created and developed by Elissa Hanson. These dances will be performed by Elissa, as well as an intergenerational group of people, at various worship services during the Convention. Our hope is that delegates and others in the Synod will be inspired and uplifted by these commissions.

In consultation with the Bishop, the Committee plans worship for Synod Convention. We seek to model elements of worship that glorify God, break open the scriptures and also inspire and enrich delegates with ideas that can be implemented in their own congregations.

The Committee has initiated plans for a Hymn Festival to mark the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. We will present this event in different locations in the Synod.

We connect with the broader Lutheran Church in Canada. Lorraine Reinhardt is the BC Synod representative on the National Programme Committee for Worship of the ELCIC, and is currently acting as chair of that Committee.

The BC Synod Worship Committee endorses the National Worship Conference *Formation and Reformation: Worship, Justice and God's Mission* which will be held in Waterloo, Ont. July 24-27, 2016. We encourage congregations to send delegates. The keynote speakers are Rev. Dr. Stephen M. Larson and The Very Rev. Bruce Jeneker. The variety and scope of workshops provides something for everyone. The content of the Conference is geared toward anyone who is interested in worship, both lay and ordained. More information is available at www.nationalworshipconference.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Lorraine Reinhardt, Chair

Youth Ministry Report to the 2016 BC Synod Convention

This committee continues to struggle with changes to the committee and finding time to meet as a whole committee. We met in June of 2015 and have another meeting scheduled for April 9. Rob Karhukangas from Good Shepherd in Coquitlam stepped in as our Program Committee for Youth Ministry liaison in the fall of 2014 after the resignation of Aneeta Saroop. We have held a number of regional events. There was a Pre-Gathering event at Shepherd of the Valley in June of 2014 prior to the CLAY (Canadian Lutheran and Anglican Youth Gathering) in Kamloops in August of 2014. Shepherd of the Valley also hosted a regional youth event when a youth group from Idaho was visiting the area in June of 2015. There have been two regional youth events at a corn maze in Chilliwack in the fall of 2014 and 2015.

In March of 2016 the first Inspire ecumenical youth and children's ministry leaders' conference was held with Rev. Kristen Steele as the Lutheran representative on the planning committee. A number of local Lutheran leaders attended part or all of the conference. There is talk of making this a regular event, either annually or every second year.

Madison Coehlo from Christ Lutheran in Chilliwack and Mena Chiarizia from Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran in Langley were our national convention youth delegates in Edmonton in July of 2015. We are pleased to have three youth delegates currently appointed to this synod convention.

Confirmation camp continues to be a well-attended and supported youth event in the synod. This year's confirmation camp will be July 4-9 at Nanoose Bay Pentecostal Camp near Nanaimo.

Many youth groups in the area have been fundraising and working hard to prepare for the CLAY gathering this summer in Charlottetown, PEI. We are hoping to have a pre-gathering event in June and possibly get together in PEI prior to the youth gathering with those who are arriving early to tour the area.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kristen Steele