

**2007 Bulletin of Reports
Delaware-Maryland Synod**

AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

BALTIMORE URBAN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP (BURP)

In 2001, it became apparent to some leaders in the DE-MD Synod, that it was time to move towards an intentional and intensive strategy for mission for our congregations in the Baltimore region. The collaborative vision developed is towards a more diverse Lutheran leadership that would make more effective the proclaiming of the gospel in congregations and communities, supported by an expanded pool of resources.

This synod supported, collective Baltimore Urban Regional Partnership Board was formed to bring this vision to life. The board has five main goals:

1. Strong and diverse pastoral and rostered leadership to be more effective in proclaiming the gospel.
2. Strong and more diverse lay leadership to be more effective in proclaiming the gospel.
3. Strong, contextually relevant congregations to be more effective in proclaiming the gospel.
4. Addressing quality of life issues in partnership with others.
5. Identifying and deploying physical, human and financial resources for ministry.

With these five goals up front in our work, the board has grappled with addressing ministry in such a wide geographic area. In 2006, we made deliberate moves to focus work on Baltimore City congregations and congregations just on the edge of the city. From this focus, the Baltimore Study project was initiated. By the time of the synod assembly, over 30 congregations will have had the opportunity to be part of a study process led by a study team that has engaged The Rev. Clemens Reinke as our facilitator. Through an intense process of one-on-one visitation, small group discussion and larger meetings, Rev. Reinke will be gathering information that will be used by the board to create an intentional plan for supporting and developing Lutheran mission and ministry. This project is a large undertaking and will consume much of our time and energy, yet the study will also be used as a platform for a re-focusing of the board and a renaming of it as well.

But, that's not all the board has done! Theological Education for Lay Leaders (TELL) 2006 saw over a dozen lay leaders graduate from the Certificate in Urban Ministry program - what a gift to ministry and mission in our synod! TELL courses are continuing, providing an important opportunity for local leadership development. Maggie Shamer is the new coordinator of this ministry.

Internships are a way that rostered leaders become connected with Urban Ministry , and the Horizon internship program is a collaborative effort between a local congregation, the ELCA and the synod. St. John's, Pimlico, will be a Horizon site in 2007.

The board has supported the congregation based organizing work of both BRIDGE and BUILD in 2006 - encouraging all congregations to take steps towards engagement in public life. We delight that two Lutherans are serving as co-chairs of BRIDGE in 2007 - Angela Ellis, lay member of Amazing Grace, and The Rev. Alan Traher, pastor of Our Redeemer in Glen Burnie.

We were also successful in securing a large grant from DIAKON for supporting several ministries related to feeding people. A portion of the grant is renewable in 2007.

The Rev. Karen Brau, chair