

**2008 Bulletin of Reports
Delaware-Maryland Synod**

CONFERENCES

Baltimore City Conference

The Baltimore City conference of Lutheran pastors and rostered leaders has been a force of vibrancy, collegiality, and effective ministry in both sacred and a secular contexts.

We bid a bittersweet departure to Karen Brau from Amazing Grace to accept a call in Washington, DC. And we saw John Heinemeier enter a well-deserved retirement after serving Faith Lutheran on North Avenue. Additionally, All Saints parish on Lock Raven Boulevard is committed to looking forward to provide the ministry of gospel outreach in its changing neighborhood. The outreach part of the City Conference, CLAIM - the Coalition of Lutherans Active in Ministry - continues to energize the Baltimore Lutheran conference through programs that increase the Lutheran presence in the city with different kinds of community groups, and assists individual congregations become stronger and more mission-oriented. As examples of community involvement (among many), Salem Lutheran in south Baltimore is now hosting a community theatre program, and St. John (Brooklyn) was a force-agent in having its neighborhood declared a "Main Streets" area, which should contribute to the business vitality in its old downtown center. The charter school at Epiphany continues to grow.

Several interns were embraced by Lutheran congregations. These interns were from a variety of sources: those seeking ordination from several seminaries, from Lutheran Volunteer Corps, and the Horizon program. Among the innovations is that many of these interns were shared among several congregations, giving congregations who otherwise couldn't afford an intern full-time a participatory role in an intern's formation; and giving the intern a richer experience across several congregations, serving different kinds of folks across a wide range of neighborhoods. The interns were also invited to participate in the weekly pericope group discussions, which include as many as twenty participants, to enrich their understanding of scripture in a pastoral context, to assist them in preaching and teaching, and to enable them to form relationships with a wide variety of pastors and rostered leaders in a broad range of contexts.

The word and the work of the Gospel is alive in Baltimore City.

The Rev. Neil O'Farrell, dean