

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

OFFICE OF BISHOP

Assistant to the Bishop

It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1

I begin by thanking God for the opportunity to serve among you this past year. I am grateful for your support, insight, energy and prayers in our common ministry.

In knowing that I will not fully cover the entire ministry that took place this past year, I will attempt to highlight a few. For more specific information of ministries under the Mission Through Congregations team, please see the individual reports of ministries.

The Anti-Racism Team has provided great leadership, energy and enthusiasm as it continues to work in this most challenging area of our corporate ministry. The team worked hard to envision a meaningful, educational, and challenging experience for the Synod Assembly. Thanks to the leadership of Linda Chinnia, Event Coordinator and Director of Volunteers, we were able to move beyond a vision to a reality. We are pleased with this first introduction of the topic of anti-racism in the church through the assembly. (The Women of the ELCA have been doing good work in this area for a number of years.) The team will be continuing to follow up on the conference plans that were made at the assembly. Some conferences are moving forward; others are stalled in their plans. There is an ongoing training for synod leadership (council, deans - also new pastors to our synod) that is led by Lutheran Human Relations Association. We also hosted a national anti-racism event on our synod territory in September of '08.

The Anti-Racism Team is reconfiguring itself to better address the issues and to have a more effective reach into congregational life. The team is now broken into four sub-groups: Advocacy, Education, Team Life and Administration. We are encouraging that at least one representative from each conference serve on a sub-group.

Another highlight of the year was "Opening Windows, Opening Doors," a congregational council training workshop. This was the brain child of former synod vice president, Donna Kent and the synod council. In 2008 we had a total of six workshops held all around the synod. In 2009 we plan to have two more such events. These workshops were very popular and effective. They were filled with practical tips and the theology behind why we do what we do as a congregational council. A special thank you to Linda Lovell on the staff, who kept us all in order for these events! Many volunteers offered significant hours to ensure the quality of this event. Look for follow up classes at "Partners in Faith, Partners in Vision" in October of this year.

In our Stewardship Ministry we had a resource workshop, *Rich Toward God*, in 2008. There are more such workshops planned for 2009. These workshops feature a "hands on" stewardship resource sharing, asset mapping experience and provide grounding in a theology of stewardship.

My prayer for our work together is we may be open to new understandings of the Spirit's work among and that the fruits of our labors would be many and give glory to God.

The Rev. Virginia Price, assistant to the bishop