

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

OFFICE OF BISHOP

Coordinator for Youth and Family Ministry

In my first full year of serving as the Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministry for the Synod, 2008 was another year of growth and excitement for the many ways we work to reach into congregations and communities in Delaware and Maryland.

The year began with RoadTrip 2008 held January 25th-27th at the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel. Event musicians "Mudhouse" led our gatherings for the weekend, and the Rev. Lisa Arrington (St. Luke, Baltimore) served as our chaplain with the theme of "We All Are One - One In Christ" for the 268 participants of the event. It was also the first time our LYO (the Lutheran Youth Organization, our high school leadership program) led the way in many areas of the event.

In March, a group of key youth and adult leaders gathered to discern the vision for our ministry for the future. The day-long visioning retreat resulted in a 3 to 4 year plan, focusing each year on several Baptismal promises as the foundation for the work of our ministries.

On April 25th-27th at Mar-Lu-Ridge, the LYO planned and led a middle school leadership retreat. The 76 participants focused on what it meant to be identified as an "Unlikely Leader," confined by the standards set by our society, yet free in Christ to serve as Jesus calls us.

As June was the completion of the academic year, we also completed our first year of young people serving in the LYO. We blessed six graduating seniors on their way as part of the 21 participants in 2007-2008. Those graduating seniors also helped to organize and lead a high school leadership event alongside the 2008 Synod Assembly, an opportunity for high school youth to identify their own skills for leadership. And after an application process for the next school year, we welcomed 34 youth participants (15 returning, 19 new) for 2008-2009. We are blessed by the leadership and commitment from the adults who serve the LYO: Co-coordinators Christine and Mark Parker (LTSP seminarians) along with 10 other adults who served in 2008.

On September 19th-20th, we hosted a conference on Milestones Ministry at Our Shepherd Lutheran in Severna Park, MD. In partnering with the Youth and Family Institute (Minneapolis, MN), over 40 participants engaged in ways to identify and celebrate the church and secular milestones that mark our lives. The event was led by the planning team of the Rev. Kathy Morris and Sandy Bishop (Our Shepherd), and the Rev. Paige Evers (Lord of Life, Edgewater).

October brought FreeRide 2008, held October 17th-19th at the YMCA Camp Letts in Edgewater, MD. We experienced the highest attendance at this event in its 10 year history with almost 200 participants for the weekend. Our LYO Worship and Music Team served as the band for the weekend, and the Rev. Mark Bringman (St. Paul, Lutherville) served as chaplain for the event which focused on environmental justice and stewardship. The event was also again co-coordinated by Marta Wallace (St. Martin, Annapolis) who also leads the Youth Events Team.

By the end of 2008, we were planning for RoadTrip 2009 and the 35% increase in registration, as well as a move of FreeRide 2009 to the NorthBay Retreat Center in North East, MD.

The Rev. Edward Kay, coordinator for youth and family ministry