

## Urban ministry group begins study process

By Pr. Barbara Melosh

**S**ince 2001, the **Baltimore Urban Regional Partnership** (BURP) has gathered people with a passion for mission and a heart for urban ministry. We are now beginning a process of self-study and strategic planning under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Clemens Reinke.

In the first phase of that study (January-April 2007), Pr. Reinke will meet with clergy and lay leaders of the 27 congregations in the Baltimore City Conference. Listening, questioning, and walking with us through our neighborhoods, Pr. Reinke will help us to evaluate our ministries and contexts, take inventory of our challenges and opportunities, and move forward with new ideas for growth in service and mission.

We invite your participation as we work together to strengthen ties among congregations, to build mutual ministry of all the baptized, and to find opportunities and resources for mission. Please welcome Pr. Reinke and keep BURP in your prayers.

The study process will also include two gatherings of participating congregations, bringing us together to evaluate where we stand and to plan for our future.

Pr. Reinke holds a doctorate in ministry with a specialization in metro-urban ministry. He brings to us as well his rich experience in urban ministry. He is currently pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Jersey City, N.J.

Collaboration begins with communication, and to that end Pr. Reinke has designed a website for BURP. Check us out on the web and send your congregational announcements and blogs! If

your congregation has a website, please add BURP as a link. [web.mac.com/clemens1961/iWeb/BURP/Welcome.html](http://web.mac.com/clemens1961/iWeb/BURP/Welcome.html)

The BURP board is made of representatives from many urban congregations. If you are interested in learning more, we welcome your inquiries to the chair, the Rev. Karen Brau, Amazing Grace Church, Baltimore, at [agelc7@hotmail.com](mailto:agelc7@hotmail.com) or (410)276-5674.

And...we're beginning to call ourselves "soon-to-be-formerly-known as BURP" - yes, we are weary of that acronym and looking for a new name. Suggestions are welcome. (No names evoking bodily sounds of any kind will be considered, so don't even think about it.)

*Pr. Melosh serves Salem Church, south Baltimore.*



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