

Knoche announces retirement

The Rev. H. Gerard "Jerry" Knoche, bishop of the Delaware-Maryland Synod, has announced his retirement for health reasons as of Oct. 31, 2009.

Elected to his first six-year term as bishop at the Synod Assembly in June 2000, he was elected to a second term at the 2006 assembly, a term which would have run until 2012.

During his leadership of the 183-congregation synod, a geographic sub-grouping of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Bishop Knoche oversaw the development and implementation of the current Synod Vision Statement, the Strategic Plan for 2007-2012, and the tagline, "Sent To Share and Serve." Other hallmarks of his time as bishop have been the synod's commitment to anti-racism efforts, to the ELCA Book of Faith Initiative, and to the "Sowing for the Harvest" Capital Campaign undertaken jointly with Gettysburg Seminary and Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp and Retreat Center. Additionally, the synod's innovative Leadership Academy for rostered leaders was established. At his urging, the synod joined with other church-related entities to form the Lutheran Community Consortium which hired the synod's first Regional Gift Planner.

In this issue of FaithLines OnLine, you'll find letters from Bishop Knoche and Synod Vice President Yolanda Tanner (St. Philip's Lutheran, Baltimore) as well as an article outlining what's known so far about the transition period until the election of a new bishop.

