

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

OFFICE OF BISHOP

Coordinator for Communication

"May you live in interesting times." That was either the blessing or the curse of my work as synod communicator in 2007. Most of the interesting times stemmed from technology, it seemed, as more and more of our communications switched to electronic distribution - through the E-Letter, the website, the blog, and, as of mid-August, Facebook. This latter is a social networking site online which attracts large numbers of high school kids and young adults, a group notably absent from the E-Letter mailing list. The group I established on Facebook, called DE/MD Synod ELCA, is used as a way to report on synod news pertinent to that group. For instance, that was the first place I distributed a news release about the hiring of a new synod youth and family ministry coordinator and the place where I advertise various young adult opportunities and events, as that new ministry gets off the ground.

For the second year in a row, I faced major surgery in April - rotator cuff this time. I was quite lucky in that the amount of time I needed to take was not as extended as the doctor initially predicted, but it definitely impacted on my preparations for the synod assembly. Each year, we seem to turn up the technology dial for those three days. Were it not for the stalwart volunteers of the 2007 Tech Team (Erik Piisila and Lori Graham, Grace Church, Westminster, MD, and synod staffer Holly Crispell), who operated the cameras, switcher and computer, the assembly would have been a far more boring event. Thanks to some quick thinking on Erik's part, when he decided to throw a tape in the camera at the right time, we even were able to offer a DVD of Judy Bultman's dynamic keynote address. Quite a few congregations used the DVD in fall 2007 to inspire their members to greater service.

FaithLines and FaithLines OnLine continued to be a major part of my work, though the schedules were thrown off again by my medical leave. Changes with the U.S. Post Office and their bulk mail service have presented us with some major increases in cost, which I'm still working to address. Though we will always produce some materials in print and mail them, evolving technologies and increasing costs are making electronic distribution a more viable option each year.

Other key happenings in communications in 2007:

- We again teamed up with our ELCA Partner Synod, Northern Great Lakes, to produce daily online devotions for Lent 2007. Daily reminders were sent through a blog devoted to that project.

- The bishop again loaned me to the ELCA Department for Communication for the duration of the Churchwide Assembly, held on Chicago's Navy Pier in August. This is always a time of great learning for me as I volunteer in the on-site computer center, interacting with ELCA members from across the church and taking part in the assembly.
- I presented three workshops for Partners in Faith, Partners in Vision 2007 and did a number of other workshops for groups within the synod on communications-related topics.
- I wrote, produced and distributed about 90 issues of The E-Letter. For a free subscription, send an e-mail to imail@lists.demdsynod.org with this exact subject line: subscribe The_ELetter

Thanks in large part to our volunteer webmaster, Pr. Carl Myers (Grace Church, Lutherville, MD), we continue to have a major presence on the Web at DeMdSynod.org.

I am constantly amazed at the amount of my time which is taken up by maintaining the synod's calendar. This is one busy synod!

As part of my work to support the synod's strategic plan, I began to compile a list of all congregational newsletter editors and their contact info. This has proven much tougher than I'd anticipated. Please send your congregation's to me at LNLOvell57@gmail.com.

Linda Lovell, coordinator