



FROM THE BISHOP



Dear Friends,

As we move into February we are experiencing a fairly significant change here at the synod office: At the end of January Pastor Bill Tesch will resign, and on February 1 he will begin as the Director of Evangelical Mission. Most of his salary will come from the churchwide organization, along with a small grant to cover some of his travel and office support. Pastor Tesch will continue to serve us as one of my associates. His duties will be focused on stewardship and mission development, including multicultural mission work in the synod. This move supports the fine work that has been done by Pastor Tesch and the Stewardship Task Force in being chosen as one of six synods to develop and carry out a mission-support pilot project. The Stewardship Task Force has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from Thrivent to assist them in implementing the new proposal. In the coming months Pastor Tesch will be letting you know the details of the new plan and about his work as our Director of Evangelical Mission in our synod.

This change has been developed after many hours of meetings with Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission (EOCM), under the leadership of its new executive director, Pastor Steve Bouman. Pastor Steve has a strong desire to support the mission and ministry of our congregations and their leadership. I have been very supportive of this move because it fits with my desire for us as a synod to continue focusing on “making disciples” rather than “having members.” We have an opportunity, with this change, to more sharply focus on supporting mission work in our neighborhood and for growing in our stewardship of God’s gifts.

As we move into 2009 you will be hearing more from Pastor Tesch and from the Stewardship Task Force. If you have questions, please feel free to contact the synod office.

I want to thank you for your mission and ministry in 2008 and I am excited about this new year and all the possibilities for ministry that it will bring. We have many challenges in front of us but that has always been true. We still have a Lord who loves us and promises to always walk with us, and who continues to call us into the future.

Blessings on the Year,

Bishop Zellmer