

# Dear Co-Worker

**Last** week I happened to watch a television show on the media coverage of the Tiger Woods story. The media was actually doing a story on the media. Tiger Woods and his family live in a gated community. In front of the entrance to the community, a street was lined with upwards of 30 media vans, each with its own upload satellite and antenna. Countless photographers with high-power zoom lenses were swarming among the vans looking for any shot that they might possibly sell to a news service.

By and large, most people I have talked to are somewhat appalled by an almost predatory news media. We're told, however, that the media is simply providing what the general public is craving. After all, they say, good news stories don't sell. On the other hand, cynics will say that the media sensationalizes things and can't be trusted. "There's no news in the truth so there's no truth in the news," as the saying goes.

The most newsworthy event in all of human history received no news coverage whatsoever, unless you count the "multitude of the heavenly host" who announced to the shepherds that the Saviour had been born. The Son of God was born in Bethlehem to redeem fallen mankind from sin, death and satan.

It has been left to us to publish this good news to one another and to all the world. Every Christmas provides us the opportunity to re-tell the account of the birth of Christ. Our churches will be full on Christmas Eve with many people who don't normally attend church and even with some people who have never heard the Gospel message.

The angel said to the shepherds: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you this day is born, in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Two things about this news that is different than the usual media reports we get: first of all, it is true and secondly, it is good news. It is my prayer that all of our churches and church workers will be bold in the proclamation of the Gospel message in this Christmas season. And as you recall that blessed event, may each of you be filled with the joy and peace that comes from Christ. God grant all of you a merry and blessed Christmas.

Your Coworker in Christ,

Rev. Don Schiemann, President  
Alberta-British Columbia District

## Calls and Vicar/Intern Applications

March 1 is the deadline for submitting calls for pastoral candidates and DPS graduates and for submitting applications for vicars and DPS interns. April 1 is the deadline for submitting calls for Lutheran teacher candidates. All calls and applications should be sent to the District President at the District Office. The following table indicates the availability of students as of Dec. 15:

	Vicars	Pastoral Candidates	DPS Interns	DPS Candidates	Teacher Candidates
CLS	6	3			
CLTS	4	5			
CUCA			2	3	1

### Welcome to the New Workers

We welcome into our District Rev. Norman Miller who comes to LCC by way of colloquy from the ELCIC. Rev. Miller completed his colloquy in early fall and is working at the South Surrey Mission out of Zion Lutheran Church in Cloverdale.

We also welcome Rev. Steven Naylor, a recent graduate from CLTS in St. Catherines who has been assigned to Saviour Lutheran Church in Delta, BC. Rev. Naylor was installed as Pastor on Dec. 13.

### Christmas Hours

Please note that, except for a skeleton staff providing very basic CEF services (deposits, withdrawals etc.) the District Office will be closed Dec. 24 to Jan. 4.

### Annual Mailing

Although you may not receive The Coworker in the mail, there are still some items that will come to our church workers every year at this time. The following items are being mailed to you:

- CPH Desk Diaries
- Church Worker ID cards. The Church Worker ID cards may be helpful to you as you apply for hospital ID cards, parking passes and access to restricted areas such as critical care units in hospitals or disaster/emergency sites.
- District Directory of Churches, Schools and Church Workers. Please note that the Directory is intended to be used as an "in house" directory. Subject to the privacy laws, it may not be shared outside of the church.
- Information about our upcoming District-wide Church Workers' Conference.



## Calls and Vacancies

The most visited page on our website is the one listing the calls and vacancies in ABC District. Some have wondered what our policy is regarding the posting of information on this web page. When a pastor receives a call, we will not post this information until one Sunday after he has been called. This gives the pastor an opportunity to tell his congregation before people find out about it online. Some pastors say they don't want the information posted until after they have received the call documents. The fact is that, whether the pastor has the actual documents or not, a congregation has called him. In one case, the pastor did not receive the documents for three weeks. In a case like this, it is unrealistic to expect that members of a congregation won't find out about the call through the grapevine.

## Circuit Convocations

According to the Handbook of Synod, "The circuit convocation is a larger gathering of members from circuit congregations during a year in which there is no synodical or district convention." 2010 is such a year and we encourage all of our circuits to plan for such a convocation. It is a wonderful opportunity for our congregations to gather together to talk about the work of District and Synod and to plan work at a circuit level. Please don't hesitate to contact our District staff to provide or serve as resources for the convocation in your circuit.



*We apologize if anyone was missed in these announcements. Please let our office know of illnesses, deaths, births or other events so that we may bring the needs and blessings of our people before our Lord in prayer.*

## In Our Prayers

### ***Recovering from Illness***

- Rev. Bob Bauer
- Rev. Paul Eifert
- Rev. Jon Estes
- Rev. Lorne Mannweiler

### ***Rejoicing over the Gift of a Child***

- Rev. Nathan & Nicole Fuehrer - a boy
- Principal Michael & Pamela Schiemann - a boy
- Vicar Jeremy & Catherine Schwem - a boy

### ***Continuing Health Concerns***

- Rev. Norm Eifert
- Rev. Paul Deblock
- Rev. Bokman Hwang
- Rev. Peter Tu

### ***Loss of a Loved One***

- Rev. Dan & Pat Hansard who have each lost a parent this year

### ***Other Prayer Concerns***

- For those church workers who are currently in the midst of personal and/or family struggles.
- All congregations that are without a full time pastor; that God would lead men to accept calls to serve these congregations with Word and Sacraments. We ask our Heavenly Father for strength and patience for vacancy pastors and lay servants who provide much time and energy as they focus on ensuring that the Gospel message is heard.

# Outreach

## Transforming for Missions Learning Community

Join a Transforming for Missions learning community! We are recruiting church workers for learning communities.

**What is a Transforming for Missions learning community?** Learning Communities are comprised of 3-6 church workers (and lay leaders). The church workers in the learning communities are people who desire to grow in missional leadership attitudes and skills. They are leaders who want to be transformed by the power of God's Word as they study God's Word "front to back." They are leaders who want to see outreach to the lost people of their communities become the primary value of their ministry as well as their congregation's ministry. Learning communi-

ties are regionally based (if possible), because it is best for the group to meet in person; however the clusters need not adhere to circuit lines. In some cases, geography might prevent regular face-to-face contact with the result that Skype or Go to Meetings might be utilized.

For additional information check out the information at the ABC District website ([www.lccabc.ca](http://www.lccabc.ca)) and follow the links. (Click on Outreach; then click on Missional Leadership and then scroll to Transforming for Missions Learning Communities). You can also contact Dr. Glenn Schaeffer at the District office (1-888-474-0063) or by email ([gschaeffer@lccabc.ca](mailto:gschaeffer@lccabc.ca)).

## Transforming for Missions: Weekend Consultations

**Are** you frustrated by the challenge of connecting the gospel message to the unchurched in your community? Do you feel as though your congregation is stuck in a rut without clear direction? Do you desire to make outreach to the lost people in your community the primary value of your ministry and your congregation's focus? If you answered **YES** to any of these questions then, you might want to consider inviting a Transforming for Missions consultation team to conduct a weekend consultation with you.

Here's how a Transforming for Missions weekend consultation works:

1) **Initial Contact** You contact Dr. Glenn Schaeffer, the Executive for Outreach in the ABC District to learn more about the consultation process and set a date for him to meet with the congregational leadership so that they

can learn about the purposes and goals of the consultation.

2) **Interviews and Surveys** Before a church consultation takes place, interviews and surveys are administered which help determine whether the congregation and pastor(s)/church workers are ready for the Transforming for Mission process. The voter's assembly is also expected to adopt a motion granting approval for a Transforming for Missions consultation.

3) **Self Examination** Once a date has been set for the consultation weekend, the congregation conducts an extensive self-study of the past 10 years and they initiate a 6 week Bible study, "Motivation for Mission."

4) **Consult Process** The consultation team (consisting of three to four people), led by an experienced pastor



or lay leader, reviews the material from the self-study.

The consultation weekend begins on a Friday afternoon with interviews of the pastor(s) and staff. Friday evening involves a focus group meeting which is made up of members who are not currently in leadership roles. On Saturday, the team meets with the congregational staff and leaders for a day-long workshop. The team leader preaches at Sunday morning worship, following which the consultation team presents their report to the entire congregation at a town-hall meeting. The report identifies five congregational strengths, five congregational concerns, and five prescriptions that address the five concerns.

5) **Prayerful Consideration** Following the consultation, the congregation is given 4-6 weeks to prayerfully consider the recommended prescriptions and vote either to implement or abandon the revitalization process

6) **Implementation** Assuming the congregation adopts all five prescriptions, a coach is assigned to the congregation and the coach works with the congregation's staff and lay leadership for a minimum of one year as they concentrate on implementing the five prescriptions.

The cost of the Transforming for Missions weekend consultations vary in price depending on the location and the team members'

travel, lodging, and food expenses, but the ABC District Department of Outreach picks up 60% of the costs and the congregation is responsible for 40% of the costs. It is anticipated that the consultation weekend will cost about \$1,500.00. There is also an expense for the coaching that follows the consultation weekend which works out to about \$100.00 per month. Again, this cost is shared by the ABC District (60%) and the congregation (40%). The cost sharing of these expenses can be negotiated. The goal of the Department of Outreach is to have every congregation have a Transforming for Missions consultation and we do not want the cost for the weekend and coaching to be a prohibitive factor!

If you are interested in a Transforming for Missions consultation or desire more information about the process, please contact Dr. Glenn Schaeffer at 1-888-474-0063 (or email [gschaeffer@lccabc.ca](mailto:gschaeffer@lccabc.ca)) and he will be pleased to discuss Transforming for Missions with you. Please keep the ABC District Transforming for Missions venture in your prayers. We trust the Lord will bless our efforts and that the Holy Spirit will transform our congregations as we immerse ourselves in His Word and Sacraments and as we intentionally move "inside-out" seeking and saving the lost. In so doing, we trust the Lord will turn our communities "upside-down" with His saving and life-transforming message.

## Life Sunday 2010 – Speak the Truth of Life

**We** live in a world that needs to hear the truth of life. Many in our churches need to hear the truth of life. Where do we find such truth? *"Your Word is truth," said Jesus. That Word needs to be spoken and applied to the life issues. It needs to be spoken in love. Thus our theme verse, "Speaking the truth in love ..." (Ephesians 4:15a ESV).*

Your congregation can Speak the Truth of Life on a Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. The "official" Life Sunday is January 17, 2010. Howev-

er, materials may be used at any time during the year. Here is a partial list of what is available at the Lutherans for Life website: [http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Life\\_Sunday/2010\\_Life\\_Sunday/2010\\_Life\\_Sunday.htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Life_Sunday/2010_Life_Sunday/2010_Life_Sunday.htm).

- Speak the Truth of Life bulletin insert
- Just For Kids bulletin insert
- Children's Message: Love Speak
- The Truth of Life Bible Study

## Vancouver 2010: People and Prayers Needed!

The following information was prepared by Don Hindle, (dpsdon@tlc-lcc.ca) the Director of Parish Services at Trinity Lutheran Church in Richmond. Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Vancouver is planning outreach activities as well! Additional information on how you can serve as a short-term missionary is available at the ABC District website (www.lccabc.ca). There is also a registration form for those who want to serve as short-term missionaries at Trinity, Richmond.

The main thing we will need is people. We are able to house quite a few people in our church (if they are okay with sleeping on the floor)... we will however be providing air mattresses, but people will need to bring their own sleeping bag/pillows. We are also asking some of our members to billet people during the Olympics.

Trinity Lutheran Church is situated directly across from the "O-Zone" which will be Richmond's entertainment/hospitality site during the Olympics. We are also located about a 25 minute walk away from the Richmond Oval. Needless to say, our church is situated in a prime location. During the Olympics we are planning many different outreach opportunities:

• **Internet Café:** Because of the amount of inter-

national visitors, one of the rooms in our church will be converted into an internet café which will have a total of 15 computer stations where visitors can come and check their email or look up maps, etc. During this time, there will be 2 hosts who will keep track of the computers and also engage in dialogue with those who are waiting (or have a cup of coffee with someone during the quiet times). We will have on hand pins for pin trading and New Testaments to be distributed. The draw will of course be the computers and the inexpensive cup of coffee.

• **Large Screen Events:** While the Olympics are on, we will be showing the events on a large (16'x12') screen in our church hall. This event will be like an "overflow" for the O-Zone, and also a place where people can come and enjoy the games with a large crowd of people in a dry and warm location! This will be done the whole time the games are on. During the less popular events, there may not be as many people in the hall, which will also give a good opportunity for our hosts to engage in dialogue with those who attend. During the main events such as hockey, and figure skating, etc., we are anticipating a capacity crowd. This event will reach out to visitors to Richmond, but also to our community.

• **Concert Nights:** Every second night we will have a concert night of some kind. So far we have the Concordia College Choir and The Crew plus other various artists that we are recruiting within the Lutheran Church and from More Than Gold. We are also hoping to perhaps have one or two sports celebrities come out and speak on an evening or two. (Such as Wally Buono or Mark Washington from the BC Lions).

• **Other:** Other things we will be doing is engaging in "pin trading" which is apparently the number one hobby during the Olympic Games. We will be using two types of pins for trading: the More Than Gold pin, which tells the story of the Gospel, and the "Remember the Fallen" pin which was made after the death of District President Rev. Don Schiemann's son and the other three RCMP officers. These pins will be used to engage people in dialogue about the Gospel.

As well, Pastor Harold will host a "running club" where people can come and go for a morning run each day and meet our Pastor, giving him the opportunity to build relationships and talk about the Gospel.

Finally, we are offering billeting to any Christian who wants to come and volunteer with our many outreach opportunities. (The bed will be



free, but people will be expected to pay their own food).

Here are some of the things we NEED and will be glad to have any organization help in whatever way they can.

- **Evangelism materials** to distribute. The ABC District has paid for some resources such as New Testaments and pins, but we could use more. We are hoping to look at getting some “Pocket Guides” to be handed out. These guides have maps, medal information, and testimonials from other people. They also have a Gospel of Mark which might be utilized as well. We are also hoping to hand out DVD’s and have many of the Project Connect booklets from LHM on hand for people to look at and take.

- **Volunteers.** Because of size of this event, we are going to need more people to volunteer than we have at our church. So we are calling on Lutherans from all over Canada to come out and take part in the Outreach opportunities

during the games. We are asking people to serve in the following areas:

- Hosts/Security
- Janitors
- Internet Café hosts (should be somewhat technically inclined)
- Bakers

- **Projector:** This is a big ticket item in our budget. However, if out there somewhere someone wants to donate, or lend us a new (or really good) projector for the Olympics, this would go a long way. It would free up many of our resources at this time.

- **Commercial Coffee machine:** We are anticipating that coffee will go quite quickly so an urn won’t be able to produce the coffee fast enough. If there is a church out there that has one, we would love to borrow it for a month.

- **Money** – of course. We are operating on a somewhat shoestring budget and so any help will go a long way. Any

money for the Olympics can go to our ABC District office and they will distribute to the two churches. However, if there are any business people in your district who may want to sponsor a night (such as when we want to have a speaker come to our church), that would also be a blessing.

As you see, there are many areas where we need help! However, if anyone from any of your churches can find one thing out of this list that they could help with, that would be great.

One final thing that is MUCH needed (actually this should be first!) is prayer. This is one of the largest projects I’ve personally had to deal with (and time consuming). The difficult thing is that most other people are thinking about Christmas at this time. So having people pray regularly for this event in their church would go a long way to helping us as we reach out to the lost from all nations during the Olympics.

## “You Version” of the Bible

**You** may have heard of Bible Gateway, but have you heard of You Version? You Version is another Holy Bible website that has numerous English translations of the Bible and many Bible in various languages. You Version even includes Luther’s Bible of 1545!

One of the features of the site is the audible versions of the Bible in different translations and languages. A NIV audible dramatic reading of the Bible is available on the site! They also have a daily reading schedule which will take you through the Bible in a year. (<http://www.youversion.com/>)



## Healthcare Professionals and Pastors are Needed for Mercy Medical Teams

**LCMS** World Relief and Human Care (WR-HC) coordinates short-term (2 week) service opportunities called Mercy Medical Teams — doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals (and pastors who serve as team chaplains) — who volunteer their time and expertise overseas to ease suffering and bring hope to some of the world's most destitute communities. These teams are led by experienced staff from LCMS WR-HC and work in conjunction with LCMS partner churches who are currently serving in these areas. New teams are continually being added to the schedule.

For online information, log on to [www.lcms.org/mercyteams](http://www.lcms.org/mercyteams). You can also get a first-hand view of the experiences of an LCMS medical

missionary team by logging on to manager Jacob Fiene's blog at <http://mercyandmedical.blogspot.com>.

Feel free to include the previous article in any newsletters or bulletins.

For more information contact:

Maggie Karner

Director, Life and Health Ministries

LCMS World Relief and Human Care

(765)289-0180

(765)748-7743 cell

<http://www.lcms.org/life>

<http://www.lcms.org/mercyteams>

Resources: [www.cph.org/worldrelief](http://www.cph.org/worldrelief)

### Euthanasia Bill Vote Delayed Again! Take Action!

**Bill** C-384 which seeks to decriminalize euthanasia and assisted suicide will now have its second hour of debate on Feb. 2, 2010 and Second Reading vote in the House of Commons on Feb. 3, 2010.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) has produced a number of resources to help you learn more and take action. Visit their Euthanasia webpage (<https://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=521>) and download their short, informational video and learn more about Bill C-384. They have also produced a sample letter (<https://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=6920>) that you can send to your Member of Parliament.

Additional information is available through the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition. Their website is: <http://www.euthanasiaprevention.on.ca/>.



### Short Term Summer Mission Trips

**It's** time to begin to plan for that summer mission trip! You might want to serve on one of the VBS summer teams with LAMP (<http://www.lampministry.org>) or the BC Mission Boat (<http://www.bcmissionboat.org>). Please visit their websites for more information.

The new church plant in Calgary, Cross Pointe, is also inviting people to help them with their summer outreach activities. If interested, please contact Pastor Jay Holdner at 403-818-7345 or visit their website (<http://www.crosspointechurch.ca>).

There may be other opportunities arise as summer approaches so please watch your email for additional requests for short-term missionaries.

Lutherans for Life have many resources that will help inform God's people from a biblical perspective. The resources are available at: [http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/end\\_of\\_life\\_\(C\).htm](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/Catalog/end_of_life_(C).htm).

## Introducing Concordia Collegiate

**Several** exciting changes are happening at Concordia High School. In October, the Board of Directors passed two resolutions that will change the face of Concordia. The first resolution is to adopt a full four year university prep program, rather than the three year that is currently offered. This expansion follows the example of many other popular collegiate schools all over the world, as well as within Canada. With this change, comes the adoption of the terms 'freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior' instead of the well known numerical grades. Alberta Learning has given their full support and encouragement to this endeavour.

The second resolution involves a name change for Concordia. The Board decided to adopt the name of 'Concordia Collegiate High School' as the school's trading and operational name. This honours the school's 88

year legacy, and enables the school to stay true to the original mission that was laid out. More colloquially, the school will be known as 'Concordia Collegiate'.

With the close relationship between the high school and Concordia University College of Alberta, it is natural for the school to strive to be the best possible prep school. There are many excellent prep programs offered around the world that offer examples of the quality of education that the school has always strived for. With the quality of education, the school remains unique in its progressive, practical approach to learning, as well as the school's Alberta heritage. However, the school's focus remains to be on preparing students for leadership and the sharing of the Gospel of Christ in a spirit of servanthood.

## School Committee Update

**The** School Committee comprised of Keith Kruse, Eric Ladoski, Margaret Towriss, Jamie Fulton and Daryl Becker has recently revised its School Grant Policy and Application Forms.

School Grants are available to those congregations and schools/preschools in the ABC District whose intent is to secure, stabilize, or enhance the ministerial goals of their Lutheran school.

Congregations and schools/preschools are encouraged to apply for a grant. If interested, an application provided from the District Office will be made available. Please submit your application on or before the deadline of February 1, 2010 to the District Office attention Daryl Becker.

For further information please contact Daryl Becker at [dbecker@lccabc.ca](mailto:dbecker@lccabc.ca) or Jamie Fulton at [daveandjamie@telus.net](mailto:daveandjamie@telus.net)

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Co-workers,

Christmas is a time for...

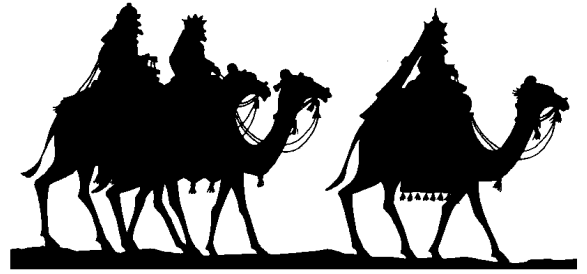
Friends.

Family.

Giving.

Sharing.

Children.



How would you complete that sentence? Certainly Christmas is a time when we think of all of the above. More importantly, Christmas is a constant reminder that God was thinking of us. In the midst of this world's darkness, the God of creation took on human flesh and nature to become one of us. The hope of the world is to be found in His life, death and resurrection.

Christmas is a time to remember that God was and is at work in human history to redeem sinful people and to make them His own. What a gift is offered to us in the infant Jesus in the manger in Bethlehem!

On that first Christmas night, the angels sang to the shepherds: "*Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth, goodwill toward men.*" (Luke 2:14) It is our heartfelt prayer that in this holy and blessed season, you will know and experience the peace of God which passes all understanding.

The staff of the District Office of the Alberta-British Columbia District of Lutheran Church-Canada wish you a very blessed, joyous, and Christ-filled Christmas.

Rejoicing in His days,

Jan Reschke  
 Donata Schiemoni  
 Janice Koshore  
 Glen Schaeff  
 Belinda Johnson  
 S. Lynn Giese  
 Alvin Schuff  
 Jamie Kub  
 Candace Sweet  
 Tony Zacher  
 Paula Hanes



## Have you Heard?

**ABC** District Investments Ltd. is now offering the Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA), being promoted as a Family Emergency Fund. A key component of any successful investment strategy is to prepare for financial emergencies. Whatever your investment goal, it is important to set aside funds that can be used for the unexpected. ABC District Investments Ltd. is now offering an investment tool that helps to meet this objective. Is your family prepared for a financial crisis? Consider opening a Tax Free Savings Account today. The interest earned on this account is tax free; withdrawals can be made at any time, without penalty.

Please take a look at all the investment options available through Church Extension and ABC District Investments Ltd. Whether it is savings account, a term investment, RRSP or the new TFSA isn't it great to know what your money invested in Church Extension and ABC District Investments Ltd. is being used for. Your partnership enables us to continue to provide funds for loans to build and renovate churches, schools, and other ministries that reach people with the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

What a joy it is to be in Ministry with you. We want to thank so many of you for supporting the Church Extension Fund and ABC District Investments Ltd. through your investments. Investments from our ABC District congregations and its members now total over \$117 million dollars! God has truly blessed the ministry of CEF through you.

For further information on interest rates, application forms, etc. please go to our website at: <https://cef.lccabc.ca> or contact us: Email: [cef@lccbc.ca](mailto:cef@lccbc.ca) or Phone (Edmonton local): 780-474-0063 Toll free: 1-888-474-0063



*"Building HIS church, together."*

