

Bishop's July / August Message

The summer months tend to be a “down time” in our congregations. The normal programming year has been completed and church workers and volunteers have a much-needed time of rest and recouping of resources – both personally and for ministry. While in a certain sense it is “nap time” in the church year, yet in another sense some of the most significant ministry opportunities we ever have take place over the summer. For many congregations, the annual Vacation Bible School week (or two) is the most positive, intentional and effective interface they have with the communities in which they find themselves. Neighbors whom we do not see on a regular basis seem happy to enroll their children in our Vacation Bible Schools. They will also volunteer to bring cookies, perhaps serve as teachers’ helpers, and gladly attend the closing festivities. This is a fine opportunity for us to make the best use of our welcoming and hospitality skills. In one of its truest forms, VBS ministry is Jesus’ Great Commission lived out among us and through us. What a privilege!

If our congregations are taking their summer break, the same cannot be said for the Lutheran Camps scattered throughout our Synod. This is the peak season for children’s camps, teen camps, and family camps. Camp directors and their staff of counselors are hard at work sharing and showing their faith and helping campers of all ages to grow in their faith and experience Christian community. I am quite amazed at the number of camp counselors who hear the call of God on their lives and find their way to a vocation as a pastor, diaconal minister or other professional work. The work of our Lutheran Camps is multi-directional and yields immense results for the kingdom of God.

By all means, then, take a summer break. And if you can participate in a Vacation Bible School program, or if you have registered for a week at one of our Lutheran Camps, take advantage of these amazing opportunities God offers! Most of all, though, remember these unique summer ministries, and those who are serving in them, in your prayers.

+Ronald B. Mayan, Bishop
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada