



To be read on Sunday January 15, 2006

It's our privilege to be able to greet you this morning and to encourage your participation in our synod's *It's Your Call* programme.

The decision to become a pastor or lay diaconal minister is, for the most part, intensely personal. Those making such a decision seldom do so without experiencing significant amounts of vocational struggle and spiritual wrestling. And in that process, it really does become **your call**.

This does not, however, mean that the process is exclusively private or individualistic. Lutherans believe that people are drawn through a process of divine call whereby God calls particular individuals to serve within a specific church vocation. This is a process that is Spirit-driven. As such, any call to ministry is really **God's call**.

But that call is seldom heard in isolation. In fact, those who experience a call to rostered ministry will often hear that call's first whispers in the context of congregational life. Furthermore, it is only after that inner sense of call has been tested and confirmed by the wider church – and upon issuance of a specific letter of call to ministry – that ordination is able to take place. As such, any call to rostered ministry is also the **Church's call**.

The *It's Your Call* vocations emphasis takes all three dimensions of this process seriously by:

- Encouraging us to regularly pray that God would raise up the leaders that we need at this time in our life. **God's Call**.
- Asking us to challenge appropriately gifted persons to consider a vocation in ordained or lay diaconal ministry. The **Church's Call**.
- Inviting you to seriously consider the possibility that you, yourself, might be experiencing just such a call! **Your Call**.

Thank you for participating in this important emphasis within the life of our church. We invite you to join with us – and our entire church family – in praying and working in support of new vocations to our church's rostered ministries.

With all our best wishes,

Bishop Michael J Pryse, Eastern Synod

Bishop Richard M Smith, Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod

Bishop Cindy Halmarson, Saskatchewan Synod

Bishop Stephen P Kristenson, Synod of Alberta and the Territories

Bishop Gerhard Preibisch, British Columbia Synod