



My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

How will we use all that God gives us to build up the community of the church so that all might be healed and renewed? It's a question I've continued to think and pray about a lot over these past months, and it's a question that we will have occasion to explore more deeply together when we meet in Diocesan Convention at our Cathedral Church of St. Paul this Nov. 4 and 5. For there's no question that God has given us much in this diocese, and, as I've said in other places and on other occasions, we're not meant to stand still with it. God is calling us forward, out into the world to be bold agents of healing and transformation, just as Jesus was.

At our convention, we will focus together on our means for answering that call in some specific ways that build on ground where God has already revealed God's presence to us: in tithing for mission beyond our diocese, caring for God's creation, equipping congregations, including our cathedral church, for strategic local mission, raising up new generations in faith and service and meeting local needs through creative collaborations. Every single one of our congregations has something to give and to receive through these efforts.

As you already know, we also will be celebrating and honoring the ministry of Bud Cederholm as he retires. His gifts for preaching and teaching will bless all of us during the closing Eucharist on Saturday, which marks the official end of his full-time ministry. The generous offering we give in thanksgiving that day will be designated for renovating the lake house at our Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center into an energy-efficient, low-carbon impact retreat and sabbatical residence, to be named in Bud's honor.

To get ready for our work together in convention, please spend some time with the accompanying materials, and then plan to attend one of the pre-Convention forums in October to ask questions and learn about the important business that will come before us, including the proposed 2012 budget. Your participation, your leadership, your voice are critical to the diocesan ministry we share.

The congregations of our Cathedral Church of St. Paul are planning a warm welcome for all of us, and your bishops look forward to seeing you there.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE".

M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE