

Community of Christ

September 25, 2003

Dear Friends,

The Greater Pacific Northwest USA Mission Center proposal, submitted in August, was approved last week by the World Church Leadership Council to be effective January 1, 2004. We are now part of a 46 congregation/group collaborative that spans from Alaska to the boarder of Oregon and California, from the Pacific coast to the eastern slopes of the Cascades.

The mission center structure challenges us to see ourselves with new eyes and recognize that we are part of a larger whole. In one sense, our mission center is familiar; the people, the places, our shared history and values have always held us in relationship with one another. Friendships and family ties are deeply woven throughout the northwest. And yet, the mission center will require us to shift our sense of who we currently are, to include a wider theological and cultural diversity. We are called to proclaim Jesus Christ and create communities of joy, hope, love, and peace. Our calling compels us to look beyond our current jurisdictional structures, to envision places and people that are currently beyond our horizons. We are called to create diverse communities of disciples and seekers in places like Anchorage, Alaska, in Bridgeport, Washington, and in Woodburn, Oregon. We are called to look to the future and asked to strengthen one another through shared ministries and shared responsibilities as we prophetically witness in the name of Jesus Christ.

For many of us, the approval of our mission center is the culmination of long hours of work beginning in May 2002 that included hundreds of voices and a series of informed decisions. Over 60 people from six states participated directly in multiple steps of this process. As a mission center, we owe our thanks and appreciation to those who served us as design team and taskforce members. Each member brought with them a Spirit of openness and a desire to listen to the concerns and needs of current jurisdictions. That Spirit is representative of the Body of Christ. It is that Spirit of openness and listening that will create a sense of purpose and unity for the Greater Pacific Northwest Mission Center.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Barbara Borkowski
Seattle Stake President
& Financial Officer

Brad Shumate
Pacific Northwest
Co-Administrator

Bill McFarlin
Pacific Northwest
Financial Officer