

CURRENTS

Upper Susquehanna Synod News and Information

August 8, 2010

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ATTACHMENTS:

- None this month

CURRENTS is the e-newsletter of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Please share this information with others! Edit, copy, and use this information in bulletins, newsletters, sermons, billboards, press releases, evangelism efforts, and/or spoken announcements where helpful. If you have information to include in future editions, please send an email to <news@uss-elca.org> with your name, congregation name, town, and the information.

The deadline for submission of items for the next edition of Currents is September 1, 2010.

NEWS IN THIS ISSUE

Congregations Can Now Befriend Liberian Partner Parishes

What's it like to be a Lutheran Christian living on the other side of the world, in western Africa? What songs do they sing in worship? How do their children learn the stories of scripture? How do congregations there celebrate Christmas and Easter? You can find out the answers to these questions, and get to know our Liberian brothers and sisters by initiating a "Congregation-to-Parish Relationship" between a congregation of the Upper Susquehanna Synod (USS) and a parish of the Lutheran Church in Liberia (LCL).

The USS and the LCL have shared a twenty-year history now as companion synods, but only now are beginning to link individual congregations with specific parishes for the purpose of developing closer ties and greater understanding. After many months of development, a formal partnership agreement regarding these "Congregation-to-Parish" relationships was signed this month by Bishop Robert Driesen on behalf of the USS, and by Bishop Sumoward Harris on behalf of the LCL.

Interested members of USS congregations might start by reading through the "Congregation-to-Parish Partnership Resource" (available at www.uss-elca.org) developed to assist them in the process. For more information, contact Pastor Beth Ann Stone or Dr. Robert Bradford at the synod office.

Highlights from the Lutheran World Federation Assembly

More than seven hundred people gathered at Stuttgart, Germany, for The Lutheran World Federation Eleventh Assembly to discuss the future direction of this global communion, which now includes 145 member churches in 79 countries. See highlights at <http://www.elca.org/lwf> and click "Read the latest news from the Assembly" in the middle of the page; also check the ELCA news releases that follow.

Sign Up for Global Links

Global Links, a monthly e-mail that contains highlights from *elca.org* of ELCA ministry or connections in other countries, is a great resource to widen your congregation's view of the church. You can subscribe at <http://www.elca.org/globalmission/engage>.

Readership Survey

Readers of *The Lutheran* and users of <http://www.thelutheran.org> are being asked to share their impressions of the magazine. This survey is part of a larger effort to assess readers' opinions about *The Lutheran*. All data collected will be aggregated and presented to the staff and the magazine's advisory committee in October 2010. The staff will use the data to reshape the magazine to better serve its targeted populations. To take the survey by Sept. 21, go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QZ5K3Q7>.

New Life for Your Congregation?

Does your congregation face a crisis of energy and commitment? There is no such thing as a "magic bullet," but the ELCA did identify three factors always present in healthy, spiritually alive congregations:

1. Commitment to & participation in what God is already doing in the community
2. Willingness to change for the sake of the Gospel
3. Ever-increasing shared leadership between pastor and lay leaders - all rooted in Bible study, discussion and prayer

The Transformational Ministry process is not a program or a project; rather it is an ongoing process of renewal that involves the whole congregation. The recently formed Upper Susquehanna Synod Transformational Ministry Team is prepared to lead you in this series of congregational renewal events for your church and two or more neighboring congregations at YOUR site and according to YOUR calendar! For more information on how to start on the path of congregational renewal please call: Rev. Karl-John Stone karljohn@uss-elca.org or Beth Yenchko eyenchko@uss-elca.org at 570-524-9778.

Another Resource for Your Congregation

Is your council or a group of leaders within your congregation looking to focus on your congregation's vision for mission or possibilities for ministry? Hoping to review the ministries your congregation has done in the past, and decide what to retain, what to let go of, and what new directions to pursue? Think it would be a good idea to seek God's transforming power, re-connect with your community, or better understand how people perceive the ministry that happens through your congregation? Then the Upper Susquehanna Synod has a number of resources available to assist you, with the help of both synod staff, and committed laity and clergy volunteers from throughout the synod's congregations, who enjoy living their discipleship as coaches or retreat leaders. To discuss what might be the best fit for your congregation, please be in touch with Pastor Karl-John Stone, Assistant to the Bishop (karljohn@uss-elca.org), or Ms. Beth Yenchko, Director for Evangelical Mission (Eyenchko@uss-elca.org), or call them at the synod office (570) 524-9778.

Child Protection Policy Help Available

Many congregations, both Lutheran and other traditions, around the country are instituting Child Protection Policies as part of their ministry, especially for the physical, emotional, and spiritual well being of "the least of these" among us. In some cases, insurance companies are requiring, or strongly suggesting, such policies. The Upper Susquehanna Synod's Child Protection Policy is intended to assist congregations in developing a child protection policy. It contains the recommendations of the USS for its congregations, as well as providing an example policy that may serve as a resource as a congregation designs its own policy. This policy is available on the synod website under the "For Congregations-- Resources" tab, or can be obtained by contacting Pastor Karl-John Stone at the synod office (karljohn@uss-elca.org; 570-524-9778). For more information, or to find out about what other congregations have done, you may also contact Pastor Karl-John.

Wanted: Your Stories and Recipes for Camp Mount Luther

Camp Mount Luther is working to publish a cookbook in commemoration of our Food Service Manager Carol Segraves' retirement. If you did not know, Carol is retiring at the end of the summer. The cookbook will include favorite Carol recipes, stories, and tributes. Please send requests of your favorite Carol recipes to be included to Chad Hershberger. Or, if you have a good recipe to share, send it their way. Also, if you have a story involving Carol, a testimonial or tribute to her, or any old pictures with Carol, please send them to Chad as well. Chad Hershberger's e-mail address is: chad@campmountluther.org. The book should be available to purchase by Christmastime.

Health Kit Challenge

The Global Mission Team of the Upper Susquehanna Synod is thinking globally and acting locally by sponsoring a Lutheran World Relief Health Kit Collection Challenge! The bar is set at collecting 1,000 health kits, compiled locally, to be distributed globally through LWR for emergency and disaster response. Congregations are encouraged to collect as many kits as possible by October 3, to package and drop off boxes of kits at the collection points for WELCA's Blanket Sunday (see below).

Why Health Kits? People who must flee their homes quickly often do not have time to pack essential items. Health kits can help refugees maintain personal hygiene while living in exile. Items may also contribute to a new start for those who can return home. Include the following items in each health kit:

- One hand towel, dark color recommended
- One washcloth, dark color recommended
- One bath-size bar (4 to 5 oz.) of soap, any brand, in its original wrapping
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging
- One sturdy comb, remove packaging
- One metal nail file or nail clippers with file attached, remove packaging (do not substitute cardboard emery boards for the file)
- Six Band-Aids® (or similar brand), preferably 1/2" to 3/4"; secure together with a rubber band

Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed. All items should be new and in good condition. Wrap smaller items in the washcloth; wrap washcloth and remaining items in the towel and tie securely with ribbons or yarn. Do not enclose the kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

Note: LWR's approximate cost to handle and ship one LWR health kit overseas is \$2.65. Contributions by cash, check, or money order may be sent to:

Lutheran World Relief
PO Box 17061
Baltimore, MD 21298-9832

For general assembly instructions, please go to: <http://www.lwr.org/beinvolved/assembly.asp>.

For packing instructions, please go to: <http://www.lwr.org/beinvolved/pack.asp>.

Drop Off in October: The completed health kits can be dropped off at the same time as blankets being collected by WELCA on Blanket Sunday (October 3). Drop off locations include St. Luke, Williamsport; St. Matthew, Shamokin Dam; St. Matthew, Bloomsburg; and St. John, Lewistown. The items may be dropped off on Sunday, October 10, from 3-5 p.m. or Monday, October 11, from 10 a.m. to noon. From there, they begin their trek to New Windsor, Maryland, and around the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dandelion Trail Run at Mount Luther: September 4, 2010

Camp Mount Luther in Mifflinburg will be holding a 5 and 10 Kilometer trail run race at the camp Labor Day Weekend. This will be an entry-level trail race on Mount Luther grounds with proceeds going to the camp. It is being organized by Joel and Shelley Heasley of Middleburg. The Dandelion Run was named in honor and memory of Rev. Glenn Heasley, former Assistant to the Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Glenn's favorite "flower" was the dandelion. The date of the race is Saturday, September 4, 2010. The start time for the race is 9:00 a.m. Runners decide on race day if they want to do a 5k or 10K (a double loop of the 5K) run. Age group awards will be presented and pre-registered participants will receive a drawstring sports pack. (A limited number will also be available on race day.) Price for entry is \$15 if you pre-register before August 27th. Race day registration is \$20. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on race day. Spectators are welcome as well. A kid's fun run (registration for that is one dollar) and a one-mile fun walk will also be held. The same registration fees and amenities apply for the fun walk which will take place on a dirt road. Awards will be given for overall male and female race time, three awards for each age group and an overall master's for male and female in both the 5K and the 10K. The awards ceremony will be immediately following the race. All miles for the course will be marked and there is one water stop on the course. Timing will be electronically done. Registration forms are posted on the camp's website at <http://www.campmountluther.org> or you can contact Joel Heasley at (570) 765-0267. Shower facilities are available after the race.

Women's Retreat at Mount Luther: September 18, 2010

All women are invited to be participants at Camp Mount Luther's Fall Women's Retreat. The retreat will feature a presentation by Debbie Best of Diakon Lutheran Social Services. The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, September 18, 2010. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments and registration at 9:30 a.m. There will be three sessions during the day led by Mrs. Best. Her topic will be "HEY CINDERELLA... DOES THE SLIPPER STILL FIT?" It will focus on women's transformations in body, mind and spirit with age. There will be singing, prayer, and devotions. The day will end around 2:30 p.m. following lunch and devotions. Cost for the retreat is \$16.00, which includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch and the program. We encourage you to bring a friend! Registration deadline is September 10. To register, contact Mount Luther, 355 Mt. Luther Lane, Mifflinburg, PA 17844. Checks should be made payable to Camp Mount Luther. If you have questions, call the camp at (570) 922-1587 or e-mail cml@campmountluther.org

Women of the ELCA Peace Pole Service: October 16, 2010

The Women of the ELCA will gather at the Upper Susquehanna Synod Office for their annual Peace Pole Service on October 16 beginning at 9:00 a.m. The theme will be "God's work. Our hands." The presenter will be Sarah Hoyes. The event happens rain or shine and a continental breakfast follows.

Pennsylvania Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend: October 22-24, 2010

This event will be held at the Radisson Hotel Sharon in Sharon, PA, an hour north of Pittsburgh. Weekends are for ALL marriages, and offer a time to escape daily pressures and responsibilities to search out and discover a warmer, closer, more joyful relationship with each other. Weekends run from Friday night at 8:00 p.m. to Sunday at 5:00 p.m. All costs for two nights lodging, meals, and supplies are covered by a \$45.00 per couple registration fee plus a confidential contribution of whatever amount you choose to make toward the end of the weekend. The Radisson in Sharon is a very popular location as the hotel boasts a lovely tropical atrium, and each room has a king bed and an in-room hot tub; so don't delay; sign up today to avoid ending up on a waiting list. To register, simply go to the website: <http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org> and sign up; or for questions or if you would like a brochure with registration form mailed to you, contact Pennsylvania Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber at 724-325-3166 or email: fjschamber@comcast.net.

"Glocal" Mission Gathering: November 12-13, 2010

2010 brings with it a full slate of "Glocal" Mission Gatherings. These exciting events bring experience and resources in global and domestic ministry together in convenient locations across the country, so leadership teams can build the skills needed to be a part of God's mission, no matter where service happens. Launched in April in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, six more "Glocal" Mission Gatherings are planned through November. The events cost just \$35 per person for 1-1/2 days of programming. A significant part of the gatherings are skill-building workshops. These workshops focus on specific mission skills to be used at both the local and global levels of ministry. The closest ELCA Glocal Mission Gathering is in Camp Hill, PA, on November 12-13. More information can be found on the Global Missions page on the ELCA website (www.elca.org) or <http://guest.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=014bf358-c666-4c1e-933e-69e5a8d49b3b>

Daily Bread Advocacy: November 20, 2010

Susquehanna University is the location for this event sponsored by LAMPa and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. The ELCA Washington Office will also be there for a day of exploring how our voices can multiply people's daily bread. To encourage participation from those traveling a distance, the cost is just \$10 with lunch included. Students are free.

MONTHLY FEATURES

(W)holy, (W)holy, (W)holy: Health, Healing and Wholeness Article for September 2010

"After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him." (1Kings 17:17, NRSV)

If you have ever heard an infant suffering from whooping cough (pertussis), it can be an extremely frightening experience (check out http://www.babycenter.com/2_sounds-of-whooping-cough_10316927.bc)! Inflammation from this bacterial infection leads to a cough so severe that the child cannot catch his breath. Between coughs, he gasps for air, leading to the distinctive "whooping" sound of the illness. Whooping cough is not just a childhood disease, and the number of active cases here in the US are climbing - in California alone, the number of cases has quadrupled over that of last year - enough for it to be labeled an 'epidemic'. Cases have also increased in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Oregon and South Carolina, and it is believed the numbers will further increase when children return to school.

Why the sharp increase? It is not due to parents failing or refusing to immunize their children, nor is it due to an increase in immigration, as one might suspect. Instead, because immunity to the disease decreases over time, adolescents and adults are increasingly vulnerable to the bacteria as they age. They may even be unknowing carriers of the disease. In addition, re-emergence of the disease appears to be cyclical, occurring every 3 to 5 years. That is why the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-dtap.pdf>) recommends that children, adolescents, and adults receive regular immunization. This is especially important if they live with, or are caregivers of, infants under the age of three months.

Children should receive immunization against pertussis at 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months-of-age, with booster shots administered between 15-18 months, and again at ages 4-5 years. Different formulations are used in children over the age of 7, adolescents, and adults, and should be determined by the prescribing physician. Adults should be re-vaccinated every 10 years.

Like many other respiratory infections, pertussis is spread by droplet via unprotected coughs. The time required for the bacteria to grow can vary from 6 - 21 days after exposure. Initial symptoms mimic those of an ordinary cold, with runny nose, congestion, sneezing, low-grade fever, and a cough. However, instead of the cough subsiding in a week or two, the pertussis cough typically intensifies. The most vulnerable is the unimmunized infant, in which a classic case of whooping cough can rapidly worsen. Uninterrupted coughing leads to the gasping for air; blueness of the fingers, toes and skin around the mouth; drooling; and vomiting. Eating and drinking become increasingly difficult, rapidly leading to exhaustion, dehydration, and in the most severe cases, seizures, and pneumonia, even death.

Currently, there is no treatment for the cough, which can linger for months, and can return with subsequent respiratory infections - earning it the name the "100 day cough". A cool mist vaporizer may provide some relief. However, the best protection against pertussis, remains immunization. In the coming months, the CDC hopes to raise public awareness of the disease, particularly in physicians and other health care providers, who may unwittingly be passing on the disease to the very patients they are trying to protect.

If you are not sure when you last received an immunization against whooping cough, please speak to your primary care provider. If you have an infant, try to limit your child's exposure to adults and adolescents who may not have been immunized. And finally, as with any respiratory infection, practice good cough and cold etiquette; remember to cover your cough, and practice good hand washing techniques!

September blessings!
Debbie Best, Program Coordinator, Diakon Family Life Services

Nurse's Notes for September 2010

September 6

Did you know that Medicare does not provide health coverage outside the US, but certain Medigap plans do offer partial coverage. If you have a private health insurance plan, check to see what the policy includes for international travel. You can purchase short-term health insurance from \$20-\$30; actual cost is based on age, gender, and any medical conditions. For more information on travel-health insurance, contact a travel agent, or check the US Department of State's website at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1470.html

September 13

First Aid for Tick Bites:

1. First, remove the tick as soon as possible. Carefully, using tweezers, grasp the tick near its mouth and pull gently to remove without crushing it.
2. Put the tick in a sealed jar.
3. Wash your hands, and the area with soap and water.
4. See the doctor if you aren't able to remove all of it, or if you develop the following: rash, joint swelling or inflammation, fever, swollen lymph nodes, stiff neck, flu-like symptoms, muscle aches. Take the saved tick with you.
5. Call 911 if you develop: severe headache, have difficulty breathing, experience paralysis, have chest pain or difficulty breathing. Complications from tick bites can include: chronic joint pain and inflammation, particularly in the knees, neurological symptoms, such as facial palsy, impaired memory, heart irregularities.

September 20

South Beach Diet Almond-Jam Bars - Preheat oven to 375° F

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|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 c. natural unblanched almonds | 1 lg. egg white |
| ¼ c. granular sugar substitute | ¼ c. sugar-free jam |
| ¼ t. salt | |

Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine almonds, sugar substitute, and salt in food processor. Process until finely ground. Add egg white and process until mixture forms a paste. Transfer dough to lined baking sheet and shape into a 14"x2" log about ½" high. With a moistened thumb, make a ¼" deep trench down the length of log. Bake until dough is lightly golden and set, 12-15 mins. Warm jam in small saucepan over low heat

until melted, a few minutes before log comes out of oven. Remove log from oven and immediately spoon jam along trench. Cool on baking sheet 10 min. before cutting crosswise on an angle into 27 bars, ½” thick. (34 cal., 1 g. pro, 2 g carb, 1 g fiber, 3 g fat, 0 g sat fat, 24 mg sodium) (*Prevention*, June 2010).

September 27

“Brew your cup of tea up to 5 minutes. The longer the steep time, the greater the quantity of health boosting flavonoids, explains Jeffrey Blumberg, PhD, professor of nutrition at Tufts University. Drink tea with a squeeze of lemon juice and you’ll increase antioxidant levels by up to 80%.” (*Prevention*, August 2010, pg. 37)