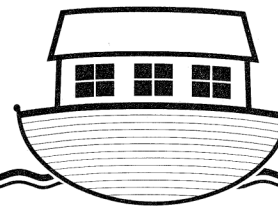


USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



April 2011

God's work. Our hands. + Upper Susquehanna Synod + Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Scholarship Fund Supports Ministry in Liberia



Rev. Weh and Ruth Mengon

Technology in Monrovia, Liberia.

In the United States, \$356 won't go very far in the world of higher education...it's barely enough to pay for books for a class or two. But for Ruth Mengon, that amount covers a semester of classes plus registration fees for her education. She's working toward an AA degree in nursing at the

Smythe Institute of Management and

The Carol G. Main Scholarship provides limited education scholarships for spouses of LCL pastors. The Fund was created in 2007 in honor of Mrs. Main, wife of USS Bishop Emeritus A. Donald Main.

In addition to Ruth Mengon, the Fund has also benefited Mrs. Grace Tutu Stevens, now studying business administration at Stella Maris Polytechnic in Capital Hill, Monrovia. Grace's goal is to develop her potential as a manager, and "organize a small business project for sustainability in five years." Her tuition costs are approximately \$385 per semester. Grace's husband, The Rev. Emmanuel Stevens, serves currently as LCL Director for Urban Ministry, and as a visiting pastor at historic Reed Memorial Church.



Rev. Emmanuel and Grace Stevens

For nearly a decade, Ruth Mengon had expressed a desire for post-secondary education to enable her to help support her family. Our synod's Carol G. Main Scholarship Fund is helping to make her dream a reality. She is the wife of The Rev. Weh Mengon, current Minister of Evangelism and Mission in the Lutheran Church in Liberia, a companion church of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Until economic conditions in Liberia improve and church members increase offerings, most Liberian pastors receive paltry incomes, and wives often garden and/or are employed outside the home to help sustain the family.

Ruth says, "Being a Pastor's wife, I believe studying in this area will enable me to render my services to the parish in which my husband is assigned, and also to the community we will live in. Another reason...is to join the global fight against life-threatening diseases and illnesses."

The fund's ability to further benefit Ruth, Grace, and future award winners depends entirely on new contributions to the fund, now nearly depleted. Gifts to the fund may be made in honor or memory of others, and donors will receive an attractive gift card to send to honorees. Checks may be made payable to: "Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA" (memo: Carol G. Main Scholarship Fund), PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA, 17837.

Social Ministry Spotlight

Janet Shuman, the Social Ministry Chair at **Christ's, Lewisburg** (Pastor Bill Henderson), reports that their congregation is involved in the Central PA World Hunger Meat Canning Project. This ministry began during World War II among Mennonites to help those who were hungry, homeless, and suffering as a result of the war. Today, the canning unit travels to 33 locations in eleven states as well as Manitoba and Ontario, Canada, from October to May. At each location, a local committee purchases meat and arranges for facilities and volunteers. Each can packed is 28 ounces and costs \$3.00. It cost an additional average of 25 cents per can to ship meat to a hungry family. Many volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs, including de-boning, stirring, packing, and washing and labeling cans. Congregations could also raise funds to help defray the expenses of this ministry. Several members of Christ's Church travel to Belleville every year to participate in this ministry. Shuman says this short-term ministry is well received with several people traveling to work at various tasks. For more information, visit <http://canning.mcc.org/>

Sandy Grier, AIM, is the USS Social Ministry Project Coach. That program is funded by Diakon to help congregations discern what outreach ministries will work best with the gifts of your congregation and the needs of the community. If you would like to meet with Sandy, contact her at 570-220-5039 or sandygrier@comcast.net. There is no fee for this service.

Up and Down the Valleys

Payne Wagner and Abby Gesselman of **Beaver, Beaver Springs** (*Pastor Lois Martin*), held a benefit spaghetti supper on March 5 as their Mid-West High School graduation project. After much consideration, the two decided to hold this supper bringing together their family, friends, church family, and community. They held the supper to benefit the Ashley & Erika Foundation, a foundation formed following an August 2005 accident that claimed the lives of Ashley Bender and Erika Mattern. The girls were passengers in a car that was struck by a drunk driver. The benefit supper was a huge success as 150 meals were served, and \$1575 was raised for the foundation.



The **Upper Susquehanna Synod Council** met in retreat on Saturday, April 2, 2011, at the Buffalo Valley Commons. Members of the Fiscal Management Committee joined them as they talked about priorities for the 2011 and 2012 Synod Budgets. Synod Council recommended a plan of action to the committee as they prepare next year's budget and deal with decreased mission support.

During Epiphany, members at **Christ, Milton** (*Pastor Pat Pittsnogle*), collected light bulbs to give to the poor. The idea was to celebrate the light that Jesus shines all through the world. The light bulbs were delivered to the local food bank.



A Mission Team of thirteen recently returned from the second mission trip sponsored by **Himmel's, Rebeck** (*Pastor Jane Compton*). The group went to Ocean Springs,

Mississippi. In addition to home repairs, the volunteers performed environmental clean-up, assisted the Red Cross, and helped to organize a warehouse of tools/supplies to be used for future construction. To view and read about their experiences, visit the church website at www.himmelschurch.org. Visiting with the group from Fort Rucker, Alabama, was Himmel's member, Danielle Klinger. Pictured are: Front Row - Karen Newman, Lynn Rebeck, Peggy Starr, Danielle Klinger, Robin Latsha; Back Row - Bill Ney, Arletta Ney, Gary Starr, Mitch Rebeck, Janice Weikel, Lisa Williard, Ginny Billow, Paul Billow, Randy Latsha.

Five Jersey Shore area churches attended the second of three trainings for Transformational Ministry on April 1 & 2 at **St. John, Jersey Shore** (*Pastor Kerry Aucker*). A TM presentation was made to the Sunbury cluster of churches on March 22; those in attendance are presently discerning whether they should commit to the TM process together in the near future.

Synod Vice President Mike Schrey visited **St. Luke, Williamsport** (*Pastors Eric and Anke Deibler*), with his "State of the Synod" presentation, including information about synod-related ministries supported through congregational mission support. Pastor Karl-John Stone was a Mission Visitor to **St. John, Northumberland** (*Pastor Dale Biesecker*), where he spoke to the congregation about Kathryn's Kloset. And, Gary Womelsdorf made a Mission Visitor presentation to the West Branch Conference recently. To schedule a Mission Visitor at your congregation or group, contact the synod office.

Chad Hershberger (*USS Ark Editor*) reminds congregations that if you have pictures to share for publication in the USS Ark, it is assumed when you send them you have the permission of the people pictured to use the photograph for promotional purposes, free of any claims. It is a good idea to get a release from anyone you photograph. The release can be part of a permission slip for an event. For samples, contact news@uss-elca.org.

A dinner to celebrate the various ministries of the **Upper Susquehanna Synod** was held on April 10, 2011, at Camp Mount Luther. Synod ministry teams and related entities were invited to participate and enjoyed a home-cooked meal, fellowship, and the chance to hear what each of the ministries are doing in the synod. The event was organized by Beth Yenchko, the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission.

USS ARK is a publication of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. Permission is granted to reproduce USS Ark for congregational communications. Send your mission stories and ministry ideas to Editor Chad Hershberger at news@uss-elca.org.



Upper Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The Rev. Robert L. Driesen, Bishop

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