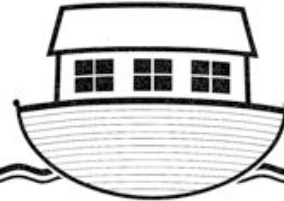


USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



Dec 2011

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

Giving the Gift of Service

Teen Blazes Paths for Award

Vanessa Hemmen, a member of St. Luke's, Bloomsburg (*Pastor Jeffrey Bohan*), was busy this year, giving of her time and talents to improve a synod ministry. Hemmen worked to earn her Girl Scout Gold Award by refurbishing worship



and campsites at Camp Mount Luther. Hemmen, a member of Girl Scout Troop 32412, is an eleventh grader at Central Columbia High School. She approached Chad Hershberger, the camp's director, inquiring of a work project she could do to help the camp. They came up with the idea of refurbishing outdoor worship and campsites. In the spring, she came up with a plan for the five sites, including blazing and lining new trails, cleaning up the sites, installing solar lights to mark the entrance to the paths to the sites, and painting trail markers to lead people to the sites.

Hemmen said it was just natural for her to help the camp for this project. "I have been attending Camp Mount Luther for about nine years; therefore, camp is a big part of my life and means a lot to me, which is why I wanted to complete my Gold Award Project at camp. It would not just be a personal thing, it would also help others so to me it was a win-win situation in deciding that I wanted to help Camp Mount Luther in my quest for Gold," she said.

The issue that her project addressed was safety. In addition to the physical work done on-site, Hemmen also created a poster about camp safety rules that was posted in each cabin. She also recruited volunteers, raised money for supplies, and had to do the necessary paperwork to complete her award requirements. Campers and staff thanked her during a campfire program this summer.

Seafarers Receive 468 Christmas Satchels from USS

The Upper Susquehanna Synod Global Mission Committee thanks the many USS congregations who supported the collection of Christmas satchels for seafarers through the Seafarers and International House (SIH) in New York City (<http://www.sihnyc.org/>) this fall. The bags will be distributed to freighter crews at port, providing some Christmas cheer and Christian love to people who often have a lonely holiday. Many heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in this project, and may the love of Christ bless your Christmastime, too!



Some of the Seafarer's Christmas bags that were collected by the Upper Susquehanna Synod. At press time, the bags were collected by Seafarer's. A report will be in the next USS Ark.

Use your smartphone to view pictures of Vanessa's projects:



Kids in Mission: Children's Baking Day



Youngsters at Messiah, South Williamsport (Pastor Maurice Frontz) were busy on Saturday, December 10. The kids, ages Pre-K through Grade 6, involved

themselves in a mission project. Participants included ten kids, two teen helpers, and eight adults.

Kathy Wither, who coordinates children and youth programs at the church, says the event was set up like a mini-Bible School with a Christmas Story theme. The idea was that the kids learn of the great love God has for them in the gift of His Son, and in turn they share that love with the community.

The kids heard the Christmas story at one station. At another, they baked cookies that will be added to the food baskets that the congregation delivers to the community. They also



made glow-in-the dark star T-shirts to remind them to follow Christ, played games, had a snack, and ended with interactive Advent devotions and singing. Wither said the event was a huge success and "the joy on the kids' faces said it all!" This was the first year for this event.

Up and Down the Valleys

Christ, Montgomery (Pastor Gunther Bernhardt), has voted to close. The congregation's last worship service will take place on February 19, 2012.

Pastor Notes: **Pastor W. Stevens Shipman, Jr.** has resigned as pastor of the Southern Clinton County Parish and will move to the roster of retired pastors. Pastor Shipman has accepted the position of Director of Lutheran CORE. **Pastor Maurice "Chip" Frontz** has submitted his resignation as pastor of Messiah, South Williamsport and will begin to serve the Southern Clinton County Parish as their interim pastor on January 1, 2012. Zion, Renovo, has entered into a contract with the **Rev. John Harwood**, an Episcopal priest serving Trinity Episcopal Church, Renovo, to serve as their pastor. Father Harwood is able to serve the congregation under contract due to the ELCA's full-communion agreement with the Episcopal Church.

The congregations of **Zion, Herndon** and **St. John's, Leck Kill** (Interim Pastor Fred Faust) have now formed the **Zion-St. John's Parish**. The new parish is creating a committee to enter the call process.

As part of the series "Worship in a New Key," **Susquehanna University** (Chaplain Mark Wm. Radecke) hosted a Jazz Vespers service on November 20. Following the historical order of Vespers, and celebrating the Festival of Christ the King, this service substituted hymns and songs for musical portions of the liturgy. **United in Christ, West Milton** (Pastor Leah Schade), held a Jazz Advent Service and Afternoon Tea on December 10. The service featured music with harp, guitar, bass, and drums. A freewill offering benefitted youth going to New Orleans for the ELCA Youth Gathering.



First, Watsontown (Pastor Jim Fladland), sponsored a free Thanksgiving Day Dinner at their congregation from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day.

Christ United, Catawissa (Pastor Gretchen Johannsen), has decided to worship this winter in their fellowship hall. They are moving there to conserve on heating oil. When asked about the move, one member said, "I don't care where we worship, just as long as we continue worshipping the Lord together." They plan to move back to the sanctuary for Easter.

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.



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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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