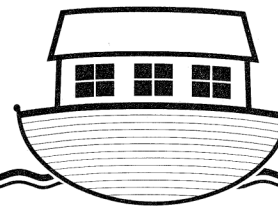


# USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



Lent  
February 2010  
(Edition 2)

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

## Pastor Attends Hunger Gathering

Pastor Erwin Roux of Zion, Turbotville, was among 37 participants who went to Mexico City last year for the ELCA World Hunger Leadership Gathering. They were kept to a busy schedule that included speakers, scriptural reflections, and visits to sites where ELCA World Hunger Funds are at work. The purpose of the gathering was to learn the root causes of poverty and the ways in which poverty is being alleviated.

Pastor Roux wrote in his congregation's newsletter, "One of the best days for me was when we were introduced to AMEXTRA. This is the Mexican Association for Rural and Urban Transformation. They began 25 years ago as the dream of a group of university students who wanted to provide transformational alternatives for their society. Their basic goal is to work with people in marginalized communities to help them discover their abilities and identify their own resources in order to create projects that benefit themselves and their community economically. The ELCA has been working with AMEXTRA for over 20 years. AMEXTRA does not give handouts; they always have an exit strategy so they are able to use their resources with a wide range of communities."

Roux explained that one particular community they visited amazed him. "I had never seen such poverty before. It was called 'Lomas' and was built in an abandoned stone quarry because the land could be purchased very cheaply. The houses, made of cement, seemed to be hanging from the hillsides. We were able to speak to several people at the AMEXTRA center who had benefited from their work. One young woman in particular touched my heart as she spoke of always wanting to work with children, be a teacher, but circumstances had prevented her from getting an education. AMEXTRA helped her to channel her passion into creating an after school program at their site. She tutors children to help them improve their grades because their parents do not always have the ability or time to help them. As our time to hear the testimony of these people was over and we were leaving, the children began to arrive from school. Her greeting to each of them and their delighted responses told the story of how important their relationship had become. That image will always remain with me and it demonstrated the truth of the AMEXTRA mission statement, "We don't serve because we already transformed, but we are transformed as we serve."

*More on AMEXTRA at [www.amextra.org](http://www.amextra.org)*



## Congregation Helps the Hungry

*St. Michael's, Quiggville, engages in several projects each year that benefit World Hunger:*

**Fair Trade Coffee:** The congregation has used fair trade coffee, purchased through Lutheran World Relief, for a number of years. When St. Michael's people gather there is always a pot of coffee brewing. Fairly traded coffee allows the coffee farmer to make a sustainable living. Being a church in a farming community, St. Michael's folks understand what it means to support the farmer rather than coffee importers and big business. St. Michael's Women of the ELCA have received a \$100 World Hunger grant through the Upper Susquehanna Synod to make the coffee available for individual purchase, too. The coffee is shade grown, organic, and tastes just great.

**Global Barnyard:** St. Michael's has a farm in Africa. Maybe not literally, but each year they add animals to a farm. Through ELCA World Hunger they buy goats, pigs, and chickens that are given to individuals and families in developing countries. The animals reproduce and can be a sustainable source of income. The congregation received a \$100 start up grant through the Upper Susquehanna Synod for education and raising awareness. St. Michael's people gave 12 goats, 7 pigs, and 441.5 chickens.

**Hunger 101:** Students of United Campus Ministry at Penn College have invited students of surrounding colleges for a hunger simulation. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania provides this roll play using PA statistics. Students will experience the struggle of families in various life situations (unemployed, underemployed, low income) to make ends meet. They will eat a meal that reflects the worldwide inequality of food. Some will eat a decent meal, while others will have to make due with a bowl of rice.

## Grace, Shamokin, Raises Money for World Hunger, too!

Submitted by David Shade, Grace, Shamokin

It all began last winter, when a small discussion group named "Fridays in the Public Square," having "solved" many of the problems of the world, decided to take on a big one: World Hunger.

We discussed the problems and the causes of those problems. We looked at many organizations that are trying to deal with these problems. We tried to come up with a way we could help. Finally, after looking at everything else, Pastor David Byerly brought up the programs of the ELCA World Hunger campaign. We studied their various programs and were amazed at the variety of ways we could participate!

We selected their God's Global Barnyard as our means of getting started. We knew that being a small group in a small church, the only way we could participate would be to raise money. We received all the printed materials that we needed. We decided to purchase farm animals for our "barnyard."

We decided to make our initial attempt by using the educational materials and the small coin collectors. We made them available to everyone in the congregation. We announced that the campaign would begin in September and would end on the Sunday before Advent. During the campaign, we supported the effort with newsletter advertising and Temple Talks on Sunday mornings.

We had decided that the small children would collect and carry the coin holders to the altar on collection day. It turned out that we underestimated the enthusiasm that we had generated. The children needed help from the adults. The coins that were in the boxes weighed about 75 pounds. We also had a good amount of "green" money, too. All in all, we raised almost \$1300 and sent off a check to the ELCA promptly. We closed this year's campaign on December 27 with a "thank you" for the congregation and a children's sermon demonstration of the animals we bought. This year's campaign resulted in the purchase of one cow, five goats, 200 chicks, and a fish. We recommend this program for your congregation. We had fun and we felt good for the effort!

## Up and Down the Valleys

**Pastor Sonja Ware** (*Zion, Trevorton; St. Peter, West Cameron; St. John, Leck Kill; Zion, Herndon*) was featured in the January 2010 edition of *The Lutheran* magazine. Ware's "My view" was published on her observations between the similarities of the ELCA Churchwide's decisions in August and her home synod, the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau, Germany.

**The Rev. Dr. Theodore Lindquist, Jr.**, who faithfully served Sharon, Selinsgrove, both as an interim pastor and as Visitation Pastor for more than twenty years, retired at the end of 2009. The Congregation Council designated him as "Pastor Emeritus." A surprise celebration was held at the church on January 10<sup>th</sup> celebrating his ministry, including naming his classroom the Dr. Theodore Lindquist Room, complete with a plaque on the door. He was also given a monetary gift and a digital picture frame with pictures of the congregation. He plans to continue teaching the Adult Sunday School class and volunteering as long as possible. Current Interim Pastor Martha Sue Moll said, "He is much beloved and a wonderfully supportive colleague. He is a true pastor."

**Clergy Notes:** **Pastor Jane Compton** has been called to Himmel's, Rebuck. **Pastor Sarah Hershberger** has been called to serve a part-time call as chaplain with the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State University in State College and will begin after a period of maternity leave. **Gettysburg Seminary graduate Carolyn E. Simonds** has been called to serve Liberty Valley Lutheran Parish. **Pastor Constantine Havir** has been called to serve Trinity, Sunbury, as their pastor, with a Purchase of Service agreement with Trinity, Point Township. **Pastor Elinor Allison** now serves as interim and part-time supply pastor at Grace, Sunbury. **Pastor Bill Petry** continues to serve as interim at St. Luke's, Sunbury. **Pastor Glen Keidel Jr.** began to serve as interim pastor at the Stone Valley Parish in January. After a period of maternity leave, **Pastor Collette Broady Preiss** will become the interim pastor and stated supply at St. John (Brick), Montgomery.

**Grace, Berwick** (*Pastor Chad Hebrink*) held their Third Annual Chili Cook-off in January. The chili was fantastic and the desserts were wonderful according to reports. Ethel Borem is the reigning chili champ for this year. The gathered even celebrated two birthdays at the event.

**The Northern Lights** (*Lutheran congregations in Upper Northumberland and Union Counties*) are having a Lenten Challenge benefiting Camp Mount Luther and are holding joint Mid-Week Lenten Services together. Bishop Driesen will be doing a study on Lutheranism each week.

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](mailto:news@uss-elca.org).



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

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