

# CURRENTS

## Upper Susquehanna Synod News and Information

*July 17, 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 August 1, 2010.*

## NEWS IN THIS ISSUE

### Stream of Information on Synod Assembly Highlights Available

*Stream of Information* is a formatted, occasional communication piece highlighting a specific topic of interest to members and leaders of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. A new *Stream of Information* is now available giving details about the 2010 Synod Assembly, held in June. To download, click here:

<http://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/Assembly-2010-Stream-of-Info.pdf>

### 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](mailto:karljohn@uss-elca.org) or Beth Yenchko [eyenchko@uss-elca.org](mailto: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](mailto:karljohn@uss-elca.org)), or Ms. Beth Yenchko, Director for Evangelical Mission ([Eyenchko@uss-elca.org](mailto: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](mailto: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.

### Camp Mount Luther Campers Produce Weekly Newspaper

Each week this summer at Mount Luther, campers are producing a summer version of *Camel Tracks*. You can find out what is happening at our synod's camp by visiting their website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org) and viewing these weekly newspapers.

### 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](mailto: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.

### **Thrivent Financial Members Give \$1 Million**

Members of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans recently voted on where to distribute \$1 million among 10 national charities through a new program called Thrivent Choice. Funds were distributed to the organizations based on the percentage of votes they received. Organizations, and the total funds they received, were:

- LCMS World Relief and Human Care: \$192,122
- Lutheran Disaster Response: \$147,242
- ELCA World Hunger: \$145,345
- Habitat for Humanity International: \$114,212
- LCMS World Mission: \$112,315
- Feed My Starving Children: \$99,465
- American Heart Association: \$67,854
- WELS Committee on Relief: \$57,281
- WELS Humanitarian Aid Committee: \$32,987

- Lutheran Malaria Initiative: \$31,176

A total of 150,199 members voted in the inaugural Thrivent Choice Voting Event. The voting took place April 19 - May 21, 2010. Thrivent Financial will launch a second aspect of Thrivent Choice later this summer called Choice Dollars. Here, eligible benefit members will be able to help direct funds to thousands of Lutheran non-profit organizations, including Lutheran congregations. Eligibility for this program will be based on benefit members' involvement in Thrivent Financial through their fraternal benefit society product ownership and/or Thrivent Financial volunteer leadership. In 2009, Thrivent Financial provided \$113 million to help congregations, communities and nonprofit organizations. Thrivent Choice is one of many ways that Thrivent Financial gives back.

### **Kathryn's Kloset Open House/Orientation Coming Soon**

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries is now operating "Kathryn's Kloset," a warehouse in Baltimore where they gather and house surplus items (except food) in large quantities. The items are available to non-profits who can pick up stuff in dock-height trucks. Many of the items must be received by the skid load. The next Open House/Orientation Meetings at Diakon Kathryn's Kloset will be held on the following dates: Tuesday, July 20, and Monday, August 30, all at 10:00 a.m. at the warehouse, 1101 Desoto Road in Baltimore. The meetings will end no later than noon. Diakon Kathryn's Kloset is a ministry of Diakon Lutheran Social Services, where personal care items and other goods are received from a central warehouse in Baltimore and distributed free-of-charge through churches and other non-profit agencies to the needy people of our communities. For more information, or to reserve a spot at one of the open houses, please be in touch with Rev. Karl-John Stone (karljohn@uss-elca.org; 570-524-9778) or Rev. John Richter (RichterJ@diakon.org).

### **Leave a Legacy for Ministry and Mission**

Would you like to make a gift to your congregation and/or other favorite church charities but are not sure what your future financial needs will be? You can make charitable giving part of your will or you could simply change the beneficiary statement of an insurance policy, qualified retirement plan, commercial annuity, or bank or brokerage account. There are many ways you can make an estate gift to support your favorite church charity without sacrificing your personal financial security. For more information on how to include your favorite church charities in your estate planning call Pr. Greg Kramer at the Lutheran Planned Giving Office at 570-374-2044 or call the ELCA Foundation, 800-638-3522, ext. 2970 or visit our website at <http://www.elca.org/fo>.

### **Keeping the Promise**

Investing with the Mission Investment Fund (MIF) still offers a great return and a great purpose. A current four-year investment will yield 3.25 percent APY. The monies invested create loans for ELCA new mission starts as well as for existing congregations and ministries to meet capital needs. For example, the current three-year adjustable rate loan for congregations/ministries is being offered at 4.95 percent. (Investment and loan rates are subject to change without notice.) For more information about investment or loan opportunities, please contact area representative Pr. Mark Wimmer: 267-203-1137 or [mark.wimmer@elca.org](mailto:mark.wimmer@elca.org)

### **Reauthorization Information for Current USS Authorized Lay Leaders**

Guidelines for authorized lay leaders (ALWLs) have been in place in the synod's LMI Handbook since early 2009. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders, Evangelists, and Catechists who wish to continue to serve in our synod as authorized leaders are now required to complete annual paperwork to be eligible for such "continued authorization." This requirement begins in 2010 with paperwork due by July 31, 2010, for continued authorization from through July 31, 2011. The required paperwork to submit to the synod office by July 31 includes:

- An annually updated [covenant agreement](#) with a Mentor Pastor of your choice (both ALL's and mentor's covenants).
- An annually signed copy of "[Statement of Commitment—Authorized Lay Leaders](#)".
- One signed copy of "[ELCA Standards Questionnaire—Authorized Lay Leader](#)" for the lay leader's file. (This form need not be completed annually, unless one's answers to it should change)
- For samples of the above items, click on each item. Please send completed paperwork to the synod office by July 31, 2010: Upper Susquehanna Synod, PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837. Confirmation of a leader's continued authorization will be sent to each lay leader (copied to their mentor) in August 2010.

### **Making Connections with Young Adults on Campus**

The graduation parties are over, and many high school graduates will soon be packing for a move to college. Campus ministers are waiting to meet them! Help them connect with the young adults from your congregation. Email the synod office at [office@uss-elca.org](mailto:office@uss-elca.org) with a student's name, hometown, college/university, and email address (if known), and this information will get passed on to the campus minister at their school. Do it today, while you're thinking about it!

### **Youth Ministry Certification School --- Register Now!**

YMCS is a fourteen-day intensive course for adults working with youth in a congregational ministry setting. Volunteers, professional youth workers and pastors have all taken advantage of this training that incorporates the best of the current practical, theological and theoretical research to help you design a ministry with children, youth, young adults and families in your congregation. The course is spread out over a nine-month period from August-April, meeting for a four-day weekend at Nawakwa in August and for five two-day events in October, November, February, March & April on the Gettysburg Seminary campus. Get more information, including an application, at <http://www.ltsg.edu/academic-programs/Certificate-Studies/Youth-Ministry>.

### **Youth Director Wanted**

The congregations of Trinity Lutheran Church and Lost Creek Presbyterian Church of McAlisterville, PA, are looking for a part-time youth director. The youth director will develop relationships with teens and children and help them to develop relationships with each other. He or she will engage the youth, guide them as they grow in faith, and provide opportunities for fellowship, worship, study and play. The position will be scheduled for 10-20 hours per week. The youth director will coordinate volunteers and be actively involved in Christian Education planning. He or she will coordinate youth meetings, service projects and fund raisers. He or she will evangelize, teach, and communicate with local church and unchurched youth. For further information, or to submit a resume and statement of faith, please email [tlchurch@tricounty.net](mailto:tlchurch@tricounty.net), call 717-463-3428 or fax: 717-463-3886.

### **Organist Needed**

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, on Route 44 between Turbotville and McEwensville, has an opening for a skilled and committed organist for our 9:15 a.m. Sunday worship and rehearsals with the choir on Wednesday evenings. The successful candidate will need to be able to start in August. Anyone interested in this position can contact Patty Hines, Choir Director, at 437-4329 for more details.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **German Partnership Picnic: August 1, 2010**

The Ansbach-Wurzburg Partnership Committee is planning a picnic on August 1 at 3:00 p.m. at St. James Church Pavilion in Rauchtown. Pastor Lois D. Martin, chairperson, says Pastor Klaus Kuhn will be visiting our synod as the representative of Bishop Schmidt in Germany. We are inviting pastors and their families and interested lay persons to join us in welcoming him on August 1. This year we celebrate our Global Missions partnership with the Lutheran Church in Bavaria. We have many things in common with them, and there are some differences as well. Our continuing conversations lead us to new discoveries with each other, while celebrating our unity in Christ. As we continue our partnership, we hope to grow new links between churches and pastors. We look forward to celebrating the renewal of our partnership covenant next year in Rotenburg, Germany. You are invited to bring a covered dish for this event. It will be held rain or shine (the pavilion is covered). Beverages and hot dogs will be provided.

### **Rostered Leaders/Families Healing Service: August 31, 2010**

A Healing Service with Holy Communion will be held at the synod office in Lewisburg on Tuesday, August 31, at 1:30 p.m. for rostered leaders and members of their families. The service is provided by the synod's Spirituality Task Force and is open to all.

### **"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](http://www.elca.org))

### **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 August 2010**

*"Classrooms and labs! Loud boiling test tubes! Sing to the Lord, a new song! Athlete and band! Loud Cheering people! Sing to the Lord a new song! He has done marvelous things, I too will praise him with a new song!" Herbert F. Brokering (Lutheran Book of Worship, #558)*

This quirky little hymn always makes me chuckle [inside] - at first glance it doesn't seem to fit the image of your typical worship hymn, yet it joyfully reminds us that God can be, and is, praised in ordinary life, through ordinary circumstances, in ordinary settings! It also brings to mind, early September, and the ushering in of yet another football season.

In a few short weeks, young men (and an occasional young woman) will don helmets and protective gear, as they begin football practice. It becomes the responsibility of parents, coaches, athletic directors and trainers to see that all safety equipment functions, fits properly, and is worn consistently. Because football is a contact sport, all those involved, need also to be aware of a rising concern regarding traumatic brain injury (TBI).

TBI is an injury to the brain when the head suddenly or violently hits an object, bouncing the fragile brain from one side of the skull to the other. Similar injuries are seen in children who have been violently shaken (Shaken Baby Syndrome) and in troops involved in combat explosions, or in vehicular accidents. Damage does not necessarily occur at the time of impact, but in the hours and days following the injury, as the injured brain bleeds or swells, and oxygen supply to tissue decreases. Repeat head trauma, particularly during the healing phase, can slow recovery and even lead to permanent damage.

Below are signs for coaches and parents to watch for after an athlete suffers a blow to the head during practice or play. The individual:

- Loses consciousness - even briefly
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets instructions, or seems unsure about score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Undergoes mood, behavior, or personality change, seems agitated
- Has poor recall of events prior to, or after the injury.

Or if the athlete reports:

- Headache or feeling of pressure in the head
- Nausea and vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred or double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems

- Confusion
- “Not feeling right” or “feeling down” Source: (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/recognize.html>)

When injury occurs, remove the athlete from play for the remainder of the game, and have him/her evaluated by a healthcare professional experienced in diagnosing and treating concussion. Be sure to report any additional blows to the head that occurred prior to, or after, the injury. The healthcare professional should be responsible for determining when/if it is okay for the athlete to resume playing. Use this time to re-educate fellow athletes regarding safe play techniques, injury and its prevention. Football is truly a team sport - and the team (parents, athletic staff, league and school officials, fellow athletes, and healthcare professionals) bears responsibility for insuring that the game is played safely!

*Back to school blessings!*

*Debbie Best, Program Coordinator, Diakon Family Life Services*

## Nurse's Notes for August 2010

### **August 1**

Parents & Teens: It is time for band and sport practice to begin! To avoid dehydration, drink 8-10 oz. of water every 10-15 minutes. If exercising for longer than 90 minutes, drink 8-10 oz. of a sports drink (with no more than 8 percent carbohydrate) every 15-20 minutes (<http://sportsmedicine.about.com>)

### **August 8**

Tips for back-pack shopping at <http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/augschool.cfm>:

- Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Pack light. Organize the backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the your child's body weight.
- Always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles.
- Consider a rolling backpack. This type of backpack may be a good choice for students who must tote a heavy load. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs, and they may be difficult to roll in snow.

### **August 15**

Bullying is wrong, and can be equally traumatic for kids who are innocent bystanders! Here are a few tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics for you to share with your child if he/she witnesses bullying.

- Tell your child not to cheer on or even quietly watch bullying.
- Encourage your child to tell a trusted adult about the bullying.
- Help your child support other children who may be bullied. Encourage your child to include these children in activities.
- Encourage your child to join with others in telling bullies to stop.

### **August 22**

Cultivate a Kinder Heart. A study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison shows that heart patients who undergo forgiveness counseling - they learn to work through and overcome hostile feelings, and thus grudges, they hold toward others - have significantly fewer heart symptoms, such as angina, than those who don't get the counseling. (Mahoney, S., June 2010 Prevention, pg. 34)

### **August 29**

Still using hydrogen peroxide to clean scrapes and cuts? Don't! Dr. Alfred Sacchetti, spokesperson for the American College of Emergency Physicians, states that though peroxide can kill bacteria, it can also damage healthy tissue as well. To clean a small wound, rinse the area gently with soap and water, dab on a little antibiotic ointment and cover with a bandage. Doctors and nurses sometimes do use peroxide to remove dried blood from sutures [stitches] after the wound has already healed. (Gelman, L., July 2010 Prevention, pg. 18)