

# CURRENTS

## Upper Susquehanna Synod News and Information

*March 6, 2010*

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Congregational Renewal Bulletin Insert
- Census Information
- Camp Mount Luther March Camel Tracks
- LPG Winter Newsletter
- CWS Health Kits

*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 next edition of Currents is planned for April 5, 2010, with a publication deadline of April 1, 2010.*

## NEWS IN THIS ISSUE

### Liberian Church Founder's Day

On Wednesday, April 28, 2010, the Lutheran Church in Liberia—a companion church of the Upper Susquehanna Synod—will celebrate its Founder's Day marking one hundred and fifty years since its birth. In February 2010, all USS congregations received a bright yellow, oversized, personalized birthday card, addressed from their congregation to the LCL. Congregation members are asked to sign their card, include a photo and a description of the congregation, and return it to the synod office by Monday, April 12. All such birthday cards will be carried by Bishop Driesen to present to the LCL when he arrives in Liberia later in April. A one-page bulletin insert has also been prepared for congregational use on Sunday, April 25, noting the special anniversary of our Liberian brothers and sisters. The left side of the insert provides general information about the LCL church and anniversary. The right side provides prayer petitions for "Prayers of the Church" or for personal use. If you're unable to use the insert on April 25, consider its similar use on the following Sunday.

Worship and/or Education Ideas: The theme of the LCL's Founder's Day celebration is "This Far By Faith", based on 2 Corinthians 5:7, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." Given the Liberian people's tumultuous recent history, this verse describes well their faith-filled journey in uncertain times. You might use this verse to introduce a Sunday School class about the Lutheran Church in Liberia. To learn more about the LCL, its mission history, arts and crafts, recipes, and maps, go to <http://www.elca.org/liberia>. The theme song for the LCL's Founder's Day celebration is #633 in Evangelical Worship, "We've Come This Far by Faith". Consider asking the choir to perform this hymn on April 25, teaching it to your Sunday school, or learning it together as a congregation in worship.

### Singers Needed for Assembly Choir

On behalf of the Bishop's Committee on Worship, which is planning worship for Synod Assembly on June 18-19, you are invited to sing as part of the Synod Assembly Choir that will provide musical leadership for the Eucharist on Friday, June 18, at 10:00 a.m. and Saturday, June 19, at 10:00 a.m. in the Field House at Susquehanna University. In addition to leading the liturgy and hymns, the choir will prepare special music for the service. The assembly is being held in the Field House due to renovations in Weber Chapel. Interesting instrumentation is being planned. Adult and high school singers who would like to sing in the Assembly Choir should have some choral experience in church and/or school. Being able to read music is helpful but not required. Bring a friend. If you cannot attend both services, please feel encouraged to sing at one. Two rehearsals are scheduled for Sunday afternoons, May 23 and June 6, from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. in the chapel of Zion Lutheran Church in Sunbury. A "warm-up" rehearsal will take place in some as yet to be designated place at Susquehanna University at 9:00 a.m. prior to each service. If you plan to sing in the choir, please contact David Reier at [dreier@ptd.net](mailto:dreier@ptd.net) by May 21. Indicate your name, address, day and night phone numbers, e-mail address, voice parts, and if you are available on June 18, 19, or both. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call David Reier at 570-286-1664 during the day or evening.

### Children's Choir Invitation

Children who are completing Kindergarten through Fifth Grade, whether or not your congregation has a formal children's choir, are invited to join with others in participating in the 10:00 a.m. Worship Service at Synod Assembly on Saturday, June 19. The service will be held in the Field House (gym) at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove as Weber Chapel is undergoing renovations. The children will have two pieces to learn and sing: "Come, O Holy Spirit, Come", #681 in *With One Voice* (sung during the prelude) and "This is the Feast" from ELW Setting 4/LBW Setting 2, the first line. They will process with streamers (provided) representing the Holy Spirit. When they finish singing, they will sit with their parents or chaperones for the rest of the worship. Please respond by May 1 to Annette Frontz, director, with the names and ages of those participating, as well as a contact person and their contact information. Information will be sent to you regarding rehearsal earlier that morning. Each group should learn the music on their own in advance. Contact Annette at [frontzfamily@verizon.net](mailto:frontzfamily@verizon.net) or 570-323-9861 for more information.

### Pages Needed for Synod Assembly

Calling all youth (who have completed at least sixth grade), college students and seminarians! The 2010 USS Synod Assembly is looking for pages. You'll be needed on Friday and Saturday, June 18-19, from 7:45 a.m. until the end of the day. Responsibilities include handing-out papers, bulletins, and other materials as well as serving as ushers for

worship and counting votes when asked. Meals will be provided for the pages. All pages receive a free T-shirt! If you have interested youth, please send their names to Pastor Jill V. Seagle at [pastorjills@windstream.net](mailto:pastorjills@windstream.net).

### **Ladders Needed for Group WorkCamp in Mifflinburg**

The Group WorkCamp to be held this summer in the Mifflinburg area is still in need of ladders for many of the homes they will be working on. They are requesting churches in Snyder and Union Counties to be in contact with organizers if they are willing to lend ladders, deliver them to the homes, and then pick them up. Their volunteer "ladder coordinator" will then be given a listing of all the ladders they need for the 75 sites. They will in turn look at the town and area and contact the Lutheran church closest to the home and ask them to provide the ladders needed. Hopefully the men (or women) of that church can assure the Group WorkCamp that they will deliver the ladder(s) prior to camp and then pick them up. Anyone who is interested can contact Kim Sawyer at [kksawyer@dejazzd.com](mailto:kksawyer@dejazzd.com) or (570) 966-1603.

### **Thrivent Builds in Williamsport**

Are you ready for a great work camp experience? Are you ready to live your faith out loud in an amazing community? Thrivent Financial is once again sponsoring a Thrivent Builds project in Williamsport. The Williamsport Habitat affiliate has identified a property in the Newberry section of Williamsport for the second local project. Various work camp packages are available for your church outreach ministry. With this local Habitat affiliate growing and celebrating their 21st year of impacting communities with over 44 homes completed to date, Habitat is prepared to successfully handle small youth groups or intergenerational groups up to 60 campers. A volunteer week involves amazing "hands on" Habitat work experiences, enjoyable recreational activities which includes amusement parks, river boat cruises, professional baseball games, Little League Baseball experiences, or even the amenities of eating, resting and entertainment provided from local hotels and restaurants. For more information, please contact Todd J. Fox, Executive Director, Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity, at (570) 322-2515 or visit <http://www.lycominghabitat.org>.

### **Thrivent Launches Fan it Forward Campaign**

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has launched a new charitable outreach campaign on Facebook allowing new fans an easy way to help others worldwide. Now through March 31, 2010, for every new fan of the Thrivent Financial Facebook page, Thrivent Financial will contribute \$1 to Lutheran World Relief (LWR), up to \$10,000. The goal of "Fan it Forward" is to generate \$10,000 for LWR and raise awareness for the humanitarian outreach the organization is making in countries around the world. Individuals can participate in the campaign by going to [www.thrivent.com/facebook](http://www.thrivent.com/facebook) and clicking on the Become a Fan button. A new tab on the Thrivent Financial Facebook page highlights the campaign details and gives fans quick tools to spread the word through Facebook, Twitter and email.

### **A Shout Out for Easter Greetings**

You and your congregation are invited to make and send Easter greetings to ELCA missionaries, troops, and other service personnel as part of Operation Thanks-Giving: Easter. Learn how at <http://blogs.elca.org/handinhand/post/ot-g-easter-25022010/>.

### **March News from Camp Mount Luther**

Camp Mount Luther is launching a monthly electronic version of their "Camel Tracks" newsletter this month. It is attached to *Currents* and permission is granted to reproduce it for local use in congregations and other settings. Highlights this month from our synod camp include the following:

- **More Campers Wanted!** There is one more opportunity for your congregation to have a camper for this year. Each congregation in the Upper Susquehanna Synod is asked to send a representative to a Summer Camp Preview Party for Campers. Two events have been held and we've had 19 people attend. There is one more chance for you to participate: March 14 at 2:00 p.m. at Camp Mount Luther, Mifflinburg. A camper serves as a liaison between the congregation and the camp. New summer programs will be explained and brochures will be available. Those who attend will also get discount coupons to distribute to campers from their church! For more information on being a camper, please visit <http://www.campmountluther.org>
- **Early Registration Deadline Reminders:** The early registration deadline this year is April 15, 2010. After that time, prices for summer camp go up. Campers need to pay their portion of the camp fee to qualify for the early discount.

- **Wanted: A Few Good Men!** Make a difference in someone's life this summer. Camp Mount Luther is in need of men to serve as counselors this summer. In addition, volunteer nurses are needed to serve as the weekly health officer. Candidates must possess a commitment to Christ, a passion for adventure, and strong leadership skills. If you or someone you know is interested, contact Chad Hershberger, Executive Director, at the camp office at (570) 922-1587. Applications are available on the website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org)
- **Spring Open House:** The annual Spring Open House will take place on Sunday, April 25, 2010, from 2:00- 4:00 p.m. Tour the camp and meet the staff! First time campers who come to the open house will receive a coupon for a discount off their registration fee for Summer Camp 2010! They will also be eligible to come to camp for the early registration price (even though the deadline is April 15). A flyer to promote the event is on the camp website.
- **Bishop's Open Golf Tournament:** The fifth annual Bishop Open's Golf Tournament is set for May 10, 2010, beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Susquehanna Valley Country Club in Shamokin Dam. A brochure containing information and registration form is available on our website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org)

### Special IRS Rule for Haiti Relief

Many of you may have already received this information regarding gifts in support of relief for Haiti, but thought I would pass it along. President Obama signed into law a bill that makes a special exception to the general rule for monetary donations to help Haiti recover from the January 12 earthquake. Individuals who make a monetary donation to a qualified charitable organization after January 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, may claim the contribution as a deduction on their 2009 or 2010 federal income tax returns. Taxpayers may not deduct contributions on both their 2009 and 2010 returns. For tax years beginning after 2009, the limitation on itemized deductions for higher income individuals is repealed. For the 2009 tax year, the limitation is reduced by two-thirds. Consequently, some individuals may find it more beneficial to claim their contributions to Haiti earthquake relief when they file their 2010 returns in 2011 than claiming the contribution as a deduction on their 2009 returns.

### Leave a Legacy for Ministry and Mission

You raised your children, paid for their education, and now they hold successful jobs. Your congregation and other ELCA ministries are important to you, too. Your family no longer needs the proceeds from your life insurance. Change the beneficiary designation partially or wholly to benefit the ministries that are important to you. For more information 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>.

### March News from the Mission Investment Fund

Would you like to make an investment that will make a positive difference in the life of a congregation? The ELCA Mission Investment Fund (MIF) offers just such an opportunity. Investments in MIF offer a competitive interest return while providing a source of funds for congregations to borrow, renovate or repair buildings in support of their ministry. For instance, a one-year investment is currently offering a 1.99% fixed rate of return. This is a win-win situation! For information on other investments or loans please contact area representative Pr. Mark Wimmer: 267-203-1137 or [mark.wimmer@elca.org](mailto:mark.wimmer@elca.org)

### Music Available

Menchey Music Service in Hanover, PA, is closing their Choral Print Music Showroom and liquidating all in-stock Choral, Handbell, Opera Scores/Large Works, and School Musical titles. In an effort to finish the liquidation by May 31, 2010, they are doing the following: now until May 1<sup>st</sup>, all remaining stock Octavos, Choral Collections and Cantatas as well as many of their Classical and Sacred Piano, Vocal, and Organ Collections are 75 percent off retail price. After that, they will begin donating their Octavos, Choral Collections and Cantatas to any school and church partners to use as they wish, but it must be picked up as a walk-in customer at their store. A complete list of what is available can be found on their website at [www.mencheymusic.com](http://www.mencheymusic.com)

### Council of Churches Asks for Your Help

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is working with the Pennsylvania Association of Regional Food Banks in an effort to impress upon our State Senators and State Representatives the importance of an important Pennsylvania anti-hunger program called the State Food Purchase Program (SFPP). We are doing this by helping to generate grassroots letters to

legislators from persons in the religious community. The goal is the allocation of adequate resources to meet the needs of Pennsylvanians struggling with hunger and food insecurity—1.4 million at last count by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

SFPP is our Commonwealth's most important contribution to the effort to feed the children, seniors, and people with disabilities, the working poor, and the increased number of unemployed Pennsylvanians who rely upon food banks, food pantries, and other providers for essential nutritional assistance. The many churches, community organizations, and other non-profit groups that distribute the foods made available through this program need a strong and adequately funded State Food Purchase Program to continue to provide this help and respond to the increased demand brought on by the recession. SFPP makes it possible for them to acquire and distribute millions of pounds of nutritious food for our neighbors in need. The number of people seeking such assistance continues to rise and a modest increase of \$2 million over the current year's appropriation will help to address the growing demand.

Because the result of this effort is expected to have an impact on many congregations, we are asking for your help in distributing this information to your congregations/members/networks. The alert with the letter is posted at <http://pachurchesadvocacy.org/weblog/?p=2205>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Mission Visitor Training: March 20, 2010**

The Mission Interpreter Team of Upper Susquehanna Synod ELCA will offer Sunday visits to congregations starting early summer 2010. These presentations will feature ministries happening in the four expressions of our church including local congregations, synod, the ELCA, national partners, and the Lutheran World Federation and their partners. Mission storywriters are preparing materials for our MISSION VISITORS, who will visit and present these stories of missional ministry in churches across the synod! A VISITOR will select and present stories about ministry in her/his own style (Temple Talk, PowerPoint, Sunday School class, preaching, presentation, etc.) The visit will be arranged at a mutually agreeable time with the pastor. Qualifications? A passion for God's mission, courage to speak publicly, and a love of people! MISSION VISITORS will experience two trainings, the first on March 20, 2010, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, Lewisburg, and at a date to be determined. For more information, please contact Beth Yenchko or Rev. Karl-John Stone at the synod office. (A bulletin insert is attached)

### **Bishop's Day for Confirmands: March 21, 2010**

A special event for the synod's confirmands will be held on Sunday, March 21, 2010, from 2:00- 4:30 p.m. at United Lutheran Church in Sunbury (Wolf's Crossroads). This special event is open to ALL confirmation students in the Upper Susquehanna Synod and the students' parents and/or pastors. Bishop Robert L. Driesen invites you to join him for an afternoon of worship and learning more about what it means to belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. Reservations/registrations are not necessary, but would be helpful for planning. Confirmation teachers/pastors are encouraged to contact the Synod Office ([secretary@uss-elca.org](mailto:secretary@uss-elca.org) or 570-524-9778) with an approximate count by March 14, 2010.

### **"Forgiveness in Our Lives": March 28, 2010**

On Sunday, March 28, 2010, at 6:00 p.m., Zion Lutheran Church in Sunbury, will be hosting a program called "Forgiveness in Our Lives." Speakers will be: Walter Everett, a retired Methodist pastor from St. Johns United Methodist in Sunbury, who currently serves on the Board of Directors of Murder Victims Families for Human Rights. He will be speaking about his own personal experiences with forgiveness; and Edward Roberts, the chaplain of the Northeast Region for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, who will talk about his personal and professional experiences with inmates and their families. Light refreshments will follow the program. Learn how to incorporate the healing power of forgiveness in your lives during Lent.

### **Holy Tuesday Chrism Mass: March 30, 2010**

The annual Holy Tuesday Chrism Mass service for leaders (rostered and lay) in the Upper Susquehanna Synod will be held on Tuesday, March 30, at 10:30 a.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, Lewisburg. Bishop Robert L. Driesen will

preside at this Eucharist service which includes the blessing of oil for use in anointing. RSVP to the synod office ([secretary@uss-elca.org](mailto:secretary@uss-elca.org) or 570-524-9778) to reserve a spot for lunch following the service.

### **Lutheran Youth Day 2010: April 10, 2010**

As a college affiliated with the ELCA, Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, PA annually welcomes more than 250 youth in grades 6-12, pastors and advisors to a day of fun, music, and exploration of the faith in large and small group settings. Worship and a concert conclude the day's festivities. We'd love for you and your youth to be a part of this year's event.

The faithful witness of the 30 to 40 young adult college students who organize and lead LYD@SU can have tremendous impact on the faith lives of middle school and high school youth.

Date: Saturday, April 10

Times: 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Theme: "Still Under Construction"

Music by: Peder Eide

Cost: \$10 per person, includes lunch and concert

Download a LYD flyer: [http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/LYD\\_Flyer\\_for\\_2010.pdf](http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/LYD_Flyer_for_2010.pdf)

Invitation: [http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/Lutheran\\_Youth\\_Day\\_Invitation.pdf](http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/Lutheran_Youth_Day_Invitation.pdf)

Registration and T-Shirt Order Form: [http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/Registration\\_Form.pdf](http://www.susqu.edu/documents/StudentLife/Registration_Form.pdf)

For more information contact Nancy Musser, administrative assistant to the chaplain, at [musser@susqu.edu](mailto:musser@susqu.edu) or 570-372-4303.

### **Laugh Out Loud: April 11, 2010**

Lutheran Congregational Services invites you to **Laugh Out Loud** with disaster volunteers and fellow believers on April 11, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. in the University Center at DeSales University. Noted comedienne Donna East and Jane Condon will poke fun at our frailties and the dilemmas in which we often find ourselves and in celebrating the ministries of all who offer their services to prepare for and respond to disasters. Free refreshments will be available. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. For more information contact: [info@lutherancongregationalservices.org](mailto:info@lutherancongregationalservices.org) or (610) 770-9205.

### **Lutheran Day at the Capitol 2010: April 14, 2010**

Lutheran Day at the Capitol gives you the opportunity to gather in Harrisburg with Lutherans from all across the Commonwealth to raise a Voice for Justice. Don't miss this day full of speakers, workshops, and networking that will equip you for a face-to-face visit with your legislators or their staff. Join lay leaders, pastors, social ministry organization leaders, students, and bishops as we work together on behalf of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable citizens. Sponsored by Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa), this year's event features the Keynote Speaker Dr. Christopher P. Borick, Professor of Political Science, Muhlenberg College & Director of the Muhlenberg Institute of Public Opinion. More details and online-registration may be found at the LAMPa website: <http://www.lamp.org>

### **"Gathering in the East" Youth Leaders' Conference: April 16-18, 2010**

Attention Youth Ministers! It's here. The time has finally come. It's the annual youth retreat, the spaghetti dinner fundraiser, the parent's Bible study, Youth Sunday, the budget meeting, the tough conversation with the youth advisor, the weekly Youth Group meeting, the late-night phone call from a young person in trouble. It's time for the ministry you've been called and gifted to do, and you're going to need the right tools. You grab your Bible, notebook, first aid kit, playground balls, and guitar, and it's time to go. We know you work hard to minister to the young people and the families in your midst, and that you need to be equipped for that work. That is what the Gathering in the East Youth Leaders Conference is all about. Get connected. Be equipped. Find encouragement. Registration starts at just \$150.00 and hotel rooms start at \$75.00. For details on speakers, musicians, and workshop topics and to get a registration discount go to <http://www.gatheringintheeast.org> or contact Robin Kunkel at (570) 374-8444.

### **USSWO Day of Learning: April 24, 2010**

The Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization Day of Learning will be held on Saturday, April 24, 2010, at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 1400 Market Street, Williamsport. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. The theme is God's Work Our Hands in Service, focusing on community service. Bible Study Leader is Pastor Ron Shellhamer who will speak on John 13: 3-16. Workshop presentations include the Shepherd of the Street and Salvation Army, both of Williamsport.

### **Lutheran Marriage Encounter: April 30- May 2, 2010**

Attention Married Couples: Many couples have learned that taking time to "tune-up" their marriages pays huge dividends. Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends are designed to strengthen and revitalize ALL MARRIAGES. We're sorry that the March 19-21 Weekend in State College is now full; however, there currently is still room for you at the April 30- May 2 Weekend at The Riverside Inn, a charming, historical Victorian Inn located in Cambridge Springs, PA, (20 miles south of Erie). All costs for 2 nights lodging, 5 meals for each of you, and all supplies are covered by a \$45.00 per couple registration fee plus a confidential contribution of whatever amount you choose that you are given the opportunity to make at the end of the weekend. If the April date does not work for you, please consider the October 22-24 Weekend at the Radisson in Sharon, PA, (an hour north of Pittsburgh.) For further information or to register online, go to: <http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org>, or contact Fred & Julie Schamber, Western PA Directors, at email: [fjschamber@comcast.net](mailto:fjschamber@comcast.net) or 724-325-3166 with questions or to receive a brochure with registration form.

### **2010 Synod Evangelism Events**

The Lay Ministry Institute invites rostered leaders and members of congregations to participate in one or more of these Evangelism events from 9:00 a.m.-noon at the Washingtonville Lutheran Church, Washingtonville, on the following Saturdays. Cost is \$30 per participant. Register by contacting the Rev. Melody Sell at <mailto:pmsell@chilitech.net>. Checks should be made out to the "Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA" with Lay Ministry Institute noted on the memo line.

May 8, 2010 - The Rev. Larry Clark, Atlanta, Georgia: Larry has served a number of congregations in Chicago and Georgia; he has more recently been Executive Director of the Lutheran Theological Center in Atlanta. Larry has been called one of those "singing pastors" and is excited about spreading the Gospel.

June 12, 2010 - The Rev. Fred Landsberg, Omaha, Nebraska: Fred has been with us in the past and his dynamic presentation challenged those present to be more daring in reaching out in our evangelism efforts. He also shares a wealth of interesting program suggestions to involve and equip lay members for ministry in daily life.

September 11, 2010 - The Rev. Anthony and Kimberly Chatman, Columbus, Ohio: formerly employed by the NFL, Anthony's call to the ministry has brought him to serve congregations in Oklahoma and Ohio. Pastor Anthony has served in the Southwestern Synod working with Mission Developers and the Division for Outreach.

October 9, 2010 - The Rev. Chi-Shih Chen, Chicago, IL: born on Taiwan; president of a corporation; Vice President of American Express; parish pastor at 50+; Pastor Chen brings a broad variety of experience to bear on the evangelistic effort. He has served as an advisor to the ELCA Church Council and is President of the Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders.

### **Grant Writing Workshop: May 26, 2010**

A grant writing training, "Grant Writing for Beginners," will be offered by Dory Campbell, Coordinator of the Evangelical Lutheran Coalition for Mission in Appalachia, on Wednesday, May 26, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Pine Street Lutheran Church in Danville. This will be a three-hour session, and is again open to any interested people. There is no cost for this training, but advance reservations are requested. For more information or to register for the session in Danville, contact the church office at 570-275-2110. Office hours are 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday. The e-mail address is [pinestch@ptd.net](mailto:pinestch@ptd.net).

### **The Morally Divided Body: Ethical Disagreement and the Disunity of the Church: June 14-16, 2010**

This is an ecumenical conference for clergy and laity sponsored by the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology. It will be held Monday evening, June 14, through Wednesday noon, June 16, 2010, at Loyola University, Baltimore, MD. While doctrinal issues have often in the past been the most ecumenically neuralgic topics, increasingly today ethical issues - abortion and homosexuality most prominently - have become a focus of difference between the churches and

of potentially splintering debate within churches. These issues are more laden with emotion than many traditional doctrinal disputes, but ecumenical discussions have yet to address them in detail. We have little sense of just when and how ethical disputes rightly impact communion within and among the churches. When can we live together with difference over such matters and when does unity in Christ require common teaching? These questions will be addressed from a variety of perspectives. Accommodations will be available on the Loyola Campus. Conference cost (including banquet): \$210; reduced price for early registrations, retired clergy (\$175), and students (\$95). For more information, contact Michael Root at 803-735-1178 or [mroot1@sc.rr.com](mailto:mroot1@sc.rr.com). Online registration at <http://www.acteva.com/go/ccet>. More information and mail-in registration at <http://www.e-ccet.org>.

### **Seminary Sampler for High School Youth: June and July 2010**

Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH invites high school youth who have completed sophomore, junior, or senior year to come to the seminary for three weeks in June or July to explore vocations, think theologically, participate in service projects, shadow mentors, and make friends with Jesus-loving youth from around the country. If you or someone you know would be interested in this unique experience, check out the <http://www.summersampler.com> website and watch a short video about the program. You'll be glad you did! For more information, contact Pastor Ruth Fortis, Director at [rfortis@trinitylutheranseminary.edu](mailto:rfortis@trinitylutheranseminary.edu)

## MONTHLY FEATURES

### **(W)holy, (W)holy, (W)holy: Health, Healing and Wholeness Article for April 2010**

*"Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate." (Genesis 18:8, NRSV)*

Some Biblical scholars believe that the *curd* with which Abraham fed his heavenly visitors, might actually have been a form of what we now call yogurt (NLV). Indeed the word yogurt comes from the Turkish for "thick milk". Both curds and yogurt come from milk; however, there is a slight difference in the way each is produced. Yogurt is produced by introducing certain types of edible, helpful bacteria [probiotics] to milk and allowing fermentation to occur (breaking down the sugar lactose). Curds, on the other hand, are produced by the curdling of milk with an enzyme called 'rennet' or by adding an edible acid, such as lemon juice or vinegar, to the milk. These acids cause milk proteins to tangle into solid masses, or curds. Milk and milk products - from a variety of sources [goat, cow, camel] played a vital role in the daily lives of the Hebrew people, and are mentioned numerous times throughout the Bible.

Perhaps you have seen ads on TV or in magazines for a "new" type of yogurt which promises "to be scientifically proven to help with slow intestinal transit when eaten daily for two weeks as part of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle" [it relieves constipation], thanks to the introduction of something called *Bifidus regularis*. *Bifidus* *wha-is?* *Bifidus regularis* is a probiotic - helpful bacteria that when added to food (in this case, yogurt) and ingested, helps to maintain the natural balance of organisms in the intestines. Helpful bacteria are "vital to proper development of the immune system, to protection against microorganisms that could cause disease, and to the digestion and absorption of food and nutrients." ([www.nccam.nih.gov](http://www.nccam.nih.gov) - *Get the Facts: An Introduction to Probiotics*). Foods containing probiotics include yogurt, miso, tempeh, and some soy beverages. The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicines (NCCAM) reports that sales of probiotics in the US nearly tripled from 1994-2003.

For years, doctors have encouraged the use of regular yogurt as a means to correct diarrhea that is linked to antibiotic use (antibiotics tend to eliminate both good and bad bacteria in places such as the digestive track). A decrease in beneficial bacteria can also lead to other infections within the urinary track, and trigger yeast infection in women. Scientific studies of probiotics continue. The NCCAM indicates that there is "some encouraging evidence" that specific probiotic forms may be useful in:

- treating other types of diarrhea, especially rotavirus (the plague of daycares)
- treating irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)
- reducing recurrence of bladder cancer
- shortening how long an intestinal infection lasts when caused by a bacterium called *Clostridium difficile* or *C.diff* (a particularly nasty bacteria that causes intestinal infection in some long-term-care settings)
- preventing and managing atopic dermatitis (eczema) in children. (*Get the facts ...*)

*So... does it really work?* More information is needed, in particular in probiotic use by

small children, the elderly, pregnant or nursing mothers, or by folks who have a compromised immune system. But there is promise. Tufts University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is studying the possibility of certain probiotics being used to treat diarrhea in undernourished children of third world countries.

Side effects of use are typically mild, but can include allergy, gas or bloating, and there is always the potential for adverse interaction with prescription and over-the-counter medications. The bottom line is this, **always consult your health care provider before you plan to use any form of dietary supplement, including probiotics.**

*Blessings!*

*Debbie Best, Family Life Services, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries*

### **Nurse's Notes - Bulletin Blurbs for April 2010**

April 4

“Jesus Christ didn’t die for us because it made for good theology, He died for us because He loved us, lost us to sin, and gave Himself up to buy us back. By doing this He had to become vulnerable to the very system He created, that we might see how true love behaves. There is a death in love, and that death is the death of self. Jesus died to love us; we die as well in order to love and serve others. And part of that is in being vulnerable.” (Fischer, J. (January 26, 2006) Daily Devotional)

April 11

Are you frustrated from trying to make a call, and all you get are voicemail instructions? Check out <http://www.get2human.com>. Click on “Click here for a full list.” The site contains a list of nearly 1000 major companies with instructions on accessing a human being at the other end of the line.

April 18

If we ever find that we are feeling a bit “full of ourselves”, it would perhaps be wise to remember these words from Mark Twain: “Don't expect too much of human beings. We were created at the end of the week when God was tired and looking forward to a day off.”

April 25

Surprising Stress Symptom - Weekend Headaches “A sudden drop in stress can prompt migraines, says Todd Schwedt, MD, director of the Washington University Headache Center. Stick closely to your weekday sleeping and eating schedule to minimize other triggers.” (Hoehn, L. (March 2010) Prevention. pg. 24)

### **Safety Tips for Ministries from Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company for April 2010**

Peace of Mind for Mission Travelers

When members of your ministry embark on mission travel, they’re filled with anticipation for what God has in store. They want to focus on this, and not on safety concerns or worries about what might happen if something goes wrong. Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company created its Passport to Ministry insurance program so mission travelers don’t have to worry. There are three different coverage options, and each one protects ministry employees and volunteers who travel outside the United States. In addition to providing insurance protection, help your mission travelers make preparations for a great trip. Brotherhood Mutual has created a free safe mission travel checklist that addresses topics like:

- Preparing a list of emergency contacts
- Photocopying important documents like passports, credit cards, etc.
- Obtaining appropriate vaccinations prior to travel
- Preparing luggage and packing for the long trip

This free checklist and many other mission travel-related resources can be found at <http://www.SafetyCentralOnline.com>, Brotherhood Mutual’s online library of free safety and risk management materials. Your insurance agent can also provide you with helpful information as your ministry prepares for mission travel.