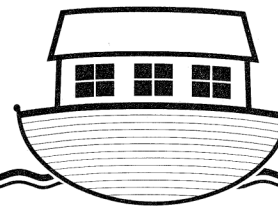


# USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



May 2011

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

## Emerging Young Adult Ministries

"Ministry with youth and young adults" was recently named by the Upper Susquehanna Synod Council as one of the most important things our synod does together. The synod's Youth Council, Camp Mount Luther, and campus ministries at six local campuses may be the first examples of such ministry that come to mind. But more are emerging all the time.

"Young adults are a challenging population to reach," Pastor Beth Ann Stone, assistant to USS Bishop Robert Driesen, said. "Among people age 18 to 30, there's a huge variety of life experiences, priorities, and lifestyles." Ministry with young adults isn't just like youth ministry but for older youth," she argues. "We have to be open to new ways of reaching out and helping to build relationships with young adults."



*Matt Marziale and Chris Sands discuss faith and life at "Message in a Bible." Sands also serves as the young adult representative to synod council*

Last December, Stone invited "to coffee" a small group of young adults she knew, proposing a regular gathering for Bible study and "faith-based conversation". "I suggested meeting a couple of times a month. They wanted to meet every week! It was easier for them to remember than keeping track of which week it was this month," she explains. The group has been meeting weekly at a café in Lewisburg since the beginning of 2011. "Message in a Bible" now has a Facebook page, a

blog, and a core group of participants. "We hope to grow in numbers, but for now we value the relationships and conversations we have just as a small group."

"Worship Aloud" is a relaxed, informal worship service led by Nautical, the praise band at Sharon, Selinsgrove. "We started Worship Aloud following the 2009 ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans," says Lauren

Marziale, the service's founder. "The youth of Sharon were looking for an alternative worship service, and the Spirit had been tugging at me for a while to try putting together a praise band." Since November 2009, the group has experimented with music and worship styles and developed a 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday-of-the-month service that includes plenty of music, interactive discussion, and Holy Communion.

"Radiate" is another new worship service at Christ's, Lewisburg. Again, this once-a-month offering features the church's house band, Faith+Fusion, involving more than a dozen youth in music leadership. Unexpected details like video clips and Christian aerobic warm-ups give this worship event a different twist. Seventy-five people attended a recent "Radiate" service, which also includes Bible readings, prayer, a message, and communion.

The USS is applying for a \$10,000 grant from Project Connect to be used to support ministries reaching out to young adults age 18-30. Partners from Susquehanna University, Camp Mount Luther, synod staff, and USS parishes are working together to envision new ways to connect with this highly unchurched, but still spiritual generation. Project Connect is an initiative of the Eastern Cluster of ELCA Seminaries.

### Young Adult Camp Slated for this Summer

Another new emerging Young Adult ministry is happening at our synod's outdoor ministry site. This summer, Camp Mount Luther is offering a Young Adult Camp. The event will be time for those in college and beyond to come to the camp for retreat and spiritual renewal. The theme this year will be "With Faith Like a Child" and they'll be using the book *The Gospel According to Dr. Seuss* as part of the faith discussions. Tied into those discussions will be activities to help participants with vocational discernment. It will be a half-week of fun, growing, and enjoying the outdoors and all that camp has to offer. For more information on this program, call the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or visit [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org)

## Social Ministry Spotlight: *The Quilting Ladies of Liberty*

Liberty Lutheran Parish reaches out to support several local, national, and international ministries. One of those ministries is called "The Quilting Ladies of Liberty." Marianne and Fran Bishop say that this is an ecumenical group that meets every Friday morning at the church. This ministry began after Hurricane Katrina to help those in the South who lost so much. The ladies have made 190 traditional knot quilts for Lutheran World Relief, and also support "The Linus Project" by making knit hats and quilts for babies at the Williamsport Hospital. So far, they have made 436 hats and 1107 quilts. They also make "Ugly Quilts," which are quilts or bedrolls made out of leftover material from other projects. Tucked into each quilt is a hat, sweater, or shirt and pants plus a devotional book. Nearly 200 "Ugly Quilts" have been made and given to the Shepherd of the Streets in Williamsport and the Seeds of Hope in Tioga County. The group has also donated 56 pillowcases and lap robes to a local nursing home as part of a "Pillowcase Challenge;" provided 1200 school kit bags to students in the Liberty School District who stuffed the bags with supplies; and made 58 simple, little girls' dresses for a person in the area traveling to Africa.

Both Marianne and Fran Bishop shared that there is a need for practical handcrafted items in these difficult times. "We enjoy getting together and sharing the Gospel through helping others," they said. There are eight to ten ladies that meet each week and a few others work from home. They get donations from promoting their projects in their church bulletin and newsletters as well as other churches in the community. Monetary donations as well as cloth and yarn are always coming in to help their ministry. They find that people see items on sale and purchase them for future projects.

For more information about this ministry, call Fran Bishop at (570) 324-2466

*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](mailto:sandygrier@comcast.net). There is no fee for this service.*

## Up and Down the Valleys

Lutheran World Federation is sponsoring a new six-month program for groups of youth and young adults around the globe who are engaging in Bible study, environmental projects, and building relationships via the internet. Pastor Roger Schmidt, LWF youth secretary, says 110 groups with over 900 individual participants have registered for this innovative program. It's called "LWF Together - the Earth Needs You." One of the 110 groups is from **Mazeppa, Mazeppa and St. John's, Dry Valley** (*Pastor Ricky Phillips*).

During the Lenten season, **St. Luke's, Sunbury** (*Interim Pastor Keith Pittsnogle*), opened their doors to the public every Wednesday evening for a Soup and Salad Dinner, followed by Holden Evening Prayer. Guest speakers included Francis Scarcella from *The Daily Item*; Chief Stephen Mazzeo, Sunbury Chief of Police; Sunbury Mayor Charles Persing; Rev. Bill Petry, Chaplain at Geisinger Medical Center; and Nancy Shipman, His Disciples Food Pantry, St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Sunbury.

**St. Mark, Williamsport** (*Pastor Kenneth Elkin*), received coverage in the May 2011 edition of *The Lutheran* magazine for their Fourth of July Celebration. The article was contributed by Sandy Grier, USS Social Ministry Project Coach and was an adaptation of an article that appeared earlier this year in the *USS Ark*.

About 90 people attended the first Celebration of Lutheran Identity for congregations in the Buffalo Valley Conference. The event, held in mid-May at Camp Mount Luther, featured performances from three praise bands and appearances by Katie and Martin Luther. The bands came from **Christ's, Lewisburg** (*Pastor Bill Henderson*), **United in Christ, West Milton** (*Interim Pastor Dan May*), and **First, Mifflinburg** (*Pastors Kris and Vickie Brown*). The event concluded with worship, led by Bishop Robert L. Driesen.

**St. Matthew, Shamokin Dam** (*Pastor Wayne Muthler*), has announced the return of a "fun and fruitful gathering." They are hosting "*The Lutheran* and a Lager." The idea is to gather once a month at the Selinsgrove Brewing Company and discuss the articles and Bible study presented in *The Lutheran* magazine.

**Camp Mount Luther** held their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Bishop's Open Golf Tournament on May 15. About 105 golfers participated in this major annual fundraising event. Many synod congregations were hole sponsors. Final totals of the amount raised to help the outdoor ministry of the synod are not yet available.

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**  
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The Rev. Robert L. Driesen, Bishop

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