

USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



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

Network Distributes Free Products in Synod



The Rev. John Richter presented a Diakon Lutheran Social Ministry grant for \$22,500 to Bishop Robert Driesen of the Upper Susquehanna Synod recently. This grant will be used in developing and supporting a distribution system for goods from

the Diakon Kathryn's Kloset warehouse in Baltimore, to four hubs in north central Pennsylvania. The distribution hubs are located at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Shamokin Dam; Agape Ministry, Bloomsburg; Messiah Lutheran Church, South Williamsport; and Juniata County Food Pantry, Mifflintown (under development). The hubs will then distribute these goods (such as laundry detergent and personal care items) both from their own facilities, and through other existing church, social ministry, and non-profit organization networks. They will be distributed for free to people in need. In the past year, over \$100,000 worth of Kathryn's Kloset goods have been distributed through this developing network in our synod.

Pictured are some of the people involved in developing this ministry. (From left to right) Pastor Bill Esborn, Gary Hutchinson, Pastor John Richter, Bishop Robert Driesen, Lisa Yeager, Pastor Karl-John Stone, and Pastor Wayne Muthler.

Lisa Yeager is the coordinator of Kathryn's Kloset at St. Matthew's. In December 1996, she was shot and wounded at a Shamokin Dam restaurant. Healing required lots of physical, occupational, and speech therapies. It has been a long recovery, she says, but the outpouring of love, prayers, and support has been astronomical. Although this is an awful thing to endure, she is a firm believer things happen for a reason. She was asked by Pastor Muthler to coordinate their Kathryn's Kloset efforts. He felt she would fit the part and she accepted. She is proud of their efforts.

"In our first year we have given away \$80,978.17, served 3,174 families and 10,301 individuals. I will continue to learn as Kathryn's Kloset moves forward. As coordinator for Kathryn's Kloset, it is my way of giving back," Yeager said.

Kathryn's Kloset helps families/individuals in need due to the falling economy, fire, rising unemployment. These are just a few of the hardships many are facing. Volunteers are always welcome for unloading the truck, possible deliveries, and drivers. If you are a church, social ministry, or non-profit organization that would like to distribute Diakon Kathryn's Kloset goods, free of charge, to those in need, please contact one of the above hub locations, and learn how you can partner with them. If you have a means of providing shipping from Baltimore to north central Pennsylvania, (such as independent truckers, or trucking companies "dead-heading" from the Baltimore area), and would like to participate in this ministry, also please contact one of the hub locations.

The following is a newsletter excerpt from St. Matthew's about their Kathryn's Kloset Ministry:

Getting started required a trip to Baltimore. Once we arrived at the Kathryn's Kloset warehouse, we were intrigued by Wade Brown, executive director, and all that he has accomplished. He proudly stood before the group telling us the ins and outs and graciously showed us the big warehouse where all the items are stored. It is amazing what we saw; cases of laundry detergent and softener stacked. Big corporations donate it all.

Rev. John Richter from Diakon contacted Pastor Muthler about expanding Kathryn's Kloset to the USS and Muthler thought we could make it happen. After our group toured the warehouse in Baltimore, we got to work.

Our first shipment of \$17,000 worth of product like Wisk laundry detergent and Snuggle fabric softener. A Penske 24-foot truck was rented and driven by Pastor Muthler and accompanied by church member Larry Redington.

We have served many churches, clothing drives, food pantries, and homeless shelters. At clothing drives, we've been very creative, giving one bottle of detergent and fabric softener for each family/individual.

There is one incident we are very proud of. On January 30, we received a second shipment containing almost \$12,000 worth of products. We gave West End Bible Fellowship half of our shipment and they in turn served 217 families and 660 individuals. That is what this program is all about. God is good!

As we move forward we hope to serve local communities, churches, food pantries, and outreach functions on a regular basis and also to network with other ministries.



Synod and Diakon representatives recently toured the Kathryn's Kloset location in Shamokin Dam

Up and Down the Valleys



In connection with the 125th anniversary of Grace, Shamokin (*Pastor David Byerly*), a unique project was conducted in which members were asked to make patches depicting the religious life of the congregation. The patches were attached to banners displayed in the foyer of the church. In all, five banners were made, three of which are shown in the above photo along with Judy Shade, project coordinator, who was pleased with the interest and work of all who participated. The unique project was the result of the congregation working together to produce something that will be a remembrance of the anniversary for many years to come, Shade said.

A group of representatives from the synod has been meeting in the last few months to prepare the synod's response to a large disaster. This would be an event where the church would have resources to help in a state or federally declared disaster. The individuals involved in this planning would serve as a roundtable, if disaster response from our synod would be needed. Representatives from Diakon, synod staff, and local pastors were part of the initial planning.

Chad Hershberger (*Director, Camp Mount Luther*), was asked to be one of five representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) at the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) Outdoor Ministries Summit this fall. The summit looked at the future of outdoor ministries in the United States and how denominations can work together more. Camp Mount Luther has already begun working ecumenically. For the past five years, the camp and the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania have partnered to offer a joint camping week in the summer for both Lutherans and Episcopalians. That partnership is expanding in 2011 to add a joint senior high week as well as joint programs in the non-summer months.



Pictured at left is Pastor Steve Shipman and Bishop Robert Driesen at Shipman's installation as pastor of the new Southern

Clinton County Lutheran Parish. The parish includes United, Lock Haven; Salona Lutheran; St. John, Booneville; St. Paul Lutheran, Loganton; and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Mill Hall.

Other Clergy Notes: In November, **Pastors Michael and Sonja Ware** will conclude their ministry with the Christians United Cooperative. **Pastor Stanley Bower** (*Mountain Grove Parish*) will retire mid-November. **Pastor Robert Doll** (*Sharon, Selinsgrove*) will be installed as pastor of Sharon on Sunday, Nov. 21 at 3:30 p.m.

About 17 people from eight different congregations and four presenters, representing four more congregations, attended the Stewardship in Trying Times workshop in October. The program, sponsored by the Upper Susquehanna Synod, was very interactive and the participants engaged enthusiastically throughout the whole event! Another workshop of this type is being planned for the spring.



Pastor Ricky Phillips (*Mazeppa Union and Dry Valley*) (pictured above, fourth from left) chairs the United Church of Christ Central Association Planning Committee. Phillips, along with UCC Pastors Joseph Linkenfelter, Susan Gabbard, and Dietmar Plajer led a team down to Glen Windsor, Maryland, late this summer to the Church of the Brethren Service Center where they made up 730 kits to go overseas. The center has over 20 denominations working together including Lutheran Disaster Relief.

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.



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

The Rev. Robert L. Driesen, Bishop

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