



God's Work, Our Hands in the Upper Susquehanna Synod + Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

***God's Work, Our Hands in the U.S.S.  
News of God's People in Action***

## U.S.S. Congregations Tackle Souper Bowl Challenge

At least 23 U.S.S. congregations took up the challenge to collect money and/or canned goods for hungry people on Super Bowl Sunday, February 1, 2009. The youth groups from Zion, Sunbury; United, Sunbury; and St. John, Northumberland competed to see which could collect the most items. The winning youth group (Zion) received a party, hosted by the other two. The three youth groups raised a total of nearly 1200 canned items!

Donations of food and money benefited a number of hunger charities, both local and ELCA World Hunger. The following list of 2009 participants from our synod was painstakingly culled from the website [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org):

St. Peter's, West Cameron (\$200); Beaver, Beaver Springs (77 items, \$327); Emanuel, Bloomsburg (189, \$24); Pine Street, Danville (122, \$111); St. Luke, Bloomsburg (\$322.10); Trinity, Northumberland (25 lbs, \$100); Trinity, Danville (17 items, \$300); Christ's, Lewisburg (17, \$357.20); St. John, Northumberland (240 items); United, Sunbury (405, \$300); Zion's, Sunbury (550, \$54); First, Watsontown (86, \$155.65); Messiah, S. Williamsport (76, \$38); St. Michael's, Cogan Station (\$66); St. Andrew, Muncy (\$201.38); St. James, Muncy (\$55.50); St. John, Jersey Shore (\$156.96); Centre, Mifflintown (\$40); Evangelical, Reedsville (\$272); Messiah, Mifflintown (\$300); St. John, Belleville (\$111); St. Stephen, Mifflintown (\$394); Siloa, Morris Run (\$50).

The grand total reported to the website from our synod's congregations: nearly \$4,000 and more than 1779 canned food items! (If we missed you, please let us know!)



## Holy Spirit Moves into New Building

Bearing a cross, banners, paraments, candles and other items for dressing the sanctuary, the congregation of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church processed in for worship for the first time in their new building in Turbotville on February 15, 2009. The congregation is temporarily gathering for worship in the building's family living center until the sanctuary is completed. The family living center includes a large meeting area, Sunday school rooms, church offices, and a kitchen. Most of the interior construction was completed by Holy Spirit members.

"This new facility for our worship and ministry offers us an accessible, flexible space that will serve us well into the future," said Pastor Dan May. "Our former buildings were special and loved, but had obstacles that some people could not overcome. Our new space will provide a base for mission and outreach as well as be welcoming to all. Everyone in the community will be able to participate in events offered here."

The move into the new building marked the end of a process that began on Feb. 12, 2002 when the congregation councils of Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church in McEwensville and St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church in Turbotville voted to consolidate.

## U.S.S. at Work in Liberia

The 2009 Work Team from the U.S.S. served in Liberia from January 13 to February 26. Team member Gary Winters shared this report mid-trip,

"Greetings from the bush! We are all fine and up to our ears in work. Our construction team was given two homes to renovate for Curran Hospital. With the hospital increasing in activity there is a great need for additional housing for visiting nurses and doctors. One house was so bad when we first drove up to it, you could hardly see that it was a house because the jungle oh so quickly reclaims its territory. We nicknamed this house the 'weed house'.

"We are also building roof trusses and installing a roof on St John's Lutheran Church in Zorzor. We have designed a very unique vaulted ceiling truss. With Joe (Kanagy)'s help, St John's project has really kicked into high gear this week. Carl (Dierksheide) is working on designing an improved water supply system for Curran Hospital. Can you imagine a hospital without running water?



"Deb (Winters) is very pleased with the progress of the teacher training classes. To try to accommodate the varying schedules of teachers from 3 different schools in Zorzor, there will be as many as 3 classes a

day. Barb (Dierksheide), Sandy (Nelson), and Deb will share those duties."



## Pastor Brings Prayer to the PA House of Representatives

Mazeppa Union Church Pastor Ricky Phillips served as the Guest Chaplain of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives on January 26, 2009. He was nominated by Rep. Camille "Bud" George. Pastor Phillips, accepting the Memorial Gavel he received for this service, is pictured above with Speaker of the House Keith McCall.

"It was a very powerful experience for me and my family," reports Pastor Phillips. "It was more powerful than I expected and another blessing from God."

In the future Pastor Phillips, whose undergraduate degree from Penn State is in Political Science, hopes to become more involved in advocacy for the poor and the elderly. He plans very soon to take his youth group to watch a House and Senate session and to meet with Representatives.

**U.S.S. ARK** is a publication of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations in the Pennsylvania counties of Mifflin, Juniata, Snyder, Union, Northumberland, Columbia, Montour, Lycoming, Clinton, & Tioga. Permission is granted to reproduce **U.S.S. Ark** for congregational communications. Send your mission stories and ministry ideas to Pastor Beth Ann Stone at [BethAnn@uss-elca.org](mailto:BethAnn@uss-elca.org).

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## St. Mark Lifts Up Bible in YouTube Video Shorts

Last autumn, the folks at St. Mark, Williamsport posted a collection of short videos on YouTube featuring Pastor Kenneth Elkin speaking on prayer, Stephen Ministry, Martin Luther, and many other topics. They're now up to 50 videos at

<http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=StMarkChurch&view=videos>. The most recent video shorts on the Gospel of Mark are the start of a 5-year project to post videos on each book in the Bible.