



CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Submitted by Chad W. Hershberger, Executive Director

Mount Luther takes seriously our mission from God of sharing Christ and planting seeds! We work hard to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, in the beauty of creation, and serve the people of Central Pennsylvania. That is done mostly through worship, study, recreation, and Christian fellowship in a place set apart by God. 2016 was our 54th year of ministry and a very strong one!

560 participants took part in programs during the eight-week summer session. Before any campers arrived this summer, 18 members of the summer ministry staff gathered at the camp for two weeks of training. They were installed by Upper Susquehanna Synod Bishop Robert L. Driesen during the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly in mid-June. The assembly was held at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove.

This summer, 303 campers enjoyed on-site programs including traditional, specialty, trip, and day camps. Campers got to do crafts, go swimming, play games, camp out, hike, and sing during their time at Mount Luther. This year's theme at Mount Luther was "La Frontera." Campers learned about how Jesus meets them wherever they are, including in their neighbors, on the cross, in the feast, and in new territories. Through their method of studying the Bible, called "GROW Time," staff helped campers Gather and Reflect On the Word throughout their day, culminating in an evening worship service.

Some highlights from this summer included: "Daily Theme Day Camp," where elementary-aged campers enjoyed a week with different themes each day; CLAWS camp, featuring Crafts, Legos, and Wild Sports; "X-Teen," for senior high-aged campers; "Night Owls" when kids stayed up later each night to do nighttime activities; a week celebrating holidays, including Christmas in July; and "Base Camp" which featured a week for campers who came and did NOT go on an overnight camping trip but rather slept in their cabins every night. A Family Camp was also held for participants of all ages. The adult Bible studies were led by Rev. Erin Bovendam and Rev. Chris Mathiason of McAlisterville.

New programs this year included Fishing Camp to locations on and off-site; Morning Glories for those who are early risers; Hammock Haven, where campers slept in hammocks all week; LEADS, a senior high leadership camp; Rock, Raft, and Roll, an adventure camp of caving, kayaking, and biking; and Apple a Day, a "day camp" for adults.

As always, there were several Day Camps at local churches, led by Mount Luther staff. This year, 258 campers were able to experience camp through these off-site opportunities. Off-

site day camps were held at Trinity Lutheran, Milton; Centre Lutheran, Mifflintown; St. Peter Lutheran, Kreamer; Emmanuel Lutheran, Middleburg; Christ's Lutheran, Lewisburg; St. John's Lutheran, Bloomsburg; Salem Lutheran, Selinsgrove; Zion Lutheran, Turbotville; Trinity Episcopal and St. Mark's Lutheran, Williamsport; Zion Lutheran, Sunbury; United in Christ Parish, Snyder County; and Messiah Lutheran, New Berlin.

List of Other 2016 Accomplishments and Activities

- Continued First Light digital daily devotions on our faith formation website.
- Had several Thrivent Action Teams do work for camp during the year.
- Sponsored Camperson Meeting, Spring Festival, Spring Work Day, and the Bishop's Open Golf Tournament.
- Hosted the synod youth retreat, "GROW in the Snow," around the theme of Holy Communion.
- Celebrated the thirteenth synod-wide Mount Luther Sunday on Transfiguration Sunday.
- Participated in the fourth Raise the Region, an effort to raise awareness and giving of non-profits in the Central Susquehanna Valley. Donations totaled \$15,294.79.
- Engaged the services of Grunland, Sayther, Brunkow, a development firm, to help us strengthen our Annual Fund.
- Established the Circle of Faith Giving Club.
- Following a visit this summer, ACA reaccredited Mount Luther.
- Held the annual Dandelion Trail Run with over 200 participants. The 5 and 10 kilometer run, kids' fun run and family walk is held in memory of Rev. Glenn Heasley.
- Continued fundraising to retire the Evergreen Center debt.
- An Evening at Shade Mountain Winery was held for the fifth year as a fundraiser.
- Hosted a Whoopie Pie stand at the Selinsgrove Market Street Festival, raising money for camperships.
- Executive Director Chad Hershberger was among nearly 140 Lutheran camp professionals and board members to attend the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Conference in Ashland, Nebraska. This year's theme was "Kingdom Come."
- Partnered with Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village to co-host "Breakfast with Santa" in December.
- Sent Christmas and birthday cards to each summer camper.

Camper Statistics

A list of where our 303 summer campers came from in 2016:

Buffalo Valley Conference- 73; Juniata Valley Conference- 58; Middle Creek Conference- 26; North Branch Conference- 24; Tulpehocken Conference- 14; West Branch Conference- 52; Other Synods- 11; Episcopal Diocese of Central PA- 5; Other Denominations- 23; Non-Church Affiliated- 17. **Top churches sending campers:** Trinity, McAlisterville- 27; Messiah, South Williamsport- 19; St. Luke, Bloomsburg- 14; Messiah, Mifflintown- 14; Zion, Turbotville- 13.

Use of Camp Mount Luther

We had about 2,766 people use camp during our retreat season in 2016, including: Asian-American Christian Fellowship; Camp Mount Luther GROW in the Snow; Christ's United Lutheran Church, Millmont; Dorman Family; Episcopal Diocese of Central PA; Erdley Family; First Lutheran Church, Mifflinburg; Foss Family; Explorer Girls; Fitch Family;

Hartman Family; Hess Family; Mark Hoffman; Kelly Family; Mid-West School District; Mifflinburg Football and Wrestling Teams; Mt. Zion Lutheran, Lewisberry; PA Environthon; Revival Tabernacle, Watsonstown; Selinsgrove Middle School; Setebaid Services, Inc., Winfield; Shady Grove Christian Fellowship; Shikellamy School District; Susquehanna University; Trinity Lutheran, Mount Joy; United in Christ Lutheran Parish, Snyder/Juniata County; Upper Susquehanna Synod; Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization; Weikel Family; Willard Family; the Yoder Family and the Young Family.

2016 Camp Mount Luther Budget Summary					
<i>(Note: the following are unaudited amounts for the year ending December 31, 2016)</i>					
INCOME	BUDGETED	ACTUAL	EXPENSE	BUDGETED	ACTUAL
Judicatory	\$48,000.00	\$48,000.00	Year-Round Salaries	\$134,683.00	\$133,249.56
Fees	\$260,247.86	\$272,518.35	Summer Salaries	\$36,362.50	\$37,411.39
Annual Fund	\$87,000.00	\$78,768.77	Second Season Wages	\$5,075.00	\$3,118.26
Store	\$9,225.00	\$7,288.84	Benefits	\$73,156.94	\$73,669.71
Subsidies	\$1,615.00	\$1,834.24	Administration	\$32,590.00	\$34,895.53
Interest	\$50.00	\$73.43	Transportation	\$4,375.00	\$4,412.37
Fundraisers	\$29,700.00	\$25,535.50	Utilities	\$44,700.00	\$40,390.20
Unexpected	\$4,000.00	\$4,140.00	Property	\$17,735.00	\$19,812.97
TOTAL	\$439,837.86	\$438,159.13	Program	\$8,650.00	\$6,762.96
			Store	\$6,100.00	\$9,221.98
			Food Service	50,440.00	\$55,526.39
			Promotion	\$2,785.00	\$2,728.66
			Development	\$11,547.57	\$11,145.92
			Fundraiser	\$10,000.00	\$10,627.61
			Interest	\$0.00	\$370.00
			Miscellaneous	\$1,600.00	\$2,198.64
			Unexpected	\$37.85	\$0.00
			TOTAL	\$439,837.86	\$445,542.15
			INCOME LESS EXPENSE	\$0.00	(\$7,383.02)

Personnel

We are grateful to those who serve year-round and during our summer camp program, providing governance, hospitality, and quality programming and facilities.

Board of Directors

President: Mr. Chris Sands, Lewisburg (Bishop's Representative)
Vice President: Ms. Cami Zimmerman, New Columbia (Term ends 2017, Buffalo Valley)
Secretary: Ms. Erin Hayes (Term ends 2018, Middle Creek)
Treasurer: Mr. David Herbert (Term ends 2019, Tulpehocken)

Rev. Andrew Fitch, New Berlin (Term ends 2017, Buffalo Valley)
 Mr. Sam Leister, Mifflintown (Term ends 2019, Juniata Valley)
 Ms. Charlene Rineer, Lewisburg (Term ends 2018, Buffalo Valley)
 Ms. Eileen Stauffer, Selinsgrove (Term ends 2017, Middle Creek)
 Rev. Andrew Weaver, Sunbury (Term ends 2018, Tulpehocken)
 Ms. Nancy Wood, Williamsport (Term ends 2017, West Branch)
 Mr. Terry Gardner, Turbotville (Synod Council Representative)

Year Round Staff

Executive Director: Chad Hershberger, Mifflinburg
 Office Manager: Linda Aurand, Mazeppa
 Site Manager: Tom Watters, Mifflinburg
 Hospitality Manager: Toni Gessner, Mifflinburg
 Kitchen Staff: Sierra Beiler, Mifflinburg; Stacey Geiswite, Mifflinburg; Eric Gessner, Mifflinburg; Kyle Gessner, Mifflinburg; Ryan Gessner, Mifflinburg; Levi Yoder, Mifflinburg

Summer Ministry Team 2016

Assistant Director: Charlene Rineer, Lewisburg
 Chaplain to the Staff: Jim Bricker, Mifflintown
 Director of Fun: Ryan Fitch, New Berlin
 Director of TLC: Olivia Tunall, Lewistown
 Head Lifeguard: Ty Turner, Lewisburg
 Craft Director: Syliva Kohl, Sunbury
 Counselors: Tara Barnard, Millerstown; Tori Callahan, Bloomsburg; James Gates, Fairport, NY; Anne Harshbarger, Belleville; Lindsey Hartman, Turbotville; Phoebe Roth, Annandale, NJ; Noah Roux, Turbotville; Staci Shoemaker, Montoursville; Jonah Waldkoenig, Gettysburg; Sean Wither, Williamsport; and Zackary Zimmerman, Yeagertown; Courtney Dunn, Philadelphia (one week volunteer).

Summer Volunteers

Chaplains- Rev. Richard Adams, Liberty; Rev. Nathan Baker-Trinity, Beaver Springs; Sherry Bingaman, Shamokin Dam; Rev. Erin Bovendam, McAlisterville; Rev. Andrew Fitch, New Berlin; Rev. Chad Hebrink, Berwick; Rev. Thomas Glasoe, Milton; Rev. Paul Kampa, Mifflinburg; Rev. Chris Mathiason, Licking Creek; Rev. Joshua Reinsburrow, South Williamsport; Rev. Erwin Roux, Turbotville; Rev. Gil Waldkoenig, Gettysburg; Rev. Andrew Weaver, Sunbury; and Rev. John Yost, Millmont. **Health Officers-** Olivia Aucker, Selinsgrove; Shirley Heasley, Mifflinburg; Carol Hanson, Selinsgrove; Sharon Truitt, McAlisterville; and Amy Gearhart, Selinsgrove.

REGION 8 EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

According to the ELCA Constitution, the region's primary mission is to connect, resource, support and network those serving in leadership in our synods and congregations. The following examples represent aspects of that work of the Region 8:

Candidacy and Assignment of First Call Candidates is, perhaps, the primary area of responsibility in my portfolio.

- In many respects I serve as adjunct staff to each Region 8 synod; in addition to my service at every synod's candidacy committee meeting, I am the 'go to' person for all things candidacy. This work regularly includes arranging Theological Review Panels and Competency Assessment Panels (as well as the follow-up report writing) and responding to the particular questions that often stymie synod staff people.
- Each year we hold at least one Region-wide candidacy gathering for each synod's candidacy staff and committee chair person; also invited are any number of colleagues in ministry from across the region (e.g., Directors for Evangelical Mission). As a result of conversation with Region 8 Candidacy partners, throughout 2016 I sponsored synod-based training opportunities for the newly approved Candidacy Manual material.

First Call Theological Education is a natural extension of candidacy's preparation of rostered leaders and first call assignment's work to match candidates' gifts with congregations' missional needs.

- Region 8 partners find continuing value in cooperative efforts in some key aspects of the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) program. Primarily this means the planning and implementing of a Region 8 FCTE Annual Conference; the office works with a Region-wide advisory council in planning.
- Due to the changes in both theological education and candidacy, Region 8 partners took the opportunity to review and restructure our approach to the annual FCTE Conference; that structure debuted in the November 2014 Conference. The program components were identified by the Region's bishops and the structure developed as a result of the collaboration between the bishops and the FCTE advisory council. Due to the ongoing success of the new structure these past two years, for the November 2016 conference we anticipate full implementation of this new structure (which includes three learning tracks, with nine segments).
- In addition to the conference, each synod also provides more contextual opportunities.

Support of newly elected bishops and called synod staff is yet another aspect of my service.

- In 2016 two new bishops were elected, Bishops Barbara Collins and William Gohl; throughout the summer and early fall I spent both face-to-face and phone time orienting them to the call of a bishop and the activities of Region 8. Each newly elected bishop appointed new staff for service in the Upper Susquehanna Synod and the Delaware-Maryland Synod; while these assistants bring deep understanding of the ELCA, and I continue spending time assisting with them orientation for service and supporting the work of the Synods' staff.

Global Gathering efforts is yet another facet of my service in Region 8.

- Since early October 2015 and throughout 2016 I collaborated with Chicago-based staff to host a region-wide Networks for Mission Gathering in Fall 2016. Over 100 people registered to attend this event.

Region 8 is developing a new vision for shared ministry efforts in the next five years. In order for this effort to move forward, I value the relationships with synod staff and vice presidents that exist here in Region 8; the give and take of any number of conversations promotes opportunities for both truth-telling and risk-taking for the sake of the gospel.

Gettysburg Seminary Report 2017

Imagine a Stronger Seminary & Unprecedented Seminarian Support

Imagine one Lutheran seminary in Pennsylvania that is stronger than its combined separate predecessors in Gettysburg and Philadelphia. Imagine an unprecedented level of student support. Imagine a seminary educating across two campuses, in hybrid and online formats as well, with a faculty filled with unparalleled expert pedagogues. Imagine a state of the art school that provides a leading edge curriculum with the deepest, classical roots on the continent. Imagine United Lutheran Seminary, opening July 1st 2017!

Full Scholarships Signal Students First

For more than a decade there has been growing concern about the financial burdens incurred by seminarians in this era when “church support” has continued to decline as a percentage of budget. But in a bold and dramatic move, both PA seminaries announced full tuition scholarships for all full-time ELCA students. The budget for United Lutheran Seminary gives priority to what we’ve called a “Students First” approach to planning. This can be sustained only with continuing strong support from synods, congregations and individual donors. To all who are making possible this bold and unique offer, we say a hearty word of thanks!

New Curriculum Integrates Classroom and Context

Perhaps the newest feature of ULS is an emerging curriculum fully designed for the 21st century. Rather than simply passing courses, students will be expected to demonstrate having mastered a high level of competence in all critical ministry leadership areas. Virtually every course will include professors from more than one discipline working collegially to bring to bear insights from their fields of expertise.

Continuity Assured

In the midst of newness is a reminder of the richness of the two seminaries’ distinctive and complementary heritages. Even as we bid farewell to faculty and staff members who are retiring or moving to new callings, we celebrate that almost the entire initial United Lutheran faculty will be comprised of current members of the Philadelphia and Gettysburg teaching theologians. Certificate study and Lifelong Learning opportunities continue on both campuses. Both Town and Country Church Institute and the Urban Theological Institute carry forward, as well as beloved traditional annual events like Advent Vespers and Music Gettysburg! concerts. Also to be sustained are recent new initiatives that better equip students to integrate faith and science, ministry with those in prison, and ecological “greening” endeavors to enhance environmental care.

Faculty Tapped

In addition to their classroom teaching, speaking in multiple church settings and other arenas, faculty members fulfill responsibilities as scholars with increasing national and international recognition. This past year, several faculty members have been asked to teach courses in other institutions, including Lancaster and Pittsburgh Seminaries. In recognition of his expertise in rural ministry, ethnographic studies and multiple point ministries, Dr. Gil Waldkoenig has accepted a half-time position as ELCA Director of Evangelical Mission for the West Virginia/Western Maryland Synod. And beginning this summer, Dean Kristin Lagen will serve half-time as Gettysburg College’s Chaplain and Associate Dean of Religious and Spiritual Life.

New Leadership

A presidential search is underway in light of the consolidation of the two seminaries. As of print deadlines for assemblies, the search is on track for the election of a new president before synod assemblies begin. Watch for an update at the assembly. And receive our profound gratitude for the synod’s unwavering support!

Michael L. Cooper-White, President

J. Elise Brown, Chair of the Board

2017 Report of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries to the Synods of Regions 7, 8 and 9

In the rapidly changing landscape of theological education, “status quo” has less and less meaning. Instead, we might talk about a “fluxus quo,” as change and flux seem to be the “new normal.” The Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries is no exception.

For those less familiar with the Eastern Cluster, this was the separately incorporated entity created by Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia to create efficiencies by inviting shared use of resources and greater interaction between the faculty and staff of our institutions. Since its founding in 1995, the Eastern Cluster has fostered strong collaboration between the three eastern schools and other partners, enhancing our common task of theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners.

Across its history, the Cluster has successfully received grants from a number of foundations – Lilly Endowment, Luce Foundation, Teagle Foundation, Thrivent – as well as ELCA research and development grants made available by the Division for Ministry. Over the course of its life, in excess of \$6 million has been garnered for Clusterwide projects. Among other projects, the creation of One Library Under Three Roofs (linking the three campus libraries into a unified system), Project Connect (a vocational discernment and recruitment effort), and various attempts to build a robust coordinated Cluster program of continuing education received the largest grants, and probably had the greatest impact. Most recently, the Cluster has received a renewal and extension of the Lilly-Endowment funded Abundant Life grant to help reduce student debt, teach greater financial acumen among our students, and promote holistic stewardship in the personal lives and congregations of our graduates.

Other major emphases and programs include Cluster sponsorship of the annual Diaconal Ministry Formation Event (with faculty from the three schools contributing), significant Cluster budgetary support for the Atlanta program (an Afro-centric studies project in collaboration with the Interdenominational Theological Center), and a collaborative Doctor of Ministry program centered at Philadelphia. Most recently, the schools have worked with colleagues from the ELCA on carrying out a consultation on the Cluster archives, and an upcoming LWF trip to Namibia supported in part through funds designated for use in the Cluster (the Marple Fund).

In recent years, there have been a number of changes to the Cluster. In 2009, the Cluster was “downsized” to reduce administrative costs. In 2012, it adapted to the incorporation of Lutheran Southern Seminary into Lenoir-Rhyne University. And today it is responding to the unification of LTSG and LTSP into United Lutheran Seminary. Despite these changes, the goals of the Cluster – to foster shared resources and encourage collaboration in order to enhance and broaden theological education – remain the same, even as the form of that cooperation continues to evolve. Currently, the governing board is considering whether the administrative structure of the Cluster is a help or hindrance to continue our shared library system, support our faculty fellows, facilitate the opportunity to seek impactful grants, and increase the potential to create cooperative systems of education for the larger church. As we explore various possibilities for faithful and efficient sharing of resources, we are grateful for the encouragement, prayers, and support of our synods and larger church. Theological education for the whole church has never been more important, and the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries has been privileged to support that endeavor.

David J. Lose, Executive Director

William B. Trexler, Board Chair

LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA

In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, the ELCA Domestic Mission unit, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans in the Upper Susquehanna Synod are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

In 2016, LAMPa celebrated 37 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, immigration, school funding inequity, racism and environmental injustice. Thanks be to God for the support of our Upper Susquehanna Synod Policy Council representatives, the Rev. David Byerly and Mr. Terry Brown.

LAMPa advocacy takes place through staff work in the capital, partnerships with coalitions and engagement of Lutherans in letter-writing, email and call-in advocacy, legislative visits, offering of testimony, editorial writing, social media campaigns, press conferences and rallies. In 2016, we identified seven issue areas around which to build teams of advocates: Hunger, Mental Health/Addiction, Racial Justice, Creation Justice, Immigration, Poverty/Housing/Employment and Education. Please consider offering your gifts or experience to any of these teams and contact LAMPa to become engaged!

Highlights of LAMPa advocacy in 2016 include:

Feeding the Hungry: Pennsylvania Lutherans helped secure a 4.1 percent increase in the line item that supports the commonwealth's most critical anti-hunger programs – one of the most significant funding increases in years in our fight against hunger in Pennsylvania. The State Food Purchase Program increased from \$18.438 million to \$19.188 million. SFPP remains one of the commonwealth's most important tools in the fight against hunger and a lifeline for food banks across Pennsylvania. Many of our Lutheran food pantries rely on this program to supplement their ministries. The program provides cash grants to counties for the purchase and distribution of food to low-income individuals, including seniors. For years, the program has suffered from stagnant funding even as need rose dramatically.

The SFPP line item is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and supports programs such as the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). After completing a successful first year, PASS received \$1 million in continued funding.

In addition, staff continued to work with statewide anti-hunger advocates to inform the work of the Governor's Food Security Partnership. That partnership produced a "Blueprint for a Hunger-Free Pennsylvania" in the fall. LAMPa continues to work with policymakers and anti-hunger advocates to implement the recommendations found in the blueprint, and the governor's 2017 budget proposal included a \$2 million increase in funding for school breakfast.

Giving All Children a Better Chance at Academic Success – Pennsylvania Lutherans pressed lawmakers as part of the Campaign for Fair Education Funding to address the state's rating as the least equitable in the country for education funding. This inequity has been leading to widening achievement gaps between wealthy and poor districts, as well as along racial lines. The efforts saw a tremendous win in 2016 with the passage of HB 1552. The bill, which amends the Public School Code of 1949, requires all new funds in the K-12 allocation to be passed through the BEFC-approved formula, received overwhelming bipartisan support. The formula passed through the Senate with a vote of 49-1 and passed the House with a vote of 188-3. Although we sought an additional \$400 million, last year's budget did see a \$200 million increase in basic education funding – a step toward alleviating the state's inadequate and inequitable school funding situation.

LAMPa staff continued to work toward coalition building for policies to promote trauma-responsive schools.

Addressing Poverty: LAMPa continued to fight attempts by predatory lenders to gain a foothold in Pennsylvania through proposals to introduce payday lending to the state.

Standing for Welcome – LAMPa worked to successfully stop legislation that sought to punish municipalities that adopted policies against honoring requests from Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain undocumented persons without a warrant. Many Pennsylvania municipalities adopted such policies, citing increased work and cost for local law enforcement erosion of trust between local police and immigrant communities – threatening public safety for all.

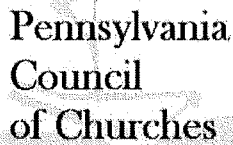
LAMPa advocated for the closure of the Berks County detention center, where immigrant families, including small children, are held while awaiting decisions on their requests for asylum. The administration maintains that the facility is not licensed for that purpose, but the operator is appealing the decision. LAMPa advocates have been attending vigils at the center to show support for the families inside.

Connecting Service to Advocacy: LAMPa provided information, resources and support for congregations and conferences participating in the Churchwide Day of Service in September. This practice is being lifted up church-wide for this year's Day of Service.

In 2017, LAMPa will again be developing service-and-advocacy projects for congregations to engage in for the Churchwide Day of Service on Sept. 10. We would be glad to help your congregation plan to make that day one of “God’s work. Our hands. Our voices.”

Public Witness: In 2016, LAMPa coordinated the first “Ashes-to-Go” at the state capitol to mark the beginning of Lent. Clergy and lay leaders from several denominations offered prayers and anointing on the sidewalk and in the rotunda and were extremely well received.

The traditional Lutheran Day in the Capitol became a two-day event in 2016, with a day of service, learning and an interfaith blessing of the waters on Sunday, followed by a day of preparation for advocacy on Monday. The event was an official part of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg’s Spring Academy, and featured participation by Lutheran Camping Corp. and ELCA Glocal musicians – collaboration that LAMPa seeks to grow as we work to be church together, for the sake of the world, in Pennsylvania.



Pennsylvania
Council
of Churches

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is the state-wide ecumenical presence in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Formed by 42 church bodies and agencies representing 20 Anabaptist, Anglican, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Protestant communions (denominations), the Council works for Christian unity for the sake of the world. [John 17:23]

IMPORTANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Future Planning Work. The Council formed a task group that began work on planning for the Council's future, with an initial focus on redefining the Council's vision and mission, and offering recommendations for what is needed for the Council to live out its mission. The group includes: Rev. Dr. D. Michael Bennethum, Executive Associate of the Bishop and Director for Evangelical Mission for the Northeast PA Synod of the ELCA; Pastor Yvette Davis, Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Council; Most Rev. Craig J. N. de Paulo, Primate of the Old Catholic Confederation, Archbishop of the United States and Bishop of Pennsylvania; Rev. Liz Bidgood Enders, President of the Council and chair of the Commission on Public Witness; Rev. Dr. Warren Eshbach, former district executive for the Southern District of Church of the Brethren and chair of the Commission on Unity and Relationships; Rev. Dr. Frank Frischkorn, Regional Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of PA and DE; Ms. Janet Gulick, Interim Executive Director and Director of Finance and Facilities for the Council; Rev. Dr. Thomas Johnston, former synod executive for PC(USA) Synod of the Trinity; and Rev. Sandra Strauss, Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach for the Council. This group began its work in June 2016 and made its initial recommendation to the Board in October 2016 to adopt a revised mission statement:

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is a fellowship of bodies responding to the gospel of Jesus Christ by sharing in the ministries of building harmony, justice, and shalom, and seeking to unite the varied expressions of the church through interfaith dialogue, openness to other traditions, and worship.

A tagline/vision is "Being together in mission across Pennsylvania."

The group will continue meeting to review and determine changes needed to the Council's Constitution/Bylaws and structure in order to live into the Council's mission.

Shalom Conference. The Council held a Shalom Conference in September 2016, with the theme "Building a Culture of Peace." The event brought together peacemakers from all across PA to hear keynote speaker Shane Claiborne's talk, "Another World is Possible," and Muslim scholar Saadia Ahmad's talk about the importance of community in interfaith conversations and peacemaking. Four panels opened the door to discussions on environmental justice, militarism, criminal justice reform, and community justice efforts. The hope is to build a statewide peacemaking network that can share information and coordinate work when possible.

Planning efforts for the conference were spearheaded by John-Michael Cotignola-Pickens, an intern from Lancaster Theological Seminary who joined the Council in January 2016 to do this work.

Support for Collaborative Efforts. The Council has received support from several different sources aimed at supporting collaborative efforts involving the Council and other denominations and coalitions.

- The Mennonite Central Committee has given the Council a \$10,000 grant to support advocacy in areas that are particularly important to Anabaptist traditions: criminal justice reform, immigration, gun violence, and education. The grant runs through March 2017, and is expected to be renewed. Initial focus has been on building a Healing Communities network in PA, and on calling for closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee women and children far in excess of the time they should be held.
- A grant of \$10,000 from the William Penn Foundation (through the Coalition for Fair Education Funding) is supporting the Council's efforts to reform school funding in PA. The funds will be used to do basic education on equity and adequacy of public school funding in PA, and sessions will be scheduled in 2017 aimed at helping the faith community understand the "school to prison pipeline"—how PA's funding system has shortchanged many schools so that they cannot adequately prepare students to function fully in our society after graduation (if they graduate at all).
- The National Religious Campaign Against Torture gave a grant of \$2,500 to support the Council's criminal justice work, good for the first six months of 2017. It will be used to support the work started through a visioning effort involving a range of organizations involved in criminal justice reform—determining how the groups can work together to forward a reform agenda for PA. Initial efforts were supported by the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society by providing a person to facilitate two visioning sessions in April and October of 2016.

The funding has supported the hiring of a part-time Advocacy Programs Coordinator, and the Council hired Cotignola-Pickens following completion of his internship. The Council is seeking additional funding via foundations and others in the hope of expanding the position to full-time.

Other Activities

- The Board of Directors adopted two resolutions—one on climate change, and one on school funding.
- The Council issued its first of what is planned to be a series of public statements—A Statement and Lament on Racism and Violence.
- The Council prepared and distributed an issue of its newsletter, Ecumenical News.
- The Service Department of the United Church Center has purchased new equipment that will make its operations more efficient.
- Both of the Council's websites, www.pachurches.org and www.pachurchesadvocacy.org, were moved to a Word Press platform and reorganized to be easier to use. The main website, www.pachurches.org, is now secure and nearly ready for accepting online contributions to support the Council's work.

COUNCIL MINISTRIES

Commission on Public Witness & Public Witness Ministry. The Council's advocacy efforts in 2016 focused on the following areas:

- Advocacy for a Pennsylvania budget with sufficient revenues that addresses the concerns of people of faith.
- Human needs/poverty-related work.
- Efforts to raise the minimum wage, primarily in coordination with the Raise the Wage PA Coalition.
- Public education funding, primarily in coordination with the Campaign for Fair Education Funding.
- Criminal justice reform, including an op-ed published concerning housing of persons in solitary confinement at the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary.
- Immigration, particularly around calling for the closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee women and children for long periods of time.
- Environment, primarily climate change and protecting water resources, in coordination with several organizations.

The Commission set the direction for the Council's advocacy efforts during the 2017-18 legislative session to focus on addressing "upstream" issues (such as many of the issues named above) in order to improve the lives of people on the margins, and addressing the role of money in our political system. Significant attention will be given to racism, xenophobia, misogyny, and homophobia—attitudes that create many of the problems that the Council is working to address.

Commission on Unity & Relationships. The Chair of the Commission and Council staff met with Bishop Ronald Gainer of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg to explore reviving efforts to work together on issues of shared interest and concern. It continues to seek funding for work on Christian-Muslim understanding.

Commission on Common Ministries. The Council has continued to provide support to its Trucker/Traveler Ministry, Campground Ministries, and Farmworker Ministries. Work has begun on building a Healing Communities network in Pennsylvania.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Council staff continue to discuss activities and areas where the Council might engage to be of service to our members, the wider faith community.

Annual Report 2016

DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES & DIAKON CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries and Diakon Child, Family & Community Ministries celebrate our partnership with the Upper Susquehanna Synod and its congregations as we live out our mission of demonstrating God's command to love our neighbor through acts of service. Diakon continues a 150-year tradition of care for people of all ages, especially those with limited financial resources. In 2016, Diakon provided some \$19 million in benevolent care, including more than \$5.2 million within the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

Last year was the second full year in which Diakon's two "sister" organizations operated separately, with individual boards of directors guiding each. Both organizations experienced successful years, achieving significant service, operational, quality, and financial goals.

Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village, Lewisburg, which offers a range of independent living homes, a personal care community and a neighborhood-concept health care center, broke ground for a new phase of senior living homes; a grand opening for the new homes will take place in mid-spring 2017. **Ohesson** in Lewistown serves older adults through senior living homes, health and rehabilitative care and a dedicated memory-support unit, as well as a bereavement support group for members of the community. It began to plan its 40th anniversary celebration, to be marked in 2017.

Together, the two senior living communities served 1,748 in 2016.

Diakon Family Life Services – Upper Susquehanna offers counseling, behavioral health care and related services at sites in Williamsport, Lewisburg and Montoursville. In all, the program served more than 2,300 people last year. Diakon Family Life Services provides individual, couple, and family counseling, a tele-psychiatry component; family-based mental health services to prevent out-of-home placement of at-risk children; and student assistance program training for school personnel. In addition, Diakon Family Life Services offers the **SPIN program** serving families in Clinton and Lycoming counties. The predominantly in-home program provides individual counseling, family therapy, group therapy, parent groups, training, and case management for children and youths who have exhibited problematic sexual behaviors.

As the prime contractor for **Pennsylvania's Statewide Adoption & Permanency Network**, or **SWAN**, Diakon helps to coordinate all public adoptions across the state, another way the organization touches the lives of people within the region. In fact, the number of children and families within the synod's territory served through SWAN in 2016 totaled 821.

We thank God for the gifts of staff, volunteers, congregations, donors, and board members who, together, enabled us to directly serve more than 67,000 people last year, including 4,877 in the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW
President/CEO



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.



The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), the lending ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects.

At year-end 2016, MIF had 860 loans outstanding, totaling \$524 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2016, MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$474 million.

The Mission Investment Fund is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$678 million and net assets of \$198 million at year-end 2016, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 29 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

MIF Loans and Investments in the Upper Susquehanna Synod (as of December 31, 2016)

- 2 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$408,892
- \$1,937,360 in Mission Investment Fund investments by 31 individuals, 38 congregations and 4 ministries

MIF representative

Gerry Lauro, Regional Manager, Tel: (312) 805-6502; e-mail: gerry.lauro@elca.org

ELCA FOUNDATION REPORT FOR SYNOD ASSEMBLY | 2016

2016 By the Numbers

Total of New Central PA Congregation
Endowments invested in Pooled Trust
\$631,204

New Endowments by Synod
Lower Susquehanna Synod: 5
Allegheny Synod: 3

Number of Central PA Pooled Trust
Presentations: 11

Total Investments in ELCA Foundation
Pooled Trust-Fund A: \$632,951,896



Total Central PA Committed Planned
Gifts to ELCA Ministries: \$7,066,250

Bequests by Beneficiary Category
PA Congregations: 10
Central PA ministry Partners: 19
ELCA Churchwide Ministries: 7
Other Pan-Lutheran or Secular
charities: 10

Memorial Endowments Established: 2

Number of Central PA Legacy
Presentations: 32

Total Committed bequests through the
ELCA Foundation in 2016:
\$55,000,000

Central PA Gift Planner

Pastor Liz Polanzke
Phone: 717-654-2334
Email:
Elizabeth.polanzke@elca.org
2428 Schoolhouse Lane
York, PA 17402

Dear Central PA Lutherans,

Thank you for a fruitful year of long-term financial planning for the ministries of Central PA. Thoughtful consideration of the future of funding for ministry will result in the Lutheran voice of God's grace and love being shared for many years to come.

In 2016, Lutherans of our territory committed \$7,066,250 as planned gifts for the ministries of the church. This is the highest across the country.

The generosity of the Lutherans of Central PA is touching. Your stories of your ministries and hopes for the future of the church shine in your gifts. In every case, these gifts reflect earnest people who love God and see God at work wherever our congregations, local agencies and institutions, and churchwide ministries can be found.

Moreover, congregations continue to demonstrate the benefit of pooling together investment assets to provide ongoing funds to support ministry. Eight congregations of Central PA opened new accounts in the Pooled Trust-Fund A. Additionally, two families opened and funded Memorial Endowment Funds. One fund will support ongoing Youth Ministry in the Lower Susquehanna Synod and another will provide for social ministries in Spry and the York area.

The position of the ELCA Gift Planner in Central PA is provided through a partnership of the ELCA Foundation with the following:

- ✿ Allegheny Synod
- ✿ Lower Susquehanna Synod
- ✿ Upper Susquehanna Synod
- ✿ Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries
- ✿ Diakon
- ✿ Luthercare
- ✿ SpiriTrust Lutheran
- ✿ Mount Luther
- ✿ Lutheran Camping Corporation
- ✿ Sequanota Conference and Retreat Center
- ✿ Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State
- ✿ United Lutheran Seminary
- ✿ Gettysburg College
- ✿ Susquehanna University

Every day brings new adventures, and new opportunities to celebrate God's generosity. I look forward to continuing the work of sharing these and other gifting opportunities with you!

For sanity in stewardship,

Pastor Liz Polanzke, Central PA Gift Planner



Seafarers International House

123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003
212-677-4800 (seven days a week, 24 hours a day) — info@sihny.org — www.sihny.org

Mission Highlights



Rev. Marsh Luther Drege
Executive Director

We stand with seafarers. We stand with immigrants. Since 1873! Always Have, Always Will.

Our mission began as an outreach to Swedish seafarers and Swedish immigrants. Over the years, the mission evolved, based on the needs of the time. After the great wave of immigration from 1870 to 1920, the emphasis focused on seafarers for whom we provided safe, affordable lodging and a ministry of presence in the ports.

In the last ten years, the number of vulnerable immigrants coming to our shores and their harsh treatment by Government officials caused Seafarers International House to enlarge the use of its Guesthouse as a mission resource.

Today, we are proud of this dual mission for seafarers and vulnerable immigrants.

Our port mission for seafarers consist of seven port chaplains serving in ports in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The number of ships coming into these ports has decreased slightly in response to international trade levels and shipping routes. Moreover, new ships are designed for smaller crew sizes. Accordingly, the number of seafarers coming into our ports and staying at our Guesthouse has decreased over the last few years.

Our immigrant mission focuses primarily on asylum seekers, people who are forced to flee their homelands. There is considerable turmoil in the world, and today one out of every seven persons are displaced from their homelands due to war, insurrection, oppression, collapsed

	2016	2015	2014
Seafarers			
Ships Visited	1,686	1,852	2,086
Seafarers Visited	18,970	21,500	22,738
Van Trips	3,145	4,074	5,202
Seafarers Transported	7,661	11,478	13,813
Christmas-at-Sea Gifts	1,771	2,226	2,100
Immigrants			
Refugees - Asylum Seekers	23	12	18
Lodging Nights	805	709	512
Community			
Domestic Violence-Human Trafficking	8	14	4
Local Disaster Victims	72	56	62
Youth Service Gatherings	5	4	7
Church Gatherings	181	179	163
Community Gatherings	398	447	397

economies and natural disasters. Moreover, the United States has become increasingly fearful of the arrival of these folks arriving at our borders and our airports, seeking asylum. We risk becoming a xenophobic nation with only a core of citizens and institutions practicing philoxenia—welcoming the stranger.

This mission of welcome consists of visiting asylum seekers in the prisons and detention centers where they are held upwards of six months and more while they wait for the Immigration Court to hear and adjudicate their claims for asylum. After they are released, we are able to offer them temporary lodging in our Guesthouse. Last year, we visited 80 detained asylum seekers and provided needed lodging for 23 released ‘asylees’ over a period of 805 nights.

I get to know nearly all the asylees who come and stay with us for 3-9 weeks. In

every single case I see the resilience, the agency, and the sheer determination of each person released from detention. They find jobs and apartments. They support themselves and become productive members of society. Without exception, they “pay their own way”, contrary to the stereotype that migrants are parasites on our country. And so it often comes to pass: time and time again, I visit detainees in the detention center one month and find that they are released to our care a month or two later.

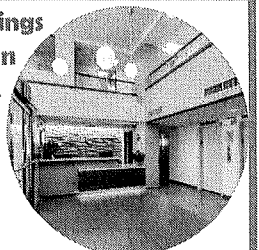
We stand with immigrants and seafarers in whatever number and with whatever need they are presented to us. Always Have, Always Will.

Blessings,

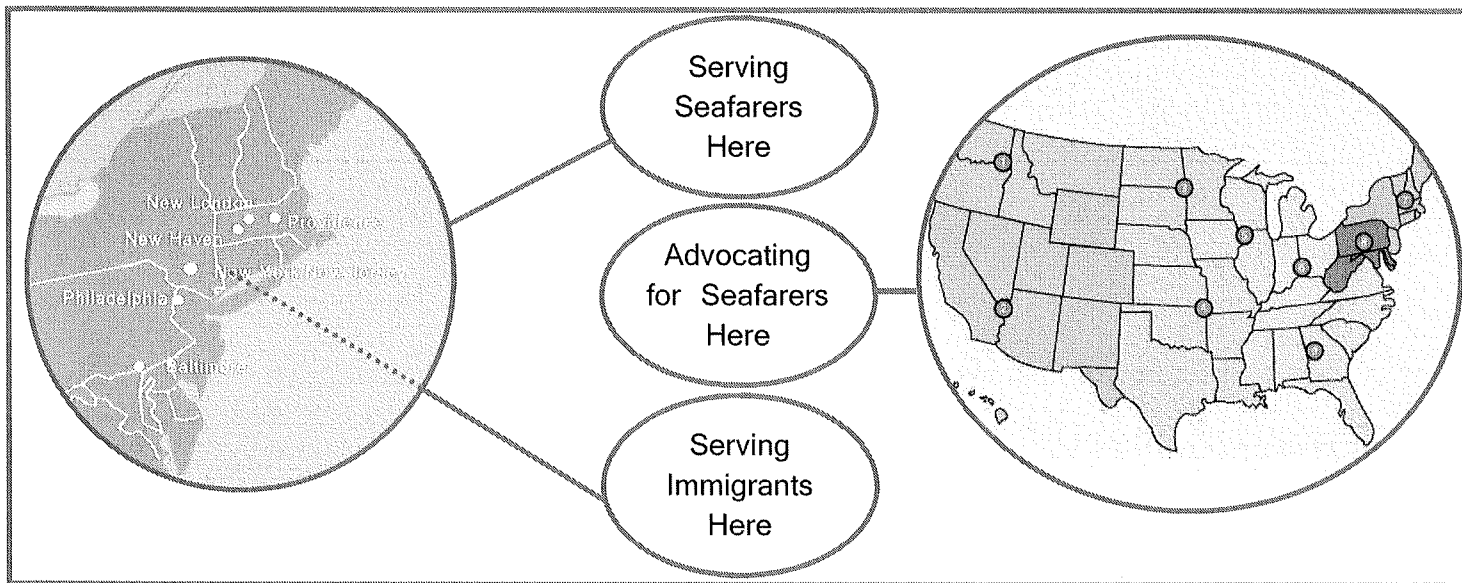
Marsh Luther Drege

Remember, our Guesthouse also accommodates church gatherings and civic groups traveling to New York City in connection with their missions and needing safe, affordable lodging. Through these accommodations, we support your missions. And by staying here, you help to support our mission to seafarers, immigrants and other displaced persons.

Sleep Well, While Doing Good



YEAR IN REVIEW



Entertaining Angels Unawares

Hebrews 13:2

Let's be candid. Today, a good portion of the American public is deeply concerned about entertaining any stranger and likely is reluctant to take a chance of receiving an angel for fear of getting instead a diluter of our American culture or even a terrorist.

Indeed, in some government circles nowadays, it is suggested that we should not receive any foreigners unless they practice Christianity, speak English, are affluent and look a little like white caucasians.

Since most of the seafarers and immigrants we encounter and serve have few, if any, of those traits, we feel the need to speak

up: we stand with refugees and immigrants.

We're not alone here.

Martin Luther taught that the church is called to be present in both kingdoms — law and gospel, and that its members are called to be good citizens by their conscientious participation in the political process.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has reminded us that "many of our ancestors faced the pain of having to flee their homes and the joy of being welcomed in new communities . . . [W]e honor our shared biblical values as well as the best of our nation's traditions

by offering refuge to those most in need."

Emma Lazarus has given this country an immigrant mission statement —

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe
free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming
shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed,
to me:*

I lift my lamp beside the golden door

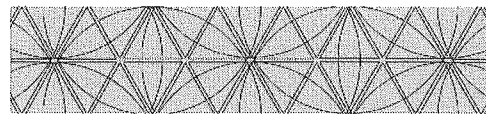
Seafarers International House is speaking up: We serve a multi-national, multi-faith community of seafarers and immigrants. Thanks be to God that we might so serve!



Seafarers International House is a Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and sojourners



Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA



Spring 2017

Dear Partners in Ministry,

As the ELCA commemorates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we are reminded that *the church should always be reforming* — adapting to a changing landscape even as it stands firm in its mission. In 2016, Portico's ministry epitomized this combination of innovation rooted in mission, as we expanded our service and stewardship in new ways while continuing to provide cost-effective, high-quality health and retirement benefits for more than 46,000 active and retired ELCA rostered ministers, lay employees, and their families in partnership with the almost 6,600 ELCA churches and employers we serve.

We championed a wellness reformation in the ELCA, inviting a recommitment to healthier lifestyles and a healthier church. For the first time, we formally extended our annual wellness challenge to congregations. Also a first: We surveyed those already living a healthy lifestyle, and more than 1,800 members and spouses shared inspiring testimonies of the life-changing power of prioritizing one's physical and emotional health.

We offered a new approach to providing health care. In response to the growing prevalence of chronic disease and rising claim costs, we introduced Portico Care Coordinators by Quantum Health to help members navigate today's complex health care system and get the best possible care at the right price. The anticipated savings from this industry-leading approach was one of several cost-containment measures that helped us hold 2017 health contribution rates to the lowest increase in four years.

We answered the church's call for socially-informed investing. We strive to live out the church's mission and make an impact in God's kingdom as we manage the assets in the ELCA Retirement Plan. Memorials at Churchwide Assembly in August affirmed the three powerful ways we impact corporate behavior through shareholder advocacy, screening, and positive investing. The Assembly also called for even broader work on the environment and human rights; in the coming months, we look forward to partnering with the ELCA to develop screens that will guide future investment opportunities.

We developed new support for financial decision-making. For two decades, Portico has been a leading voice in the ELCA connecting the importance of physical, emotional, and financial health to ministry. In response to members' desire for an easier way to manage their retirement savings, we developed new benefits that will help our members better assess their readiness for retirement, and will provide personal assistance to help them reach their financial goals.

These efforts — and many more — come thanks to a dedicated, creative staff constantly seeking to improve our internal operating processes, maximize efficiency, and be good stewards of the resources entrusted to our care. Their efforts helped ensure that for the third straight year, Portico's capital and operating expenses were under budget, and we maintained ELCA Health Plan and Retirement Plan expense ratios lower than our benchmarks. As the church adapts to today's changing landscape, Portico is well positioned to continue to provide the best possible care for our members, so they can serve the world with confidence, resilience, and faithfulness.

In Christ,

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann
President and CEO