

# USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



April  
2017

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

## Synod Assembly in June

The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly of the Upper Susquehanna Synod will be held at Susquehanna University on June 16-17, 2017. The theme of this year's assembly is "Together in Mission: Relating and Reforming." Guest speakers and musicians from the ELCA's Global Mission Team will be with us, including Sunitha Mortha as our ELCA Churchwide representative. Items of business include adopting the 2018 budget and making changes to the synod constitution. Register now!

**Singers Needed for Assembly Choir:** You are invited to sing as part of the choir that will provide musical leadership for the Eucharist on Saturday, June 17, at 2:00 p.m. in Weber Chapel Auditorium at SU. In addition to leading the liturgy and hymns, the choir will prepare special music for the service. 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. One rehearsal is scheduled for Sunday, June 5, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in the chapel of **Zion, Sunbury**. We will also have one, perhaps two, opportunities to rehearse with the Glocal Team during the Assembly (both on June 17). If you plan to sing in the choir or have questions, please contact David Reier at [dreier@ptd.net](mailto:dreier@ptd.net) or 570-847-3435.

**Pages Needed for Synod Assembly:** Calling all youth (who have completed at least sixth grade), college students, and seminarians! The 2017 USS Synod Assembly is looking for pages. You'll be needed on Friday and Saturday, June 16-17, from 7:45 a.m. until the end of the day's business (5:00 p.m. on Friday and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday). Responsibilities include handing out papers, bulletins, and other materials as well as serving as ushers for worship and counting votes when asked. All pages receive meals and a free T-shirt! If you have interested youth, please send their names and T-shirt sizes to [brenda@uss-elca.org](mailto:brenda@uss-elca.org).

**Live Tweet from Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly:** We will also live "tweet" from our synod assembly. This year, we invite others to also tweet from the assembly and use this hashtag: #usselca17. If you'd like to see what is happening at assembly in June, search for the Twitter hashtag or visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/usselca](http://www.facebook.com/usselca).

**Bulletin of Reports:** We are striving to go paperless this year with the bulletin of reports so materials will be available for download at [www.uss-elca.org/assembly](http://www.uss-elca.org/assembly).

## Chrism Mass is Holy Week Tradition

The annual Chrism Mass with Renewal of Ministry Vows took place on the Tuesday of Holy Week, April 11, 2017, at Trinity, Hughesville (*Pastor Cinda Brucker*). The service included the blessing of oil and the renewal of ministry vows for pastors, deacons, and Authorized Lay Worship Leaders.

Bishop Barbara J. Collins preached during worship.



## Summary of March Synod Council Meeting

- Council members were given suggestions on how to interact with congregations in their conferences as Bishop Collins has challenged the council.
- Bishop Collins reported on the recent meeting of the Conference of Bishops. She has been or will be involved in several clergy installations. Reminders were made of the Chrism Mass, Bishop's Retreat, and Synod Assembly. There will be a gathering of Authorized Lay Worship Leaders, Catechists, and Evangelists on May 7 at Camp Mount Luther and a recognition of their ministry at a separate event and at Synod Assembly.
- The treasurer's reports show a continuing trend of a shortfall in Mission Support from congregations. Council members will address finances at their May 6 retreat.
- Mount Luther representatives shared their visioning process; council members completed a survey concerning future directions for the camp.

## Up and Down the Valleys

The synod's new website ([www.uss-elca.org](http://www.uss-elca.org)) debuted in early March. New features on the website include a featured congregation as well as the ability to post blogs right on our website. The synod staff plan to do regular blogging, which began on Easter Sunday. Some new organizational items were added to make the website easier to navigate and updates continue to be made.

Synod Council extended a call to **Pastor Sarah Hershberger** to serve as an intentional interim pastor at Grace, Shamokin and St. Paul's, Gowen City.

Pastor Martin Zimman of the Lutheran Theological Seminary reports that **Grace, Jersey Shore** (*Pastor Gary Shumway*) voted to fund an endowed scholarship at the seminary. Zimman preached at the congregation on March 26 and officially thanked them at a potluck held after worship.

**St. John's, Potts Grove** (*Pastor Tom Glasoe*) has about six years of a publication called "Heartshaper," published by Standard Publishing, available for the taking. It is early and middle elementary material. The teacher guide, posters, CD, and some student pamphlets are in each packet. A packet covers three months. Anyone interested is welcome to have them free. Contact Kathy Harris at [kathyharris1051@yahoo.com](mailto:kathyharris1051@yahoo.com) or 570-742-9357.

**Mission Builders of the ELCA**, who do construction work for churches and camps, still have opportunities for short term volunteer visits at all of their 2017 project sites. They are also putting on a full court press to enroll new Mission Builders for the 2018 construction season and after. Without new additional people joining our organization they will have to turn down projects in 2018 and in 2019 assuming projects on the table currently move forward. For more information on Mission Builders, visit their website at [elcamissionbuilders.org](http://elcamissionbuilders.org).

**Falling and not afraid.** In her April column for *Living Lutheran*, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton reflects on the questions of life after death and what the Scripture says about heaven. Read her column at <http://www.uss-elca.org/presiding-bishops-column/>

**Pastor Kenneth Elkin** (retired) is now serving as an associate organist at Zion, Turbotville (*Pastor Erwin Roux*). He will be playing for Sunday services twice per month.

**Camp Mount Luther Updates:** Raise the Region was another huge success in March for the camp. The event was coordinated by The First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania. They raised \$14,550 (a new record) from 91 gifts and just recently received the check from the foundation with stretch dollars. The total amount from this event was \$15,521.29! Thanks to all who donated that gave and supported these efforts.

The camp is also gearing up for their summer camping season for 2017 and is accepting registrations for all programs. This year's camping season will begin on June 11, 2017. Resident and Day Camps run until August 4. There are programs for all ages from kindergarten to senior high, adults, and families. Most sessions run for one week, but there are also half-week, day-only, and ten day sessions.

New programs this year include Nature Detectives, when the youngest campers will explore the forest and learn more about the creatures who call the woods home; Night Camp Sampler for elementary-aged campers to come to camp for an evening (or two or three) and learn what camp is all about; LOGIC, a camp where campers will spend a week Living Outside in God's Incredible Creation; and Tour De Crème, a bike trip tour of Western Union County, stopping at ice cream shops along the way. For more information on this summer's programs, visit the camp's website at [campmountluther.org](http://campmountluther.org).

This year's theme at Mount Luther is "The Water of Life." The theme will give campers a new awareness of how water and life are gifts from God. Campers will dive into themes that will show them God's goodness, birth and belonging, enough for everyone, seeing and being the light, and resting in God. The curriculum, produced by Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, features the upper elementary section of activities and games written by Chad Hershberger, Mount Luther's executive director.

**USS ARK** is a publication of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. Permission is granted for congregations to reproduce this newsletter. Send mission stories and ministry ideas by the first of the month to Chad Hershberger, Director of Communications, at [news@uss-elca.org](mailto:news@uss-elca.org).



**Upper Susquehanna Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

The Rev. Barbara J. Collins, Bishop

PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837 570-524-9778 [www.uss-elca.org](http://www.uss-elca.org)

# Upper Susquehanna Synod Events Calendar

## **Information on the ELCA Youth Gathering/Volunteer Registration Opening Soon**

Next month (in May), volunteer applications for the ELCA Youth Gathering will go live and close on July 15. Current high school seniors and older are eligible to apply as volunteer staff. The gathering will be held in Houston, TX, from June 27- July 1, 2018. Congregations should start to identify youth, leaders, and a primary contact person. You can sign up for gathering news at [www.elca.org/gathering](http://www.elca.org/gathering). Now is also the time to set a budget and begin fundraising efforts. The gathering staff suggests budgeting between \$900-\$1200 to get youth to and from Texas. This includes a range in the cost of hotel rooms of \$99-\$150.

Charlene Rineer, our synod's Gathering Coordinator, will be presenting workshops at Synod Assembly to share more details. On July 15, financial aid registration will open on the Gathering website. No congregation is too small to send kids. The average size group at the Gathering is 3-7 kids. If you are concerned about not having enough youth, you can also join in with a nearby congregation. More questions? Want more information? Check out [www.elca.org/YouthGathering](http://www.elca.org/YouthGathering), join the Facebook group USS ELCA Youth Gathering Leaders (for adult leaders only) or contact Charlene Rineer at [ckrorange@yahoo.com](mailto:ckrorange@yahoo.com) or 717-880-2872. (Please note the phone number area code was incorrect in last month's USS Ark). For congregations who do not have youth attending the gathering – consider helping to support other youth of our synod by sponsoring a youth participant from a neighboring congregation. After all – we are church together!

## **April 23, 2017: Camp Mount Luther Spring Open House and Future Directions Meeting**

Have you ever wanted to see Mount Luther's site and facilities? Do you miss camp and want to visit in the springtime? Are you interested in coming to camp this summer but want to get more information and see the place first? Well, this is your chance. The Camp Mount Luther Spring Open House will be held on Sunday, April 23, 2017, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. You can ask questions, tour camp, and see what it's like to be a camper! First time campers who are not yet registered for the summer and who attend the event can get a \$25 discount on their summer registration! More details will be shared on their website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org)!

Following the Open House (at 4:00 p.m.), there will be a future directions meeting at the camp. The Camp Mount Luther Board of Directors has begun a process to look forward to the future of the synod's outdoor ministry and to build a vision and ministry plan to serve children, families, congregations and our greater community for generations to come. The board is holding several "cabin meetings" in various areas of the synod to talk about opportunities, challenges, and a new vision for Camp Mount Luther. At those meetings, the process will be outlined, questions will be answered, and the opportunity will be given for folks to fill out a survey to help the board as they plan for the future. Your advice and counsel are vital to the camp ministry's future. Please plan to attend and give your input.

## **April 24-28, 2017: Gettysburg Seminary Spring Academy**

The year of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation calls for a new examination of the church's mission and task in the world. This Spring Academy, under the theme "Re-Formation is Local" brings the question home to each believer and congregation. What is our mission and task in this world, right here? Our "Re-formation" is in our own hands; we have what we need right here and now to follow God's call to us in this place. The week will offer everything from biblical vision to practical work sessions on the neighbor and what the Gospel means to those nearby sojourners. Preaching Perspectives, a Croquet Tournament, and great food and fellowship are also part of the week. Check this page often:

[www.ltsg.edu/springacademy](http://www.ltsg.edu/springacademy) as schedule, registration and presenters' details are soon posted.

Wednesday evening worship will recognize the years of the seminary being LTSG with Michael Cooper-White preaching.

## **April 25-27, 2017: Generosity NOW, being held in Washington, D.C.**

Generosity NOW—formerly the North American Conference on Christian Philanthropy—has been a premiere Ecumenical Stewardship Center event for decades. Laypersons, pastors, and judicatory and denominational staff who attend Generosity NOW increase their knowledge about spiritual principles and best practices relating to faithful stewardship and generous giving through plenary sessions, workshops, and worship. This year's Generosity NOW plenary speakers reside in Washington, DC and are from the Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesley Theological Seminary, and the Faith and Money Network. Along with these excellent plenary sessions, attendees will choose from 18 different workshops from three tracks: Faithful Stewardship, Leadership, and Generous Giving. If interested in registering, contact Pastor Craig Miller at the synod office as he has some funding available. Registration fees include:

- a pre-conference reception at the Hilton Garden Inn Reagan National Airport on Tuesday evening, April 25
- lunch on Wednesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 27 at the conference site

Registration closes on Tuesday, April 18, the Tuesday after Easter. Register today! Visit <https://stewardshipresources.org/generosity-now> for information about schedule, leadership, location, lodging, transportation, and registration.

### **April 29, 2017: Food Packaging Event**

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Williamsport, will be hosting a meal packaging project on Saturday, April 29, from 10:00 a.m. – noon or possibly longer. Their goal is to package 20,000 pasta and tomato basil meals that will be donated to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank and area food pantries. These highly nutritious soy-fortified meals have a shelf life of two years and cost 25 cents each to produce. Their goal is to raise \$5,000. If they raise more, then they can package additional meals. The counties the northern Central Pennsylvania Food Bank serves are counties of high food insecurity. The term food insecurity means children come home from school with little or no food in the house. One in four children in Clinton County are food insecure. Lycoming County is slightly better. While we cannot solve all the causes of hunger, packaging a meal and giving something nutritious to a family is a physical act to serve our neighbor. The Outreach committee of St. Mark's Lutheran invites you to participate. They will need volunteers on Saturday, April 29. Please contact the following for more information.

Michele Owen, 570-323-4619, [mowen@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:mowen@stmarkswilliamsport.org), St. Marks Youth & Family Ministry  
Becky Miller Pryor, 570-971-4585, [murphy173@verizon.net](mailto:murphy173@verizon.net), St. Marks Outreach Chairperson

Donations to cover the meals can be made out to St. Mark's Lutheran or "Outreach, Inc." and given to either Michele or Becky or mail to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 142 Market Street, Williamsport PA 17701.

### **May 3-5, 2017: Bishop's Retreat**

The annual bishop's retreat for rostered leaders will be held on May 3-5 at Camp Hebron, Halifax PA. The focus of the retreat will be: *Relationship with God. Relationship with each other. Relationship with the world.* Cost for the two and a half days, meals included, is \$115/person for double occupancy and \$225/person for single occupancy. The registration date has passed, but if you are interested in attending, contact the synod office ASAP to see if space is available. Spouses are invited to attend this event.

### **May 8, 2017: Bishop's Open Golf Classic**

The annual Bishop Open's Golf Classic is set for May 8, 2017, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Susquehanna Valley Country Club in Shamokin Dam. The tournament benefits Camp Mount Luther and the camp's annual fund. A flyer/bulletin insert containing information and registration form is available here: <http://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017-Golf-Tournament-Flyer.pdf>. The camp's golf tournament committee is currently looking for hole sponsors, door prize sponsors, silent auction items, and golfers. If you can help, please contact the camp office at 570-922-1587 or [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org). Congregations are also encouraged to become hole sponsors. Get involved and help our synod's outdoor ministry!



### **May 12, 2017: Adam Miller Concert in Belleville**

Adam Miller, a legendary folksinger, storyteller, and autoharp virtuoso will present a concert at St. John's Lutheran Church in Belleville. The concert will be held on May 12, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. A freewill donation will be taken to benefit St. John's Christian Day Care and Preschool.

### **May 17, 2017: Pre-Retirement Seminar**

Together with their partner, Ernst & Young, Portico is holding a day long pre-retirement seminar. They will cover all phases of retirement planning in simple, understandable terms — from establishing a retirement budget, to discussing investment strategies, to reviewing health care options. And, they leave plenty of time to address your retirement questions. The event will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2221 N. Oak Lane, State College, PA, on Wednesday, May 17, 2017. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and runs until 6:00 p.m. Register at <https://myportico.porticobenefits.org/NewsEvents/Events/Pre-RetirementSeminars>. Once registered, you'll receive an invoice for \$35 per person. Please make your check payable to Portico Benefit Services and mail the check or bring it to the seminar.

### **May 20, 2017: CML Spring Work Day and Youth GROW in the Son**

Practice stewardship through service at Camp Mount Luther at their Annual Spring Work Day on Saturday, May 20, 2017, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. They need your help getting the camp grounds and facilities ready for summer. There will be plenty to do and everyone in the family can help! Please bring supplies to do cleaning, mulching, raking, and light construction projects such as step ladders, buckets, rakes, etc. A light lunch will be served. RSVP by May 12 if staying for lunch to [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org) or 570-922-1587.

NEW THIS YEAR! We are inviting youth to stay overnight on Friday night, May 19, through Saturday afternoon. We call it GROW In the Son and we'll have a short campfire program, complete with S'mores, you'll sleep in the cabins, help with our work day, and then we'll have GROW Time for you after lunch. The GROW Time will be a chance to reflect on how God calls us to serve one another! We will finish around 3:00 p.m. Cost for GROW in the Son is \$20. You must register by May 12, 2017, by e-mailing [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org) or calling 570-922-1587. We ask that each registered youth group provide one adult (21 or over) for every seven youth and at least one adult for each gender represented. To download a bulletin insert/flyer for both events, click here: <http://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2017-Work-Day-Flyer.pdf>

### **May 22, 2017: Lutheran Day at the Capital**

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in PA will hold their annual event on May 22 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill. We mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in a time of great upheaval and division at home and around the globe. On May 22, we gather to consider how the Holy Spirit is re-forming us as the Word of God continues to change and renew the world. How can we be Church Together, for the sake of the world, in Pennsylvania? Bring your faith to the table, and join advocates from across the Commonwealth for a day of worship, learning and inspiration to ground and deepen your call to faith-rooted advocacy. The day will feature a keynote address by Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, Professor of Theological and Social Ethics, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary of California Lutheran University, legislative briefing and visit training, issues and faith formation workshops, a continental breakfast, lunch and special advocacy celebration. Come to be inspired, prepared and equipped to act on issues that matter. Bring a team from your congregation, or partners from other traditions in your community. You don't have to be Lutheran to benefit from the issues and advocacy training! Most other bodies do not have their own state advocacy offices, and many would appreciate this opportunity. To learn more and register, click here: [http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event;jsessionid=17463E35FB25ECAF7D5944045D62165.worker\\_registrant?llr=lvflt5dab&oeidk=a07edukmq05a668eb65](http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event;jsessionid=17463E35FB25ECAF7D5944045D62165.worker_registrant?llr=lvflt5dab&oeidk=a07edukmq05a668eb65)

### **Looking Ahead to June at Camp**

Camp Mount Luther is gearing up for their summer camping season for 2017 and are accepting registrations for all programs. Late fees will begin to be assessed on June 2, so register soon to avoid the late fees! The summer campina session will be in full swing in June! This summer's staff will arrive in late

May for their two weeks of training. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, the first campers for this year will arrive for Fishing Camp and Tour de Crème, a new bike adventure camp. On June 18, the camp schedule will have a classic week featuring juniors and intermediates as well as day camp on-site, all under the theme of "Scooby Doo Week." Rock, Raft, and Roll will also take place. Beginning on June 25, campers will participate in Explorers, Night Camp Sampler, Morning Glories, Sprouts, Nomads, and SCUBA Adventure. The Canada Adventure Trip begins on June 30. For more information, visit [our website](#) or call the camp office at 570-922-1587. There is still time to register for all these and other summer programs! This year's theme at Mount Luther is "The Water of Life." The theme will give campers a new awareness of how water and life are gifts from God. The Bible is filled with stories involving water as a powerful means by which God sustains, heals, revives, and saves us. God surrounds us and fills us with literal waters and spiritual waters that remind us how we are part of God's life. Campers will dive into five Bible stories and daily themes that will show them God's goodness, birth and belonging, enough for everyone, seeing and being the light, and resting in God.

### **June 16-17, 2017: Synod Assembly**

Now is the time to register for this year's Synod Assembly. The registration mailing has been sent from the synod office. The 2017 Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly will take place at Weber Chapel on the campus of Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, on June 16-17, 2017. Register before April 15 for a \$10 discount on registration! This year's theme is "Together in Mission: Relating and Reforming." Guest speakers and musicians from the ELCA's Global Mission Team will be with us, including Sunitha Mortha as our ELCA Churchwide representative. More information will be provided as it becomes available and will be posted on the synod assembly page at [www.uss-elca.org/assembly](http://www.uss-elca.org/assembly). Remember, we are striving to go paperless this year with the bulletin of reports so materials will be available for download from the website listed here.

### **August 7-10, 2017: Rostered Ministers Gathering**

The ELCA will hold its first ever Rostered Ministers Gathering in Atlanta at the Sheraton Downtown. This will be an opportunity for Rostered Ministers to assemble for worship, education, and fellowship. The theme will be "On the Way...Together," using the Road to Emmaus story. There will also be two pre-gathering events for federal chaplains and young rostered ministers (20's and 30's). Early registration is open now and will be \$245 per person which includes coffee breaks, four meals, keynotes, Bible studies, workshops, evening concert, worship, and interaction center. Registration fee increases on June 1 to \$295 per person. Room rates will be \$119 per night (plus taxes). Questions about this event can be sent to [2017MinistersGathering@elca.org](mailto:2017MinistersGathering@elca.org) or you can call 1-800-635-3522.

# MOUNT LUTHER

## Camel Tracks



April 2017

### Council Retreat Sets Tone

In late February, members of the congregation council at Trinity Lutheran, Danville, came to Mount Luther for a one-day retreat. Their pastor, Trevor Hahn, wanted to give the group a day to work on putting the past behind them and plan for the future. He felt it would be good to take the group to a neutral location, away from their church.

The group arrived at camp around 10:00 a.m. and spent the morning working on healing and talking about the past. They had lunch together, serving each other sandwiches and fruit and vegetables.

After lunch, Camp Mount Luther Director Chad Hershberger led the council in a discussion on HOT Communications. HOT Communications is the technique that the camp summer staff uses to communicate in healthy ways and resolve conflict.

Pastor Hahn reports that the day was well received and the council has started to put into practice the things they learned during the retreat. If your congregation council could use a day away to deal with issues or spend time educating their members on important topics, contact the camp office. We can help you schedule a retreat similar to the one Trinity, Danville, engaged in and can also possibly help with the program.

### Camperships Wanted

Each summer, we supply financial aid to many kids who otherwise would not be able to come to camp. One of our campers who received a campership last year wrote to us and said, "Thank you so much for giving me the extra money to come to camp. I can meet new people at camp. Going to camp is the best part of my summer. I love singing songs and playing games. Thank you again." Please consider giving to our campership fund so we can continue to give help to those who need it.

### Open House and Future Directions Meeting



Our Spring Open House will be held on Sunday, April 23, 2017, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. You can ask questions, tour camp, and see what it's like to be a camper! First time campers who are not yet registered for the summer and who attend the event can get a \$25 discount on their summer registration!

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### Golf Classic in May



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## Looking Ahead to June

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## Straight From the Camel's Mouth By Kyros T. Camel

The camels are gearing up for summer, which is quickly approaching! We can't wait until the campers are back in camp for our summer program. Here are a few things we've noticed lately.

Have you checked out the Mount Luther Prayer Service podcast? It's on the website on the podcast page. A podcast for Easter is the latest offering for April. Each podcast is about an hour in length.

Raise the Region was another huge success in March. The event was coordinated by The First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania. We raised \$14,550 (a new record) from 91 gifts and just recently received our check from the foundation with stretch dollars. The total amount from this event was \$15,521.29! Thanks to all who donated and supported our efforts. We appreciate it.

Our summer staff is almost complete. We still could use another male counselor and maybe a lifeguard. If interested, contact the camp office.

Congratulations to Chris Sands, camp board president. Chris married Megan Moran at a beautiful ceremony near Valley Forge, PA, on March 25, 2017. Lots of camp folk were represented that day to celebrate the newlyweds. We wish Chris and Megan all the best in their new life together.



# MOUNT LUTHER

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*Please remember Mount Luther in your gift plan.*