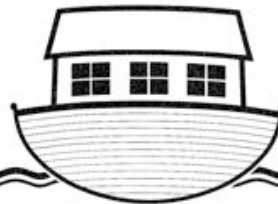


U S S A R K

News of God's People in Action



July/Aug
2017

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

Connecting to the World through Song, Work and Word: Synod Gathers to Relate and Reform

The Upper Susquehanna Synod connected to the world through song, work, and word during the 30th Annual Assembly, held on June 16-17, 2017, at Susquehanna University. A Glocal Team of musicians and presenters from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) shared global songs on a local level and helped the assembly look at how to connect to current contexts and how to accompany those doing mission.

Bishop Barbara J. Collins led the proceedings, her first Synod Assembly since being elected as bishop in 2016. During her annual report, Collins talked about her first nine months in office and her task of building relationships with many entities of the Church. She also challenged those assembled to think about being Church in new ways, to meet people where they are and to be in those places where people of all ages gather in the community. She even suggested going to the soccer fields on Sunday mornings to be with young members of the congregation.

The assembly kicked off with worship led by the Global Mission Team musicians from the ELCA. Greetings were extended from Rev. Scott Kershner, chaplain of Susquehanna University, who also brought greetings from Dr. Jonathan Green, the new president of the university. About 300 lay persons and clergy who are members of congregations of the synod attended plenary sessions, workshops, and worship during the two-day event. During both days, workshops were held over the lunch period and provided information that attendees could use in their congregations, including presentations by the Glocal Team. Round robin sessions of some of the synod's ministries and related entities were held so attendees could ask questions of those leaders about their ministries.

The ELCA Churchwide Representative was The Rev. Sunitha Mortha, who presented keynotes on Mission and Accompaniment and Connecting to Our Context and gave a report for Churchwide on Saturday morning. She shared greetings from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and shared the ELCA's Strategic Directions 2025.



Actions of the 2017 Assembly

- *Elected as Synod Vice President for a four-year term was Melvin Stojakovich, Jr., of Bloomsburg. Outgoing Vice President Dr. Karla Bohmbach completes her four-year term this summer.*
- *Elected as Synod Secretary for a four-year term was Rev. Thomas Glasoe of Milton. Outgoing Secretary Ms. Carol Waltz completes her four-year term this summer.*
- *Passed the 2018 Budget, balanced at \$835,000. The budget includes reductions to grants to related agencies and in percentage of mission support sent to the ELCA.*
- *Adopted the 2018 Salary, Housing, and Health Benefit Guidelines for rostered leaders and those on the lay roster.*
- *Passed several constitutional changes, including changing the terminology of ordained ministers and non-ordained rostered personnel to align those with new ELCA roster name changes. Other changes included cleaning up some language for the Synod Assembly requirements, changing the term "benevolence" to "mission support," and having the nominating committee nominate the secretary instead of Synod Council.*
- *Approved a resolution of thanks for all those who planned and led various aspects of the assembly.*

2017 Theme is "Together in Mission: Relating and Reforming"



Members of an ELCA Glocal Team sing during Synod Assembly. The team provided music from across the world.



Rev. Glenn Ludwig, Vice President of Seminary Advancement for the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, gave a report on the new United Lutheran Seminary, which began on July 1. He also acknowledged Bishop Emeritus Robert L. Driesen, who was presented with a distinguished alumni award from the seminary this spring.



Pastors with significant ordination anniversaries were honored on Friday afternoon. They included Deacon Barbara Smillie, Rev. Viking Dietrick, Rev. Robert Doll and Rev. Vickie Reeser (25 years); Deacon Constance Fladland and Rev. Thomas Martin (30 years); Rev. Williams Esborn, Rev. Anna Ritter-Esborn, and Rev. James West (35 years); Rev. Kenneth Elkin, Rev. John Fenton, Rev. Mike Sigler and Rev. Philip Tundel (40 years); Rev. Bruce Amme (45 years); Rev. Edwin Rehrauer (50 years); Rev. David Hauck and Rev. Hugo Schroeder (55 years); and Rev. Stuart Lengel, Jr. (60 years).



On Friday afternoon, Bishop Collins installed the Camp Mount Luther 2017 Summer Staff for their work on behalf of the synod. Eighteen members of the staff were present and then led the assembly in singing, "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love." The young adult staff also participated in a panel discussion with campus ministers about how to involve their age group in the Church. They were also part of a new round robin format for several committee reports that allowed for more discussion with ministry partners.



Report of the Synod Assembly Elections Committee

Elected to Synod Council for three-year terms were the following: Crystal Bollinger of First, Mifflinburg; Esther Bratton of St. Stephen's, Mifflintown; Scott Frost of Sharon, Selinsgrove; John Riley of St. Matthew, Bloomsburg; Rev. MarthaSue Moll of the Elysburg Parish; Rev. Joshua Reinsburrow of Messiah, South Williamsport.

Elected to the Consultation Committee for six-year terms were Rev. Steven Middernacht of Zion, Turbotville; Samuel Leister of Messiah, Mifflintown; Lee Naugle of Zion, Kratzerville; Mary Ann Landi of Pine Street, Danville.

Elected to the Committee of Discipline for a six-year term were Rev. Thomas Glasoe of Follmer Parish; Linda Weaver of Holy Spirit, Turbotville; Margaret Reed of Trinity, Danville; and Rev. Sandra Olson of Siloa, Morris Run.

Rev. Robert Doll of Sharon, Selinsgrove, was elected to a four-year term on the Board of Directors of Susquehanna University.



Rev. Andrew Weaver and Rev. Theodore Cockley were installed on Friday afternoon as deans of the Tulpehocken and West Branch conferences.

Other Notes from Assembly

Friday evening at the Synod Assembly featured dinner and recognition of congregations celebrating significant anniversaries. The following congregations were recognized: Beaver Lutheran Church, Beaver Springs (50 years), Christ Lutheran Church, Buckhorn and St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Jersey Shore (150 years), St. James Lutheran Church, Muncy and St. John Lutheran Church, Richfield (175 years), St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Montgomery and St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Northumberland (200 years). The Global Musicians also led a "Healing of the Nations" evening prayer.

Also during the Friday plenary session, Pastor Craig Miller, assistant to Bishop Collins and Director for Evangelical Mission, spoke to the assembly, giving his first report since he began his work last fall.

During a service of Holy Eucharist on Saturday afternoon, Rev. John Vought was remembered posthumously for his service. An in-gathering offering was received for the ELCA Campaign for Global Mission and the USS Rostered Leaders' Seminary Reduction Fund totaling \$1,680.



The synod's Leading Ladies! Vice President Karla Bombach, Secretary Carol Waltz and Bishop Barbara J. Collins. Bombach and Waltz end their terms this summer and gave closing remarks to the Assembly.

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.



**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

Upper Susquehanna Synod Announcements

Volunteers Needed for CML Fundraiser in September

Camp Mount Luther is once again participating in a local festival to help raise funds for their campership fund. The camp will staff a booth at the Selinsgrove Market Street Festival on Saturday, September 23, 2017. Their booth will feature the sale of homemade whoopie pies. Volunteers are needed to make these sweet treats, as well as to staff the booth on the day of the festival. If you are interested in donating whoopie pies (of any flavor) or helping to sell them that day, contact Sarah Hershberger at 570-966-9674 or Chad Hershberger at 570-922-1587.

Registration and Information on the ELCA Youth Gathering

Registration for the ELCA Youth Gathering will open on September 15 and continue until November 15 for the early bird discount. Late fees go into effect on February 15. The gathering will be held in Houston, TX, from June 27- July 1, 2018 with MYLE and the tAble being from June 24-27. Congregations should start to identify youth, leaders, and a primary contact person. You can sign up for gathering news at 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.

On July 15, financial aid registration opened 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, join the Facebook group USS ELCA Youth Gathering Leaders (for adult leaders only) or contact Charlene Rineer at 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!

Participate in the Social Statement on Human Rights

As you hopefully are aware, the Draft of an ELCA Social Message on Human Rights has been available on the ELCA website since the beginning of July for reading and response. The comment period runs until August 31. The Draft is available online only, but it can be downloaded for review and there are two primary ways to provide a response: 1) Fill out the online response form, found there. 2) Send comments via email to eva.johnson@elca.org. Both will be shared with the Theological Discernment staff and the consulting group preparing the message. In early September the revision work will be finalized and the Proposed Message will be shared with members of the Conference of Bishops and Church Council for review and then brought to the Council's November meeting for consideration.

A Growing Need for Caregivers

Home Helpers of Central Susquehanna Valley (based in Sunbury) is looking for compassionate individuals to provide companion care and daily living assistance to the elderly, new parents, and those requiring recuperative or continuing care. If you are a compassionate caregiver who is looking for a rewarding career, there are full-time, part-time and live-in positions available with Home Helpers...and the need is growing. Contact them directly to learn more: 570-286-9460 or www.HomeHelpersHomecare.com/CSV.

Ministry Opportunities in the Synod

Do you have a passion for a particular area of ministry such as Advocacy, Congregational Health, Disaster Relief, Ecumenical Relationships, Global Partnerships, Mission, Outreach, World Hunger, or Youth? We are looking to engage more leaders from across the synod, with a number of these areas of ministry that take

place within our synod, in order to grow and empower leaders. If you would like to be more involved in any of these areas of ministry, please contact Bishop Collins at the synod office (bpcollins@uss-elca.org).

LAMPA Looking for Help

Travis Woodfield, an intern with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is currently looking to put together a list of Lutherans around the state who might be interested in working on mental health and addictions issues. They are seeking individuals from diverse perspectives on these issues. Some ideas for perspectives that would be helpful include: medical professionals, pastors and rostered persons, people who currently live with addictions or mental illness either directly or are affected by these issues directly, law enforcement and lawyers, business professionals, and any others that have a passion for these issues. If you know of anyone who might be interested in this kind of ministry, LAMPA would love to talk to them. To see the kind of work LAMPa is currently doing feel free to check out our website: <http://www.lutheranadvocacypa.org>. To volunteer, contact Travis at travis@lutheranadvocacypa.org.

Hymnals Available

Mazepa Union Church has about 60 of the green (LBW) hymnals which they would like to give away to anyone who might want them. Please contact Hazel Roush at muc@dejazzd.com

Youth Leader Position Available

St. Luke Lutheran Church in Bloomsburg is accepting applications for part-time (up to 10 hrs/week) Youth Leader. We are looking for an energetic person to engage with our youth and be a role model of living a life in relationship with Christ. A successful candidate must have a flexible schedule to attend scheduled youth activities and be available for Sunday morning worship. The position will consist of planning and implementing youth activities, along with our Youth Committee. For full job description, contact the office at stlukelc@ptd.net. Hard copies of resumes may be sent to St. Luke Lutheran Church, 9 St. Luke's Way, Bloomsburg, PA 17815.

Mission and Senior High Youth Director Position Available

A Mission and Senior High Youth Director is being sought by St. Luke Lutheran Church, 1400 Market St., Williamsport, PA, 17701. The position would support parents in their work with youth programming, as well as encourage mission for all age groups. Expected time commitment would be 8-10 hours a week. If interested, please request a job description from the St. Luke church office (570-323-7309). Applicants must be over 21 years of age. Those who are applying may also request an application form from the office and will need to submit a resume with the completed form.

LAMPA Has Position Available

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) is searching for a program director to be based in our Harrisburg-area office. Those interested in advocacy ministry should apply by August 30 at <http://elca.atsondemand.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=512830.viewjobdetail&CID=512830&JID=585232>

Director of Music Position Available

St. Michael Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, is seeking an enthusiastic and talented person for the position of Director of Music. This is a part time position averaging 10 hours per week. St. Michael is a vibrant and affirming congregation made up of a diverse group of devoted members welcoming all to our community located on historic State Street near the State Capitol. responsibilities include one Sunday morning worship service per week. Wednesday evening choir rehearsals as needed, and special worship services throughout the year (e.g. Ash Wednesday, Ascension, Christmas Eve, Epiphany, and the services of Holy Week.) Additionally, the Director of Music will need to attend monthly meetings of the Worship and Music Committee. Candidates shall demonstrate the ability to sight read music, reverent liturgical practices, and the use of music to enrich worship. The successful candidate will also have the ability to function well as part of a team. The Director of Music will collaborate with the pastor and the Worship and Music Committee in selecting music for worship services. The Director of Music may be asked to accompany

weddings and funerals, as available with additional compensation provided. Salary range for this position is negotiable based on education, experience, and the final negotiation of responsibilities. A complete job description is available from the church office at 717-234-0092. Interested persons should send a hard copy of their resume including references to St. Michael Lutheran Church, 118 State Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101, or electronic copies can be emailed to pastor@stmikehbg.com

Upper Susquehanna Synod Events

September 2, 2017: Dandelion Trail Run at CML

Camp Mount Luther in Mifflinburg will be holding a 5 and 10 Kilometer trail run race at the camp Labor Day Weekend. This is the fifteenth year for the event at the camp, located five miles west of Mifflinburg. This will be an entry-level trail race on Mount Luther grounds with proceeds going to the camp. It is being organized by Joel and Shelley Heasley of Middleburg. The Dandelion Run was named in honor and memory of Rev. Glenn E. Heasley, Jr., former Assistant to the Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Glenn's favorite "flower" was the dandelion. The date of the race is Saturday, September 2, 2017. The start time for the race is 9:00 a.m. Runners decide on race day if they want to do a 5k or 10K (a double loop of the 5K) run. Age group awards will be presented and pre-registered participants will receive a drawstring sports pack. (A limited number will also be available on race day.) Price for entry is \$20 if you pre-register before August 12th. Race day registration is \$25. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on race day. Spectators are welcome as well. A kid's fun run (registration for that is one dollar) and a one-mile fun walk will also be held. The same registration fees and amenities apply for the fun walk which will take place on a dirt road. Awards will be given for overall male and female race time, three awards for each age group and an overall master's for male and female in both the 5K and the 10K. The awards ceremony will be immediately following the race. All miles for the course will be marked and there is one water stop on the course. Timing will be electronically done. To download a registration form, visit <http://midpenntailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelion-run-application.pdf> or you can contact Joel Heasley at 570-765-0267. Shower facilities are available after the race. All proceeds from this event will benefit the camp's general operating fund.

September 3, 2017: Liberia Committee Visitor

On Sunday, September 3rd, the synod's Liberia Committee is pleased to welcome Abel Learwellie back to our synod for a time a renewing friendships and conversation. Abel will share updates about the work which the Lutheran Training Institute (LTI) is doing, especially with youth, and the current challenges that LTI faces. This gathering will take place at the Synod Office on Reitz Blvd., Lewisburg, beginning at 2:30 p.m. All are welcome.

September 10, 2017: "God's work. Our hands." Sunday

This day of service is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. The suggested date for the 2017 dedicated day of service is Sunday, September 10. Mark your calendars today! If your congregation cannot participate on this date, please consider another day. Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace. You work every day to make your community a better place. Let us continue doing this work together in 2017! Access resources to guide your congregation's planning, promotion and more here: <http://elca.org/Resources/GWOH-Sunday>.

ATTENTION MARRIED COUPLES: Have you signed up for your fall Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend? Both of our spring Weekends had waiting lists, so sign up **now** for a fall Weekend to avoid disappointment! Couples overwhelmingly report that the Weekend is the best thing they have ever done for their marriage. The fall Weekends are:

- **September 15-17, 2017** at Spruce Lake Retreat Center, Canadensis, PA, a new hotel-style facility on Spruce Lake in the heart of the Pocono Mountains – an hour north of Allentown.

- **October 6-8, 2017** at the Black Swan Inn in Lee, Massachusetts. Nestled in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains, a hidden gem overlooking Laurel Lake – an hour north of Hartford, CT. Two nights lodging, 5 meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your \$100 per couple registration fee, plus toward the end of the weekend you will be given an opportunity to make a confidential contribution of whatever amount you wish toward the continuation of the program. Registrations are limited, so sign up today by going to the website: www.Godlovesmarriage.org and paying the registration with your credit card, or marking the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure with registration form mailed to you, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at fjschamber@comcast.net or 724-325-3166.

October 4, 2017: GROW Writer's Retreat

Anyone wishing to come and write devotions for Camp Mount Luther's First Light Digital Devotions is welcome to join other writers on October 4, 2017. The retreat will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Evergreen Center. It will be a day of writing and sharing resources for devotional writing. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to the camp office at cml@campmountluther.org or 570-922-1587 before September 30, 2017.

October 7, 2017: Fall Women's Retreat

All local women are invited to be participants at the Fall Women's Retreat, sponsored by Camp Mount Luther and the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization. The day-long retreat is in place of the fall cluster gatherings and will feature a presentation led by Christine Mabon titled, "Renew, Restore, Revitalize: The Five Essential Friendships That Enrich Our Lives and 101 Ways to Nurture Yourself. The day will be spent looking at how to embrace the unique gifts friendships bring to our lives and how to sustain these friendships. And, we'll look at how we might love ourselves more by nurturing our body, mind, and spirit. The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, October 7, 2017. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments and end with singing and prayer.

The cost of \$22.00 per person includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch, and the program. You are encouraged to bring a friend! Registration deadline is September 26. To register, contact Camp Mount Luther, 355 Mt. Luther Lane, Mifflinburg, PA 17844. Checks should be made payable to Camp Mount Luther. If you have questions, call the camp at (570) 922-1587 or e-mail cml@campmountluther.org. To view a flyer/registration form, click here: <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017-Womens-Retreat-Flyer.pdf>

Copies of the presenter's book, 101 Ways to Nurture Yourself, along with "friendship" aprons, pot holder/oven mitt sets and note cards will also be available for sale.

October 15-20, 2017: Children, Youth & Family Ministry Certification School.

Vibrant Faith (www.vibrantfaith.org) is a great ministry that has been at work for many years building up the church through leadership development and research. Bear Creek Camp (BCC) near Wilkes-Barre is hosting Vibrant Faith's 75th certification school in October. The CYF Training School changes lives, equips leaders and helps transform ministries in effective and creative faith formation. It's a 9-month program for the participants that begins with five days of group training at BCC and continues with one-on-one training via phone, blogs, videos, and webinars. Youth leaders, pastors, volunteers, other interested adults are the perfect folks who could benefit from a program like this. It's typically a \$2,000 fee, but, the camp is offering the program for \$1,600. To sign up or get more information visit www.bearcreekcamp.org/vibrant-faith-training-school/

October 21, 2017: Building Youth Group Event at Camp Mount Luther

Keep your youth group strong and growing by laying a foundation for its future members! Bring your youth to Camp Mount Luther for BYG, a fun community building time. We'll work with you and your youth to facilitate relationship-building experiences. Youth leaders, pastors, and parents should bring as many as you can in this age bracket to help build comfort and trust within your future youth group. Come along- bring the youth leader, pastor, or parents with your kids. Camp Mount Luther invites you to bring one adult free for every seven kids you bring to camp. Additional adults come for half of the participant's

fee. We'll have team building, reflection time on God's Word, Frisbee golf, ropes course, and fellowship. Our theme this year is "Pray!" Cost for the program is \$22.00, which runs from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Each participant is asked to bring a bag lunch.** To register, call the Camp Mount Luther office at 570-922-1587 or e-mail cml@campmountluther.org. Click here to download a flyer/bulletin insert: <http://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/BYG-Day-Long-Flyer-2016.pdf>. **Deadline to register is October 16, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.**

October 22-23, 2017: LARC Vespers and Day of Dialogue

Save the Date. Our annual Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic (LARC) Vespers will be on Sunday, October 22, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at the United Lutheran Seminary (Gettysburg Campus) Chapel. The LARC Day of Dialogue will be Monday, October 23, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Cardinal Keeler Center. The events will take special note of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation as well as our progress on the path to Christian Unity. Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Bishop Emeritus Donald J. McCoid, who as Executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) had a key role in developing the document Declaration on the Way, will be the speaker for the Day of Dialogue.

October 31, 2017: Looking Back and Called Forward—ELCA 500

This event, commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, will feature ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as co-host. It will also include speakers and a service at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Bishop Eaton will be joined by co-hosts Indiana-Kentucky Synod Bishop Bill Gafkjen, ELCA Vice President Bill Horne and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod Bishop Dick Graham. The event is open to the public and will be available online via livestream. All are invited to participate and honor the Reformation anniversary as we bear public witness to Christ, who frees us to love and serve our neighbor, and as we look to the future to which God is calling us. More details will be available soon at <https://elca500.org/events/looking-back-called-forward-elca-500-washington-d-c/>