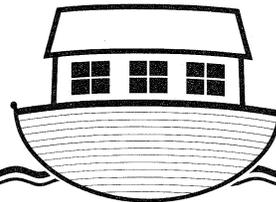


USS ARK

News of God's People in Action



November
2017

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

Observances of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Editor's Note: The following are reports we received of commemorations of Reformation 2017.



Bishop Barbara J. Collins visited with Martin & Katie Luther as the Port Royal Parish celebrated the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Pastor Charles Hershberger and his wife, Paula, dressed up as the Luthers during a celebration on October 28 at Port Royal Community Building. The couple was also in two local parades in October and November.

Follmer Parish (*Pastor Tom Glasoe*) celebrated Reformation Sunday with the confirmation of five students. A reception was held afterwards.

Liberty Lutheran Parish (*Pastor Richard Adams*) joined with the Harvest Family Fellowship to sponsor a joint Reformation Service in the Liberty High School Auditorium. Following worship, there was food and fellowship.



St. Matthew, Bloomsburg (*Pastor Joel Zeiders*), marked the actual day of the posting of the 95 Theses by having a hymn sing in the evening of October 31. They sang hymns from the 16th-21st centuries. Dr. Alan Hack, Director of Music, played their Moller pipe organ.



LARC Activities Include Signing

In late October, the Upper Susquehanna Synod, along with the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg, commemorated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation at United Lutheran Seminary on the Gettysburg campus. Bishop Ronald Gainer, from the Catholic Church, preached in the Lutheran Seminary Church of the Abiding Presence on the unity we share in our baptisms in Christ. He, along with Bishop Barbara J. Collins of our synod, Bishop James Dunlop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, and Bishop Audrey Scanlan of the Episcopal Diocese recommitted these church bodies to the Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic (LARC) covenant agreement. That agreement, originally signed in 1993, calls for mutual cooperation. The current bishops recommitted the main principles in that document. Bishop Scanlan said, "The LARC Covenant respects and retains the integrity of each tradition while commending us to share together God's Word, the work of social justice, and to learn about each other." The original document was signed by Bishops Charlie F. McNutt (The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania), Guy S. Edmiston, Jr. (Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA), Nicholas C. Dattilo, (The Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg), and A. Donald Main, (Upper Susquehanna, ELCA). Read an article about this process at <http://tinyurl.com/y86xl4ze>.

Fryer Speaks at Workshop for Leaders

In mid-October, author, former ELCA pastor, and professor Kelly Fryer came to the Upper Susquehanna Synod to discuss racism. At the invitation of Bishop Collins, Fryer presented a program titled, "Cries from the Wilderness: A Down to Earth Conversation about Racism and Our Role in Ending It." Fryer is now literally in the desert, serving for the past five years as CEO of YWCA Southern Arizona. That organization's mission is eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Fryer shared what she has learned in the wilderness and lead conversation about racism, the ways in which it harms us, and what church leaders can do to end it.

Participants were encouraged to ask questions and take part in discussions. The event was held at Follmer Lutheran Church (*Pastor Tom Glasoe*). The following day, Fryer met with the deans to continue the conversations.



Up and Down the Valleys

On October 14th, the **Women of the ELCA** collected one and a half containers of supplies to send to Lutheran World Relief in New Windsor, Maryland. Coordinator Sue Baylor reports that the following were collected: 162 blankets, 1622 quilts, 901 school kits, 10 sewing kits, 264 health kits, 47 baby kits, 8 pieces of fabric and 87 pounds of soap.



Clergy Notes: Rev. Brian Vasey is now interim pastor at St. Luke, Bloomsburg, following the resignation of Rev. John Fenton who served as interim there. Rev. John Koons is the new interim at Pine Street, Danville.

Liberian prayer petitions are prepared and sent by the **Upper Susquehanna Synod Liberia Committee**. Prayers for the rest of this year are available on the synod website.

Lutheran World Relief is looking to highlight some PA congregations in their publicity. If you have pictures or stories of quilt or kit blessings, please share them with Elizabeth McKinley at EMcKinley@lwr.org.

In this changing climate for our church, our synod has recognized the need for strong leaders who can help our congregations to proclaim the Good News in our rapidly changing world. We have committed to two funds for which our synod council recently adopted policies. The **USS Fund for Leaders**, established in 2013, supports candidates for rostered leadership from our synod. Synod Council has expanded that fund to include continuing education for rostered leaders. And, many of our rostered leaders serving in our congregations and other ministries leave seminary with large educational debt. Last year, Synod Council established the **USS Rostered Leaders Seminary/Educational Debt Reduction Ministry** as a way for our synod to assist these leaders, easing their burden and enabling them to put more of their focus into leading our church to adapt to our changing world. We encourage our congregations and individuals to consider a contribution to either of these funds along with your normal Mission Support.

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 Events Calendar

Input Needed!

The Synod's Mission Strategy Team is asking congregations for some input. Each congregation will receive a packet of multiples of small pieces of yellow and green paper squares. Included are instructions to ask two questions for folks to provide a one word answer for each question. Please complete this exercise and return the squares of paper to the Synod office by December 20. Results of this exercise will be revealed at next year's Synod Assembly.

November 27, 2017: Deadline for Seafarer Bags

Nearly 500 ship workers docked at the Port of New York/New Jersey last December received a reminder of God's love for them during the Christmas season, thanks to the generous contributions of USS congregations who contributed gift bags last fall. The synod invites congregations and individuals to join together in collecting "Christmas-at-Sea" Gift Bags for seafarers this Christmas through the Seafarers and International House (SIH) in New York City (<http://www.sihnyc.org/>). Sturdy, imprinted plastic bags for this project are available now at the Synod Office. ***PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH BAG!*** Each gift bag should contain one sweatshirt (L-XL), three pairs of crew or knee socks (no ankle socks), one casual t-shirt (M-L), one knit heavy winter cap, one can of nuts or bar of chocolate, and a personalized Christmas card from you. Filled sacks should be brought to the Synod Office by November 27 (the Monday after Thanksgiving) so that they may be transported to NYC in time for holiday distribution. Thank you for taking part in this ministry to some of the hardworking, lonely freighter crews who are responsible for 90 percent of the world's trade via merchant ships.

November 29- December 1: Ecumenical Stewardship Center's Generosity NEXT

Generosity Next takes place November 29 - December 1 in Nashville, Tennessee. It explores how current culture informs faithful stewardship and generous giving. This year's topic is Stewardship & Generosity: Are We Doing All We Can? Engage with keynote speakers Steve Manskar and Anne Burkholder as we explore John Wesley's well-known sermons about money and their relevance for generous stewards of the 21st century. Connect with Christian sisters and brothers who share a passion for faithful stewardship and generous giving. Be inspired through meaningful worship, insightful presentations, and thoughtful conversation. Become better equipped to lead others in their discipleship journeys of becoming faithful stewards and generous givers. Contact Pastor Craig Miller in the Synod Office for information on ELCA sponsored registration. Information about Generosity NEXT and registration can be found at <https://stewardshipresources.org/generosity-next>.

December 9, 2017: Holiday Breakfast

Diakon's Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village and Camp Mount Luther are teaming up to provide a fun morning of food, fellowship, and Christmas crafts and games on Saturday, December 9, 2017. The breakfast will feature an appearance and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, chocolate chip pancakes, craft stations, and cut-out cookies. Space is limited. Call Gretchen at 570-523-4285 to RSVP. The event will be from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village Common Building. For more information and a flyer to help publicize this event to your friends, visit <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SLS-BV-Breakfast-With-Santa-4Q-B-2017-4.pdf>.

December 18, 2017: Active Shooter Response Training

In light of recent mass shooting events, church leaders have asked to have training in how to respond if an active shooter comes into the building. United Lutheran Seminary will offer this training at the Gettysburg campus December 18th led by the Safety & Security team of Gettysburg College. This event is open to all interested persons who wish to receive such training. Questions can be directed to Chelle Huth, Director of Lifelong Learning, United Lutheran Seminary at chuth@uls.edu. It is a busy time of year, but ULS wanted to offer this in a timely manner. Another training will be scheduled in the new year. The Active Shooter Response Training will be held on Monday, December 18, 2017, from 10:00 a.m. -11:30

a.m. at the Church of the Abiding Presence on the United Lutheran Seminary Gettysburg Campus. Cost is \$10 per person, payable at the door (reservations/registration not necessary).

January/February 2018: Worship at the Center

This coming January/February, you can attend "Worship at the Center: Journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter." During these days, the ELCA will worship using the services for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Vigil of Easter, and join in reflection, study, and discussion of the cross and empty tomb, baptism and the Bible—the meaning of this journey for ourselves and the world. Come and be refreshed in your planning and leading of these worship services that are central to our worship together as Christ's church! The events are as follows:

January 18-20, 2018, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Winter Park, Florida

February 1-3, 2018, at St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Austin, Texas

For details of the event and to register, visit <https://elca.org/en/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Worship/Worship-at-the-Center>: For questions, contact BethAnn Lynch at 773-380-2590.

January 21, 2018: Camp Mount Luther Camperson Meeting

The annual meeting for Camp Mount Luther Campersons is Sunday, January 21, 2018, starting at 3:00 p.m. The camp is an extension of local congregational ministry and wants every member of the Upper Susquehanna Synod to know what is happening with this important ministry. To do that, Mount Luther has CAMPERSONS! A camperson is a liaison between CAMP and your CONGREGATION, who is interested in camp and wants to regularly share camp news with others. Parents of campers, past campers or staff, or someone with a genuine interest in outdoor ministry makes a great camperson. Campersons are ambassadors and promote camping ministry in your congregation. Each synod congregation is asked to send a representative to this event to learn more. Campersons will

- Share Information
- Plan and Coordinate a Camp Sunday
- Recognize Campers
- Reach Out to promote outdoor ministries
- Support camp fundraising efforts

Each congregation who sends a camperson to this event will receive Camel Bucks for the camp store for each camper. For more information, visit <http://wp.me/P7aFC9-y2>

Here is a bulletin insert/flyer to promote this event in your congregation: <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018-Camperson-Meeting-Flyer.pdf>

January 21, 2018: Camp Mount Luther Turkey Benefit Dinner

This event will celebrate Benjamin Franklin's Birthday. Franklin wanted the turkey to be the national bird of our country. Camp Mount Luther thought it would be fitting to have a turkey dinner to honor his January birthday! You are invited to come to his birthday party and support camp at the same time! The dinner will be held on Sunday, January 21, 2018, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Evergreen Center at Mount Luther. The menu will consist of turkey and all the trimmings. Cost for the meal is \$14 per person. Reservations are required and can be made by contacting the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org. Deadline for reservations is Tuesday, January 16, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. To download a bulletin insert/flyer at the dinner, click here: <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2017-Turkey-Dinner-Flyer.pdf>

February 9-10, 2017: GROW in the Snow

This year's synod youth retreat at Camp Mount Luther will be held on February 9-10, 2018. All youth in 6-12th grade and their youth leaders are invited to attend. The theme of this year's retreat is "Hello God, It's Me," dealing with prayer. Experience your Creator, play winter games and find refreshment in the peace of camp in winter. The retreat is from Friday night to Saturday afternoon, but there is an option for youth and leaders to come just for the day on Saturday. Cost is \$59 (whole program) or \$40 (Saturday only) if registered by January 30, 2017. A late fee of \$25 added after that date. No refunds will be given after the January 30 deadline. Each registered group should provide one adult (21 or over) for every seven youth and at least one adult for each gender represented. Cabin assignments will be made based on available adults and number of youth attending. Contact Chad Hershberger at chad@campmountluther.org with questions. Click here for a flyer and registration form: <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018-GROW-in-the-Snow-Flyer.pdf>.

February 16-17, 2018: Healthy Congregations Facilitator Training

Our synod will host a two-day training for those interested in becoming facilitators for Healthy Congregations. This training will take place at the synod office – 500 Reitz Blvd, Lewisburg. Anyone who would like to learn more about Healthy Congregations may attend this event. More details will be forthcoming but save the dates! Healthy Congregations is an interfaith organization that understands the times in which we live in. They equip leaders for challenges of thinking more clearly about families, relationships, and faith communities. Resources and training are based on seeing all communities as living systems that incorporate thinking, feeling, responsibility, and purpose. Healthy Congregations, Inc. has created educational resources and leadership development material designed with the purpose of encouraging healthier, clearer and deeper individual and community life based on the contributions of leaders in the field of Bowen Theory and congregational life.

February 28- March 3, 2018: ALDE IGNITE in Minneapolis

Learn how to take your mission to the next level at IGNITE: Minneapolis 2018, February 28-March 3. This conference will include top-notch keynote speakers as well as rich curriculum sessions and network building opportunities for those with congregational leadership, fundraising, communications, or marketing roles. If you are looking to grow an already vibrant organization, need to reenergize a once-thriving program or are guiding an organization that's just in its infancy, ALDE is here for you. View the curriculum. Find out more at ignitespark.org. Register now at www.alde.org/register. Early Bird Rates expire January 10. Please note that it is less expensive to become an ALDE member, and then register as a member, than it is to attend as a nonmember. So, you might as well join and take advantage of all ALDE offers year-round. Why ALDE? Click here and find out! Who attends this conference? People just like you who are ready to learn, connect and experience career and mission changing curriculum. In 2017, attendees held such titles as: Pastor, Principal, Board Member, Chief Development Officer, Major Gifts Officer, CEO, Executive Director Consultant, Annual Fund Director, Special Events Coordinator, Director of Marketing, and many more — so you are certain to make a strong peer connection at this event. The conference offers content for every area of the development profession, and for congregational leaders. Can't make it to the full event, or looking to save money? Try the day rate! Attend just one day for a very reduced price. March 1 offers several curriculum sessions designed with pastors and congregational leaders in mind. Topics include: Igniting Donor ATM (Abilities, Time, and Money); Kindling the Spiritual Meaning of Philanthropy; and IGNITING Planned Giving for Churches and Schools. Other days highlight additional focus points. There's even more you can gain from attending IGNITE. We are offering the chance to win a Pro Bono Consultation from Gronlund Sayther Brunkow to someone who is new to ALDE, or has been a member for less than five years. This could be you, but you must attend IGNITE! Learn about the opportunity and sign up now to win at bit.ly/aldegrant (case sensitive). ALDE inspires, educates and mentors the Christian fundraising community to spark generosity for mission. We are an international community of fundraising and communication professionals rooted in the Lutheran tradition of the Christian faith and dedicated to serving God's people in the church and the world.

MOUNT LUTHER Camel Tracks



November 2017

Leaving a Legacy

Wanting to give back was the motivation that Ruth and Andy Gates felt as they worked on their legacy gift plan. Andy worked at Mount Luther as a counselor in the early 80s and his wife, Ruth, and their family have attended Family Camp for about 20 years. They have seen first-hand the benefits of outdoor ministry and how lives can be changed as they experience God at Mount Luther.

During Family Camp in 2016, they met Liz Polanzke, ELCA Regional Gift Planner. Mount Luther partners with the ELCA and Liz to provide gift planning services for folks who want to leave a legacy to a ministry. The Gates met with Liz at their home in New York last Fall to talk about options for their estate planning. In that process, they established an endowment fund with the ELCA Foundation that will be funding through a bequest. They'd like the funding to go for programs, facilities, and camperships. It is their intention through this gift that they will have expressed their thanksgiving to the ministry of Mount Luther.



Ruth and Andy and their son, James (who has served on summer staff the past four years) spoke at our Circle of Faith Giving Club Recognition Dinner in June. They spoke

about how easy it was to work with Liz on the process and how important it is to give back to those ministries who mean something to each of us. If you would like more information on gift planning and how you can help Mount Luther, please contact the camp office.

Fun Time at Shade Mountain



On November 3, we had our annual Evening at Shade Mountain Winery. The night was one of fellowship, entertainment, and of course, locally produced wine. About 40 folks attended. Local musician Bernie Rich provided

music including contemporary folk music and Christian anthems. Toni Gessner, our hospitality manager, provided delicious heavy appetizers and desserts. Proceeds totaled about \$1,500 to our annual fund. We thank Shade Mountain Winery who provided wine for attendees and will donate a portion of their proceeds in wine sales that night.



Creation Care Tip

Do you have a reusable grocery bag? Our Care of Creation and Environmental Sustainability Committee wishes to share tips in the coming months on how you can be "more green." One of those ways is to use neither paper nor plastic when you go to the store—bring a reusable bag with you. An average American uses 350 bags per year. By using cloth bags, you reduce needless deaths of marine life caused by plastic bags that end up in streams, rivers, and oceans. At camp, we've gotten those bags for our golf tournament goodie bags with hopes that the golfers will use them for other uses, like when they go to the store. It helps the environment and it promotes camp!



Camp Teams Up with BVLV for Holiday Breakfast

Diakon's Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village and Camp

Mount Luther are teaming up to provide a fun morning of food, fellowship, and Christmas crafts and games on Saturday, December 9, 2017. The breakfast will feature an appearance and photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, chocolate chip pancakes, craft stations, and cut-out cookies. Space is limited. Call Gretchen at 570-523-4285 to RSVP. The event will be from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village Common Building. For more information and a flyer to help publicize this event to your friends, visit <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/SLS-BV-Breakfast-With-Santa-4Q-B-2017.pdf>.

Camperson Event in January

This event gives participants the chance to find out what's going on at camp and tell the story to others! Join us on Sunday, January 21, 2018, at 3:00 p.m. in the Evergreen Center. Mount Luther wants every member of the Upper Susquehanna Synod to know what is happening with this important ministry. To do that, campersons serve as a liaison between your congregation and camp. They are individuals who are interested in camp and want to regularly share our news with others. Parents of campers, past campers or staff, or someone with a genuine interest in outdoor ministry make great campersons. Campersons are to be ambassadors and promote our camping ministry in your congregation. Each congregation in the Upper Susquehanna Synod is asked to send a representative to this event. Each congregation who sends a camperson will receive Camel Bucks for the camp store for each camper. Campersons are also invited and encouraged to attend the camp's annual Turkey Dinner, starting at 4:00 p.m. that day. To download a bulletin insert/flyer, visit <https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018-Camperson-Meeting-Flyer.pdf>



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

Some people wonder what happens at camp after the summer season ends. Well, in the last two months, planning has begun for next year (I can't wait to share what new camps we have planned for 2018) and budgets are prepared. The board met for their quarterly meeting in October and passed a tentative budget for next year and talked about committee structures for the coming year. We also host fall events, including Midd-West Outdoor Education, when fifth grades come to camp for a few days to learn more about the environment. As we move into November and December, things slow down a little bit for our staff but there is always something to do at camp all year!

Speaking of fall events, about 45 women attended our retreat in October with Christine Mabon talking about friendships. The retreat was co-sponsored by Mount Luther and the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization. It was a great day.

As we look ahead, the camp will again host a turkey dinner in January to celebrate Ben Franklin's birthday. It will be on January 21st starting at 4:00 p.m. More details will be in next month's newsletter but for now, please save the date and join us for good food and fellowship.

The annual synod youth retreat, called "GROW in the Snow" will be held on February 9-10. The GROW Team is finishing up preliminary preparations and more details are forthcoming. It's always a fun weekend, so get some youth together to come and spend some time at camp. The theme this year will be "Hello God, It's Me," looking at prayer.

Ash Wednesday is on Valentine's Day this year and Easter is on April Fool's Day. How often does that happen? With Ash Wednesday on February 14, that means the Sunday before is Transfiguration Sunday and the annual synod-wide Mount Luther Sunday. Campersons will get more ideas in January on how to celebrate outdoor ministries on February 11. We hope you will join us in uplifting Mount Luther in your congregation.

Have a good November and don't eat too much turkey!



MOUNT LUTHER

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Please remember Mount Luther in your gift plan.