Youth Gather in Houston  
By Charlene Rineer, Synod Coordinator

From June 27- July 1, the ELCA Youth Gathering occurred in Houston, Texas, with 176 teenagers and adults from our synod (our biggest ever) attending. The theme for the gathering was “This Changes Everything.” On Thursday, we got to enjoy our Synod Day. We focused on the fact the God’s Love Changes Everything. On our Synod Day, Bishop Collins, Charlene Rineer, Dottie Bollinger, Emily Kuhn, Ryan Frantz, and a music team led by Pastor Robert Doll and Jonathan Moser lead the group through an interactive worship service. We also had Pastor Lisa Barnes help as Sacristan and other youth from her congregations gave a baptismal blessing and served communion. The youth and leaders from Christ’s, Lewisburg, helped with sound, video, and greeting/ushering. On Friday our congregations got to join in with Service Day where we walked along side organizations in the community and helped them with many different projects. The theme for the day was God’s Grace Changes Everything. On Saturday, the theme was God’s Hope Changes Everything. That day our synod’s congregations got to experience the Interactive Center were many different church ministries offered various activities for the youth to do while learning about what their ministries do. We closed the whole event on Sunday with a Worship Service that was focused on Jesus Changes Everything. The whole event was a very faith formative experience. It was a joy watching the youth explore all aspects of their faith.

Reflections on the Gathering  
By Kailey Betz, Zion, Turbotville

While in Houston I met many different people and experienced the way that God’s love, hope, and grace changes everything. Standing in line, I even met some girls from Minnesota and we all started singing camp songs! While in NRG Stadium they did an activity where they put a statement on the screen and if it applied to you, you were to shine your flashlight. The last statement was shine your light if you’ve ever felt God's love. I loved being able to look around the stadium and see 30,000 lights shining.

Our service day was my favorite day. We went to a local YMCA to help with a book fair/carnival. There were kids ranging from four to thirteen years old. While there we were in different stations, I was in a group that led tongue twisters and the kids loved them. Seeing the excitement on their faces as they came in and then telling them that they got to take a book home was the best feeling. Later that night at NRG one of the speakers said something directed at the adult leaders but it really stuck with me. He said something along the lines of don’t give your all to try to save someone because Jesus has already saved them. This is something that I will always remember, when I’ve tried all that I can and it still doesn’t work, Jesus saves.

Our active learning day was also very impactful for me. My favorite activity was the global farm challenge. We each picked a crop and carried a bucket around that had our crop in it and we went through different challenges that farmers in other countries have to go through to be able to provide for their families. It was an eye-opening activity. We also learned about how people with different disabilities may not be able to have the same worship experience as others because of their disability. We talked about how changes can be made to churches to make them more accessible to everyone. This was very impactful for me because I didn’t realize how hard it could be for someone to come to worship. Later that night at NRG there was a speaker who said “When you don’t have hope, God has hope for you.” That has really stuck with me since my time in Houston, knowing that we always have someone who has hopes for us and is always with us when we have lost all hope and feel alone.

We closed our week together with worship at NRG in the morning. It was a great experience going to Houston and getting to meet so many other Lutherans that know about the grace, hope, and love of God.
Learning More About God’s Awesome Love

Camp Mount Luther recently ended their summer camping season. Around 600 participants took part in both on and off-site programs during the eight-week session. 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 “Awesome God, Awesome Love.” Campers looked at five Bible stories to see the awesome love that our Awesome God gives each of us and has given to Biblical characters from the Old and New Testaments. A new feature this year included Faith 5, a way to look at how God is at work during your everyday activities. It also included prayer and a blessing.

Some highlights from this summer included: “Crazy Day Camp,” where campers dressed in different themed outfits each day; Nature Detectives, LOGIC, and SURE, where campers learned more about their natural environment; “X-Teen,” for senior high-aged campers; “Night Owls” when kids stayed up late each night to do nighttime activities; a week celebrating holidays, including Christmas; and Tour de Crème, a bike trip where campers went to a local ice cream establishment. The camp also did several joint camps with their counterparts at Krislund Presbyterian Camp and Wesley Forest Methodist Camp, including Rock, Raft, and Roll doing rock climbing, rafting, and biking; and CLAWS camp, featuring Crafts, Legos, and Wild Sports. A Family Camp was also held for participants of all ages. The adult Bible studies were led by Rev. Stina and Deacon Gary Schaeffer.

New programs this year included Tracks, where campers chose from four activity areas to focus their attention during the week. Susquehanna Canoe, a new trip camp, allowed middle school-aged campers the opportunity to paddle for a day. The trip location changed to Walker Lake due to extreme heat that week.

Up and Down the Valleys

October is Rostered Leaders Appreciation Month. Bishop Collins is asking that congregations consider donating to the synod’s Rostered Leaders Debt Reduction fund that month. Gifts can be sent to the synod office.

To celebrate summer, a joint service and Corn Roast was held on August 12. It featured the congregations of Washingtonville, Hidlay’s, and Christ United, Catawissa (Pastor Melody Sell).

Rev. Kerry Aucker (St. John, Jersey Shore) was presented with the Rev. George Morton Spiritual Aims Award at a recent meeting of the Jersey Shore Kiwanis Club. The award is representative of Kiwanis International’s first objective: to give primacy to the human and spiritual, rather than to the material values of life. The club noted Pastor Aucker’s work with the food bank at the former Love Center. Leroy Wion presented the award.

Know a college student who is attending college this fall? The LuMin Network has a student referral tool to help students connect with campus ministries across the country. The referral site is located at: http://lumin-networkreferral.org/student-referrals.

Submit Your Stories! The USS Ark publishes stories about ministries throughout the synod. If you know of a ministry that is flourishing, have a resource that others could benefit from, have a question that you’d like answered, or have a call story that you’d like to share, contact us at news@uss-elca.org

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.

The Rev. Barbara J. Collins, Bishop
Global Mission Updates

- **Christmas will be here before you know it!** That means we are launching our 8th year of providing Christmas-at-Sea gift sacks for ships’ crews that come into East Coast ports during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Plastic gift sacks, with instructions, are available at the synod office. Please make sure you follow the instructions exactly. Substitute items should not be included. This year we are also appealing for homemade cookies or brownies, packed in tins. Inexpensive tins, though not necessarily Christmas-themed, are available at the big “Community Aid” store next to Walmart on “the strip” (Routes US 11/15) just north of Selinsgrove. Deadline for turning in both gift sacks and cookie tins is November 26.

- **Calling all carpenters and general construction volunteers** to make up a small work-team to go to Liberia for 2 or 4 weeks in January 2019 to repair the ceiling of Day Memorial Church in the Liberian town of Harrisburg. Built in 1933, the church was named for Rev. & Mrs. David Day whose graves lie in the cemetery behind the Susquehanna University campus where both graduated in 1874.

- **Congregational contributions so far this year for the “Current for Curran” Hospital project** - building a solar energy facility to provide electrical power to the hospital as a replacement for expensive and unreliable diesel fuel - shows donations so far this year of only $150. In 2015, an identical campaign to provide solar power for Phebe Hospital brought contributions from USS congregations totaling $2,607. Can’t we do at least that for Curran Hospital in 2018? [These two are the only Lutheran hospitals in Liberia].

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 22, 2018. 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.

Books Available

Thanks to a generous gift from the Frantz family, Virginia’s religious library now the lobby at the synod office. Knowing how much Virginia loved to learn, these books, DVD, VHS tapes, and Sunday School materials are now available to other learners for a simple donation per book. All donations from these resources will be designated for future continuing education events that the synod hosts.

Songbooks Available

Redeemer Lutheran Church in Williamsport was gifted ELWs when Saint Matthew, Williamsport closed. If anyone is in need for green LBWs, they have 133 of them. Also, they have 116 With One Voice song books, two service books for the green hymnals and the music accompaniment book for the green hymnals. If anyone is interested in them they can email the church at redeemer144@verizon.net to the attention of Carol Johnson or they can email her directly at carolandshuman@verizon.net. They are free to anyone who can use them, they would just have to make arrangements to pick them up or for shipping.

Director of Music Wanted

Trinity, Hughesville, is looking for a new Director of Music. The job description is available by calling the church office at 570-584-3490.
Grants Available
The Campbell Foundation is excited to announce the opening of their first Chesapeake Office unsolicited grants cycle. This opportunity is open to new grantees (organizations that are not current or previous grantees of the Campbell Foundation) that would like to submit a proposal for projects that improve water quality and promote healthy communities in the Pennsylvania portion of the Susquehanna River Basin. Project award requests can be up to $25,000. Proposals are due no later than Monday, October 1, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Guidelines, FAQ, and instructions on how to apply are available at http://www.campbellfoundation.org/apply/.

September 9, 2018: Liberia Organizational Meeting
Our synod is issuing a first call for anyone interested in joining either a work-team or a familiarization tour to meet the leaders of the Lutheran Church in Liberia and to tour the major facilities of the LCL, including historic churches, schools, and its two hospitals (Phebe and Curran)! A work team will repair the ceiling of Day Memorial Church and continue the renovation of small houses on the campus of the Lutheran Training Center. Don’t freeze at home this January. Visit tropical Liberia and be uplifted by God’s work in our companion synod. Learn more at our first organizational meeting on September 9, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. at our synod office, or phone Sandra Nelson (570)995-9327 or Bob Bradford (570)473-9505.

September 9, 2018: Fall Festival
St. Peter’s, Kreamer, is holding a Fall Festival on Sunday, September 9, 2018, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Free activities include square dancing, cake walk, fire truck rides, games for kids, a basket raffle, and food for purchase. The event benefits the Meals for Mustangs and Meals for Seals programs. To download a flyer, click here: https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-Fall-Festival-Flyer.pdf

September 14-16, 2018: Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend
Marriage is a journey! A Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend can help you enrich your marriage and add some pizzazz to your journey. Sign up TODAY to for the weekend of September 14-16, 2018, at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, PA. A lovely hotel-style retreat center with many acres of woodlands in the heart of the Poconos, an hour north of Allentown, PA. Two nights lodging, five meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your 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. For further information or to sign up, go to: www.GodLovesMarriage.org and pay the $100 registration fee with your credit card, or mark the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

September 24-26, 2018: Stewardship Kaleidoscope’s Transforming the Face of Generosity
Pastors and lay leaders are invited to attend this event at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac in St. Louis, MO on September 24- 26. Keynoters will be Diana Butler Bass and Chick Lane and there will be 30 workshops covering topics such as annual stewardship, planned giving, theology of giving, current trends in stewardship, and capital campaigns. Cost is $275 before August 1, and $300 after. For more information and to register, visit www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org. There are a limited number of scholarships for first call and small church pastors!

September 25-29, 2018: Reflect, Renew, Recommit (3R)
Reflect, Renew, Recommit (3R), a week long discernment retreat, will be offered again this year on September 24-29, 2018. This experience creates a safe place for pastors and spouses to process, share, worship, embrace prayer practices, use tools for vocational support, and discover a newfound community. Deadline to register is August 15, 2018. For more information:

September 26, 2018: ENERGY STAR Pennsylvania Stewardship Tour
Join Interfaith Leaders for the ENERGY STAR® Pennsylvania Stewardship Tour. ENERGY STAR is the nation’s voluntary program helping congregations, businesses, schools, homeowners, and tenants save energy and water—and therefore money. Local Pennsylvania faith communities are hosting ENERGY STAR presentations on tools, training, and technical support freely available at www.energystar.gov/congregations. Everyone is welcome to attend. Presentations are free and reservations are suggested, but not necessary. The closest events near the Upper Susquehanna Synod include:

2:30p.m. – 4:00p.m. at State College Friends Meeting, 611 East Prospect Avenue, State College
7:00p.m. – 8:30p.m. at Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg

October 1, 2018: Boundary Awareness Training
The Lower Susquehanna Synod is holding a boundary awareness training on October 1, 2018, at Zion Church in Marietta. Cost is $25. For more information, visit www.lss-elca.org/event/boundary-workshop-2018-10-1/. Rostered leaders of the ELCA are required to remain current with Boundary Awareness training. As part of their continuing education rostered leaders should participate in a training every three years. Bishop Barbara J. Collins encourages all rostered leaders of this synod to take advantage of trainings offered by our ELCA and full-communion partners. Please be sure to send a copy of your certificate of completion/participation to the bishop’s office when you have completed a workshop. As we learn of opportunities we will make them known.

October 4, 2018: Discipleship Workshop
Go ... make disciples of all nations ...
In a time of declining membership and attendance at worship we struggle to achieve Jesus’ Great Commission. What does it mean to “make disciples” today? At this workshop, on October 4, 2018, from 10:00-2:00 at Messiah, South Williamsport, Craig Miller, Assistant to the Bishop, will help us to
- Share best practices for discipleship that maintains or increases attendance
- Learn about resources for discipleship
Register now at this link: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/discipleship-workshop-tickets-49397155221 or call Brenda in the synod office (570-524-9778). Lunch will be provided by Messiah Lutheran Church.

October 6 and 20, 2018: Peer Ministry for Youth Training
On October 6 & 20, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., St. Luke, Bloomsburg, will host Peer Ministry for Youth Training. Rev. Dr. Kerry Aucker, Certified Peer Minister Trainer, leads this 2 day session to enable 7th thru 12th graders to learn how to overcome barriers that separate people of diverse populations from living, working and ministering together. The training will be held at the church at 9 St. Luke’s Way, Bloomsburg PA 17815. Class size is limited. Call 570-784-5035 to register. Cost is $15. For a flyer/bulletin insert, click here: https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Pear-Ministry-b.insert-2018.docx

October 7-13, 2018: Disaster Recovery Work Trip
The Susquehanna Interfaith Disaster Response Network fall work trip will take place October 7-13. Our work team will go to Washington, North Carolina, to help with rebuilding after Hurricane Matthew. The Susquehanna Interfaith Disaster Response Network is an effort by the Presbytery of Northumberland and the Upper Susquehanna Synod to establish a system for addressing disasters at home and abroad. Formal establishment of the network is planned to take place in September when our synod council and the presbytery will each vote on a resolution. We hope that this network will grow to include other denominations as well. If you are interested in participating in disaster recovery, contact Craig Miller, Assistant to the Bishop for Evangelical Mission: prcmiller@uss-elca.org.
October 8-12, 2018: Appreciative Inquiry and Transition Ministry
The Upper Susquehanna Synod will sponsor a week-long Appreciative Inquiry workshop October 8-12 at Camp Hebron in Halifax, PA. This course, led by the Clergy Leadership Institute, will offer tools to lead through the rapid transitions taking place in our congregations. Special rate for Upper Susquehanna Synod leaders: $550 plus room and meals ($585 residential, $100 commuter). The synod will offer financial assistance to meet the cost of this workshop. To learn about the Appreciative Way check out www.appreciativeway.com. To register, click here: https://www.appreciativeway.com/registration/reg.cfm?prog=Halifax-Oct-18. USS Synod leaders leave the Discount Option “None” and put “HebSpx18” in the Discount Source box to receive a $200 discount per person. Contact Craig Miller for any questions about this event or for financial assistance.

October 19-21, 2018: Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend
Marriage is a journey! A Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend can help you enrich your marriage and add some pizzazz to your journey. Sign up TODAY for the weekend from October 19-21, 2018, at Olmsted Retreat Center. A stunning, hotel-style retreat center adjacent to the Olmsted Mansion in the Allegheny National Forest, two hours north of Pittsburgh. Two nights lodging, five meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your 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. For further information or to sign up, go to: www.GodLovesMarriage.org and pay the $100 registration fee with your credit card, or mark the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

October 20, 2018: Fall Women’s Retreat and Cluster Gatherings
All local women are invited to be participants at the Fall Women’s Retreat and Cluster Gatherings, sponsored by Camp Mount Luther and the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women’s Organization. The day-long retreat will feature a presentation led by Friends of the Heart titled, “Just Say Yes to God.” The retreat is based on the book of Philippians and focuses on balancing work with worship. They will talk about: “Looking In,” issues that keep you from moving on in life, “Looking Up,” developing an ongoing relationship with Christ and “Looking Out,” using your talents, gifts and passion to touch the world. Skit characters are Mary, Martha, and a psychologist who helps them determine how they might best express devotion to Christ. The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, October 20, 2018. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments. The cost of $22.00 per person includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch, and the program. A freewill offering will also be collected. You are encouraged to bring a friend! Registration deadline is October 12. To register, contact 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/2018/07/2018-Womens-Retreat-Flyer.pdf

October 20, 2018: Lay Boundary Awareness
The Penn Central Conference (UCC) is holding a lay boundary awareness workshop on October 20, 2018, at First UCC in Middleburg. Cost is $15. For more information, visit https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ef6x4q4i42dab86d8oseq=&c=&ch. This training is geared more for lay members of congregations, with their pastors attending with them. Rostered leaders of the ELCA are required to remain current with Boundary Awareness training. As part of their continuing education rostered leaders should participate in a training every three years. Bishop Barbara J. Collins encourages all rostered leaders of this synod to take advantage of trainings offered by our ELCA and full-communion partners. Bishop Collins also encourages all ALWL’s of this synod to participate in a boundary training event every three years, just as rostered leaders are required to remain current with boundary training. Please be sure to send a copy of your certificate of
completion/participation to the bishop’s office when you have completed a workshop. As we learn of opportunities we will make them known.

**October 25, 2018: Karl Vaters’ Presentation**

Karl Vaters, pastor of the Cornerstone Christian Fellowship and founder of the New Small Church and the New Small Church Blog, will be in our synod on October 25. He will be doing a presentation, similar to our annual Bishop’s Day gathering, during the day. It will be held at Faith Lutheran, Lewisburg, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This session is geared for rostered church leaders (but lay leaders are welcome). Registration fee of $25.00 per person includes lunch. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. Then, Vaters will offer a second presentation in the evening from 6:00-8:30, also at Faith, Lewisburg. This session is open to all. Registration fee for the evening session is $10.00 per person. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Send registrations to: The Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA, PO Box 36, Lewisburg, PA 17837 Deadline to register is Monday, October 15th. A flyer and registration form are available here: [https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Karl-Vaters-Flyer-and-Registration.docx](https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Karl-Vaters-Flyer-and-Registration.docx)

**October 29- November 2, 2018: EQ-HR Workshop**

EQ-HR Center is sponsoring an intensive four or five-day session designed to enable participants to learn about, build and practice emotional intelligence skills in a small group setting. The program provides the space for faith based leaders to openly explore their relationships with self, their communities and congregations, and experiment with new behaviors. Participants will receive multiple level feedback: in session coaching from experienced facilitators, 360 degree ESCI Analysis, group feedback, and partner feedback. As group life unfolds, participants give and receive feedback regarding the impact they have on others in the group. Participants will learn both inter-personal and intra-group communication skills. The event will take place at the Bishop Clagget Center in Adamstown, MD. Cost is $695 for early bird tuition, $750 regular, $199 ESCI Assessment (required) and $550 for lodging and meals. Payment plans are available. More information at [https://www.eqhr.org/registration/5-day-maryland-2018](https://www.eqhr.org/registration/5-day-maryland-2018).

**November 2, 2018: Evening at Shade Mountain to Benefit Mount Luther**

Come to Shade Mountain Winery to share fellowship, entertainment, and enjoy locally produced wine, all to benefit Camp Mount Luther. The event runs from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by Jason Yoder, a local musician who sings blues and acoustic music. The menu will include heavy appetizers, dessert, and one glass of wine per person. SPACE IS LIMITED. Please make your reservations with the camp office at 570-922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org. If you choose to purchase any bottles of wine that evening, a portion of the proceeds will be given to Mount Luther. We ask all participants to make a donation to the camp that evening, equal or greater to the food and entertainment provided. Download a flyer/bulletin insert here: [https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-Shade-Mountain-Winery-Flyer.pdf](https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-Shade-Mountain-Winery-Flyer.pdf)

**November 4, 2018: Luther Rose Lectures**

Dr. Vincent Evener, Instructor in Reformation and Luther Studies at United Lutheran Seminary, will present the 2018 Luther Rose Lecture at Palm Lutheran Church, Palmyra. It will be from 2:00-4:30 p.m. Evener will speak on Luther, Mysticism, and the Social Order.

**November 5, 2018: LARC Day of Dialog**

As part of our 1993 covenant among Lutherans, Anglicans, & Roman Catholics (LARC), the Upper Susquehanna Synod participates in an annual Day of Dialogue with the Dioceses of Harrisburg (RC) and Central Pennsylvania (Episcopal) and the Lower Susquehanna Synod. This year’s Day of Dialog will take place on Monday, November 5, 9:00-3:00, at the Keeler Center in Harrisburg, with the theme *A Christian Response to Violence*. This event is open to all. Registration information will be made available later this month.
**November 9-11, 2018: Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend**

Marriage is a journey! A Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend can help you enrich your marriage and add some pizzazz to your journey. Sign up TODAY for the weekend of November 9-11, 2018, at Hampton Inn Berkshires in Lenox, Massachusetts. Situated on the edge of a nature preserve in the heart of the Berkshires, an hour northwest of Springfield MA. Two nights lodging, five meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your 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. For further information or to sign up, go to: [www.GodLovesMarriage.org](http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org) and pay the $100 registration fee with your credit card, or mark the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

**November 12, 2018: Educating Educators**

The Penn Central Conference (UCC) is holding a lay boundary awareness workshop on educating educators on November 12, 2018, at Trinity UCC, Dalmatia. Cost is $10. For more information, visit [https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ef772o1za50d4803&oseq=&c=&ch=](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ef772o1za50d4803&oseq=&c=&ch=) This training is geared more for lay members of congregations, with their pastors attending with them. Rostered leaders of the ELCA are required to remain current with Boundary Awareness training. As part of their continuing education rostered leaders should participate in a training every three years. Bishop Barbara J. Collins encourages all rostered leaders of this synod to take advantage of trainings offered by our ELCA and full-communion partners. Please be sure to send a copy of your certificate of completion/participation to the bishop’s office when you have completed a workshop. As we learn of opportunities we will make them known.

**December 7, 2018: Boundary Awareness Training**

The Lower Susquehanna Synod is holding a boundary awareness training on December 7, 2018, at Good Shepherd in Liverpool. Cost is $25. For more information, visit [https://www.lss-elca.org/event/boundary-workshop-3/](https://www.lss-elca.org/event/boundary-workshop-3/). Rostered leaders of the ELCA are required to remain current with Boundary Awareness training. As part of their continuing education rostered leaders should participate in a training every three years. Bishop Barbara J. Collins encourages all rostered leaders of this synod to take advantage of trainings offered by our ELCA and full-communion partners. Bishop Collins also encourages all ALWL’s of this synod to participate in a boundary training event every three years, just as rostered leaders are required to remain current with boundary training. Please be sure to send a copy of your certificate of completion/participation to the bishop’s office when you have completed a workshop. As we learn of opportunities we will make them known.
CML Now RIC

As part of the camp board’s strategic plans to extend more Christian hospitality, the camp has now been recognized as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Organization. The ReconcilingWorks organization affirmed us as an RIC Organization this summer. As part of the application process, the camp board adopted the following welcoming statement:

In response to God’s immeasurable love; and Jesus’ radical calls for grace, inclusion, and freedom of expression, Camp Mount Luther believes all staff, campers, and guests shall be affirmed as children of God who are able to be loved, treated with dignity and justice, and shown grace. Diversity and uniqueness are welcome here because God welcomes all, regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, life circumstances, race, relationship status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic circumstances, or anything else that divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

Mount Luther is just the second organization in the Upper Susquehanna Synod to become a RIC organization, joining the Susquehanna University Worshipping Community. Being RIC means that we publicly state we do not discriminate and are inclusive of those we will serve, particularly LTGBQ people. In reality, this is what we have always done but we are now publicly stating it.

Beginning in 1983, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) program recognizes Lutheran congregations, synods, organizations, colleges, and seminaries that welcome people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. The RIC roster, which Mount Luther is now included, provides a list of places that create safe, nurturing, and affirming settings in which to worship and learn.

“Awesome God, Awesome Love” Highlights Summer

We recently ended our 2018 summer season. Around 600 participants took part in programs during the eight-week session. Upper Susquehanna Synod Bishop Barbara J. Collins installed staff during Synod Assembly where the staff planned and led opening worship.

This summer, 320 campers were able to experience off-site opportunities and 278 campers enjoyed on-site programs including adventure, mini, day, extreme, and family 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 “Awesome God, Awesome Love.” Campers looked at five Bible stories to see the awesome love that our Awesome God gives each of us and has given to Biblical characters from the Old and New Testaments. A new feature this year included Faith 5, a way to look at how God is at work during your daily activities. It also included prayer and a blessing at the end.

Some highlights from this summer included: “Crazy Day Camp,” where campers dressed in different themed outfits each day; Nature Detectives, LOGIC, and SURE, where campers learned more about their natural environment; “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; and Tour de Crème, a bike trip where campers biked to eat ice cream. We also did several joint camps with Krislund Presbyterian Camp and Wesley Forest Methodist Camp, including Rock, Raft, and Roll and CLAWS (Crafts, Legos, and Wild Sports). A Family Camp was also held for participants of all ages. A campfire that week featured a celebration of the camp’s 55th birthday with music provided by K.J. Reimensnyder-Wagner.

New programs this year included Tracks, where campers chose from four activity areas to focus their attention during the week. Susquehanna Canoe, a new trip camp, allowed middle school-aged campers the opportunity to paddle for a day. The trip location changed to Walker Lake due to extreme heat that week.
Whoopie Pies Stand Again!

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 22, 2018. 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.

Women Invited for Fall Retreat

All local women are invited to be participants at the Fall Women’s Retreat and Cluster Gatherings, sponsored by camp and the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women’s Organization. The retreat will feature a presentation led by Friends of the Heart titled, “Just Say Yes to God.” The retreat is based on the book of Philippians and focuses on balancing work with worship. The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, October 20, 2018. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments. The cost of $22.00 per person includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch, and the program. A freewill offering will also be collected. You are encouraged to bring a friend! Registration deadline is October 12. If you have questions, call the camp at (570) 922-1587 or e-mail cml@campmountluther.org. A registration form is on our website.

Evening at Shade Mountain

Come to Shade Mountain Winery to share fellowship, entertainment, and enjoy locally produced wine, all to benefit camp. The event runs from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on November 2. Entertainment will be provided by Jason Yoder, a local musician who sings blues and acoustic music. The menu will include heavy appetizers, dessert, and one glass of wine per person. SPACE IS LIMITED. Please make your reservations with the camp office at 570-922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org. If you choose to purchase any bottles of wine that evening, camp receives a portion of the proceeds. We ask all participants to make a donation to the camp that evening, equal or greater to the food and entertainment provided. A flyer for this event is available on our website.

Straight From the Camel’s Mouth

By Kyros T. Camel

What a great night for the second annual Circle of Faith Giving Club dinner on June 10. We had a great turnout to celebrate our partners in ministry and kickoff the summer camping season. Chad Hershberger, executive director, presented the second Cloud of Witness Award to Upper Susquehanna Synod Bishop Barbara J. Collins. The award recognizes an individual’s time, talent, and treasure to the camp.

Our golf tournament in May garnered just over $16,000 for the camp. About 100 golfers were in attendance. Thanks to all who golfed and sponsored this important fundraiser.

The 17th Annual Dandelion Run was held on September 1st. About 130 runners took part in the 5 and 10K trail race, which this year was part of the Rocksylvania Trail Running Challenge. Several kids, including the camp director’s, took part in the kids fun run as well. And, several summer staff put on their running shoes (and one pair of sandals) to participate. About $2,000 was raised for the camp that day.

We continue to raise funds for the paying off of the debt incurred for last year’s sewer repairs. As of August 14, we had raised $45,680 of our $100,000 goal. Please consider giving to this cause.

At their meeting in July, the camp board approved an “alternative” sabbatical for the Executive Director, which starts on September 10. Chad will be taking a total of 8-9 weeks of sabbatical time from September 2018 to March 2019 and possibly 3-4 weeks during Fall 2019. It was mutually determined that a long-term sabbatical would not be in the camp’s best interest, so he will be taking blocks of time in one and two week increments instead. It has been 11 years since his last sabbatical.