**News, Prayers and Links**

- Continued healing and recovery for Pastor Charlie Hershberger (retired) who suffered a heart attack in July.

- Thanks are extended from Pastor Bill Jones (Emmanuel, Middleburg) to all who helped him and his congregation during his recent surgery.

- Prayer petitions are prepared and sent by the Upper Susquehanna Synod Liberia Committee. Use them in your congregation to lift up our companion synod program; for example, include them in your intercessory prayers, print them in your bulletin or newsletter. The committee welcomes suggestions for petitions: [https://www.uss-elca.org/liberian-prayers-september-2019-december-2019/](https://www.uss-elca.org/liberian-prayers-september-2019-december-2019/)


- From ELCA Advocacy: The “Moving Forward” resource - introduced this summer is now available from [elca.org/environment](http://elca.org/environment). And a reminder, the #PreparedToCare series on the theme's intersection with food assistance, global food security, health, housing, migration, resilience and weather is available from [https://elca.org/resources/advocacy#Environment](https://elca.org/resources/advocacy#Environment).


**Milestones**

**James Vitale** has been called to serve Beaver, Beaver Springs. He and his family plan to move to the area in September and will start his call on October 1. His ordination and installation are planned for October 26.

**Pastor Mark Galbraith** served as Intentional Interim Pastor at the Milton Lutheran Parish. He resigned that call this summer, taking a new interim call at First Presbyterian Church in Davenport, Iowa. **Deacon Gary Schaeffer** will begin as interim for the Milton Parish on September 1.

**New Interims:** **Pastor Justin Lingenfelter** is now the interim at St. John’s, Delaware Run. **Pastor Charles Hershberger** is now the interim at the East Kish Parish (St. Paul’s, Milroy, and St. John’s, Siglerville). **Pastor Christine Kirchner** is now interim at Good Shepherd, Berwick.

**Roster Changes:** Pastor Luther Martell is now on the roster of the Southeast Michigan Synod. Pastor Catrina Ciccone is now on the roster of the Northeast Minnesota Synod.

*With thanks to God for their ministry, we celebrate with these children of God the anniversaries of their ordination or consecration (note: anniversary years listed are in multiples of five only):*

**50 years:** Kenneth Louder (retired) 9/28/1969
MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
(Updated August 28, 2019)

Seeking Candidates/Interviewing
• Messiah, Mifflintown
• Milton Lutheran Parish
• Port Royal Parish
• St. John, Montgomery
• St. John, Northumberland
• St. Luke, Williamsport
• St. Mark, Williamsport

Served by Interim/Preparing Profiles
• Pine Street, Danville
• St. John, Delaware Run

Currently Served by Interim Pastor
• East Kish Parish
• Faith, Richfield
• Grace, Sunbury
• St. James, Jersey Shore
• Trinity, Oak Grove
• Trinity, Shamokin
• Zion, Herndon
• Zion, Renovo

Without Interim, Synod Staff Covering
• St. Luke, Sunbury
• St. Mark, Dormontown

Long-Term Interims are listed here: https://www.uss-elca.org/ministry-opportunities/

CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Buffalo Valley: September 5, 9:00 a.m., Site TBA;
Lectionary study on September 16, 10:00 a.m., Faith, Lewisburg.

Juniata Valley: September 19, 10:00 a.m., Evangelical, Reedsville

Middle Creek: September 10, 10:00 a.m., Salem, Selinsgrove

North Branch: September 25, 9:30 a.m., Site TBA

Tulpehocken: September 3, 10:00 a.m., Grace, Shamokin

West Branch: September 10, 9:30 a.m., Messiah, S. Williamsport.

SYNOD STAFF

Rev. Barbara J. Collins, Bishop
BpCollins@uss-elca.org

Rev. Craig Miller, Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Evangelical Mission
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Brenda Krouse, Office Manager
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Chad Hershberger, Director of Communications
news@uss-elca.org

The bishop and assistant like to make Sunday and other congregational visits. Here is the schedule:

Sept 1: Bishop at Trinity, Shamokin
Sept 8: Pastor Miller at Milton Lutheran Parish
Sept 15: Pastor Miller at Evangelical, Reedsville

Sept. 22: Bishop and Pastor Miller at David Lowell Chilton installation

Sept 29: Bishop at Conference of Bishops

CONFERENCE DEANS

Rev. Erwin Roux, Buffalo Valley
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Rev. Calra Volland, Juniata Valley
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Rev. Stina Schaeffer, Middle Creek
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Rev. John Koons, North Branch
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INTRODUCING

The Bishop’s Congregational Discernment Team

At the synod assembly this June, the Bishop’s Reconciliation Team reported: “We as a team are in a discerning process as well. We continue to search for ways to serve congregations and pastors in a more effective way. We are at one of those points in our history when we want to renew our understanding of who we are and what resources we can offer. We will certainly be in touch with you as those thoughts become plans.”

Well, those thoughts have become plans. As we have ministered among the congregations of the synod that are struggling or conflicted, we see they often need resources and assistance that are not typically considered as tools for conflict resolution. So, we have reconstituted ourselves so that we can deal not only with conflict directly but can assist...task forces and other tools available through the synod. We have compiled a reference so that we can immediately point a congregation to appropriate persons who can immediately respond to the need. For example, often we find that congregations would benefit from an update of the constitution. We would immediately refer them to Rev. Thomas Glasoe, chair of the constitution committee. Or perhaps there is a need for better communication within the congregation. Chad Hershberger, our director of communications, could be of assistance. There are lots of resources available to our congregations, many of which can help with the stresses and discomfort that go along with ministry. We can help congregations discern those needs and resources.

So, we are no longer the Bishop’s Reconciliation Team. We are The Bishop’s Congregational Discernment Team. You can reach us through Bishop Collins, or Pr. Jim Bricker, chair of the team. (Gymbri@embarqmail.com 717 512-1026) Here is the official description of our ministry.

The Bishop’s Congregational Discernment Team

The Bishop’s Discernment Team of lay and ordained volunteers is devoted to assisting congregations. The Team’s assistance can be in the form of coaching, conflict mediation, referral to appropriate synod resources and guided conversation. The Team encourages congregations to consider well their pastoral and other relationships, past and present, ministry programs and structures, in order to identify ways by which they may reach their fullest potential as God’s people.

COMING SOON: Watch for a special ELCA Churchwide Assembly summary with reflections of some of our synod members who attended. We’ll give you information, reflection, and resources you can use.
With One Voice and Pascal Candle Available
United In Christ, West Milton, has about 125 copies of With One Voice in storage that anyone would be welcome to have (you know, if they are looking for a change from the green book.) They also have an extra stand for a paschal candle base/stand available that is free for the taking. If interested, please contact the church office at 570-568-2254.

Haven Ministry Seeks Volunteers
Haven Ministries of Sunbury is always in need of individuals or groups of up to four people to volunteer overnight at the shelter from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. It’s easy and a fun way to help out. You can relax, watch TV, and socialize with the clients during the evening. Then you’ll close up the common area and go to bed. In the morning, staff comes in and you go home. You’ll need to answer phones if they ring and take a message. All clients must pass a criminal background check before they come to the shelter which helps ensure your safety. If you would like to volunteer, call 570-286-1672.

Strategic Plan Work Continues
Bishop Collins and Synod Council thank all for participating in our day of discussion focused on our synod strategy. By sharing your thoughts in your conference gathering space and on the sheets provided you have offered ideas and aspirations that we will share with the implementation team to guide their work. As stated at the assembly, our synod strategy will work best when our congregations and conferences see and act their part in making it a success. Witnessing the energy and engagement amongst you as you discussed Unity, Support and Service, made us believe that this strategy truly reflects God’s desire for our synod. We encourage you to remain engaged with your conference and the plans that have already begun to take shape. And we also encourage you to share your energy with your congregations in order to bring many into the work of our church united in support for one another and service in the world. Please continue to share your thoughts and ideas in your congregations, your conference, and with our synod leaders. Together we will share in God’s mission for our church in our Upper Susquehanna Synod.

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 28, 2019. 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.

Clergy Clinic in Family Emotional Process
The dates for the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center’s Clergy Clinic 2019-2020 are listed below. You can register online at www.BrownPaperTickets.com. Please be aware that the online option has an additional small service fee will be assessed. Questions? Visit www.LMPeaceCenter.org, call our office at 630-627-0507, or send us an email at Admin@LMPeaceCenter.org.

Location: Lombard, IL (Chicago area)
Two options: choose Group A or Group B

Group A dates
October 28-30, 2019
Lutheran Marriage Encounter Fall Weekends

Don't miss your opportunity to enrich your marital relationship at one of these lovely locations. Remember that because Lutheran Marriage Encounter is celebrating 50 years of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, they are offering 50 percent off on all registration fees for 2019, so the registration fee is $50 instead of $100. Whether your marriage is practically perfect or if you have some struggles, couples overwhelmingly report that the weekend is the best thing they have ever done for their relationship!

Fall Weekends are scheduled for October 11-13, 2019, at Hyatt Place in Cranberry / Pittsburgh, PA and November 1-3, 2019, at Hampton Inn Berkshires in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Please go to the website: www.GodLovesMarriage.org to see the cost for the Weekend of your choice. Two nights lodging, five meals for each of you, and all supplies are included. Financial assistance is available for those in need. Fill out and submit the form, and complete your registration with a credit card, or you may choose the option to mail a check. For questions, please contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

September 7, 2019: Church Musician Workshop

ALCM will hold the workshop "Exploring New and Renewed Assembly Song for Lutherans" on Saturday, September 7, 2019, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Worcester, MA. Information is at https://alcm.org/event/worcester-ma/. Mark Mummert is the host and facilitator. Please forward this to your church music friends. All are welcome!

September 8, 2019: “God’s work. Our hand.” Day of Service

Save the date! “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday will be Sunday, September 8, 2019. This day 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. 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 2018! Access resources to guide your congregation’s planning, promotion and more at https://www.elca.org/dayofservice.

September 15, 2019: College Planning Workshop

Thrivent Agent Melissa Apanel is hosting a college planning workshop on September 15, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. at 434 Market St. Suite 204, Lewisburg. This workshop is free and open to all, but is geared towards families with kids in 8th through 11th grade who are thinking about college. Feel free to invite others – this is important information to share. Four out of 5 parents send their children to college without knowing how to pay for it. Do you know there are ways to potentially save on your out of pocket costs? “College Planning Strategies” is presented by college planning expert and Thrivent representative Chris Grant. You’ll learn why:

- applying to more than one college can improve admissions and financial aid chances.
- a college with high sticker price can turn out to be less costly out of pocket than a competitive public college.
• similarly situated families can have widely different FAFSA results that can affect their student’s financial aid. You’ll also learn how to access free college planning tools, resources, and information to make your family’s college planning efforts as effective as possible. Taking on $30,000 in student loan debt (the average debt per borrower at graduation), can’t be the best strategy to starting life after college. Learn how having a solid plan for admissions, focusing on academics, and understanding the financial process could provide a much better option. Please RSVP to melissa.apanel@thrivent.com or call 570-884-4060 by September 10th. This event is open to all – please feel free to share with others that may have interest in attending. https://www.facebook.com/events/2333859920189416/

October 6, 2019: CML Volunteer Brainstorm
Be part of a new camp event on Sunday, October 6, 2019, from 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Evergreen Center at Camp Mount Luther. Everyone, but most especially campers, parents, alumni staff, camp friends, and anyone interested in our outdoor ministry is invited to come to this new, exciting event. Bring your ideas for camp- summer camp programs, fundraising, marketing, facilities, non-summer events, or anything else you think might benefit Mount Luther. We’ll share ideas and organize Camel Crews (task forces) to work on those ideas for the coming year! If you have questions, contact the camp office at 570-922-1587 or cml@campmountluther.org

October 8, 2019: 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 8, 2019. 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. You don’t need to stay the whole time! Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to the camp office at cml@campmountluther.org or 570-922-1587 before September 30, 2019.

October 20-26, 2019: Mission Trip
Upper Susquehanna Synod and the Northumberland Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA) are sponsoring another mission/work trip to hurricane ravaged areas of North Carolina. The trip will be October 20-26, 2019, and the cost will be $100 plus transportation. All levels of experience are needed. For more Information, contact: Doug Orbaker at 570-768-6436 or dougorbaker@yahoo.com. For a flyer about this event, visit https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/poster-to-send-out.pdf

November 1, 2019: 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 KJ Reimensnyder-Wagner, a local musician who sings folk 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@cammpountluther.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/2019/08/2019-Shade-Mountain-Winery-Flyer.pdf.

November 2, 2019: 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 will feature a presentation led by Rev. Sarah Hershberger titled, “We All Are One in Mission.” The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, November 2, 2019. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments. The cost of $20.00 per person includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch, and the
program. You are encouraged to bring a friend! Registration deadline is October 25. 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.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2019-Womens-Retreat-Flyer.pdf.

November 20-21, 2019: ESC Generosity Next
"Spiritual Generosity: Offering Vitality in the 21st Century" will be held in November. Some of the questions that will be addressed include:

- What changes have you noticed in your offerings?
- How is the role of offering evolving in worship?
- What new practices can bring vitality to your offerings?

The Ecumenical Stewardship Center (ESC) sponsors this conference in Atlanta, GA, on November 20-21, 2019. In an effort to reach a broader audience this fall, a new format for this conference is being introduced via live streaming at multiple host site locations. Does your church have the ability to serve as a live streaming host site? Contact Craig Miller for more information or to indicate your ability to host.

Basic Format: A two-day event with Day 1 being presentations onsite in Atlanta by four speakers, followed by the use of guided questions and open conversation. Presentations will be live streamed to offsite locations. Each offsite location will have their own conversations in context. Questions from these conversations can be submitted for discussion with each presenter on Day 2 as part of deeper reflection and discussion time. The presentations on Day 1 would be live streamed starting at 9:15 a.m. EDT. Day 1 will conclude by 4:30 p.m. EDT and Day 2 by 12:30 p.m. EDT.

The synod will identify facilitators for the events. Host sites will need to arrange internet connection and projection audio & video for both days, as well as lunch on Day 1 (Day 2 lunch optional).