Focus on Global Missions

We had two folks from the area travel to Liberia with Sandy Nelson as part of the Hand in Hand Tour earlier this year. They provided reflections on their trip:

"Looking back, I cannot articulate how invaluable this experience has been for me educationally, personally, and spiritually. Each day I was confronted with all the things I have studied in school, like peacebuilding, reconciliation, and international development. Even though I was missing class at home, I learned more in Liberia than I could have from a book alone," said Claire Weisner, Trinity, Milton (Deacon Gary Schaeffer)

"I enjoyed our visits to local Lutheran churches, hospitals, and Lutheran schools. In particular, I was impressed with the missionaries at Totota, and the amazing Lutheran Training Institute located at Zorzor. The latter has much to be completed but the Director is young and energetic, and I have a lot of confidence that he has a vision and will fulfill much of his vision," said Eleanor Uckele, Williamsport.

Read more of Claire and Eleanor’s reflections at https://wp.me/p9Gqgm-1mx

From Brian Palmer, ELCA Pastor/ Missionary serving in Totota, Liberia: I’ve heard about two cures for COVID 19 in my community. The first originated from an elderly woman in the bush. In a dream the answer was revealed to her, it’s ginger mixed with lime. Although this cure became common knowledge in Totota, I’m not aware of anybody actually trying it. The second cure was quite popular for a few days. Some pastor on the radio said he had a vision of a corona prophylaxis. The recipe was simple, flip through your Bible and find a hair somewhere among the pages, then take that hair and put it in the water you use to bathe. I’ve made it a point to try to be a helpful presence while honoring social distancing etc. I’ve helped several people find hairs.

From Viking Dietrich, ELCA missionary in Berlin where he serves as regional representative in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa: I have been impressed with the creativity and boundless efforts being undertaken by so many to create worship and other congregational events with online formats. Listening to pastors, I hear them saying online worship has enabled them to reach many more people than they usually would on a Sunday morning, but they are also saying it is difficult and stressful to work in this new format every week. Is there any way that I could help? It is very possible for me to join you “online” or even through a prerecorded video that you could share. Some ideas:

• Could I record a reading of a lesson, intercessory prayers, or a sermon, and send it to you to use in your online worship?
• Could I attend one of your live online meetings, such as a Bible Study group, or a Council meeting, or an online youth gathering?
• What ideas do you have that would work for you?
Camp COVID-19 in ‘20

This summer, Mount Luther is offering their grounds for use by families who want to “re-create.” Please maintain current coronavirus precautions, including social distancing, wearing masks, not visiting camp if you are ill, and not gathering in large groups. Plan to be self-sufficient, bringing whatever you need. Please email chad@campmountluther.org or call ahead (570-922-1587). Also, Virtual CML plans to kick off on July 28. There will be online camp activities for a week, produced by the camp’s summer staff. Look for more details on the camp website and social media, including pre-camp worships!

HELP INVITE COLLEGE STUDENTS TO LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY!

With COVID-19, students are facing a different world.

- It is vital that you help campus ministry reach out to students this year.
- Colleges will begin classes this fall with unprecedented restrictions.
- Campus life will bring new challenges and students will need the connection of a faith community more than ever.

Use this link to share contact info with Lutheran Campus Ministry across the nation!

http://lumin-networkreferral.org/student-referrals/

This online form helps you send student names and contact information to the ministry or congregation closest to their campus.

Contact Alicia Anderson at ara2@psu.edu if you have questions.

Thank you so much for your help connecting campus ministry and students as we prepare for life on campus during the COVID-19 era.

Up and Down the Valleys

It is our tradition in the synod to celebrate the significant anniversaries of our congregations and rostered leaders when we gather for Synod Assembly. Even though we cannot gather for assembly this year, we don’t want to neglect recognizing these milestones. For all these we give thanks for their faithful years of service.

Celebrating significant anniversaries of congregational ministry or Word and Sacrament ministry:

- 175 years- Garman, Jersey Shore (Pastor Gary Shumway); and
- Pine Street, Danville (Interim Pastor Tim Sadler); 250 years- St. Peter, Freeburg (Interim Pastor Lisa Barnes)

SYNOD COUNCIL ACTIONS: Synod Council approved a change in status to On Leave from Call for the Rev. Jerri Carlin following a mutual separation agreement between her and St. John’s, Lewistown. They also voted in July to reappoint Rev. Chad Hebrink to serve another four-year term as treasurer. Synod Council is seeking two lay female representatives for synod council, one from Buffalo Valley and one from Juniata Valley.

Brenda is back in the synod office, but the office is open by appointment only and that masks are required for entry. Go to our website for updates, online worship services, and education opportunities.

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
**Worth Repeating:**
**Marriage Enrichment in the Fall**
If the Coronavirus has put stress on your marriage, you are not alone! Lutheran Marriage Encounter has scheduled a couple of weekends this fall, and we believe that you will find that attending a Weekend will help you renew and revitalize your marital relationship no matter whether your marriage is in great shape or if you could really use some help. The weekends currently scheduled are:

**September 18-20** at the Heritage Hotel Lancaster in Lancaster PA and **October 16-18** at the Olmsted Retreat in Ludlow, PA, an hour north of Pittsburgh.

Scholarships are available for those in need of financial assistance--simply email or call us at the information below before you register. Registrations will be very limited as we plan to provide ample space in the conference room for each couple. If the virus should cause us to have to cancel the Weekend, your registration will, of course, be transferred to a later Weekend or refunded if you wish. So please sign up now, at the website: [www.GodLovesMarriage.org](http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org) to ensure your spot. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance and enrich your relationship! For questions, please contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

**July 28, 2020- August 4, 2020: Virtual CML**
Mount Luther is gearing up for their alternative summer camping season for 2020. While traditional residential and off-site camps were cancelled due to the pandemic, Mount Luther’s “Camp COVID-19 in ’20” is in full swing with a number of activities. On Wednesday, July 15, returning summer staff began three weeks of leadership training, service work, and the development and implementation of a virtual summer camp experience.

“Virtual CML” will begin on July 28 and run until August 4. Online camp activities will be shared then, in a combination of pre-recorded and live videos as well as sharing of resources of things that can be done at home. Updates on virtual camp will be provided on the camp’s website and social media. In addition, camp staff prepared three worship services that are being posted on the camp’s social media prior to the virtual camp. They feature the themes of “God’s Promises,” “Grieving What We Lost,” and “Hope for the Future.” This year’s theme at Mount Luther is “From Generation to Generation.” Campers will explore the stories of familiar Bible characters and their responses to God’s call and promised faithfulness in their lives. They will see how the enduring love instilled in the promise to Abraham and Sarah continues through Old Testament characters, to Jesus, to the early church, and on to them! Through the camp’s method of studying the Bible, called “GROW Time,” staff will help campers Gather and Reflect On the Word throughout their day, even in a virtual setting.

**August 2, 2020: Outdoor Worship**
The Buffalo Valley Conference is sponsoring an outdoor worship service at Camp Mount Luther at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 2. All are welcome and more details will be posted soon.

**August 13, 2020: Rostered Leaders Renewal Day**
Bishop Collins invites rostered leaders and their families to a Renewal Day on August 13, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at Camp Mount Luther. Current events have added tension to the already stressful lives of our rostered leaders. Thanks to our synod council, the Bishop’s Retreat planning team, and the generosity of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund we will provide a day of relief for rostered leaders on August 13 at Camp Mount Luther. This one-day event will include opportunities for worship, conversation, relaxation, recreation, and refreshment.
The day begins with a Service of Lament at 9:00 a.m. and concludes with a Message of Hope at 3:30 p.m. For those who wish to linger, we will offer time around the campfire until 5:30 p.m. (weather permitting). Those who attend will have opportunities to participate in small group conversations, a meditative hike, and more. The campgrounds will be open for exploring all day or bringing lawn chairs or blankets for sitting on the grounds and enjoying a day away. Bishop Collins and Craig Miller will be available for one-on-one conversation as well. This respite day is offered at no cost to participants; simply register by August 1: https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/2050139

**September 5, 2020: Dandelion Trail Run at CML**
Camp Mount Luther will be holding a 5- and 10-kilometer trail run race at the camp on Saturday, September 5, 2020. This is an entry-level trail race on Mount Luther grounds with proceeds going to the camp. 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. The 10k distance is included in the Rockslyvania 10k race series. More details on that are available at [http://midpentrailblazers.com/links.html](http://midpentrailblazers.com/links.html). Race day registration is $30. Pre-register by August 21 and pay only $25. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on race day. Spectators are welcome as well. A kid’s fun run will also be held with two age categories: six and under and 7-10. Special awards will be presented to every participant in the fun run. Again, this year, a one-mile fun walk on a dirt road will be held with the same registration fees and amenities applying (or you may just walk without receiving amenities for $10). 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. Shower facilities are available after 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 register, visit [http://midpentrailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelionrun.html](http://midpentrailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelionrun.html). The Dandelion Run, begun in 2002, is organized by Joel and Shelley Heasley of Middleburg. It 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. Heasley’s widow, Shirley, is also involved in the planning of the race. A flyer is available here: [http://midpentrailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelion-run-application.pdf](http://midpentrailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelion-run-application.pdf)

**September 13, 2020: “God’s work. Our hands.” Day of Service**
You are invited to add your voices to this year’s “God’s work. Our hands.” Day of Service. And, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of PA can help you take your service to neighbor a step further toward justice through advocacy. Learn more here: [https://tinyurl.com/y8a4p2hu](https://tinyurl.com/y8a4p2hu)

**September 21, 2020: Bishop’s Open Golf Classic**
The annual Bishop’s Open Golf Classic scheduled for May 11, 2020, has been postponed until September 21, 2020, with the same schedule. Registration starts at 11 with lunch following and a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. at the Susquehanna Valley Country Club in Shamokin Dam. Snacks and prizes after golfing. The tournament benefits Camp Mount Luther’s annual fund. A flyer/bulletin insert containing information and registration form is available here: [https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-Sept-Golf-Tournament-Flyer.pdf](https://www.campmountluther.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-Sept-Golf-Tournament-Flyer.pdf). The camp’s golf tournament committee is currently looking for hole sponsors, silent auction items, and golfers. If you can help, please contact the camp office at 570-922-1587 or [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org). Congregations are also encouraged to become hole sponsors. Get involved and help our synod’s outdoor ministry!

**October 4, 2020: Blanket Sunday**
Blanket Sunday is October 4, 2020. The container will be at the Synod Office on October 10, 2020, from 9-3. This is not a group gathering, and Lutheran World Relief will need supplies this year more than ever, especially blankets, quilts and health kits. For more information, contact Sue Baylor at 570-279-4766

If you need envelopes, they are available at the Synod Office. If you call Brenda at 570-524-9778 you can arrange to pick them up or have them mailed to you.
New Learning Opportunities Coming This Fall from the Stevenson School for Ministry
A Joint Venture of the Upper and Lower Susquehanna Synods and the Episcopal Diocese of Central PA

- **How is God calling us to move forward as Christ’s church? Webinars:** Saturdays August 15 & October 31 10:00 a.m. to Noon. The Rev. Dr. Tricia Lyons will lead us in discussions and learning as we wrestle with the work of embracing evangelism in the complexity of our challenging times. Being an evangelistic community in a time of Covid-19 taught us new ways of building discipleship through evangelism and sharing our story. *Registration coming soon!* **Partner with the SSFM to Practice Evangelism** and reach out to your community! If you are involved in a parish or regional evangelism project, the SSFM would like to consider collaborating with you. The SSFM is the blessed recipient of a new Episcopal Evangelism grant that supports best practices for integrating evangelism in the community. If your parish is engaged in an intentional Shaped by Faith evangelism initiative or immersion experience that could benefit from a financial seed grant or missional leadership support and guidance, please contact the Very Rev. Robyn Szoek-Coolidge, rszoke@diocesecpa.org or Deacon Marsha Roscoe, mroscoe@diocesecpa.org.

- **Misional Stewardship:** Taught by The Rev. Richard Jorgensen begins Mondays at 6:00 pm on August 25. We are called to bear witness to Christ in all that we say and do. As stewards of the gospel, we use all the gifts which God has given us to proclaim and reflect the reign of God, which is already breaking into our lives and our world today. This course will equip students to articulate the connections between a stewardship of life and their mission as servants of Christ. Cost is $75 and registration is here: https://diocesecpa.org/shaped-by-faith-courses/registration/.

- **Study Biblical Hebrew** with the Rev. Dr. Collin Cornell beginning Tuesdays at 6:00 pm on August 25 and delve into a deeper understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. More information: https://diocesecpa.org/ssfm/

- **Spiritual Practices for Today** taught by Deacon Marsha Roscoe begins Tuesdays at 7:00 pm on August 25 and offers an experiential introduction to classical Christian spiritual disciplines that nurture intimacy with God. Becoming familiar with some of Christianity’s rich spiritual traditions as you experiment with various classical prayer-forms. More information: https://diocesecpa.org/ssfm/

- **Post Pandemic Church I & II:** Thursdays at 6:00 PM beginning August 27. This series of discussions, offered by The Rev. Canon Chris Streeter as part of our Shaped by Faith initiative in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, will enable church leaders to discern how we will guide the shaping our communities on the other side of Covidtide. Drawing on the experience of practitioners from across our Diocese and the wider church, and utilizing data gathered by our Diocesan Task Force on Theology & Ecclesiology, our areas of focus will include liturgy and worship, pastoral offices, evangelism, fellowship, outreach, and faith formation. Cost is $75 and registration is here: https://diocesecpa.org/shaped-by-faith-courses/registration/.

- **Doing Politics Through the Lens of Faith:** Taught by The Rev. Matthew Best begins Thursdays at 7:00 pm on August 27. This five-week course will explore politics through the lens of faith. Through real life examples, stories, and Scripture, students will examine their own beliefs about politics and faith and come away ready to “do” politics in a faith-filled way. Watch the course intro here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66qFWuT8r4I. Cost is $75 and registration is here: https://diocesecpa.org/shaped-by-faith-courses/registration/
• **Racial Justice and the Body of Christ:** Co-taught by The Rev. Dr. Allison St. Louis and Dr. Joshua Davis begins Wednesdays at 6:00 pm on September 30. Using a framework of becoming, connecting, and doing, this module is designed to engage persons of faith in the work of co-creating with God a society in which racial justice is the norm. This is free but registration is required: [https://diocesecpa.org/shaped-by-faith-courses/registration/](https://diocesecpa.org/shaped-by-faith-courses/registration/)

• **Have you explored our podcasts yet?** We have a variety of podcast series available to help you deepen your faith. [Listen on our website](https://diocesecpa.org/ssfm/ssfm-podcast-series/) as we continue to offer weekly podcasts facilitated by Dr. Deirdre Good to engage Scripture lessons from Sunday’s lectionary: [https://diocesecpa.org/ssfm/ssfm-podcast-series/](https://diocesecpa.org/ssfm/ssfm-podcast-series/)
Camp Mount Luther Store
Open until July 12

The Camp Mount Luther Summer 2020 Online Store is now open! Until July 12, you can order apparel with all proceeds benefiting CML! After the sale ends, merchandise will be sent to your address. There is a new shirt for 2020 "I Don't Get Homesick, I Get Campsick!" and other long-sleeve shirts, hoodies, tank tops, and women's apparel in lots of colors. Check it out and support camp as we kick off "Mount Luther's Camp COVID-19 in '20." Make your first stop the camp store by clicking here: http://campmountluther.graphichivestores.com/

Camp Open for Re-creation!

Our latest offering for this unusual summer is to offer our grounds for use by families who want to re-create. Do you want to get away and connect with family, nature, and God? Do you need a place for a small picnic? Want to take a hike or play Frisbee golf on a sunny, summer day? Come to camp!

We ask that you continue to maintain all current coronavirus precautions, including social distancing, wearing masks when needed, not visiting camp if you are ill, and not gathering in large groups. You should also plan to be self-sufficient when you are here, bringing whatever you need.

Please call ahead (570-922-1587) or email chad@campmountluther.org to reserve time at camp. Cabins are also available to be rented, based on availability. Shared kitchen facilities in Pine Lodge and Maple Hall could also be utilized based on request.

Coming this Month!

Details will be shared soon about our Virtual CML that will be coming later this month. Join us from July 28-August 4, as we provide online camp activities for you. There will be both pre-recorded and live videos as well as sharing of resources of things you can do at home.

Our summer staff arrives on July 15 to prepare for Virtual CML as well as do leadership training and service work. We will provide updates as we figure out exactly what our online camp will entail.
Dandelion Run Planned for September

Don’t forget about our 5- and 10-kilometer trail run race still scheduled at the camp on Saturday, September 5, 2020. The Dandelion Run starts at 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. The 10k distance is included in the Rocksylvania 10k race series. More details on that are available at http://midpenntrailblazers.com/links.html. Race day registration is $30. Pre-register by August 21 and pay only $25. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on race day. Spectators are welcome as well. A kid’s fun run will also be held with two age categories: six and under and 7-10. Special awards will be presented to every participant in the fun run. Again, this year, a one-mile fun walk on a dirt road will be held. A flyer is available here: http://midpenntrailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelion-run-application.pdf

Help Us Fund Summer Camp

“Adopt” A Staff Member

Because of the cancellation of summer camp this year, the camp board decided that we would hire our 11 returning staff members who were already contracted for the summer. For three weeks, starting on July 15, they will be doing leadership training, service work, and developing our virtual camp.

We estimate that it will cost about $350 per staff per week for their time here. This figure includes salary, room and board. So, our expenses will be about $11,550 for this program. So far, some generous supporters have contributed about $1,700 to help “Support the Staff.”

We are asking if other individuals or congregations are interested in supporting a staff member for a week (or more), please send your donations to the camp marked “Support the Staff.” We are grateful for your help in this endeavor.

Golf Tournament Scheduled for September

The annual Bishop’s Open Golf Classic is now scheduled for September 21, 2020. Registration starts at 11 with lunch following and a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. Snacks and prizes after golfing. The tournament benefits Camp Mount Luther’s annual fund. A flyer/bulletin insert with registration form is available on our website. The camp’s golf tournament committee continues to look for hole sponsors, silent auction items, and golfers. Congregations are also encouraged to become hole sponsors. For more information visit our website or call the camp office.

Watch for Video Worships before Virtual CML

Our summer staff are recording some worship services that will be posted on our social media prior to our virtual camp. They will feature the themes of “God’s Promises,” “Grieving What We Lost,” and “Hope for the Future.”

The first of these have been recorded and will be posted after July 8.

CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

355 Mt. Luther Ln., Mifflinburg, PA  17844

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E-Mail: cml@campmountluther.org

Please remember Mount Luther in your gift plan.