Other “Camp COVID-19 in ’20” Events

On August 2, Mount Luther staff welcomed friends for three events. Former senior high campers reunited in the afternoon and played some Frisbee Golf. Then, a Take-Out Spaghetti Supper was held, complete with socially distanced eating outside! That evening, an outdoor worship service was at the Amphitheater, with Bishop Barbara J. Collins preaching and the staff leading worship. About 85 spaghetti suppers were sold and had about 80 (all masked) in attendance for the worship.

Thanks to the Graphic Hive in Williamsport, Mount Luther was able to host an online apparel store with all proceeds benefiting CML! There was 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. Sales were so good that they won a competition, receiving a dozen free staff shirts.

The camp also offered families the opportunity to come and stay at camp in a cabin or tent for a family getaway. Several families enjoyed spending time together in the outdoors.

"From Generation to Generation” Virtually!

Camp Mount Luther recently ended their summer camping season. Due to the global pandemic, it was like none other in the camp’s history! Because traditional summer camp was cancelled, the camp engaged in some creative ways to still have camp activities despite not being together on-site. Committed to providing some type of camp experience this summer, twelve returning staffers were hired for three weeks to do leadership training, service work, and develop a virtual camp. Three recorded “Zoom” worships were posted online prior to the staff's arrival on July 15. Then, Virtual CML launched on July 28, which the staff developed the two weeks prior. It was full of Facebook Live events, pre-recorded videos, and activities to do at home. They even had a Flipgrid so campers could share what they did with us. You can view all the materials at www.campmountluther.org/coronavirus.

This year’s theme at Mount Luther was “From Generation to Generation.” Campers explored the stories of familiar Bible characters and their responses to God’s call and promised faithfulness in their lives. They saw 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 helped campers Gather and Reflect On the Word throughout their day, even in a virtual setting.
Clergy Renewal Day Held

Thanks to our synod council, the Bishop’s Retreat planning team, and the generosity of the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, a Renewal Day for rostered leaders was held on August 13, at Camp Mount Luther. Current events have added tension to the already stressful lives of our rostered leaders and this day gave those in attendance opportunities for worship, conversation, relaxation, recreation, and refreshment.

The day began with a Service of Lament and concluded with a Message of Hope. Attendees got to do a meditative hike, outdoor yoga, canoeing, fishing, and just sitting in lawn chairs and blankets enjoying a day away. Bishop Collins and Pastor Miller were available for one-on-one conversation as well.

Pastor Ela Robertson (St. John, Belleville) provided music on her cello during the two worship services at the Day of Renewal in August.

Up and Down the Valleys

Bishop in Residence: Over the next three months, Bishop Collins will make arrangements to be in conferences for a few days. The first one will be the week of September 23, in North Branch Conference at Grace, Berwick. Check the synod website for the complete schedule as dates are confirmed.

Clergy Notes: Rev. Erin Bovendam (Trinity, McAlisterville) and Rev. Chris Mathiason (St. Stephen’s, Licking Creek) moved to Minnesota in September. Rev. Allen Hulslander is now interim at St. John’s, Lewistown. Gary Schaeffer (formerly of St. Matthew’s, Shamokin Dam) was called to the Milton Lutheran Parish and ordained on September 6. TEEM Vicar Mindy Bartholomew now serves St. Matthew, Shamokin Dam following Deacon Schaeffer’s end of service. Rev. David Byerly (Lycoming County Trinity) retired at the end of August. TEEM Vicar Carol Johnson will now serve Redeemer, Williamsport and St. Michael’s, Cogan Station following Pastor Byerly’s retirement. New Interim Pastors: Rev. Steve Middernacht (Faith, Lewisburg); Rev. Karen Minnich-Sadler (Christ’s United, Catawissa, Washingtonville); and Rev. Joel Zeiders and Rev. Chad Hebrink (Hidlay, Bloomsburg).

Congratulations to Rev. James Vitale (Beaver, Beavertown) and his wife, Isabel, on the birth of Benjamin Andrew, born on August 11. He joins big brother Ezra. Their congregation held a drive-by baby shower on August 29 for the new family of four.

Sherry Bingaman, Chad Hershberger, and Charlene Rineer, members of the synod GROW Team, attended a two day Zoom workshop on the Growing Young initiative from Fuller Youth Institute. Six themes emerged from their research into “growing young” congregations, commonalities that were about culture more than sustainability strategy. The “growing young” movement is building momentum and the three plan to share their learnings in the coming months.

Submit 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.
**Upper Susquehanna Synod Events**

**Farmer’s Market Produce Vouchers for Union/Snyder County**
To be eligible, individuals must be 60 years of age or older by December 31, 2020 and have an income that does not exceed $23,606 per year for a single person or $31,894 for a household of two. Eligible individuals can obtain applications at any of the Senior Centers in Union/Snyder County, Ards Farm Market, Route 45, Mifflinburg; Lewisburg Farmer’s Market; Whispering Pines Market, Mt. Pleasant Mills; and the website for Agency on Aging (usaaa17.org). Once the application is received by the agency, they will be sent via U.S. mail to the recipient. Each eligible individual receives four $6.00 checks to spend throughout the season. Vouchers may be redeemed from June 1 through November 30, 2020. For additional information contact the Union/Snyder Agency on Agency, Inc. at 570-524-2100 or (570) 374-5558.

**SINDR Clean-Up Kits**
The Susquehanna Interfaith Network for Disaster Response is collecting items for clean-up kits. Church World Service provides these clean-up kits to survivors of disasters. A truck will come through our area on September 15. Watch synod news for more information about where to take your clean-up kits.

**Cleanup Bucket checklist**

- 1 — 5-gallon bucket with resealable lid*
- 5 — scouring pads
- 7 — sponges, assorted sizes
- 1 — scrub brush
- 1 — pkg. cleaning towels (18 reusable, like Easy Wipes®)
- 1 — box dry laundry detergent, 50-78 oz.
- 1 — liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol®), 12 oz.**
- 1 — bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn®), 24-28 oz.**
- 1 — 1 pkg. clothespins, 48-50
- 1 — Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- 5 — dust masks
- 2 — pair latex gloves (like Playtex®)
- 1 — pair work gloves
- 1 — 24 to 28 ct roll heavy-duty trash bags (30-45 gallon, remove from carton)
- 1 — bottle insect repellent (pump, drops or lotion; not aerosol), 6-9 oz.**

*Some local fast-food restaurants are willing to give pickle buckets (or other 5-gallon buckets with resealable lids) or offer them for a small fee. These can be washed out and used for the cleanup buckets.

**Please purchase all liquids in plastic bottles. Send only new, unopened materials. Put all items in the plastic bucket, packed securely to avoid damage during shipment, and seal lid with packing tape.

For more information on Cleanup Kits see www.cwskits.org/assemble-kits/emergency-clean-up-buckets

**Livestreaming Course for Congregations**
Joseph Liles, the Lead Pastor of The Neighborhood Church is teaching an online course for congregations called ‘Livestreaming 101.” More information is available here: https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Neighborhood-Church-Live-Stream-101.pdf. Anyone needing financial assistance to attend should contact Pastor Craig Miller in the synod office at 570-524-9778

**ELCA Level 1 Coach Online Trainings**
Questions: Contact Craig Miller at prcmiller@uss-elca.org or (347) 327-3777. Our synod desires to cultivate a culture of coaching and create pathways and partnerships for coaching to support the ministry in which we engage! If you think you have gifts to serve as a coach and you would like to start, please let
me know. The ELCA coach network firmly believes that valuing, prioritizing, and deploying coaching as a leadership style of accompaniment, synod-by-synod, is a strong strategy for developing a well-governed, connected, and sustainable church. Here are the details for ELCA Level 1 Coach Launch Trainings for 2020: Cost: $375/participant Note: this is a tremendous cost savings for our denomination as participants do not have to add additional funds for travel/housing for the typical 2-day face-to-face training and host synods do not have to allow for venue and food costs for hosting!

Cohort Dates and Registration Links: Tuesdays September 29, October 6, 13, 20 (triad), 27, November 3, 10, 17 (triad) Mondays & Wednesdays November 2, 4, 9, 11 (triad), 16, 18, 30 and December 2 (triad) All these sessions run 4-6 p.m. Eastern. Participants MUST attend the triad sessions LIVE; outside of the live triads, participants can miss attending up to 2 sessions live and catch up by watching a recording. Pre-work from CoachNet and from ELCA Coaching Ministry is required (a series of short videos and a 30-minute session with the Coordinator of ELCA Coaching). All are open for registration NOW. There is a 30-person cap on each one. Registration closes 10 days before the start of each cohort.

**Marriage Encounter Weekend Goes Virtual**

Because of the coronavirus restrictions, the September 18-20, 2020 Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend will now be presented online using Zoom video conferencing. SO, YOU NOW CAN EXPERIENCE THE WEEKEND FROM YOUR OWN HOME WHEREVER THAT MIGHT BE. If the coronavirus has put stress on your marriage, you are not alone! Lutheran Marriage Encounter wants to help you renew and revitalize your marital relationship no matter whether you have been married a year or 60+ years. And because there is no room and board expense, your total cost to experience this Weekend is only $100 per couple. In addition, some scholarship funds are available if this creates a hardship for you--simply email or call us at the information below before you register. You only need to provide a quiet spot with minimal distractions, a good internet connection, and a computer or laptop or some such device suitable for video conferencing. (If you have children in the home, it is highly recommended that they stay with friends or relatives for the Weekend.) The Weekend begins at 8 PM on Friday night and ends at approximately 3 PM on Sunday. REGISTRATIONS WILL BE LIMITED, so sign up NOW while there are still openings. Simply go to: www.GodLovesMarriage.org, find the September 18-20 Virtual Weekend, fill out the form, and pay the $100 with a credit card, or print the form and mail with a check. Don't miss this opportunity to create a more intimate and joyful marital relationship! For questions, please contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.

**Secretary Redding: $13.6 Million Remains Available for Pennsylvania Dairy Industry, Farmers Urged to Apply for Relief**

Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding visited the Scattered Acres Dairy Farm in Reading, one of Pennsylvania’s many dairy farms that had to dump milk as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic’s effect on dairy markets in the commonwealth. On the farm, Secretary Redding revealed that nearly $13.5 million of the $15 million CARES Act-funded Dairy Indemnity Program was still available for farmers to claim in direct relief payments. Any dairy farm that experienced financial losses due to discarded or displaced milk during the COVID-19 emergency disaster may apply for assistance. In addition to farms directly affected, farms that did not have displaced milk but have had COVID-19-related fees assessed on their milk check may also apply. Each farm with a documented loss will receive a minimum of $1,500 and can apply for an additional prorated share of the remaining funds, not to exceed the actual amount assessed by the handler. The deadline to apply for the Dairy Indemnity Program is September 30, 2020.

**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
Registrations are being accepted for the 15th Annual Bishop’s Open Golf Classic, which benefits Camp Mount Luther of Mifflinburg. Golfers are invited to participate in the tournament to be held on Monday, September 21, 2020, at the Susquehanna Valley Country Club in Shamokin Dam. This fundraiser benefits the camp’s ministry in running a summer camp for children. Last year, nearly $15,000 was raised because of this event. Shotgun start time is 12:30 p.m. Registration with a bag lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. Please do not arrive before this time as we will be practicing pandemic precautions. The building, except for the bathrooms, will be closed. **Face coverings and social distancing will be expected while in the parking lot both before and after play.** There will be no snacks or sponsored gathering after play is completed. **Winners of the tournament will be notified by email.** Gift certificates, which can be used at winners’ convenience, will be available in the pro-shop. Sponsorships as well as individual registrations are currently being solicited. To get a registration form or register online, or for more information, go to the camp’s website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org) or contact the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or Jim Bricker, Tournament Chair, at (717) 535-5416.

September 26, 2020: Drive Through Turkey Dinner
A “Drive Through” Turkey Dinner will be held on Saturday, September 26, 2020, starting at 3:30 p.m. until sold out, at Christ’s United (4 Bells) Lutheran Church, 3.5 miles west of Mifflinburg on PA Route 45. (Christ’s United Address: 13765 Old Turnpike Road, Millmont, PA 17845.) Dinners include Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Gravy and Vegetable. Cost is $9.00 per dinner. All proceeds will help fund their “Hopes Haven” Food Pantry, open each Wednesday to residents of Union County. For more information, please call 570-716-5601 or email kim@4bellschurch.com.

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. Click here for the donation form: [https://wp.me/a9Gqgm-1oC](https://wp.me/a9Gqgm-1oC). Please make sure you follow the instructions exactly. Substitute items should not be included. **YOU ALSO NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO PICK UP THE BAGS. CALL THE SYNOD OFFICE AT 570-524-9778.** You can read about ministry that Seafarer’s offers in their latest newsletter: [https://d9efe642-f8bd-4cba-8f4d-5a503d12d57c.filesusr.com/ugd/0a725f_63e533f98c6f442f8f91ec9eaead53c8.pdf](https://d9efe642-f8bd-4cba-8f4d-5a503d12d57c.filesusr.com/ugd/0a725f_63e533f98c6f442f8f91ec9eaead53c8.pdf)

November 5, 2020: Deadline for Seafarer Bags
This is our 10th year of providing Christmas-at-Sea gift sacks for ships’ crews that come into East Coast ports during the Advent and Christmas seasons. 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/). Plastic gift sacks, with instructions, are available at the Synod Office. **PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH BAG!** For a flyer with instructions and to promote this, click here: [https://wp.me/a9Gqgm-1oC](https://wp.me/a9Gqgm-1oC). Please make sure you follow the instructions exactly. Substitute items should not be included. **YOU ALSO NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO PICK UP THE BAGS. CALL THE SYNOD OFFICE AT 570-524-9778.** You can read about ministry that Seafarer’s offers in their latest newsletter: [https://d9efe642-f8bd-4cba-8f4d-5a503d12d57c.filesusr.com/ugd/0a725f_63e533f98c6f442f8f91ec9eaead53c8.pdf](https://d9efe642-f8bd-4cba-8f4d-5a503d12d57c.filesusr.com/ugd/0a725f_63e533f98c6f442f8f91ec9eaead53c8.pdf)

November 6, 2020: Evening at Shade Mountain to Benefit Mount Luther
Camp Mount Luther is working to have some kind of event with Shade Mountain Winery on November 6. Due to the coronavirus, it will need to look differently than years past. We'll keep you posted but save the date for now.
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

- **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/)
Whoopie Pie Sale Again!

Since the Selinsgrove Market Street Festival was cancelled this year, we decided we will still sell Whoopie Pies as a fundraiser. Instead of having a booth, we will take orders for two weeks and then have a pickup date and time when you come to camp to get your sweet treats!

Ordering will take place between September 15 and 30. On September 15, an email will go out to our camp email list with instructions on how to order. Pickup date is set for Saturday, October 10, 2020, here at camp.

We are still working on what flavors we will be offering and that will be in the instructions sent out later this month. We hope that you can support this fundraiser for camp. Proceeds will go to our campership fund.

Still Time to Help & Golf

Pandemic precautions will be in play, but the annual Bishop’s Open Golf Tournament is set for September 21. We could still use some golfers and sponsors. Registration starts at 11:30 a.m. PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE BEFORE THEN. WE WILL PROVIDE BAG LUNCHES PRIOR TO GOLFIN

12:30 p.m.- Golfing Shotgun Start. The building, except for the bathrooms, will be closed. Face coverings and social distancing will be expected while in the parking lot both before and after play. There will be no snacks or sponsored gathering after play is completed. Winners of the tournament will be notified by email. Gift certificates, which can be used at winners’ convenience, will be available in the pro-shop. Contact camp office for more information and a registration form. If you’d like to be a hole sponsor, email chad@campmountluther.org

Mark Your Calendars

In October, we will be hosting Fall Frisbee Fundays at camp. Each Sunday in October at 4:00 p.m. the director will be at the A-Center for anyone who would like to play a round of Frisbee Golf. No need to sign-up, just show up to play

We are also working to have some kind of event with Shade Mountain Winery on November 6. Due to the coronavirus, it will need to look differently than years past. We’ll keep you posted!
Looking for Your Photos

Because we were not able to have residential summer camp this year, we do not have any pictures of campers doing the things they love at camp. We need some for next summer’s brochure. So, we are declaring September “Summer Shots September” asking you to send us your favorite pictures of you and your friends at camp. By sharing them with us, you give us permission to use your photo in promotional materials and we will assume you’ve checked with the people in the picture and they are okay with us using it as well. Send pictures to chad@campmountluther.org.

The Annual Dandelion Run was held on September 5, 2020, with pandemic precautions in place. We had about 170 runners. Several kids took part in a fun run as well. About $3,000 was raised for the camp that day.

Straight From the Camel’s Mouth

By Kyros T. Camel

It was really neat for the camels to see the behind the scenes work of the summer staff in late July and early August as they developed Virtual CML. They came up with some neat ideas and we are grateful for all those who watched the Facebook Live worships and First Light and watched the videos and did the activities that were posted. One of our campers wrote us a note and said, “I have had an opportunity or two to tune into to camp via your Facebook page. Nice!” You can still access all our virtual content at www.campmountluther.org/coronavirus.

The support has been very gratifying as donors have stepped up to support camp financially in these challenging times. The Port Royal Parish asked their members to consider donations to camp. As a challenge, the joint council agreed to match individual donations dollar for dollar. They were able to send a check to us for $1,000! In a letter to the camp, their council president wrote, “We know how important the work of the camp is to so many families in our synod and beyond. We also recognize that just because there are no campers this summer, the work of Camp Mount Luther does not stop, and neither do the bills!” Thanks so much to members of Port Royal Lutheran and St. Paul, Nook, for your support!

And, Pine Street Lutheran in Danville didn’t let the coronavirus stop a time-honored tradition. They held their annual ice cream festival in August. They made about 300 quarts of five flavors of ice cream with proceeds going toward a few charities, including Mount Luther. The festival has been going on for about 50 years. We are grateful that the congregation was able to take pandemic precautions and still help us out!

These are just a few stories of how people are helping. All of us are grateful and humbled by your help in these times!