

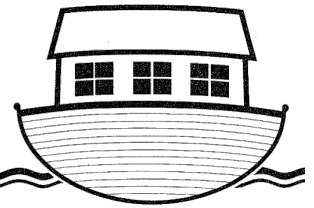


USSARK

Mar/Apr 2024

Ministry Stories from the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

*United as Christ's Disciples, we **Support** one another; and **Serve** God in the World*
More news and events can be at uss-elca.org/uss-ark



New Website Debuts

In February, the latest redesign of uss-elca.org debuted. The goal of the redesign was to streamline information and make it more user-friendly to navigate. A new feature of the site is a Google drive folder where important resources can be downloaded. This is the fourth redesign of the synod website in the last 20 years.

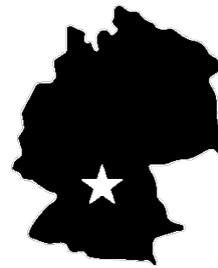


Registration Open

The Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly will convene on June 14 & 15 2024, in Weber Chapel, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, under the theme "Fed by Jesus to feed the world". The agenda will include Bible Study led by the Rev. Dr. Lisa Barnes, Pastor of the Follmer Parish. Our ELCA Representative will be Marie Ann Sliwinski, Senior Director, ELCA Building Resilient Communities. At this assembly we will also elect synod council members and voting members to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly and conduct other synod business. Prior to the assembly, on Friday morning, workshops will be offered on various topics. Visitors are welcome at this assembly, especially for the workshops. Online registration is now open for voting members and visitors at www.elca.org/assembly.

Focus on...

Ansbach-Würzburg Kirchenkreis



The Upper Susquehanna Synod maintains two global companion synod relationships, including the Ansbach-Würzburg Kirchenkreis (Bavaria, Germany) and the Lutheran Church in Liberia. The Ansbach-Würzburg

Kirchenkreis (AWK) traces its roots back over 500 years to the Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther. While the Upper Susquehanna Synod's (USS) relationship with AWK began much later (in December of 1996) we share a common theological and cultural ancestry. In 2001 the first official partnership agreement was signed by then Bishop Bezzel and Bishop A. Donald Main at the Bishop's Retreat in Wellsboro. The partnership has since been renewed multiple times, most recently at the 2022 Synod Assembly. This relationship has led to several youth and choir exchanges as well as multiple visits of USS and AWK representatives to each other's territories.

Please pray for our global partners. If you wish to join the USS Global Ministry team, email annzimmerman@hotmail.com. If you'd like to promote AWK in your congregation, download a bulletin insert here: <https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Ansbach-Wurzburg-bulletin-insert.pdf>

In addition, prayer petitions are prepared and sent by the Upper Susquehanna Synod Global Ministry Committee to use in your congregation intercessory prayers, print them in your bulletin or newsletter. Click here for the prayers: <https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Prayers-February-to-May-2024.docx>

From Bishop Craig Miller



At its February meeting, the ELCA Conference of Bishops issued a statement calling for a bilateral cease-fire in Gaza.

(<https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/8217>). This statement, and a letter to President Biden (<https://tinyurl.com/y7h5s8v9>) asks our government to take a strong role in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the current situation and to recognize the value of Palestinian and Israeli lives.

I have sent a letter to each of the Congressional Representatives whose districts intersect with our Upper Susquehanna Synod, asking them to embrace this statement and exert their influence by calling for a cease-fire.

I encourage you to take a moment and communicate your own thoughts to your representatives as well as to President Biden. You may include the Conference of Bishops statement or craft your own. You can find your representatives at this link:

<https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.

Regardless of one's political position, I am hopeful that one thing we can agree on is an end to violence. I ask for your help. Let us together articulate a voice of peace in this matter.

You can read the statement at <https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/8217>.

During March Weekend, Youth Explore Music

This year's Upper Susquehanna Synod Youth Retreat, GROW in the Snow, was held on March 15-16, 2024, at Camp Mount Luther. Youth and their adult leaders attended and explored the theme "Break Forth in Song," looking at music. Those in attendance participated in indoor and outdoor games, worship services, learning more about music, and doing an Escape Room. They were led in closing worship by a contemporary band from Zion Lutheran, Sunbury.

Up and Down the Valleys



Members of **St. Luke, Sunbury** (Pastor Ann Zimmerman), voted to close their congregation. They will hold their final worship on May 19, Pentecost Sunday, at 9:00 a.m.



Zion, Trevorton (Pastor Jodi Ellis), held a spaghetti dinner fundraiser on March 10. Proceeds will assist needy families.

Applications are still being accepted for Summer Staff at **Camp Mount Luther**. Candidates must possess a commitment to Christ, a passion for the outdoors, and strong leadership and teamwork skills. Interested persons should contact chad@campmountluther.org, or www.campmountluther.org/jobs.

The Buffalo Valley Lutheran Parish (Pastor Curt Wingert) held a community Easter Egg Hunt at Christ's United, Millmont, on March 30. The parish also has started an acoustic praise worship service every third Sunday evening of the month at First, Mifflinburg.

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