In response to God’s love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans who are working to eradicate hunger are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth. This shared ministry has perhaps never been so vital as now, in the face of a pandemic, urgent challenges that threaten our communities here and around the globe, and a dangerous “othering” that prevents us from encountering Jesus in our neighbor and, possibly, preventing our neighbors from encountering Jesus in us.

Since the last in-person Synod Assembly, LAMPa celebrated 41 years of advocacy ministry that has supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, racial injustice, health care, human trafficking, election integrity, immigration, discrimination and hate crimes, criminal justice, environmental threats to health and safety, and an accurate census. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to secure emergency food, shelter, access to medical care and other relief in response to COVID-19. Through these efforts, Lutherans in this synod spoke up with and on behalf of those who are suffering and whose interests were most likely to be overlooked in a time of chaos. LAMPa shared vital information with synods and our network about opportunities to access grants, assist people in applying for benefits and to offer resources in the state’s emergency response. Though much of our work has unleashed assistance directly to those in need, some – in the form of meals or other aid -- has gone to your ministries, enabling you to be the visible presence of Christ as you encounter Christ in your neighbor at your doorstep and in each other as you continue teaching, preaching, singing and praying together virtually.

In its work of equipping disciples, growing leaders and supporting vital congregations, LAMPa staff continued teaching virtually – in congregations, seminary classes and synod events. We hosted a virtual hearing on the ELCA draft social message on Government and Civic Engagement in the United States: Discipleship in a Democracy and will host listening sessions on the related draft social statement in this synod in the coming months. We are working with congregational leaders to prepare for God’s work. Our hands. Our voices. Sunday in September and look forward with hope that we might be able to work side by side in person on that day.

We give thanks to God for you and for the support of our Lower Susquehanna Synod Policy Council representatives, the Rev. Carla Christopher Wilson and the Rev. Matthew Best.

With deep gratitude for all the ways in which you support LAMPa’s ministry,

Tracey DePasquale, director
LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION OF CENTRAL PA
Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, Wittel Farm

Given the unprecedented impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had upon almost every facet of our lives, it is no surprise that 2020 was by far the most unusual ministry year ever – and not in a good way. It was way too quiet at Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, and Wittel Farm. The 2020 winter retreat season ended abruptly with the onset of the pandemic. The spring retreat season was non-existent. Summer camp was cancelled. We were able to pivot somewhat during the summer to provide limited campground-style experiences for families. This continued through October, but the fall retreat season was also significantly curtailed compared to the typical level of activity.

Despite the many challenges and disappointments of 2020, there were ministry highlights and advancements:

- We are truly excited about the growing relationship and ministry partnership emerging with the United Church of Christ congregations across the Penn Central Conference. LCC is very pleased to welcome these congregations and their members into our outdoor ministry family! We look forward to welcoming many youth and families to camp this summer and welcoming many young adults onto our summer camp ministry teams as staff persons.
- The families which visited the camps during the summer and fall welcomed their time at camp. They found respite and relaxation in these places set apart, where it is easy to feel God’s presence in the quiet of the camps’ natural setting.
- The Wittel Farm Growing Project functioned successfully with modifications to keep volunteers safe while they served together planting, tending and harvesting fresh, nutritious vegetables which were donated to feed food insecure families.
- Similarly, cut on a smaller scale than the Wittel Farm Growing Project, the Nawakwa Growing Project also saw success.
- Day programs like the Winter Fun Days and Fall Foliage Day were well attended and enjoyed by those who came out.
- The generous outpouring of financial support in 2020 from individuals and congregations was truly a blessing and reflects the strong commitment to the ministry at Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, and Wittel Farm. This generous support sustained LCC, kept the ministry strong and positioned the ministry to be prepared to fully embark on ministry as it becomes safe to do so. Thank you!!!
- LCC proceeds into 2021 confident in our capacity to conduct ministry even as the pandemic continues. Plans, practices, and protocols implemented allow us to provide small group retreat experiences.
- Additionally, we are confident that the 2021 summer camp season will be successful and are taking great care to implement best practices so camp can happen and so it can be enjoyed safely this summer. The 2021 summer camp Bible study and worship theme is “From Generation to Generation”. Campers will learn how God’s enduring love instilled in the promise to Abraham and Sarah continue through the Old Testament characters to Jesus, to the early church, and on to US! God’s love endures forever. We look forward to sharing this exciting summer ministry theme and all the joyful, exhilarating, fun-filled programs and activities with our campers of all ages this summer.

As we move through 2021, we thank all those who support this outstanding ministry. Go to www.lutherancamping.org to get information and get involved!!!!

Michael Youse, executive director
LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AND
LUTHERAN STUDENT COMMUNITY AT PENN STATE

In March 2020, students at Penn State left campus for spring break and didn’t return for classes again that semester. Midway through break, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic and eventually the university chose to not bring students back to campus. Faculty made adjustments to begin teaching online immediately. Students took classes via Zoom from their childhood bedrooms at home or apartments in the State College community as the world sheltered in place.

In the midst of fear and uncertainty, Lutheran Campus Ministry has continued to provide a community of faith. By gathering online for regular check-ins during those uncertain early weeks, holding book discussions and Bible study on Zoom through the summer months, and returning to campus for socially-distanced worship in accordance with campus COVID-19 restrictions, Lutheran Campus Ministry has continued to care for students in this year of pandemic.

As always, Lutheran Campus Ministry walks with students through the joys and challenges of campus life, offering a faith community that provides care and support throughout their college years. Students are welcomed just as they are, with their questions and mistakes, their insecurities and fears. Students are encouraged, pulled, and challenged as they live their faith and grow in faith. Each time they gather, in person or online, these children of God are reassured of God’s presence and forgiveness and reminded of God’s unconditional love and constant embrace.

Spring Semester 2020
Spring Semester 2020 at Penn State began fully in person and ended fully online. The first half of the semester was fairly typical. Students gathered for weekly worship Thursdays on campus and Sundays at Grace Lutheran Church. Meals after worship provided the opportunity to share the joys and burdens of the week, talk about issues on campus and in the broader world, and build connections. Students participated in a 24-hour retreat with discernPSU to reflect on their own story and how it shapes their calling. Brian Patchcoski, Director of Penn State’s Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, spoke about his sense of vocation and call for the series “Why I Do What I Do.” Plans were in place for Nikole Hannah-Jones from the New York Times 1619 Project to meet with student leaders and present campus-wide Keynote in late March, after spring break. A small group travelled to rural Alabama for Spring Break, despite word of a new and concerning virus spreading globally. They rebuilt homes damaged in a tornado and explored a variety of sites in the Civil Rights Struggle. The week was a powerful experience for everyone on this ecumenical trip. Local historians helped interpret the story at various sites in Atlanta, Georgia; Tuskegee, Montgomery, rural Macon County, and rural Lee County, all in Alabama.

When campus shut down after spring break and all in-person programs and events were cancelled, Lutheran Campus Ministry began to offer online check-in and Office Hours. We learned how to hold Evening Prayer online each week. The familiar music and liturgy encouraged and comforted students and staff alike. They truly found community seeing each other’s faces and sharing the week’s struggles and joys through Zoom. Weekly listserve messages and other online connections took on new importance as students were away from campus.

Virtual Summer 2020
Lutheran Campus Ministry continued a variety of virtual programs through the summer months, connecting with students and recent graduates. Students faced complicated school and job situations due to COVID-19. Online gatherings to check-in, worship and pray together, and discuss books and topics were helpful touchstones. Topics included Bible study on the Acts of the Apostles, exploring Lutheran theology and history in “Confirmation 2.0,” and Summer Book Club on White Fragility: Why it is so hard for white people to talk about racism by Robin DiAngelo. Evening Prayer online continued through the spring and into the summer months providing continuity and helpful grounding in worship.

Returning to Campus & Ministry in the Context of COVID-19
As students returned to campus for the new academic year, university guidelines and restrictions designed to keep students and the community safe have led to countless adjustments in our work with students. In-person events through Grace Lutheran are suspended, so students are not finding their way to campus ministry through congregational activities. On-campus worship is allowed, with specific guidelines that have changed the look, if not the feel of mid-week worship. For Evening Prayer each week, students typically gather in a circle of chairs around a small table holding bread and wine at the front of the large Worship Hall in the campus Spiritual Center. The liturgy is sung to piano accompaniment, participants facing each other from a distance of about 10 feet. There are many hugs, handshakes, and close conversations. Communion is shared by common cup and bread passed from person to person. Dinner afterward is served buffet style and shared around a table together. Almost none of this is safe or permitted by the university during the pandemic.

This year students are able to gather for worship at the Spiritual Center while they are masked and stay socially distanced. Using live piano accompaniment and vocals recorded by members of the Lutheran Student Community, we worship six feet apart, facing forward instead of each other, listening rather than singing. Students still read passages from scripture and there is still reflection together and proclamation. Prayer concerns are still gathered and prayed together. Fall Semester, students were permitted to take Grab n’ Go meals or share them together outside and/or socially distanced. Though things look quite different, somehow the Spirit helps to create a holy time. God is still there, in the midst of the community, within the community.
University restrictions require that other Lutheran Campus Ministry programs and events are held online or outdoors. Weekly, there is Night Prayer on Sundays with Taizé-style music and prayer, Pop-Up Office Hours or Walking Office Hours outside. Monthly programs include “Questions Not Answers” with Grace Lutheran Church, and “Antiracism Discussion” with ecumenical friends. Nikole Hannah-Jones will be rescheduled for an in-person visit for Fall 2021.

Pastoral Care
As students manage the demands of this unusual time, it is essential for campus ministry staff to be available to simply listen, talk, or pray with them online and in-person where possible. The usual stresses of college life are compounded by the isolation as well as the forced closeness of living with roommates. Limited opportunities for extracurricular activities or exercise take their toll on student well-being. COVID-19 symptoms or positive tests in family members, roommates, close friends or neighbors are stressful. Vocational issues are especially challenging with uncertain job markets and unusual graduate school circumstances. In these times, pastoral care on Zoom and digital connections are especially important. Weekly listserve messages, social media presence, and texting helps connect students and provide safe and accessible contact with our campus minister for pastoral care.

Sustainability and Board Redevelopment
Despite all the challenges of ministry in the context of COVID-19, the Lutheran Council for Campus Ministry Board has been taking significant steps toward restructuring and redevelopment. The LCCM Board has expanded membership this year, including some younger alumni of the ministry bringing experience from their own college years plus gifts and insights to help guide and support the work of the ministry. Lutheran Campus Ministry received a Sustainability Grant from the CMTEV initiative of the Lilly Endowment, providing $50,000 over five years to help broaden and deepen the base of support for our work on campus.

Looking Ahead
Penn State has announced that Fall 2021 will return to fully in-person instruction. Certainly, COVID-19 will continue to shape and reshape higher education and how Lutheran Campus Ministry moves forward. We are truly looking forward to gathering without social distance, singing and sharing bread and wine. Students are eager to spend mealtime together again, to have more service-learning opportunities, and to plan another Spring Break pilgrimage. There will certainly be more use of online gathering and continued opportunities to connect with resources and communities far from campus itself. Please pray for Lutheran Campus Ministry as we move ahead.

In These Challenging Times
This is a challenging time for everyone related to campus. Please keep students in your prayers as they navigate virtual classes, meals in their rooms, and so much isolation. Pray for faculty as they continue to learn new ways to teach and try to help their students learn in ways they never have before. Please pray for staff who make the university run. Pray for administrators who are tasked with keeping everyone safe and dealing with the outrage and opinions of people on every side of each decision.

Connections
We are grateful for the wide and complex network of relationships make the work of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State possible. On campus, connections to the university and various Student Affairs units help maintain our presence on campus and provide opportunities to truly be part of campus life. Ecumenical and interfaith connections keep our work grounded in the diverse and challenging context where our students live and study, providing unique opportunities to work cooperatively. Connections to alumni, friends, parents, faculty, and staff from the Penn State community provide important support in so many ways, including financial, volunteer help, and speakers. Connection with the three synods that support our ministry is vital to our very existence. We are deeply grateful for the many ways Lutheran Campus Ministry is supported by the Allegheny Synod, the Lower Susquehanna Synod and the Upper Susquehanna Synod. In addition, support from congregations and rostered leaders (some near, some far away) enhance and bless our work. We are truly blessed that Lutheran Campus Ministry is part of the whole body of Christ.

Visit our website: www.lutheranpennstate.org; Sign up to receive our e-newsletter for friends and alumni; Add a student to our weekly student listserv; Find us on Instagram: LutheranPennState; Like us on facebook: Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State

Deacon Alicia Anderson, campus minister
LUTHERCARE

Tremendous opportunities, blessings and challenges are a part of each year for Luthercare and 2020 held all of that for us as we worked to continue to bring our mission to life each day in the midst of a global pandemic. We live and work in a geographic area with many organizations which provide similar or even the same services, but for us the difference is always in why we serve, and, we trust, recognizable in how we serve others. We are constantly aware of the giving and receiving nature of the work of social ministry and we work to increasingly engage participation in decisions and plans. More than providing passive care or blind leadership, we actively work out what is best together. We also continue to be open to new ventures and avenues.

For five years now, Luthercare and Moravian Manor have partnered together in a venture called “Your Neighborhood Connection” – a jointly-owned and operated home care agency providing in-home services and support to residents of our community. In 2020 we were pleased to announce that Pleasant View Communities has become a third partner in this venture as we expand this important outreach to our community.

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically impacted our organization in many ways. The care and well-being of our senior living residents and children in our childcare centers has always been our first concern. We have learned to adapt in our means of communication and in the ways we provide care and support. From meal delivery to electronic platforms to stay connected, we have been able to work to ensure everyone’s safety and well-being during this difficult time.

We have also been incredibly blessed by the generosity of so many around us. The H&H Group of Lancaster provided us with plastic face shields for use by our frontline healthcare workers. We partnered with WORKNET Occupational Medicine in providing N95 fitting for our staff. We received PPE donations from the Thomas Sardina Dental Group at a time when PPE supplies were difficult to come by and we were especially blessed when over 30 volunteers from local congregations, led by Amy Mozingo of Lititz, sewed 160 washable and reusable isolation gowns for use by our healthcare center staff. These homemade gowns covered our healthcare heroes until PPE supplies were made available for purchase once again. It truly was incredible having that level of support from our local congregations.

Our team members have gone above and beyond during this past year. Under normal circumstances, working in healthcare can be tiring and difficult, but with the added stressors brought on by the pandemic their work was physically, mentally and emotionally exhausting. To recognize our healthcare heroes – nurses, aides, support staff and more – Luthercare established a special “Heroes Program” which included additional time off or “hero days” and a raffle for a “Hero Getaway” vacation awarded to three randomly selected staff members.

In addition to those blessings, our staff at Luther Acres was treated to a “Community Clamor” on campus when independent living residents gathered outside the healthcare center at shift change with pots and pans and other noise makers to show our healthcare workers how much their hard work, dedication and commitment to our residents is appreciated. More than 160 residents showed up to be part of this outpouring of love and support. It was a deeply emotional and uplifting display of encouragement and a special blessing for our frontline healthcare workers – reminding them just how special they are.

Luthercare continues to support Pastor Glenn Beard, Director of Church Relations & Pastoral Care, in his role as the coordinator of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Disaster Response Network. While the pandemic eliminated traditional opportunities for disaster response mission trips this year, local volunteers have been quite busy providing support to local homeowners in eastern Pennsylvania after the destruction caused by Hurricane Isaias.

We are delighted to share that in 2020 we awarded eight scholarships to deserving high school graduates from school districts in Lancaster and Lebanon counties who will be pursuing careers in the nursing industry.

Our Philanthropy Office worked hard in 2020, raising over $45,000 for the COVID-19 Relief Fund which will keep our frontline staff well-equipped with PPE and provide contactless screeners for staff and visitors to campus. In the midst of this difficult year we were still able to host a successful golf tournament in October where we were able to raise over $50,000 for childcare scholarships in our Luthercare for Kids program. We held a physically-distanced “Together in Community” event this year where we provided gourmet meals to many of our donors who were grateful for the recognition and updates on life here on campus.

We reflect on 2020 feeling thankful for many things - the continued support and partnership of congregations, residents, children and families, donors, volunteers, team members, business associates and friends, all of whom enhance and enlarge our mission. We are all in this together as we work, side by side, to reflect Christ’s love through service to others.

Carl McAloose, president and CEO
THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Advocacy and Ecumenical Activities of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches

The COVID-19 pandemic curtailed some of the advocacy-related activities planned for 2020 which included a statewide tour of Pennsylvania with a solitary confinement cell replica and related programs. Our goal was to provide education about solitary confinement and prisoner advocacy training. We did manage to hold one early “Solidarity Not Solitary” program in early January, and we also held meetings about solitary confinement with key elected officials to advocate for legislation to substantially reduce its use.

Furthermore, in lieu of the planned solitary programming, our Episcopal Service Corps fellow, Emily Schmid, planned and carried out online book studies on the books White Fragility and Just Mercy. She also proposed and helped to facilitate a Lenten devotional guide, 40 Days of Solidarity to address solitary confinement and other criminal justice reform issues.

We co-sponsored and helped to facilitate a program with the CeaseFirePA Leadership Institute to introduce participants to gun violence reduction legislation and advocacy.

We planned, sponsored, or participated in online prayer events. Prayer gatherings included prayers for: incarcerated persons during the pandemic; legislation to reduce gun violence; valuing Black and Brown lives/peace in our communities; prayers for a peaceful election; prayers for a peaceful transfer of power; and prayers for all people dealing with the pandemic over the holidays. Working with Episcopal Service Corps fellow, Kelsey Reyes, we planned and carried out two discussion events on the 2020 election and COVID-19. We continued vigils in support of immigrant families detained at the Berks County Residential Center and held the 12th annual Commonwealth Interfaith Service: Prayers for Justice and Peace remotely for the first time (view at https://www.facebook.com/PAChurchesAdvocacy/live).

In an event co-sponsored by the council, Pennsylvania’s Senior Senator Bob Casey joined clergy and faith leaders from across the Commonwealth on August 28 to answer questions reflecting several concerns within the state’s faith community around the coronavirus pandemic. Topics covered included: efforts to get unemployed persons back to work; disproportionate impact of the virus on persons of color; ensuring adequate nutrition for children when schools are closed; protections against evictions and foreclosures; protecting mail-in voting, considering cutbacks in the US Postal Service; and what will happen as recipients of Paycheck Protection Program loans look to converting them to grants, as envisioned at the creation of the program. Also covered were disparities in Pennsylvania’s public-school funding and what Senator Casey planned to do to make the system more equitable. In a particularly encouraging note—one that spoke directly to dealing with getting people back to work—the Senator announced that he would be introducing a bill to create a new version of the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

On October 7, 2020, the council hosted “An Evening with Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis,” co-chair of the national Poor People’s Campaign. She spoke of the Campaign’s work to turn out poor and low-income voters and answered questions from the viewers. The Campaign’s groundbreaking report, “Unleashing the Power of Poor and Low-Income Americans,” noted that just a few percentage points’ change in the turnout of poor and low-income people could change the political maps of this country. The event on the Council’s YouTube channel at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCunqnFIOcrIn_o715zhITIA.

The council has spoken out in 2020 through a series of statements that were widely shared (including in the media) and posted on the Council’s website. Statements included: A Pastoral Statement at a Time of Global Pandemic (3/27/20); A Pastoral Call to Dismantle Racism and End Violence Against People of Color (6/2/20); Pennsylvania Council of Churches’ Statement on 6/18/20 Supreme Court DACA Decision (6/18/20); and A Statement Calling for a Peaceful 2020 Election (10/28/20). All are available at https://www.pachurches.org/about-us/statements/.

The Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach completed a sabbatical where she visited or held Zoom meetings with counterpart state councils across the country. During those meetings she gleaned several ideas that have worked for others and looks forward to working with a newly formed Commission on Unity and Relationships to determine what our own council will do moving forward. More will be shared on the sabbatical within this report.

In this consequential year, the program also provided resources aimed at helping church bodies, congregations, and people of faith (and others) with important issues facing the state and country, building resource pages around COVID-19, the 2020 Census, and the election.

Looking forward, the Commission on Public Witness is still working on refining advocacy priorities for 2021-22. We will place the strongest emphasis on addressing racism, white supremacy, and Christian nationalism and on educating people of faith about government systems and our call to be faithful advocates. Priority advocacy efforts will focus on addressing racism and the related issues named above that form the core of problematic legislation and policies. We will be looking to more creative approaches to advocacy, and to messaging aimed at government officials letting them know we are holding them in prayer and urging them to tone down their rhetoric and find ways to work together. We will also look to putting together a clearinghouse or bibliography to help congregations/people of faith create the space for respectful conversations and be effective advocates.
On the Unity and Relationships side, we have already held a statewide service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and we are planning a service/program for Black History Month. We will be activating the newly formed Commission on Unity and Relationships, as noted above, and the reactivated group of local and regional ecumenical executives to consider the ways we can build relationships across Pennsylvania and develop programs that will be helpful to our members and others.

**The Service Center of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches**
The Service Center of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches provides a significant communication ministry to its member churches and constituents. The Council of Churches Service Department also works with many of the agencies within the United Church Center in addition to faith-based organizations, churches, and Christian fellowship groups outside of the Center, producing print materials inclusive of business cards, letterhead, envelopes, brochures, and flyers. We also handle printed presentations, using GBC punching, binding strips, and O-ring style wire combs, as well as books, church directories and newsletters. We can laminate, fold, saddle-stitch, tab, and provide most functions of business size and traditional cut printed matter in black & white and color print, inclusive of one and two color “spot color” on an offset press.

Our printing operation makes an impact on individuals, congregations, and communities. People who are seeking counseling and spiritual help are supported by printed material from the Service Center through the agencies that we service. We work to ensure that our product and service are of the highest quality.

**Staff Sabbatical**
The Personnel and Executive Committees of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches created space and resources for Sandy Strauss, our Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach, to take a sabbatical last year to learn about the ecumenical, interfaith and advocacy work that is taking place in other states. The initiative was designed to enable our efforts to learn about best practices that occur in other ecumenical settings.


**Conclusion**
Our experience in 2020 was exceptional and challenging. The Pennsylvania Council of Churches, however, adjusted and worked to remain relevant in promoting ecumenical engagement and advocacy throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As a foundation for our work going forward, we will take an intentional look at our future as an organization. In some ways our experience with COVID-19 is forcing all our organizations to transform our work and seek new ways of expanding our opportunities for mission and engagement.

We appreciate our partnership and look forward to doing even more with you in 2021. The council has also welcomed a new executive director, the Rev. Dr. Larry D. Pickens. He brings a great deal of ecumenical and interfaith experience to this experience. Dr. Pickens looks forward to working with the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA, as we partner to make a difference in the world around us.

The Rev. Dr. Larry D. Pickens, *executive director*
PORTICO BENEFITS SERVICES
A Ministry of the ELCA

Supporting Those Who Serve Now More Than Ever
Portico Benefit Services is a holistic benefits ministry serving those who serve — from rostered ministers and their families to staff at social ministry organizations. We strive to help our members grow their overall well-being.

We could not have predicted this pandemic. But the virtual benefits we’ve introduced before and after its arrival, the benefit adjustments we’ve made since, our successful navigation of volatile financial markets, and the consistency of our customer service have made a powerful difference.

During this pandemic, ELCA benefits are helping to lower stress levels, create safer access to health care, and increase financial flexibility — all to strengthen the resilience of those who serve and, by extension, the resilience of this church.

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<tr>
<th>Building Resilience in 2020</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>26%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>More Calls to Our Financial Planners</td>
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<tr>
<td>During last year’s market volatility and our introduction of target date funds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanks to quick modification of our retirement plan rules for 2020.</td>
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<td><strong>49</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3,230 Medical Visits Via Text</td>
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<td>Through 98point6, our new virtual 24/7 primary health care service — with $0 copay.</td>
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<td>Our self-directed online program, Learn to Live.</td>
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<td>90%</td>
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<td>Very Satisfied</td>
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<td>With our Customer Care service — delivered by Portico employees working remotely.</td>
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<td>To help members maintain an age-appropriate asset mix over time — and better weather volatility.</td>
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Data as of Dec. 31, 2020; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary.

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, president & CEO
SPIRITRUST LUTHERAN®

May the Peace of the Lord be with all of us as we celebrate the unwavering commitment of 1,400 team members, the dedication of 2,700 faithful volunteers and the generosity of 1,500 donors in their support of our mission to Witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a year that unfolded unlike any we have ever seen.

The year 2020 will go down in history as one of the most challenging times for all of humankind. By the Grace of God and the fortitude of our team members, we remained resolute in providing exceptional care and quality service while adapting to the operational demands of responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Despite constantly changing state and federal mandates and guidelines associated with keeping those we serve safe, our team members stood strong as they compassionately served more than 17,000 individuals in a year of great uncertainty. Whether providing care and services in personal protective equipment, interacting virtually or supporting our operations from their dining room table, team members adapted to the new norm with creativity, resilience and a “can and will do” attitude.

Although unable to interact in-person after the start of the pandemic, that decision did not stop our faithful volunteers from bringing joy and comfort to others as they sewed facemasks and stayed connected to residents and clients by uplifting shut-ins and providing emotional and spiritual support to those in need through friendly phone chats. In total, volunteers contributed 58,600 hours of service to our life plan communities, the community-at-large and hospice clients and their bereaved families.

With our focus on the safety and well-being of those we serve and those who serve, it became very apparent in early spring that we would need to place on hold our plans to renovate The Village at Gettysburg skilled care center and expand residential living options at The Village at Luther Ridge. All of our financial resources – including federal, state, local government support and board-designated funds – were committed to support ongoing operating expenses; preventive measures, including personal protective equipment; and testing to safeguard the health and well-being of our team members, residents, clients and program participants.

We are eternally grateful to our team members, volunteers and donors for their steadfast commitment to fulfilling our mission. Because of their dedication, SpiriTrust Lutheran overcame the challenges created by COVID-19 while continuing to provide the compassionate and exceptional service the community has come to expect from us.

We also are extremely thankful to the families of our team members, as well as those we serve and their families for their understanding and cooperation during 2020. Although these clearly have been unprecedented times, it is also clear the Love of God has been most evident in the work God called us to do during this time.

Robert L. Rundle, president/CEO
ST. BARNABAS CENTER FOR MINISTRY

The St. Barnabas Center for Ministry is a joint venture of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania hosted at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 248 Seneca Street, Harrisburg. Formed in 1993, its creation was the brainchild of Bishop Emeritus Guy S. Edmiston and Bishop Charlie McNutt as a way of preparing our synod and the diocese for the adoption of “Called to Common Mission”, the full communion agreement of our church bodies, and as a way of working together to provide much-needed social ministry and worship services to an underserved section of Harrisburg. While the initial plans called for a variety of social ministries being hosted in the former St. Matthew Lutheran Church building, soon the thrust of the ministry of the St. Barnabas Center centered on ministries to children and youth while St. Paul’s Episcopal Church provided worship services and, much later, the Beacon Health Clinic provided medical services. The mission of the St. Barnabas Center is to nurture the spiritual, educational, social, and physical development of children and youth in Uptown Harrisburg. This nurture has taken on different forms throughout the years including an afterschool program when none was offered by the city schools. However, the most consistent ministry has been the summer day camp. Since 1993 the St. Barnabas Center for Ministry has provided a summer day camp for children ages 5 to 11. In 2015 a teen camp was added to its ministries for youth 12 to 15 years old. Registration for the 2019 summer day camp was 100 campers with an average daily attendance of more than 80.

However, unfortunately, the St. Barnabas Center for Ministry did not sponsor a summer day camp in 2020 because of the dangers and threats of COVID-19, which created a worldwide pandemic. With much anguish and disappointment, after lengthy discussion, the board of directors, with the concurrence of our synod and the diocese, decided that it was best for the children we serve and their families, the staff, and the volunteers that there be no summer day camp in 2020. We just could not risk endangering the health and the welfare of the very children and youth we exist to nurture.

Before this decision was made, Director Rodger Hines and former Assistant Director Kathy O’Neal Sloan had already made major plans for the 2020 day camp, already incurring significant expense, most of which could not be recouped. Their next tasks were to cancel all the arrangements that were made, including all the contracts, and to contact the campers and their families to share the news that the day camp would not be held in 2020. Anticipated income to offset the expenses, had been lost. And disappointed parents who had come to rely on the program had to make other arrangements.

The board decided to use this cancellation as an opportunity to strengthen the internal structure of the ministry of the St. Barnabas Center. The board diligently updated its bylaws clarifying how board members are nominated and elected and what the functions and responsibilities of the board are; began discussions on revising employment agreements to specify more clearly job expectations and requirements; worked to reconnect and strengthen our relationship with the Lower Susquehanna Synod, the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, and the Harrisburg community; strengthened our financial base; and made plans for updating the St. Barnabas website and developing promotional and education materials. The board also has been making plans to resume the day camp in 2021 if that can be done safely. Of one thing the board members are certain, day camp 2021 will be different from the past 26 ones. Therefore, the board members are learning what other sponsors are doing and what other experts are recommending while deciding what procedures and alternate plans they need to adopt so that the center can continue to nurture children and youth in a safe and responsible way. The program will continue to be centered in Scripture and based on the seven pillars of character: respect, caring, fairness, responsibility, trustworthiness, citizenship, and forgiveness.

The St. Barnabas Center for Ministry is no longer supported through the synod budget but is supported by grants, donations, and fund-raising activities. Mr. Hines and the board have completed several applications for this year. Our 2020 annual appeal has provided $5,885 from 62 individual donors, a 19% return rate from our mailing. Many congregations also regularly provide financial gifts to fund this ministry. We are planning two fund-raising events in 2021. We will be walking in the virtual Highmark Walk, seeking walkers and sponsors. In 2020, our participation provided $4,797.15 to support this ministry. We also are making plans for our annual fashion show and silent auction, which will be held November 14, 2021. Thank you for your support for this important ministry.

The Lower Susquehanna Synod’s representatives on the board of directors are: Sandy Brandt, Tree of Life Lutheran Church; Pastor Ronald Costen, Messiah Lutheran Church, Harrisburg; Pastor Thomas McKee, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, York; and B.J. Weber, Grace Lutheran Church, Camp Hill.

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, board secretary
Psalm 46 reminds us that “God is our strength, a very present help in trouble. We will not fear, though the earth be moved.” Since the beginning of the pandemic, it seems as if the ground moves under our feet every day. The seminary has adapted quickly to this new reality, using our pre-existing technology that used to join physical classrooms in Philadelphia and Gettysburg to create a new totally virtual learning environment. Also, we encounter the risen Christ together as a community through our Zoom worship services, a blessing that has truly unified our students, staff, and faculty across the miles.

President Guy Erwin arrived last August to begin a new chapter in the seminary’s story, introducing a fresh perspective on the needs of the church during such a time as this. Along with Dean Sebastian and the faculty, he welcomed 85 new members to the ULS student body. In January, we welcomed an additional 39 new students. Our overall enrollment is strong: 360 students, including 177 in the Master of Divinity Program (Word and Sacrament), 19 Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership (Word and Service), and 82 Doctor of Ministry Candidates. Other students are enrolled in the MA, MAPL, STM, and PhD programs. Currently, 56 of our students are concluding their internships. Seventy-five students received diplomas this Spring, enabling them to continue servant leadership in the church. We also celebrate the gifts and service of non-degree students including 24 Affiliates and 33 Certificate course enrollees (CTS, TEEM, CCFF, UTI, and Anglican Studies). We welcomed the regional bishops to a virtual visit this past February where they met with members of the seminary community and spent time in worship and prayer. We will hopefully return to in-person learning in this coming fall, with events featuring convocation, colloquy, and Dr. Erwin’s inauguration (go to www.uls.edu for more information). We strive to be a community that celebrates God’s diverse Creation, with intentional focus on inclusivity and equity for all. Last fall, we created the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in keeping with a Board of Trustees mandate. Our own Brother Ed Henry was promoted to become VP in this new office.

We are grateful to the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, our partner congregations, alumni, individual donors, and synod support. Thanks to all of our donors, we continue to offer up to full tuition for our degree-seeking students with plans to prayerfully provide such support in decades to come. As a higher education institution, we were able to receive federal PPP loans/grants which have helped to sustain us despite the economic hardships in our midst. We strive to be faithful stewards of our resources, looking to guidance from the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Board to help with sound fiscal and resource advice. We welcomed Buff Carlson, the Chief Financial Officer, who began working at the seminary in February of 2020, a few days before the pandemic upended our patterns and routines. He continues to work with the Advancement team to forge a sustainable financial strategy for faithful ministry to our students now and in the future. In March, we thanked the Rev. Dr. Angela Zimmann for her years of faithful leadership as she departed for a new position as VP of Advancement at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Otto-Zimmann, director of church relations
CHRIST LUTHERAN HEALTH MINISTRIES
http://www.pcysoftware.net/christlutheran/index.html#health
Prenatal, Dental and Urgi-Care Clinics

Mission Statement
Our mission and the job description for volunteers are synonymous: to provide high-quality prenatal care to low-risk obstetrical patients in the neighborhoods surrounding Christ Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. These women are uninsured and will be asked for no fee or other type of donation in return for their care.

Budget
+ $0 … no paid staff; all volunteers
+ All medications and supplies are donated
+ The Center for Women’s Health physicians deliver our babies and accept payment by the baby’s Medicaid; other charges are written off to the hospital’s charity budget
+ Labs and ultrasounds that are not covered by the baby’s Medicaid at birth are written off to the charity budget by Penn State-Holy Spirit Hospital
+ In addition to prenatal care, we give out Pack-n-play cribs, car seats, baby clothing and many other baby items that are donated by church members from a number of area churches

Board
+ The Church Council of Christ Lutheran Church, Harrisburg
+ Rev. Drew Stockstill, Executive Director
+ Holly Hoffman, MD, MAMS, ELCA Deacon and Medical Director

Accomplishments
+ There were 137 patient visits across 44 clinics during Year 14 of our program
+ Since inception 12 years ago, 196 babies have been born at Penn State-Holy Spirit Hospital from the clinic and 232 women have received care through the clinic.
+ The clinic was the first free-standing prenatal clinic in the U.S. to become certified as a federal employee for malpractice purposes through the FTCA (Federal Tort Claims Act). The application and recertification process for this program is rigorous and annual. This status has allowed Christ Lutheran Health Ministries to add volunteer dentists and physicians who would not have otherwise been able to volunteer their skills due to lack of coverage.

Health Ministries overall:
+ Because of the availability of FTCA coverage, Dr. Margaret Groff has been able to provide acute care visits once a week in an adjoining room at Christ Lutheran church since 2014. Dr. Groff has not held clinics because of COVID since March but she is becoming immunized and her return is anticipated in the near future.
+ Health Ministries is also the umbrella organization over a busy free dental clinic. A team of volunteer dentists, support staff and translators offer care three days a month for urgent dental conditions requiring simple extractions and fillings. HACC dental hygiene students provide cleanings, prioritizing prenatal clinic patients.

Relationship to the Lower Susquehanna Synod
The Medical Director/founder is a LSS-ELCA Deacon. The ministry is supported by donations and volunteers from many congregations in the area, both Lutheran (LSS-ELCA) and other denominations/churches.

Holly C. Hoffman, MD, MAMS, deacon at St. Paul ELC, Carlisle
COMMUNITIES OF HOPE

Communities of Hope is a Synod-Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) that intentionally works with leaders and communities of people who would not typically find their way into a traditional worship setting.

2020 – the year of the coronavirus pandemic, COVID-19. What started out with a bang, swiftly moved in a new direction for the church. For Communities of Hope (COH), the year began with celebration. A new ministry was being invited into the work of COH. Recovery Church was a project begun by the Rev. Sharron Blezard at St. Paul’s, New Cumberland. Dinner church for folks in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous and those who support them sprung from a response to the opioid crisis and the Night of Hope event held in New Cumberland in 2019. Welcome Table is the name of the ministry. Welcome Table church met twice a month on Sunday evenings just before the very large “open” AA meeting in the basement of the church. We gathered for worship, conversation and communion, and the group began to stabilize and create a regular crowd of about 20 people. On February 17, 2020, the one-year anniversary of the ministry led to discussion of bringing this ministry into the work of COH.

Another celebration was also had in February. On February 25, 2020, I was installed as the pastor to serve Communities of Hope at the joint Harrisburg and West Shore Conferences Retreat at Camp Nawakwa. Two of the leaders from COH – Rose Tonkin and Carol Carinig spoke to the rostered ministers about their calls to leadership and the ways in which they use their gifts to lead people in worship in non-traditional settings.

Rose gathers folks from their barstools in a local VFW for Bible study and a time of worship and communion. She also began a ministry to children inside a local congregation in the Steelton area. Her gifts and stories about her fearless pursuit of non-churched people offers hope that God still calls people as evangelists. Rose is currently engaged in study at the seminary and with our synod’s Candidacy Committee in preparation for ordination. Even in these difficult COVID times, Rose calls all of her folks from VFW church and the two churches where she is leading worship every month to check in with them.

Carol is an artist. She is a professional hairdresser, and her ministry is appropriately titled, “Salon church.” Using her artistic skills, Carol gathers some of her clients and those who they have invited to attend various activities. She has held dinner church and book studies and conversations around seeing God through art. Although Salon church has not been able to meet in person during COVID, Carol maintains online relationships with her community and has held her community together by checking in personally with them.

In March 2020, I was attending an education event out of state just as it became clear that everything would be shutting down. I flew back home, and like typical congregations, our leaders began to discuss how we would move forward with caring for our ministries. But it was becoming painfully clear that some of our ministries would not make it through the losses of COVID.

One of those ministries was The Tribe. This was a ministry that focused upon young people meeting Jesus through martial arts. This ministry had expanded initially from one space into three locations, but then attendance began to decline. It was difficult to keep motivation and consistent meetings in this ministry. The pandemic only exacerbated the problem; and by the end of 2020, we determined that it was time for this ministry to come to an end.

We also recognized that the amount of clerical work had changed, and we agreed that our support person would no longer have enough work to keep her employed with COH. So, a difficult time came for us as we thanked two of our leaders for their time and energy and closed a chapter of their work with COH.

Like the rest of society, Communities of Hope has adapted in these challenging times. We are thankful to be participating in what the Spirit of God is doing in our midst, and we look forward to a day when we can meet in person with others. If you know of leaders and ministries that would enjoy the support of a community like COH, please contact me. There is support for those who want to try new ways of doing ministry. The Rev. Richard Jorgensen invited me and our leaders to attend the ELCA Congregational Vitality Training this year. I joined a cohort for leaders of Recovery Church. I highly recommend these trainings. It has given me a chance to make relationships with like-minded colleagues across our nation.

In closing, I would like to thank the congregations of our synod for seeing Communities of Hope as a place to invest our energy and resources. This truly is a growing edge for God’s church. I thank the Synod Council, Bishop Dunlop and his team, and especially the Rev. Richard Jorgensen. Pastor Jorgensen took me under his wing and met regularly with me as I entered into this new call as pastor of Communities of Hope. I would also like to thank Dean Martha Boyd of the Harrisburg Conference for a beautiful installation and for caring for me and COH. And of course, we give God the glory for all ministries, especially those that intentionally seek out those who would not typically “come to church.”

The Rev. Jennifer Richards, pastor
HARRISBURG AREA YOUTH INITIATIVE (HAYI)
A Lower Susquehanna Synod Partnership Ministry

In late-2016, a group of congregations from the Harrisburg Conference began to pool their resources in an effort to gather their youth for shared faith formation and community building. The goal was to offer spiritual and faith formative conversations to their youth and to engage them in service-learning experiences within the city, all designed to help expose young people to shared experiences of living out their faith. The ministry was shepherded by Pastor Victoria Larson, who was then called to serve at Trinity Lutheran in Steelton. The synod Office for Children, Youth & Family Ministry acted in an advisory role, assisting the group of about ten congregations, discern vision and direction.

At the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year, Pastor Larson, in consultation with our office and working cooperatively with the peer congregations, elected to move toward a more intentional partnership, which included hiring or calling a leader, specifically to assist the congregations in growing and shepherding this emerging ministry. Congregations chose whether they would invest in supporting a paid staff person and designed a job description with expectations for that role.

Knowing that the new role would align with our synod’s goals of **equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission**, our Director for Evangelical Mission working alongside our Director for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, proposed that our synod office also invest in this emerging ministry. With a desire to create a model for cooperative youth and family ministry that may ultimately be mimicked elsewhere within the synod, a three-year proposal was recommended to the Synod Council. Six congregations opted to contribute financially, which, when combined with mission dollars and a synod grant, allowed for the creation of a new ministry position.

Consecrated as a deacon at the 2018 Synod Assembly, David Hope-Tringali accepted the call to become the first HAYI director and began serving on June 1, 2018. In June 2019, he resigned that call in anticipation of a move to shepherd an emerging mission in Guatemala. The pastors involved in the partnership and I met to strategize next steps, including identifying a candidate to fill that role. It was suggested that the position shift to a layperson under contract, as opposed to a rostered minister under call. Harrisburg Conference Dean, Pastor Martha Boyd, one parent from the Steelton congregations, and I were designated as the interview team, who would bring a candidate before other congregation leaders for approval. Five candidates were interviewed. Zach Hartman was hired to fill the vacant position and began his work at the beginning of the 2019 school year.

The shift from a rostered to non-rostered position saved the HAYI cooperative money, and more importantly allowed for the new candidate to focus primarily on growing the youth group and accompanying the existing youth and families in faith formation. This was a welcome shift in priority, since David was often preoccupied with the wide variety of ministries that were brought together to form his initial rostered call and therefore unable to focus specifically on the youth ministry aspect.

In the early winter of 2020, a group of leaders from Messiah Lutheran in Harrisburg met with Zach and me to begin envisioning a neighborhood outreach with the teens from their Harrisburg city neighborhood. This initiative never had a chance to materialize due to the onset of the COVID pandemic and subsequent restrictions that followed. Zach did continue meeting with the youth in-person when possible and by videoconferencing in some cases.

The three-year partnership between the HAYI cooperative of congregations and the synod is scheduled to end in June 2021, and I will be in conversation with the congregations to determine next steps, including the viability and sustainability of an ongoing part-time staff person.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation and youth ministry
Mission Statement
The Living Water Dental Health Ministry is a Christian outreach clinic whose mission is to provide quality comprehensive and emergent dental care to indigent patients using volunteer service providers.

Founded in 2012, the clinic is a ministry of Carlisle Area Religious Council, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. No fees are charged, and the providers involved are not reimbursed for their time and services. This clinic exists to serve the needs of migrant workers in Adams County and to care for others of low income who would otherwise lack access to dental services. Patients are eligible for the clinic if:
   a) they currently reside in Adams, Franklin or Cumberland counties (Franklin was added in 2014 because of the need in Haitian migrant camps there and the lack of other services)
   b) they have no dental insurance
   c) their income is 200% or less of Federal Poverty Guidelines

The target population benefits not only from acute dental care but also from preventive dentistry teaching and services and dentures. The clinic is also able to offer free endodontics, at-cost implants and even bone grafting, due to the skill sets and enthusiasm of the professional volunteers.

Board
- Sharon Kaya, Chairperson (Latino Missioner for Gettysburg Conference)
- Casey Williams, DMD Vice-Chairperson (volunteer dentist and provider of office space)
- Holly Hoffman, MD, Secretary-Treasurer (Diaconal Minister St. Paul Lutheran Church)
- Bill Currie, DDS (volunteer oral surgeon)
- Cynthia Reinecker, RDH (Concordia Dental, Dental Hygienist)

Accomplishments
- The clinic has been CLOSED since the lockdown began in March 2020 due to COVID-19. The board is meeting on February 15, 2021, to discuss future plans for resuming operations.
- The clinic only operated for three sessions since the 2020 report. Eight patients were given cleanings and 11 had restorations and four had extractions during those three clinics. Free dentures were made for two patients during that time.

Relationship to the Lower Susquehanna Synod
The clinic was co-founded by LSS-ELCA members Sharon Kaya and Holly Hoffman. The ministry is supported by donations and volunteers from many other congregations of the LSS, as well as individuals and congregations from other denominations.

Holly C. Hoffman, MD, MAMS, deacon at St. Paul ELC, Carlisle
Mission

Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants. SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in maritime ports on the Eastern Seaboard and in New York City.

“Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; For I am the Lord your God, the Holy one of Israel, your Savior”. Isaiah 43:2-3

Haven’t we all felt overwhelmed this past year? And yet, you have helped us weather the storm caused by the pandemic with your overwhelming support ... this imperfect storm that disrupted the lives of so many of us as well as those often-unseen seafarers during the crew change crisis and invisible asylum seekers detained in jail-like facilities, while the immigration process grinded to a halt.

You, our supporters, expressed compassion for seafarers and immigrants during the time of crisis by increasing contributions significantly. When we had to cancel our major fundraiser, the 2020 Setting the Course Banquet, individuals, shipping industry partners and unions, decided to send donations instead of buying tickets so that our six port chaplains could continue to visit ships that some likened to “floating prisons” because travel bans made crew changes impossible for most.

Spring was financially disastrous as we had to stop operating the guesthouse, which typically subsidizes our mission with about 75% of total income. Tragically, we had to part with our guesthouse staff, first hoping to rehire them in the summer, then by the end of December. Saving our organization when our services are needed most, we received a “gift” in the form of a respite organization (Comunilife) that leased our space from April to July to attend to community members recovering from COVID-19. With that blessing, we were able fulfill our continuing mission to seafarers and immigrants, while contributing the health insurance of the laid-off staff members throughout the year. And all through the pandemic we have been able to house seafarers in a midtown hotel now temporarily known as “SIH relocated”.

The Right of Asylum Online Advocacy Event was a great way to reach new friends – over 100 people attended all across the nation with over 2,000 seeing it on social media in the days after. Many participated in lobbying against new asylum rules and sent contributions to support our work with asylum seekers.

When senior groups, businesses, and congregations could not meet in person to assemble Christmas-at-Sea satchels, they contributed financially and assembled satchels in their homes and, in the end, showed 2,080 seafarers during the Christmas season that their sacrifices are appreciated.

We have been overwhelmed by the gifts of “imperfect storm weatherers” like you who enabled us to serve almost 20,000 people in the ports and at SIH relocated where we now provide lodging and social work assistance.

We thank the amazing individuals, congregations, synods, foundations, shipping industry partners and unions who helped us through the tempest of 2020 and who prepared a solid ground for 2021, where we will continue our service to seafarers in ports and at SIH relocated where we now provide lodging and social work assistance.

We are overwhelmed by your support. If you like to learn more about our ministry watch the 5-minute video on our home page www.sihnyc.org and share it with your congregation or assembly.

2020 Program Impact

19,746 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services while their lives were disrupted during the pandemic

2,080 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by congregations and volunteers to recognize these key workers

12 asylees stayed for free at the guesthouse and at SIH relocated a total of 442 nights; we also hosted 11 local disaster survivors

18 volunteer visitors brought hope to eight asylum seekers before detention center visits had to be cancelled

3 months (April-June) during which a community partner cared for people recovering from COVID-19 at the guesthouse

14,644 seafarers, the invisible essential workers, who often worked on extended contracts, were visited on 1,407 ships receiving essentials they had requested during the crew change crisis

1,351 seafarers were transported to the mall or medical facilities before COVID-19 restrictions made shore leave impossible for most mariners

72 seafarers received at times free lodging at SIH relocated when between job assignments because of COVID-related disruptions and quarantine requirements

2 advocacy campaigns, one championing seafarers to be recognized as essential workers, and another online campaign attended by over 100 people drawing attention to a failing immigration system and opposing new rules that would have dismantled asylum to the United States
**2020 Financial Report**

COVID-19 related challenges are reflected in our finances with lodging revenue that accounted for 72% of income last year dropping to just 17% in 2020. Overwhelmingly, it was our supporters’ response that enabled us to fulfill our mission with contributions accounting for 34% of income, up from 22% in 2019. Even with the ability to lease the building for three months to a partner organization that took care of COVID-19 patients in recovery, operating expenses exceeded revenues by $551,048. Program services accounted for 83% of expenses with only 17% spent on support services and fundraising. Net assets increased from $6,150,830 in 2019 to $6,159,175 in 2020. The figures below reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change once audited. To request the audited 2020 financial statements, send an email to henryk@silnyc.org.

Marsh Luther Drege, *pastor and executive director*
TREE 4 HOPE

Tree 4 Hope is a 501(c)3 nonprofit committed to providing a bright future for children and their families throughout Guatemala. They manage Hope Academy, a bilingual STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) school for girls living in some of the poorest conditions in the country. Through the work of Hope Academy, Tree 4 Hope endeavors to help young girls break out of the cycle of poverty that has held their families captive for so long by equipping them with the tools and resources they need to find meaningful work, reach for higher education, and create a more environmentally sustainable Guatemala.

For almost 20 years, Tree 4 Hope has also supported the work of Hogar Miguel Magone orphanage, a home for over 100 boys and girls in Guatemala’s foster system, as well as the neighboring village Aguacate. Tree 4 Hope runs a food sponsorship program to ensure children and elders both in the orphanage and village have nutrient rich fruits, vegetables and meats, provides salaries for psychologists to work with orphanage children who have experienced trauma, offers music lessons to facilitate the creative and emotional development of children in the community, assists with the purchase of shoes and school supplies for children in both the orphanage and the village, provides vaccinations against the flu and other ailments for children in need, and leads volunteer groups to build long-term relationships and encourage transformational experiences between United States volunteers and the people of Guatemala.

The organization is managed by Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali and Deacon David Hope-Tringali, both of whom are called as global missionaries to Guatemala through the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Tree 4 Hope’s board of directors is composed of Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali (Harrisburg, PA), Kristen Mam (Harrisburg, PA), Karen Withrow (Harrisburg, PA), Ruth Jeannerat (Harrisburg, PA) Deacon Chelle Huth (Harrisburg, PA), Brooks Foland (Harrisburg, PA), Anne Mosiman (Corpus Christi, TX) and Jordan Sanford (Seattle, WA).

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Tree 4 Hope undertook the responsibility of providing emergency food relief for the village of Aguacate when many residents lost their jobs or their ability to get to their jobs during Guatemala’s intense lockdown. Twice a month, Tree 4 Hope delivered food for over 100 families and also helped to coordinate food relief for over 500 families in northern Guatemala in partnership with the Lutheran Church of Guatemala. Though COVID has shut down in-person education throughout the country, Tree 4 Hope remains committed to providing the students of Hope Academy with the highest quality education. In order to live into this promise, they worked throughout the month of January to equip all of their students with the technology necessary to do all of their schooling virtually.

In the future, Tree 4 Hope dreams of expanding its offerings to continue providing food relief to the most needy individuals in Guatemala, allow Hope Academy to grow every year in order to meet increasing student demand, and offer a boarding option at the school so girls from difficult home situations have a safe and nurturing place to live while focusing on their education. Year after year, Tree 4 Hope continues to partner with like-minded organizations, both in the United States and Guatemala, that share their vision of transforming lives through education and opportunity.

While Tree 4 Hope is not a religious non-profit, faith has always driven Jennifer, David and the rest of the team behind the organization to continue reaching out to those most in need. They believe that encountering Jesus happens when they love God, love neighbor, and live into the calling of Matthew 25:40 “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” Tree 4 Hope has worked with many congregations in the Lower Susquehanna Synod including Trinity Camp Hill; Tree of Life, Harrisburg; Messiah, Harrisburg; St. Paul’s, New Cumberland; St. Paul’s, Littlestown; Trinity, Steelton; St. Matthew’s Hanover, and Zion, York, among others to create real, meaningful, and transformative encounters with Jesus that lead people to deeper relationships with God on the journey of discipleship.

More information about Tree 4 Hope and the work they do can be found at their website www.tree4hope.org or by following them on Facebook or Instagram under Tree 4 Hope. Tree 4 Hope is always happy to talk to individuals and congregations interested in knowing more about their projects or how to get involved. Inquiries can be directed to Deacon David Hope-Tringali by email at david@tree4hope.org or by phone at 717-982-2353.

Deacon David Hope-Tringali, director of advancement