THIRTY-SECOND
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA

Messiah College
Grantham, Pennsylvania

June 6 - 8, 2019

Bishop James S. Dunlop
Presiding

Representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
DEACON SUE E. ROTHMEYER
Assistant to the Secretary/Executive for the ELCA Office of the Secretary
Administration
2019 MINUTES
THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYND, ELCA

The Assembly Planning Committee and the Synod Council of the Lower Susquehanna adopted the theme, “Hungry for God’s Mission,” for the thirty-second annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It was an important year with a bishop’s election as well as elections for synod vice president and synod secretary. It was the assembly just prior to the Churchwide Assembly, so they anticipated having memorials to discuss. It was also Pentecost weekend. Therefore, the Assembly Planning Committee and the Synod Council decided to return to a Thursday through Saturday format for this assembly, June 6 through June 8, 2019.

Registration for the thirty-second annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America opened at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, and continued until 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 8, 2019, with brief interruptions to enable the certification of voting members prior to the balloting for bishop. Registration was held in the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and Performing Arts of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. Registration was coordinated by Catherine F. Deitrich, assembly registrar, and supported by Denise C. Ferguson and Catherine L. Paul, synod staff; and Glenn Bartsch, Debbie Korzon, Susan Mull, Carol Krouse, Stella Ludwig and Tim Swartz, volunteers. Other volunteers from around our Lower Susquehanna Synod, coordinated by assembly manager, Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe, welcomed assembly participants and provided information and assistance to them.

Displays opened at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, 2019, and remained open throughout the entire assembly. The displays tables were placed around the outer hallways on both levels of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts, where members of the assembly could easily view them. Displays were provided by Communities of Hope; Criminal Justice System Ministry; Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries; Gettysburg College; Heifer International; Lower Susquehanna Synod Candidacy Committee; Lower Susquehanna Synod Center for Faith Formation; Lower Susquehanna Synod Konde Diocesan Committee; Lower Susquehanna Synod Disaster Response Network; Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Center; Lower Susquehanna Synod World Hunger Committee; Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania; Lutheran Campmining Corporation of Central Pennsylvania; Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State; Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic; Lutheran Men in Mission; Lutheran World Relief; Luthercare; Portico Benefit Services; SpiritTrust Lutheran; Thrivent Financial; Tree 4 Hope; United Lutheran Seminary; and Women of the ELCA, Lower Susquehanna Synodical Women’s Organization.

The Hearts and Minds Bookstore, Dallastown, Pennsylvania, Byron Borger, owner, offered a large display of books and publications for assembly voting members to peruse and purchase.

Members of the assembly were able to write on strips of ribbons their names and what they love in God’s creation and would not like to see come to an end because of climate change and have them placed on the climate ribbon tree placed prominently behind the altar in the center of the stage in Parmer Hall. At the concluding session of the assembly, these ribbons were distributed among the members of the assembly, who were encouraged to take a ribbon home with them and make the prayer petition written on the ribbon part of their prayer life. Members of the assembly also had opportunity to remember their baptism calling and to become a change agent by making a commitment to alter their lifestyles to care for creation and place that commitment on a mural of God’s world.

An optional dinner was held at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, 2019, in the Brubaker Gymnasium of the Eisenhower Conference Center in honor of the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, who is retiring on August 31, 2019, after serving our synod faithfully as synod secretary for the past twenty years. Nearly 275 individuals attended this dinner.

ASSEMBLY APPOINTMENTS

The 2019 Assembly Planning Committee, a committee of the Synod Council, met four times throughout the year to plan for the 2019 Synod Assembly. Members of this committee were chair, the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, SC; Catherine F. Deitrich, assembly registrar; Tracey DePasquale; the Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George; the Rev. Edward J. Robbins; Charlie Roberts, staff; Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe, assembly manager; the Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown, SC; and the Rev. Gwenn L. Trout; and officers Lucinda L. Bringman, and the Rev. Thomas E. McKee.

Serving as members of the Nominating Committee for the 2019 Synod Assembly were chair, Stella Ludwig, SC; Bishop James S. Dunlop; secretary, the Rev. Thomas E. McKee; the Rev. Eric N. Anderson, SC; the Rev. Cindy A. Brommer; the Rev. David W. Clark; the Rev. Timothy L. Craven; the Rev. Christopher A. Frye; the Rev. Beth Ann R. Hawk; the Rev. Gretchen S. Ierien; the Rev. Kathleen A. Kuehl; Sister Deborah A.S. McClellan; the Rev. Jason P. Northridge; the Rev. Kevin C. Stout; Allen P. Stump, SC; the Rev. Alan J. Watt; Evan Williams; the Rev. Robert R. Yankovitz; and staff, Debbie Clark.

Members of the Gift Discernment Committee, who interviewed candidates for officers’ positions are chair, Stella Ludwig, SC; Bishop
James S. Dunlop; the Rev. Eric N. Anderson, SC; the Rev. Douglas L. DeStephano; Holly Freas-Webster; Allen P. Stump, SC; Robert Walton; M. Jane Wigand; and the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary.

The members of the Worship at Assembly Committee were chair, the Rev. Aaron M. Erdley; the Rev. Rebecca M. Ajer Frantz; the Rev. Mark W. Oldenburg; Debra E. Reeder; the Rev. Jillian E. Riddle, SC; Stephen A. Strauss; and Carol A. Krouse, bulletins; and staff, the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali and the Rev. Thomas E. McKee.

Members of the Bishop’s Election Committee were chair, Joseph M. Stepansky, treasurer, Tina A. Ahrens, Thomas Busteed, Patti Corill, Michael Faust, James Fulkroad, Sharon Kaya, Elizabeth Parker, Emili Scavitto, and Bill Sowers.

Bishop James S. Dunlop appointed the following assembly committees:

**Committee of Reference and Counsel**: chair, Kay A. Hinkel, SC; Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president; the Rev. Matthew B. Best; Fred Botterbusch; the Rev. Titus D. Clarke; Carol Heintzelman; the Rev. Stephen R. Herr; Scott Kopp; the Rev. Jason P. Northridge; and staff, Debbie Clark and the Rev. Thomas E. McKee.

**Committee on Memorials**: chair, Allen P. Stump, SC; Sister Dottie K. Almoney; Susan Feldmann; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George; the Rev. Jonathan R. Jenkins; the Rev. Alex R. Martini; the Rev. Jane C. Nicholson; the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel; Steve Shissler; Molly Wirick; and staff, Debbie Clark and the Rev. Thomas E. McKee and.


Bishop Dunlop appointed the following personnel for the assembly: Sister Dorothy Kay Almoney, Director of Education and Outreach, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster, chaplain; Erik Teichmann, a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster, assembly musician; Joseph A. Ricci, Esquire, Trindle Spring Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, parliamentarian; and the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, retired, a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Middletown, necrologist.

The pages were members of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Lutheran Youth Organization and young adults participating in our synod’s young adult ministries. Coordinating the pages were Charles R. Roberts III, director of faith formation and youth ministry of the Lower Susquehanna Synod; the Rev. Harold S. Fox, retired, a member of Messiah Lutheran Church, Harrisburg; and the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, Synod Council, pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church, Shippensburg.

The following individuals, who were not mentioned elsewhere, served as volunteers during the assembly aiding voting members: Vickie Howery, Jason Roscoe, and Gina Roscoe.

Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, Assistant to the Secretary/Executive for the ELCA Office of the Secretary - Administration, was the churchwide representation to this assembly. She represented Presiding Bishop Eaton, presided over the assembly during times of the bishop’s election, and presented the Churchwide Report.

**FIRST ASSEMBLY SESSION**

**Thursday evening, June 6, 2019**

The Thirty-Second Annual Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod began with a Service of Word and Sacrament held at 6:45 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, 2019, in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts on the campus of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, presided at this service, and Charles R. Roberts III, Director of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, preached. This service was modeled after the services held on Synod Day at the National Youth Gathering. Members of the band that provided the musical accompaniment were Andy Hyatt, band leader, Mia Brown, Alex Finn, Matt Little, Jocie Little, and Joel Ryder. Also participating in this service were Heather Wilkie and Zach Hartman, assisting ministers, and assembly pages and advisors, communion assistants.

Following worship, the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, called to order the thirty-second annual assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, 2019, in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts on the campus of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. Bishop Dunlop led the members of the assembly in the Order for the Opening of a Synod Assembly.

Bishop Dunlop greeted the members of the Synod Assembly and welcomed them to this thirty-second annual Synod Assembly. He thanked the participants in the worship service, especially the youth who served as assisting ministers, communion assistants, and musicians and vocalists in the band. He shared that he just loves assemblies, and he knows that the assembly participants love assemblies
too. He announced that the theme of this year’s assembly is “Hungry for God’s Mission.” This theme has been developed from our mission statement, “The Lower Susquehanna Synod is the place where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ.” He introduced the assembly’s parliamentarian, Joseph Ricci, Esquire, a member of Trindle Spring Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg; the assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, Director of Education and Outreach, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster; and the assembly musician, Erik Teichmann, member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster, and spouse of the Rev. Sarah E. Teichmann. The assembly acknowledged them with applause. The bishop asked the voting members how many of them are attending their first assembly. About a third of the voting members present raised their hands. These first-time voting members were greeted with applause.

**PRACTICE WITH VOTING MACHINES**

Bishop Dunlop requested that the pages distribute the electronic voting machines to voting members. He provided the following instructions to the voting members. To receive a voting machine, voting members must display their name badges indicating that they are voting members. Voting machines may not be removed from the assembly hall. Voting machines are to be returned to the pages at the close of each session. Pages are available to assist with changing batteries and trouble shooting. To vote, voting members must be seated in either the main level or the first balcony of the assembly hall. Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly Darin Beamish, owner of Qwizdom Technologies, who conducted a training session with the electronic voting machines for voting members.

**CERTIFICATION OF VOTING MEMBERS AND REPORT ON REGISTRATION**

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary of synod, reported that 587 persons were certified as voting members of the 2019 Synod Assembly. Needed for a quorum were 295 voting members. Registration at 6:45 p.m. indicated that there were present 204 ordained voting members, of which 157 were on the roster of active pastors and 47 were retired; and 269 lay voting members, including 244 voting members from congregations, 14 deacons, nine lay members of Synod Council, and two lay officers, making a total of 473 voting members. Bishop Dunlop declared a quorum present. The secretary reported that 56 visitors also had registered, giving a total of 529 persons in attendance.

**BISHOP’S OPENING REMARKS**

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, addressed the assembly. The bishop shared how, over the last six years, he has heard repeatedly the need for our congregations actively to be engaged in mission. He related a story about a young girl whom he met at Memorial Lutheran Church, Shippensburg. He asked her, “What do you think people are hungry for?” Her response was, “I think people are hungry for food, for a place to belong, to have a mom and dad…..” Bishop Dunlop shared how this powerful sense of recognizing how our neighbors are in need is what God’s mission, OUR mission, is all about. He noted that there is a much deeper hunger that calls us to be engaged with our neighbors. He talked about the Mission Support Experiment in which the Lower Susquehanna Synod, four other synods, and the ELCA is now engaged. It is a brand-new approach to supporting mission where we and the other four synods retain part of ELCA mission support to fund congregational renewal and new ministry starts on the territory of these synods. This new approach has changed the narrative substantially. He invited the assembly to learn more about this new and exciting approach by watching the mission support video.

The mission support video introduces us to Vicar Carla Christopher, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries at Union Lutheran Church, York. Carla loved the church as she was growing up. However, at age 18 she came out as a lesbian, and things changed. She was sent to a deprogramming camp where “they” tried to rob her of her identity. It was devastating to her to hear that God did not love her. She left the church for many years. Finally, she began to talk with Pastor Joel Folkemer, and she began to realize that in many of the things she experienced God was reaching out to her, telling her to come home. Pastor Folkemer took Carla to meet Bishop Dunlop. He talked and prayed with her for two hours, learning her story, hearing her experiences, learning her passions, and hearing what she felt called to do. He took all of that and wove it creatively into a ministry context where she could use her gifts of public speaking, facilitating, and training. It was a prayerful process that led to her current position at Union Lutheran Church, York. Bishop Dunlop explained the partnership we have with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through the Mission Support Experiment that allows us to have valuable resources to respond to calls to ministry and to human need in a timely manner. The story of Carla Christopher is just one example of the Kairos moments that occurred because we had the resources to act quickly when opportunities for mission arose. Pastor Richard E.T. Jorgensen Jr., Director for Evangelical Mission for Renewing Mission, explained that we can do these things because we already have relationships on the ground working in all sorts of different communities. The experiment allows us to take risks to grow as God provides us with the opportunities to launch out in new ways to share the Gospel with God’s people. Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, affirmed that she has watched the Mission Support Experiment closely for five years. She has seen us as a synod responding to God’s mission. The change has been exciting. The video returned to add to Carla’s story. As she was transparent with the community about her life’s story, more and more women came up to her and told her that they were living through some of the same circumstances. They were waiting for treatment, but the wait to receive services was a long one, and, when the wait was finally over, they discovered that the cost of treatment was prohibitive. So, Carla started a peer group that meets twice a month. The members of the group pray together, eat, meditate, learn skills, work with a social worker, and support one another. Carla shared the Biblical example lived out by Jesus. Jesus would ask, “What are your needs? What are the needs of this community?” And that is how Jesus would come to them. She said that she follows the Jesus model. She
asks first, “What do you need? Where are you in life?” There are other conversations she will have, but this is where she starts. You need to meet people where they are.

After the mission support video was shown, Bishop Dunlop recounted the first chapter of Mark’s Gospel, highlighting the use of the word, “immediate.” There is a sense of urgency in Mark’s Gospel. Mark used the words immediate or immediately eleven times. At the closing session of our first R3 Initiative, the bishop heard from the twenty-three congregations who have been engaged in this renewal process how they are moving forward with a sense of hope. The bishop announced that we no longer have to wait six months for a grant. We are moving as quickly as we can because the needs are so great. The bishop noted that, as we move forward, there is an urgent need to expand our mission in our communities. He asserted that this is where the church exists, in the congregations where we walk together and where we are disciples together. We are called to grow the church on the ground in those places where we live. Those contexts are changing, and we need to be ready to deal with those changes. There are no more German immigrants getting off the boat. That model for growth is done. In a totally new way, we are equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission.

**REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL: BISHOP’S ELECTION**

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. The vice president made some introductory remarks about the election of the bishop, including detailing the Preliminary Identification Process Leading to the Election of a Bishop and the proposed Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop. The vice president stressed the importance of Rule #2 in the Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop. The names written on the first ballot had to be the pastor’s full name as found in the clergy roster for it to be a valid ballot.

Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman moved Recommendation 1 (SC19.02.05.) (SC19.05.32.) on behalf of Synod Council:

**ADOPTED: That the proposed Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop be adopted.**

**SA19.06.01. 2/3 majority**

**2019 RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP**

1. In accordance with S9.04 of the synod constitution, the election of a bishop shall be by ecclesiastical ballot. There shall be no spoken nominations from the floor. Only those receiving a vote on the first ballot shall be elected bishop or listed on the second ballot. Persons identified as possessing gifts for the office of bishop are not nominees. The first ballot shall occur on Thursday evening, June 6, 2019.

2. Any ordained minister of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA is eligible for nomination for bishop. A valid ballot is to contain the nominee’s full name as found in the clergy roster. All registered voting members of the 2019 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly shall be eligible to cast a ballot.

3. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the first ballot shall be necessary for the election of a bishop.

4. If no election occurs, the first ballot is the nominating ballot. This ballot becomes the total slate of nominees.

5. Pastors who are nominated on the nominating ballot and desire that their name be retained on subsequent ballots shall submit a completed biographical form to the secretary of synod by 9:30 a.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019. Biographical forms must be submitted to Thomas E. McKee, secretary of synod, in-person via hard copy or flash drive or by emailing Deacon Marsha Roscoe at mroscoe@lss-elca.org.

6. Pastors nominated on the first ballot shall have the right to withdraw their names from subsequent ballots before the casting of the second ballot. A form requesting the name to be withdrawn must be secured from the pages’ desk and must be returned to the secretary of synod by 9:30 a.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019. Those pastors who are not present at the assembly may withdraw their names electronically to the secretary of synod (tmckee@lss-elca.org) or in the hearing of two members of the Bishop’s Election Committee.

7. The second ballot shall be scheduled before the lunch recess on Friday morning, June 7, 2019. On the second and all subsequent ballots, the order of listing of the nominees on the ballot shall be from the greatest number of ballots cast to the least. Ties shall be listed alphabetically. Three-fourths of the votes cast on the second ballot shall be necessary for election.

8. Following the report of the second ballot on Friday afternoon, June 7, 2019, biographical data for the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be distributed to all voting members.

9. Following the report of the second ballot on Friday afternoon, June 7, 2019, the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot shall be invited to the stage and be introduced by name to the members of
the assembly. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each individual introduction. After time has been allotted for all voting members to read the biographical information of the seven nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of ballots cast on the second ballot, these seven persons (plus ties) will be invited to address the assembly on a subject of their own choosing, with each speech limited to five minutes. If any such person is not present at the assembly, the individual, if possible, may designate an alternate to speak on her or his behalf. A time keeper shall indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of the allocated time and when the allocated time has elapsed. The sequence of the speeches shall be determined by lot. There shall be no applause before, during, or after individual speeches; only after all have spoken is there to be such affirmation. There shall be ten minutes time allotted after these speeches for voting members to engage in prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members. The third ballot shall be scheduled early in the Saturday morning session.

10. Two-thirds of the vote shall be necessary for election on the third ballot.

11. Prior to the fourth ballot for synod bishop on Saturday morning, June 8, 2019, the three persons (plus ties) who received the greatest number of votes on the third ballot will be invited to participate in a question-and-answer period. The period shall be moderated by the designated presider for the election process. The same six questions shall be asked of each of the nominees. The order that the nominees shall answer the first question shall be determined by the draw of names. For subsequent questions, the order for nominees to answer the next question will rotate, i.e., the nominee previously answering second will answer first, the nominee previously answering third will answer second, and the nominee previously answering first will answer third. Each nominee shall have a maximum of two minutes to respond to each question. If any nominee is not present at the assembly, that individual, if possible, may designate an alternate to answer on her or his behalf. A time keeper will indicate to the speaker when 30 seconds remain of allotted time and when the allotted time has ended. Questions to be asked shall be determined by a committee appointed by Synod Council. Any voting member of the Synod Assembly may submit questions from February 1, 2019, until May 10, 2019, via the form on our synod’s website, to Lucinda Bringman, vice president of synod, 900 S. Arlington Avenue, Suite 220B, Harrisburg, PA 17109, or to lbringman@lss-elca.org. There shall be no applause before, during, or after each answer; only after the question-and-answer period has come to an end is there to be such affirmation.

12. The casting of the fourth ballot shall be scheduled immediately before the close of the Saturday morning session to provide time for prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members. 60% of the votes cast shall be necessary for election on the fourth ballot.

13. On ballots after the fourth ballot, the ballots shall be limited to the two nominees (plus ties) who receive the greatest number of votes cast.

14. The fifth ballot and all subsequent ballots shall be scheduled for Saturday afternoon, June 8, 2019.

15. On all subsequent ballots most of the votes cast shall be necessary for election.

16. The report of all ballots shall be reported orally to the assembly, displayed on the assembly screen, and entered in full in the minutes.

Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman appointed the following individuals to the Bishop’s Election Committee: chair, Joseph M. Stepansky, treasurer, Tina A. Ahrens, Thomas Busteed, Patti Corll, Michael Faust, James Fulkroad, Sharon Kaya, Elizabeth Parker, Emili Scavitto, and Bill Sowers. The assembly expressed their appreciation with applause.

**REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL: ASSEMBLY**

Bishop Dunlop called on the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, member of Synod Council and chair of the Assembly Planning Committee, to provide the report of the Assembly Planning Committee. Pastor Blouch-Hanson is pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church, Shippensburg.

Pastor Blouch-Hanson addressed the voting members, saying “Siblings in Christ, I bring you greetings from the Assembly Planning Committee.” She expressed her appreciation to the committee for all their work, including the members of the synod staff, especially co-assembly managers, Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe and Pastor Thomas E. McKee. Pastor Blouch-Hanson reminded the members of the assembly that “the major priorities of the assembly are worship, edification, and the legislative business of this synod conducted with the greatest possible involvement of those entitled to participate.” The assembly, especially in the years when a bishop is elected, is a time for discernment, prayer, and conversation. She expressed her appreciation to the youth who led worship and to the pages. She encouraged assembly participants to be kind to the youth and to thank them for their service. Their help is invaluable. She shared with the assembly that she is honored to serve in a synod like this.

Pastor Blouch-Hanson brought Recommendation 2 (SC19.02.07.) (SC19.05.31.) on behalf of the Synod Council:
ADOPTED:  That the proposed agenda for the 2019 Synod Assembly be adopted.
SA19.06.02.

2019 SYNOD ASSEMBLY AGENDA

Registration
Thursday, June 6 4:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Friday, June 7 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Friday, June 7 12:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Saturday, June 8 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Pre-Assembly Options: Thursday, June 6

4:00 p.m. Displays Open
4:30 p.m. Optional Dinner in Honor of the Rev. Thomas E. McKee’s 20 years of service as Secretary of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

First Assembly Meeting: Thursday evening – June 6

6:45 p.m. • Service of Word and Sacrament Parmer Hall
8:00 p.m. • Order for the Opening of the Assembly Parmer Hall
• Certification of Voting Members
• Report on Registration
• Bishop’s Remarks
• Report of the Synod Council
  o Adoption of the Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop
  o Appointment of the Bishop’s Election Committee
• Report of the Assembly Planning Committee
  o Adoption of the Agenda
  o Adoption of the Rules of Procedure
• Introduction to the Election of a Bishop – Churchwide Representative Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
• Mission Snapshot and A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission – Vice President Lucinda Bringman and Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Director for Mission Interpretation

8:30 p.m. • Registration Closes
ALL VOTING MEMBERS WHO WILL CAST A BALLOT DURING THE FIRST BALLOT FOR BISHOP MUST BE REGISTERED BY THIS TIME
• First Ballot for Bishop – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
  o Instructions – Treasurer Joseph Stepansky
  o Invocation of the Spirit – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
  o Balloting
• Announcements
• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain

9:30 p.m. • Recess
• Reception in Honor of the Rev. Thomas E. McKee’s 20 years of service as Secretary of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

DEADLINES
Friday  Deadline for requests to remove one’s name from the ballot for bishop.
9:30 a.m.

Friday  Deadline for submitting biographical information for the election of bishop.
9:30 a.m.

Friday 10:00 a.m. Deadline for submitting nomination information forms for vice president, secretary, Synod Council and Discipline Committee.

Friday 11:00 a.m. Registration closes. All voting members casting a ballot during the second ballot for bishop must have registered by this time.

Saturday 8:00 a.m. Registration closes. All voting members casting a ballot during the third, fourth and fifth ballot for bishop must have registered by this time.

Second Assembly Meeting: Friday morning – June 7

7:00 a.m. Breakfast (residents only) Lottie Nelson Dining Room

8:00 a.m. Parmer Hall

- Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
- Report on Registration
- Presentation of the Minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly
- Report of the First Ballot for Bishop
- Bishop’s Remarks

9:15 a.m.

- Break (break by 9:15 a.m.)
- Report of the Synod Council
  o Nomination of Vice President and Secretary
- Report of the Nominating Committee
  o Nominations for Synod Council
  o Nominations for Discipline Committee
- Committee Appointments
  o Elections Committee
  o Committee on Memorials
  o Committee of Reference and Counsel
  o Worship at Assembly Committee
- Introductions
  o Parliamentarian – Joseph Ricci, Esq.
  o Necrologist – The Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton
  o Former Bishops and Special Guests
  o Pages and Coordinators
- Report of the Synod Council
  o Report of the Mission Support Experiment
  o Adoption of the 2020 Proposed Budget
  o Adoption of Minimum Salary Guidelines
  o Adoption of Amendments to Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of This Synod
  o Other Synod Council Recommendations
- Ministry Focus – Equipping

11:00 a.m.

- Registration Closes
ALL VOTING MEMBERS WHO WILL CAST A BALLOT DURING THE SECOND BALLOT FOR BISHOP MUST BE REGISTERED BY THIS TIME
- Second Ballot for Bishop – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
  o Instructions – Treasurer Joseph Stepansky
  o Invocation of the Spirit – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
  o Balloting
- Announcements
12:00 noon

• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
• Recess for Lunch

12:15 p.m.

Lunch

Lottie Nelson
Dining Room

Third Assembly Meeting: Friday afternoon – June 7

1:30 p.m.

• Forums
• Worship Rehearsal

Boyer Hall
Parmer Hall

2:45 p.m.

• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
• Biblical Storytelling
• First Ballot for Vice President, Secretary, Synod Council, and Discipline Committee
• Second Ballot for Vice President, Secretary, Synod Council, and Discipline Committee
• Report of the Second Ballot for Bishop
• Mission Focus
• Introduction of Seven Nominees for Bishop and Presentation of Biographical Information
• Speeches by the Seven Nominees for Bishop
• Churchwide Presentation – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
• Announcements

Parmer Hall

• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
• Recess for Dinner

5:30 p.m.

Dinner

Lottie Nelson
Dining Room

Fourth Assembly Meeting: Friday evening – June 7

5:30 p.m.

• Rehearsal for “Of the Land and Seasons” worship musicians

Martin
Instrumental Hall

7:00 p.m.

• Service of Word and Sacrament – “Of the Land and Seasons”
  o Necrology
  o Rite of Ordination

Parmer Hall

Fifth Assembly Meeting: Saturday morning – June 8

7:00 a.m.

Breakfast (residents only)

Lottie Nelson
Dining Room

8:00 a.m.

• Registration Closes
  ALL VOTING MEMBERS WHO WILL CAST A BALLOT DURING THE THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH BALLOT FOR BISHOP MUST BE REGISTERED BY THIS TIME
  • Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
  • Biblical Storytelling
  • Third Ballot for Bishop – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
    o Instructions – Treasurer Joseph Stepansky
    o Invocation of the Spirit – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
    o Balloting
  • Report of the Third Ballot for Bishop
  • Question and Answer Period with the Three Nominees for Bishop
  • Mission Focus – Website
  • Committee of Reference and Counsel
  • Break
• Committee of Memorials
• Reports of the Bishop and Officers
• Reports of the Committees, Agencies, Institutions, and Synodical Units of Churchwide Organizations
• Fourth Ballot for Bishop – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
  o Instructions – Treasurer Joseph Stepansky
  o Invocation of the Spirit – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
  o Balloting
• Report of the Fourth Ballot
• Announcements

12:00 noon
• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
• Recess for Lunch

12:15 p.m. Lunch

Sixth Assembly Meeting: Saturday afternoon – June 8

1:30 p.m.
• Hymn and Prayer – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
• Fifth Ballot for Bishop – Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer
  o Instructions – Treasurer Joseph Stepansky
  o Invocation of the Spirit – Sister Dottie Almoney, chaplain
  o Balloting
• Report of the Fifth Ballot
• Response of the Elected Bishop
• Biblical Storytelling
• Unfinished Business
• New Business
• Installation of the Newly Elected Members of Synod Council, Deans, and Secretaries
• Order for the Sending of the Voting Members of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly
• Bishop’s Closing Remarks
• Rite of Affirmation/Rite of Thanksgiving
• Order for the Closing of the Assembly with Installation of the Newly Elected Secretary

Reorganizational Meeting of Synod Council

Pastor Blouch-Hanson moved Recommendation 2 (SC19.02.08.) from the Synod Council:

ADOPTED: That the proposed Rules of Procedure for the 2019 Synod Assembly be adopted.
SA19.06.03.
2/3 majority

2019 Rules of Procedure

1. The bishop shall vacate the chair to the churchwide representative during all the procedures relating to the election of a bishop. After each step of the process is completed, the churchwide representative shall return the chair to the bishop.

2. All voting members shall be seated on the main floor or on the first balcony to receive a voting machine and to vote. Voting machines shall not be taken from assembly hall.

3. Persons eligible to vote shall be official voting members wearing voting member badges. The following persons shall have voice but not vote in the assembly:
a. official representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
b. representatives of institutions and agencies having a relationship to this synod
4. Others who are not voting members may be permitted to speak on the floor of the assembly by a 2/3 vote of the assembly.

5. The microphones in the aisles shall be used when addressing the chair. Speakers shall state plainly their name and their congregation or, if rostered persons, their area of ministry or service.

6. In all business meetings, speeches from the floor shall be limited to three (3) minutes and no persons shall speak more than twice on the same question, except by consent of the assembly. This rule shall not apply to persons presenting a report nor when direct questions are posed to specific individuals for clarification.

7. No motion, other than procedural ones, may be debated on the floor until a written copy of the motion is in the hands of the chair. A triplicate form, provided by the pages, shall be used to send the copy to the bishop and the secretary.

8. When there are many pro and con statements on any motion, the chair will recognize alternately persons making a pro or con statement. To comply with this provision, when representing a pro position voting members shall indicate this to the chair by holding up a green card located at the microphone. When representing a con position, voting members shall indicate this to the chair by holding up a red card located at the microphone. Those speaking FOR shall display a GREEN card prior to speaking and those speaking AGAINST shall display a RED card prior to speaking. To address procedural issues, voting members shall indicate this to the chair by holding up a WHITE card (located at the microphone).

9. During legislative meetings of the assembly, no member of the assembly may express a position on any matter unless assigned the floor by the chair. During legislative meetings of the assembly, no member may call upon other members to express themselves by oral acclamation, applause, raising of hands or in any other manner, and members of the assembly may not so express themselves without being requested to do so by the chair.

10. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be the governing parliamentary law of this assembly, except as otherwise provided in these Rules of Procedure. A parliamentarian will be appointed to advise the chair on procedure.

11. Voting members shall not absent themselves from any meeting of the assembly without valid reason (Constitution S7.36.02). One-half (1/2) of the registered voting members of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum. Once a quorum has been established at the beginning of each assembly meeting, all items of business on the adopted agenda for that meeting may be completed.

12. Except for procedural motions, any motion which the chair determines is not germane to the business of the assembly then under consideration shall be referred to the Committee of Reference and Counsel to decide whether said motion shall be brought to the assembly for consideration or referred to the Synod Council for final action.

13. Any memorial or resolution which is to be presented at the Synod Assembly for consideration must be delivered in writing to the secretary of the synod by May 1, 2019, so that such memorial or resolution may be reviewed by the Committee on Memorials or the Committee of Reference and Counsel and by the voting members of the assembly, prior to assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended the adoption of a resolution, the text of the resolution recommended for passage shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended that a proposed resolution be amended, the resolution shall be the main motion before the assembly and the committee’s recommendation shall be received as information/advice to the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended referral of a resolution, the committee’s recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has recommended that the assembly not adopt a proposed resolution without the committee making any other recommendation related to the same or closely related subject, the resolution shall be the main motion before the assembly and the committee’s recommendation shall be received as information/advice to the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has acted to present a resolution to the assembly without recommendation, the text of the resolution shall be the main motion before the assembly.

When the Committee of Reference and Counsel has combined similar resolutions, the composite resolution shall be the question before the assembly.

Action on recommendations from the Committee on Memorials shall follow the same procedure as action on the recommendations from the Committee of Reference and Counsel.
All memorials and resolutions received after May 1, 2019, shall be automatically referred to the Committee on Memorials or the Committee of Reference and Counsel, according to the order of receipt. The appropriate committee shall review the resolutions or memorials and shall decide whether said memorial or resolution shall be forwarded to the assembly for consideration or referred to the Synod Council for final action.

14. When memorials and resolutions are brought before the assembly, the oral reading of the ‘whereas clauses’ shall be waived.

15. The deadline for the submission of typed biographical information of persons who will be nominated from the floor shall be 10:00 a.m., Friday, June 7, 2019.

16. Any amendments to the proposed budget of the Lower Susquehanna Synod must be adopted within the total proposed amount.

17. The report of balloting will be reported orally to the assembly, displayed on the assembly screen, and entered in full in the minutes.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Pastor Blouch-Hanson and the members of the Assembly Planning Committee. The assembly responded with applause.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP**

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer. Deacon Rothmeyer is the churchwide representative to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly. She will be presiding over the assembly during the times of the bishop’s election. Deacon Rothmeyer serves as Assistant to the Secretary/Executive for the ELCA Office of the Secretary Administration. The assembly greeted Deacon Rothmeyer with applause.

Deacon Rothmeyer said, “I am honored to be here at the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, to be with you to worship, to conduct business, to share ministry stories, to reconnect with old friends and colleagues, to make new friends, and to participate with you in the important work of this assembly.”

One of the most important responsibilities given to a Synod Assembly is the election of a bishop. She noted that the Lower Susquehanna Synod has a constitutional preliminary process to identify persons who possess the gifts for the office of bishop, and she thanked all who took part in prayer, Bible study, discussion, and deliberation at the January and March Conference Assemblies. She also noted that biographical information forms had been posted on the synod website from April 22 until May 31 for those identified at the March Conference Assemblies as possessing the gifts for the office of bishop. She reminded the members of the assembly that those identified as persons possessing the gifts for bishop are not nominees for bishop. They will only become nominees for bishop if their names are written on the first or nominating ballot. She also reminded the members of the assembly that, although this is an election process, from the church’s perspective it is a call process. It is a time of discernment. It is a time for the synod to listen to what God is calling God’s people to do in coming years. It is a time for pastors to listen to God’s Spirit for the call that comes both from God and from God’s people.

Deacon Rothmeyer quoted Dietrich Bonhoeffer in *Life Together*: “Bishops are those unpretentious persons who are sound and loyal in faith and life and who properly carry out their ministry to the community of faith. The authority of bishops lies in accomplishing the tasks of their service.” She stated she wanted to share some perspectives with the assembly based on her years of experience. “The constitution of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, as with all synod constitutions, uses two full pages to describe the responsibilities of the bishop, stating ‘the bishop shall.’” Of primary importance is to be a pastor— to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accord with the Confessions of Faith of our ELCA. And the bishop has responsibility for this ministry of Word and Sacrament in our synod and its congregations. The bishop serves as a pastor to the ministers of our church. Further, the bishop is a servant by advising and counseling the institutions and agencies that relate to the synod and consulting and assisting congregations in their calling of pastors and deacons. The bishop cares for colleagues in ministry and prays for them and the church. A bishop serves as a leader and a reminder of our unity within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the one holy catholic and apostolic church. More than any other minister of Word and Sacrament in this church, the bishop is accountable to all three expressions of this church, accountable to the congregations, pastors and deacons, accountable to the Synod Council and Synod Assembly, and part of the Conference of Bishops with responsibilities to our churchwide organization. The bishop exercises the church’s power to ordain all approved and properly called ministers of Word and Sacrament and to consecrate approved and properly called ministers of Word and Service in this church, on behalf of the whole church. The bishop is called upon to speak on behalf of this church to the local community and the world. The bishop has a public voice that is to be used on behalf of the church and those God has called us to serve. At times this voice will lead the church through the confusion that confronts us. At other times the bishop will speak to the world God’s word of law and gospel. That word both accuses and heals the broken world in which we live. And the bishop serves as chief ecumenical officer of our church in this synod and maintains relationships with leaders of other Christian Churches. Finally, the bishop is also the CEO of your synod. Constitutionally, this means the bishop coordinates and has oversight of your synod staff and their work, attests letters of call, provides for the installation of pastors and deacons, and maintains the roster. The bishop presides at the Synod Assembly. So, you see, the bishop
is a pastor, a servant, a sign of the unity of Christ’s church, a CEO and a leader. The bishop is a child of God called and empowered by the Holy Spirit to work on Christ’s behalf among us and in the world.

Deacon Rothmeyer said that the assembly will now turn to the process of calling the bishop, invoking the Holy Spirit to guide us in our thinking, deliberating, and voting. She led the assembly in the following prayer: “Almighty God, your Holy Spirit equips the church with a variety of gifts. Grant that we may use them to bear witness to Christ in lives that are built on faith and love. Make us ready to live the gospel and eager to do your will, so that we may share with all your church in the joys of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, Our Savior and Lord. Amen.” (ELW, p.76)

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe, Director for Mission Interpretation, and Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president, to review the Mission Snapshot and A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission, respectively.

Deacon Marsha Roscoe introduced the Mission Snapshot. “We are the synod where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ.” Hunger reminds us that we’re human. No one of us has everything we need within us – and just as we need food to satisfy physical hunger, we also have a spiritual hunger and a deep longing for God. In fact, God has made us hungry to remind us that we need each other and, most of all, God. In our synod, feeding others as we have been fed by Christ shapes our ministries and is foundational to God’s mission. Our Mission Snapshot strives to identify what is most important for God’s mission and our ministries in this time and place. The development of our Mission Snapshot was like the process congregations use to develop a ministry site profile when calling a new rostered minister. Our starting points were our three missional priorities — equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission. Many voices, conversations and prayers have shaped these missional priorities. As a synod, we have been in dialogue together, in conversations in various settings, with various gatherings of people, including this assembly. All of this informed the first draft of the Mission Snapshot which we shared with all of you at our Winter Conference Assemblies. We are grateful for the ways in which you helped clarify and re-shape this into what we have today. As a synod, we always remember that we are on a journey together. Together, we seek to be a welcoming community. We strive to equip one another for ministry, we partner for the sake of the gospel, and we walk together with God and with the people in the communities where God has planted us. It is our goal that you will use this Mission Snapshot as a discernment tool to think and pray about the gifts needed in a bishop who will lead us in fulfilling God’s mission.

Vice President Bringman provided background on the process of completing A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission. The vice president said, “In our synod where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ, we are hungry for God’s Mission too. And God’s Mission needs a leader. We pray that the Holy Spirit will continuously be in our midst as we discern who is the leader God is guiding our synod to call for that mission. Where do you go to figure out the traits and attributes of a leader? Pastors and deacons have the daunting task of completing a Rostered Minister Profile which is supposed to let call committees know who the person is and what type of faith leader they can be. And we say the election of a bishop is a call process, but really, we can’t provide the Rostered Minister Profile for every pastor you might want to nominate. So, instead, we write a description of what our synod believes would be the gifts a person would need to serve in the role of bishop for God’s Mission in this place. A task force of lay members of the Synod Council was appointed last summer. They started with two key documents: our synod constitution and the report of the renewal team from the work done in 2017-2018 leading to the mission priorities identified by the 2018 Synod Assembly. The two groups working on the two documents made lists of key attributes which spoke to our synod. We put things we identified on sticky notes and then moved them around on a wall until we found things that cluster under our synod’s key mission areas: equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission. Some things seemed really important but didn’t fit under the three areas, so we put them aside - in a parking lot. From this we wrote the draft document. The Synod Council sent it on to the conferences and in January, all of you were invited to review it and provide feedback. And you did, 31 pages worth! A working group of the Synod Council reviewed everything you told us and revised the document. All of us together decided that the things we put in the parking lot (you know the meeting after the meeting that happens outside and sometimes has the real issues discussed) needed to come first and be named for what they are: essential gifts for a bishop. The rest follows. So now, with the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit, our election process will help us continue this journey together. We’ll hold our understanding of our mission before us and pray that we are led to the person with a bishop’s gifts for God’s mission.”

Both the Mission Snapshot and A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission were displayed to the assembly.

**FIRST BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Deacon Rothmeyer reviewed the election process that had been sent forth in the synod constitution, S9.04., and in the Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop adopted by this assembly. This election process is referred to as the ecclesiastical ballot. It begins with a blank sheet on which a voting member enters the name of one ELCA Minister of Word and Sacrament that the voting member wishes to nominate and continues with a multiple ballot election process, with a different number of nominees and different vote requirements on each successive ballot for a maximum of five ballots.
Deacon Rothmeyer explained legal votes to the assembly. A legal vote is a ballot that is filled out in accordance with the instructions. Only legal votes count in determining the percentage of votes. Illegal ballots and abstentions do not count in determining the percentage of votes.

She went on to explain that the first ballot in an ecclesiastical ballot process means that voting members may write in the full name as it appears on the ELCA roster of anyone on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. No absentee or proxy voting is permitted. If any nominee receives 75% of the legal ballots on Ballot 1, he or she is elected. If no one is elected, the first ballot is considered a nominating ballot. Those who wish to remove their name from the ballot for bishop may do so only after the first ballot. The deadline for removing one’s name is by 9:30 a.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019. Those who are nominated on the first ballot and desire to remain on the ballot are asked to submit the biographical information form for bishop’s nominees by 9:30 a.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019.

Deacon Rothmeyer informed the members about the subsequent ballots, if necessary. The name of every eligible person who was nominated and who did not withdraw will appear on the second ballot. No additional nominations can be made. For an election to occur on the second ballot, a nominee must receive ¾ of the legal votes. If there is no election on this ballot, the third ballot will contain the names of the seven persons (plus any ties in the seventh position) that receive the most legal votes on the second ballot. Before the third ballot, their bios will be posted, and they will have opportunity to address the assembly for five minutes on a subject of their own choosing. For a nominee to be elected on the third ballot, they must receive 2/3 of the legal votes cast. If there is no election, the fourth ballot will contain the names of the three persons (plus any ties in the third position) that receive the most legal votes on the third ballot. Before the fourth ballot, the three nominees will have opportunity to answer for a maximum of two minutes the same six questions chosen by a committee of Synod Council from questions posed by assembly voting members. On the fourth ballot, 60% of the legal votes cast are necessary for election. If there is no election on the fourth ballot, the fifth ballot will contain the names of the two persons (plus any ties for the second position) that receive the most legal votes on the fourth ballot. A majority vote is necessary on the fifth ballot for election as bishop.

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer again stressed that this is a call process that involves discernment. Thus, the process is designed to provide voting members with the opportunity to listen, confer, and prayerfully reflect on the nominees.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Pastor Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, to give an updated Credentials Report. Pastor McKee reported that there were 493 voting members registered as of 8:30 p.m.

Deacon Rothmeyer reviewed the requirements for Ballot 1. The first ballot begins the ecclesiastical ballot process. When voting members are directed to “vote now”, voting members will write the full name as it appears on the ELCA roster of any Minister of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A 75% majority on this ballot is required for election. If no one receives a 75% vote, this ballot will be considered a nominating ballot. When the voting closes for Ballot 1, there will be no additional opportunities in this elections process to add names to the list of nominees for bishop. And likewise, when the results of Ballot 1 are given Friday morning, there will be only one opportunity for those nominated on Ballot 1 to withdraw from nomination. Ballot 2 will then consist of all those nominated on Ballot 1 who have not withdrawn. Ballot 2 takes place at 11:30 a.m. Friday morning.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Joseph Stepansky, Chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to give instructions for casting Ballot 1. Joseph Stepansky is treasurer of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Paxtang, Harrisburg.

Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee gave the following instructions.

a. You must be seated on the first two levels of Parmer Hall to vote.

b. As we begin, Deacon Rothmeyer will call for a moment of prayer and reflection led by assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, Director of Education and Outreach, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster.

c. After Sister Dottie Almoney leads us in prayer, Deacon Rothmeyer will instruct you to get out a certain color ballot from your packet.

d. Please print clearly and legibly the full name of the Minister of Word and Sacrament that you are nominating for synodical bishop as it is written in the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA.

e. At the end of the voting period, Deacon Rothmeyer will call for the ballot to be collected.

f. Please fold your ballot in half only once and pass it toward the aisle where the pages will pick them up.

g. Once Deacon Rothmeyer declares the ballot closed, no more ballots will be received.

Deacon Rothmeyer thanked Joseph Stepansky for providing these instructions on balloting. She asked if there were any questions. The Rev. Kurt S. Strause, pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Lancaster, requested that Deacon Rothmeyer repeat how the name must be written on the ballot. Deacon Rothmeyer answered, “The name must be written exactly as it is found on the ELCA Roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. If the person whose name is written on the first ballot has an initial in the person’s name as found on the ELCA roster, the initial must be used.” A voting member asked if the name needed to include the title, “The Rev.” Deacon Rothmeyer answered in the affirmative. The Rev. Edward J. Robbins, interim pastor of St. John (Sadler’s) Lutheran Church, Stewartstown, and Trinity Lutheran Church, York, asked, “If I do not know if there are two persons with the same full name on the ELCA Roster of
Ministers of Word and Sacrament, may I write the name of the congregation the pastor serves or town where the pastor lives?” Deacon Rothmeyer said such identifying features would be helpful if two pastors have the same full name.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, to lead the assembly in an invocation of the Spirit as the assembly prepared to vote.

Sister Dottie led this responsive prayer:

L: We pray together as we prepare for the first ballot;
C: Almighty God, you have given your Holy Spirit to the church to lead us into all truth.
L: We give you thanks for the candidates that have discerned the call to bishop.
C: Bless our synod with the Spirit’s grace and presence as we prepare to elect a bishop.
L: Keep us steadfast in faith and united in love, that we may manifest your glory and prepare for the way of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
C: Amen.

Deacon Rothmeyer asked the voting members to take out their purple colored ballot and vote.

After all had time to complete their ballot, she declared the first ballot for bishop closed. She informed the assembly that the results will be announced during the Friday morning session.

Deacon Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

Bishop Dunlop announced that earlier this evening our synod sponsored a dinner to honor the Rev. Thomas E. McKee for his exemplary work in our synod. One of Pastor McKee’s significant contributions has been building and strengthening our relationship with the Konde Diocese, our partner diocese in Tanzania. His ministry positively impacted many lives and has been crucial in our partnership as church together. The Konde Diocese has provided a video to address our assembly.

Bishop Dunlop invited the members of our synod to donate a gift in Pastor McKee’s honor to the Legacy Fund of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. He also extended an invitation to attend a reception in Pastor McKee’s honor in the main lobby of the High Center immediately after this session.

Bishop Dunlop reminded the assembly of the following deadlines: Friday, June 7, 9:30 a.m., deadline to remove one’s name from the ballot for bishop and deadline to submit biographical information for the bishop’s election; Friday, June 7, 10:00 a.m., deadline to submit nomination information forms for vice president, secretary, Synod Council, and Discipline Committee.

Bishop Dunlop called upon assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney for prayer.

Sister Dottie led the assembly in this responsive prayer.

L: Let us pray. As our day comes to a close,
C: We give you thanks O God for walking with us.
L: As our day comes to a close,
C: We give you thanks Holy Spirit for guiding us.
L: As our day comes to a close,
C: We ask you dear Jesus to be with us as we rest in preparation for another day. Amen.

The members of the assembly joined in singing, “Gather Us In,” accompanied by Erik Teichmann.

Bishop Dunlop announced that the assembly will be in recess until 8:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, June 7, 2019.

SECOND ASSEMBLY SESSION
Friday morning, June 7, 2019

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, called to order the second assembly session of the thirty-second annual assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019, in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts on the campus of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania.
Bishop Dunlop greeted the assembly and called upon Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, for hymn and prayer. Sister Dottie Almoney was assisted in this devotional time by the members of the Toward Racial Justice Task Force, Vicar Carla Christopher, the Rev. Titus W. Clarke, the Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown, and Sister Megan McClinton.

Vicar Carla Christopher explained to the assembly why we are called to do racial justice work. We are called to love our neighbor and to be with them to support them. She suggested to the assembly participants that perhaps they had noticed that she is different. She met Pastor Joel Folkemer, pastor of Union Lutheran Church, York, and he has been walking with her. She was longing for beautiful liturgy and good theology, and he and the members of Union Lutheran Church made a place for her and held her up on dark and difficult days. Vicar Carla Christopher said that she wants to do that for others in her community who do not know that God loves them. The Toward Racial Justice Task Force is here to educate, train, counsel, and provide resources.

The members of the Toward Racial Justice Task Force presented a devotion by Godfrey Birtill, “When I look at the blood, all I see is love, love, love. When I stop at the cross, I can see the love of God…. I see surrender, sacrifice, salvation, humility, righteousness, faithfulness, graces, forgiveness, love, love. When I stop at the cross, I can see the love of God.” The assembly joined in singing “Will you let me be your servant” and “We are called.”

Bishop Dunlop thanked Sister Dottie Almoney and the members of the Toward Racial Justice Task Force for the devotions. He called upon Pastor Thomas E. McKee for an update on registration.

Pastor McKee announced that registration at 8:00 a.m. indicated that there were present 224 ordained voting members, of which 170 were on the roster of active pastors and 54 were retired; and 310 lay voting members, including 285 voting members from congregations, 14 deacons, four lay members of Synod Council, and two lay officers, making a total of 534 voting members. The secretary reported that 63 visitors also had registered, giving a total of 597 persons in attendance.

MINUTES OF THE 2018 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, secretary of synod, announced that the Synod Council had reviewed and approved the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly and, through the bishop and secretary, certified these minutes as the official protocol of said assembly. Two copies of the 2018 Minute Book have been deposited in the Region 8 Archives as a permanent record of the 2018 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly.

REPORT OF THE FIRST BALLOT FOR BISHOP

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer assumed the chair for the Report of the First Ballot for Bishop. She called upon Joseph Stepansky, Chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to announce the results of the first ballot.

Joseph Stepansky provided this report on the first ballot for bishop:

On Ballot 1 in the election of bishop the results are as follows:

- Total number of ballots cast: 479
- Number of illegal ballots: 9
- Total number of legal ballots: 470
- Total number of ballots required for election 353

[Read the report as printed, giving both vote total and full name.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Candidate</th>
<th>Vote Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Rev. James S. Dunlop</td>
<td>266</td>
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<td>The Rev. Stephen R. Herr</td>
<td>109</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rev. Lisa M. Leber</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer</td>
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<td>The Rev. Joel S. Folkemer</td>
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<td>The Rev. Matthew B. Best</td>
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<td>The Rev. David J. Schreffler</td>
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<td>The Rev. Brian A. McClinton</td>
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<td>The Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson</td>
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<td>The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel</td>
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<td>The Rev. Richard E.T. Jorgensen</td>
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<td>The Rev. Brian A. Biery</td>
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<td>The Rev. Richard B. Geib</td>
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<td>The Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown</td>
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<td>The Rev. Stephen P. Verkouw</td>
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<td>The Rev. Robert W. Wallace, Jr.</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Joseph Stepansky announced that this concludes the report of the Bishop’s Elections Committee.
BISHOP'S REMARKS: “The Future of our Faith”

Bishop Dunlop reported that at the Conference of Bishops he heard a presentation entitled, “The Future of Our Faith,” by Wesley Granberg-Michaelson. Bishop Dunlop adapted this presentation with permission and shared it with the Synod Assembly. This presentation looked at Christianity from a global perspective. When the church was formed, its center was in Jerusalem. By the 1500’s, the center was in Europe. In 2010, the center was in Timbuktu, Mali. The center will be moving deeper into Africa in the future. One out of every four Christians are living in Africa. The church also is growing in Latin America and in Asia. Christianity has become a non-Western religion. What we fail to notice when we just consider the church in the United States is that the world is becoming more religious, more spiritual. He presented ten challenges: revitalizing withering congregations; embracing the color of the future; seeing the world through non-western eyes; perceiving the world as sacred; affirming Spirit filled communities; rejecting the heresy of individualism; de-Americanizing the gospel; defeating divisive culture wars; belonging before believing; and saving this world. What Bishop Dunlop has noticed is that the very things that Dr. Granberg-Michaelson suggests are the very things that we are doing through R3.

Bishop Dunlop provided the assembly information about trends within our synod. In 1989 the number of members was 150,509; in 2017 the number of members was 83,093. In 1980 the number of congregations was 279; in 2017 the number of congregations was 231. The average worship attendance in 1989 was 41,356; the average worship attendance in 2017 was 20,371. Total financial receipts in 1989 adjusted for inflation to 2017 dollars were $70,967,809; total financial receipts in 2017 were $61,508,992. In 1989 mission support adjusted for inflation to 2017 dollars was $8,270,392; mission support in 2017 was $2,600,768. In 1989 the percentage of mission support given to the larger church was 11.7%; in 2017 the percentage of mission support given to the larger church was 3.9%. Bishop Dunlop pointed out that there was a 70% drop in the support of the larger church. Congregations are more focused on themselves, on their own needs, needs made more urgent because of dwindling attendance, decreased offerings, and needs of aging church buildings. Therefore, our synod and our ELCA receive less funding. No one says to our synod you should be doing less ministry. We need to figure out what it looks like to be a church with a congregational focus. We need to wrestle with what it means to be a smaller synod within a smaller church national body. The bishop stated that he would rather have a plan than have things happen by default.

PRESENTATION BY PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly Barbara Debski, regional representative of Portico Benefit Services. Barbara Debski greeted the assembly and introduced a video that Portico Benefit Services produced for Synod Assemblies. The purpose of Portico Benefit Services is to serve God and to serve others. Specifically, it serves God’s people who have been called and gifted to serve others through a life of faith. A life of faith is a journey. Portico Benefit Services accompanies those serving God and the church along their life’s journey. Portico Benefit Services serves the well-being of those called to serve. It does this by providing innovative and cost-effective life insurance, pension plans, and healthcare. Portico Benefit Services serves rostered ministers and their families and other employees of the church and their families so that they can serve others.

Barbara Debski announced that Bishop Dunlop is on the Portico Board and serves with distinction. She expressed her appreciation for the amazing ministries that are happening in our synod. Barbara Debski talked about the some of the difficulties faced by those serving in the ministries of our synod: walking with the marginalized, dealing with difficult situations, and having many worries on their minds. She introduced a devotional practice of unbinding. She suggested that assembly participants tie their life's worries on a ribbon and tie it to the globe. Barbara Debski will take our ribbons to Milwaukee for the 2019 Churchwide Assembly where she will place them on Portico’s Breathe Prayer Station. She closed her presentation with a prayer, asking that God’s river of peace take us to the shore and make the swim easy. The assembly expressed its appreciation to Barbara Debski for her presentation with applause.


The members of the assembly enjoyed a break to allow pastors who were nominated for bishop on the first ballot for bishop to remove their names from the ballet or to submit their biographies for bishop.

The Rev. David J. Schreffler, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church. Lemoyne, requested that the names posted on the screen be enlarged.

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

Deacon Rothmeyer announced that, based on the report of the Bishop’s Election Committee, there was no election. The second ballot for bishop will be held at 11:30 a.m. this morning. She reminded those nominated on the first ballot that, if they desired to remove their name from the ballot, they must do so by 9:30 a.m. and, if they desired to keep their name on the ballot, they should submit the biographical information form by 9:30 a.m.

The assembly expressed its appreciation to Barbara Debski, regional representative of Portico Benefit Services.
REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL – NOMINATION OF VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY

Bishop Dunlop introduced Stella Ludwig, a member of Synod Council and chair of the Gifts Discernment Committee, to bring the Synod Council recommendations for the nomination of vice president and secretary. Stella Ludwig is a member of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Dillsburg.

Stella Ludwig moved Recommendation 4: (SC19.02.11.)

That Lucinda L. Bringman be nominated for synod vice president.

Stella Ludwig offered the following explanation. “The Gifts Discernment Committee and the Synod Council is presenting only one name for synod vice president. The term of Vice President is four years while the Bishop’s term is six years. So currently every twelve years our synod elects both a bishop and a vice president, two essential positions in our synod, with significant learning curves. This leads to the possibility that a new bishop and a new vice president can be elected at the same time, followed by an extended or more difficult transition. Our current vice president Lucinda Bringman is willing to accept nomination for a third term with the stipulation that she will resign after one year. Our constitution states that when an officer does not complete their term, the next assembly elects someone to the office for a full term. Therefore, next year our synod would elect a vice president for a full four-year term. Thus, after this, the elections of a bishop and a vice president, if these officers served full terms, would never occur the same year. The Gifts Discernment Committee is in favor of this plan and therefore is not nominating a second person for this office. Of course, this decision ultimately rests with the assembly. If you disagree with this recommendation, you may nominate someone from the floor for the office of vice president and elect that person to office.”

Bishop Dunlop asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

ADOPTED: That Lucinda L. Bringman be nominated for synod vice president. SA19.06.04.

Bishop Dunlop declared that Lucinda L. Bringman was reelected synod vice president.

The assembly responded with applause.

Stella Ludwig moved Recommendation 5: (SC19.02.12.)


Bishop Dunlop asked for additional nominations. There were none.

The Synod Council recommendation was before the assembly.

ADOPTED: That Joyce E. Frigm, Nancy J. Martin, and the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel be nominated for synod secretary. SA19.06.05.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Stella Ludwig, Synod Council chair of the Nominating Committee presented the report of the Nominating Committee.


Synod Council – lay female: Meredith Killian Askey, Shirley McGowan, Gale W. du Pont, M. Jane Wigand, and Debra K. Barrett. This ticket was closed.

Synod Council – lay male: Dallas Joseph Barclift Jr. and Allen Paul Stump. This ticket was closed.

Synod Council – young adult: Karl A. Segletes and Daniel P. Picone. This ticket was closed.

Synod Council – youth: Theodore D. Wolfe and Hunter A. Nelson. This ticket was closed.

Discipline Committee – lay: Eric H. Crump, Joan R. Leedom, Molly A. Wirick, and Evan P. Williams. This ticket was closed.

This completed the report of the nominating process. The bishop thanked Stella Ludwig and the members of the Gifts Discernment and Nominating Committees.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Dunlop announced the following committees for the 2019 Synod Assembly had been appointed: the Assembly Planning Committee, the Bishop’s Election Committee, Committee on Elections, Committee on Memorials, the Gifts Discernment Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Committee of Reference and Counsel, and the Worship at Assembly Committee. The members of these committees have been listed on the first and second pages of these minutes.

ASSEMBLY GUESTS

Bishop Dunlop informed the assembly that he introduced some of our special guests last night and will introduce most of the assembly guests when they address the assembly. However, he did introduce the following: the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, a member of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Middletown, synod necrologist; the Rev. Hans Becklin, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, Lititz, the ELCA Church Council representative to this assembly, the youth and young adults of the Lower Susquehanna Synod who are serving as pages, coordinated by Charlie R. Roberts III, synod staff, the Rev. Harold S. Fox, a member of Messiah Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, and the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, a member of Synod Council and pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church, Shippensburg. The assembly greeted them with applause.

Bishop Dunlop recognized three former bishops of the Lower Susquehanna Synod: the Rev. Guy S. Edmiston, the Rev. Carol S. Hendrix, and the Rev. B. Penrose Hoover. The assembly welcomed them with applause. The Rev. Howard J. McCarney, former bishop of the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, was not able to be in attendance.

The bishop called attention to the Hearts and Minds Bookstore and their vast array of books. He called attention to the many displays in the High Center for Worship and the Performing Arts and encouraged members of the assembly to visit the displays.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL – REPORT OF THE MISSION SUPPORT EXPERIMENT

Bishop Dunlop relinquished the chair to synod vice president, Lucinda L. Bringman. The vice president called upon Bishop Dunlop to present the report of the Mission Support Experiment. The vice president explained the mission support experiment to the assembly.

Bishop Dunlop provided this report.

“In 2015, the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), was looking to pilot new ideas about Mission Support. Five synods offered to participate in an experiment for three years. They would take on their own directors of evangelical mission, take no mission grants, and reduce their Mission Support in proportion. The Lower Susquehanna Synod was one of the five synods participating in the Mission Support Experiment. The experiment was planned originally for 2016 through 2018; however, the experiment was extended through 2020. We learned the following from this experiment. It allowed synods to be more responsive. It allowed the synods to strengthen commitment to mission. It allowed for staffing flexibility and used a broader array of gifts. It improved trends in mission support. In 2012, .97% of our budget went for new and renewing congregations. In 2018, 18.77% of our budget was spent on new and renewing congregations. This has given us a new focus in mission. For 2019, 100 congregations have increased their mission support, 60 congregations have held the line, and 70 congregations have decreased their mission support. We have changed the story in our synod. We have begun new mission projects. We have created the model for renewal in the ELCA. Since 2016, we have trained 40 renewal coaches; trained 42 lay leaders and 20 rostered ministers in renewal at the United Lutheran Seminary’s Summer Institute; equipped 13 leaders through Vibrant Faith University and 18 leaders through the Stevenson School for Ministry; in 2018, equipped 20 congregations and 100 people through R3 Generosity; in 2018-2019, trained 45 leaders in congregations through Readiness for Renewal; and increased the number of individuals discerning entrance into the Candidacy Process by 500% (8 to 41), 1/3 from emerging or renewing ministry sites. We are changing the story of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. We are transforming our approach to God’s mission. We are creating new stories. We are building new worshiping communities. We are engaging with our neighbors in new ways. We are a model to the whole church. We are renewing the church. We are feeding the hungry.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL - PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET

Vice President Bringman called upon Joseph Stepansky, synod treasurer, to move the adoption of the budget.

Joseph Stepansky moved Recommendation 6: (SC19.05.39.)
That the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget of $2,535,000 be adopted.

**Lower Susquehanna Budget Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Spending Authorization</th>
<th>2020 Budget</th>
<th>Changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>(6,061.86)</td>
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<td>Region 8</td>
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<td><strong>1,159,666.41</strong></td>
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<td><strong>(61.86)</strong></td>
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<td>Care of Rostered Persons</td>
<td>600.00</td>
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<td>Psychological Services</td>
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<td>ABX Alpha Beta Christos</td>
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<td>Res. Ctr. for Faith Formation</td>
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<td>Other Support</td>
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<td>(10,446.14)</td>
<td>(15,152.34)</td>
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<td><strong>2,550,000.00</strong></td>
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The Rev. Stephen R. Herr, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, asked about the mission support receipts for this year and how these receipts impact the budget. Treasurer Joseph Stepansky answered, he keeps close tabs on our finances, both income and expenditures, and regularly provides a forecast to inform the officers, staff, Synod Council, and the Finance and Budget Committee about our financial state. The treasurer stated that we are doing well. We are currently $27,000 ahead of where he forecast we would be at this point in the fiscal year.

Rachel Johnson, voting member of Zion Lutheran Church, Enola, asked, “If we are getting more candidates, why take money from candidacy?” Bishop Dunlop responded that we are not cutting candidacy’s budget although it may appear that way. We are supplementing the budget in the area of candidacy with a larger grant from our Legacy Fund. Part of the annual distribution from this endowment fund is designated for candidacy. We are anticipating a larger return from this fund.
The Rev. Robert J. Myallis, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lititz, asked which synod staff members are compensated from the mission support fund held in our synod through the Mission Support Experiment. The bishop answered that all of Pastor Richard Jorgensen’s salary and all of Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali’s half-time salary, one-quarter of Pastor Robert Blezard’s salary for his work in stewardship, and one quarter of Charlie Robert’s salary for his work with R3 and Readiness for Renewal.

The motion to adopt the budget was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:** That the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget of $2,535,000 be adopted.

**SA19.06.06.**

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REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL: MINIMUM SALARY GUIDELINES

Vice President Bringman introduced the Rev. Deborah A. Mahady, chair of our synod’s Committee on Compensation and Benefits and pastor of Christ (Filey’s) Lutheran Church, Dillsburg, to present the recommendations for minimum salaries in 2020.

Pastor Mahady moved Recommendation 7: (SC19.02.13.)

ADOPTED: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum base salary and housing allowance for 2020 of $52,306 for ministers of Word and Sacrament who serve full time at the time of their ordination and the beginning minimum base salary for 2020 when housing is provided of $36,388 for ministers of Word and Sacrament who serve full time at the time of their ordination.

Pastor Mahady moved Recommendation 8: (SC19.02.14.)

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum salary for 2020 of $44,023 for ministers of Word and Service who serve full time at the time of their consecration.

Sister Davia A. Evans, a member of St. Matthias Lutheran Church, Carlisle Springs, said that in this traditionally sexist synod, deacons have had to find their own internships and their own first calls. Deacons bring many gifts to the life of this church and serve in many important ways in our congregations, institutions, and synod as well as in places where the church meets the world. While other synods are supporting equity for deacons, our synod continues to marginalize Ministers of Word and Service.

Recommendation 8 was before the assembly. A voice vote was taken.

The Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke, intentional interim pastor of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, York, questioned whether the outcome of this voice vote could be determined. She called for a division of the house. Bishop Dunlop ruled that we would vote again using the electronic voting machines.

Richard Hornberger, a voting member of Salem Lutheran Church, Jacobus, asked what would happen if we voted down this recommendation. The vice president answered that we would return to the beginning minimum salary adopted for 2019, $43,075.

The Rev. Martha S. Boyd, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Hoernerstown, asked for clarification. She asked, “Would there be another motion to set the beginning minimum salary at a different amount?” The vice president answered that a voting member would have to move another recommendation from the floor of the assembly.

The Rev. Glenn M. Miller, interim rector at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Lancaster, asked for clarification whether a new motion would be in order if this motion fails. The vice president encouraged Pastor Miller to consult with the parliamentarian.

The Rev. Bonnie M. Oplinger, pastor of Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Rothsville, Lititz, asked for the rationale for having different beginning minimum salaries for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service.

The Rev. Kurt S. Strause, pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Lancaster, asked if we are bound by our voice vote. The vice president said, “Only you and God will know.”

The vice president called for a vote of Recommendation 8, using the electronic voting machines.

LOST: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum salary for 2020 of $44,023 for ministers of Word and Service who serve full time at the time of their consecration.

249 – YES
276 – NO

Vice President Bringman relinquished the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Bishop Dunlop called upon Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman to introduce recommended amendments to the bylaws of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman moved Recommendation 9: (SC19.05.33)

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, delete the following bylaws S10.06.07. c.

(the election of member to the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches),
The Committee for Church in Society shall be composed of no more than 12 persons. A representative of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPA) and of each of the social ministry organizations on the territory of this synod shall serve as consultants. This committee shall work with congregations, conferences, institutions, and agencies of this synod to help the baptized carry out their baptismal affirmation to work to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. This committee shall study this church’s theological and ethical analysis of social issues; relate this church’s social witness to the life of the congregations and to the ministry of members in daily life; encourage communication among people throughout this synod who are committed to study, service, and advocacy concerning social issues; and interpret and maintain, in partnership with the Domestic Mission Unit, concern for advocacy and corporate social responsibility. This committee shall advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love. This committee shall work closely with the social ministry organizations of this synod.

The Leadership Support Committee shall be composed of at least 8 persons, both ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service as well as non-rostered laypersons. This committee shall work in cooperation with the bishop to nurture faithful and effective rostered persons and lay leaders in congregational, institutional, and synodical ministries. This committee shall advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love. This committee shall advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love. This committee shall work closely with the social ministry organizations of this synod.

The election of members of the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches - in a number to be determined by the constitution of said council.

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Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman explained that the Constitution of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches has changed. Membership in its board is granted to one of the ELCA bishops in Pennsylvania, elected by the other bishops. The vice president also explained that some of the committees of our synod had become inactive. Synod Council decided to give them a jubilee year to see if interest in them would bubble up. Interest in some committees did generate, and these committees have become active again. For others, no new interest surfaced. These later committees are the Committee of Church and Society and the Leadership Support Committee. Some of the original functions of these committees have been assumed by the staff or by task forces composed of people passionate about these issues.

The Rev. Amy E. Reumann, ELCA Director of Advocacy, stressed the importance of some of the functions of the Committee for Church in Society: social action, public witness, especially with the growing use of social media, and corporate social responsibility. She noted the importance of continuing to support these important functions as we move forward.

Recommendation 9 was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:**

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, delete the following bylaws S10.06.07. c.

SA19.06.09.

S11.06.07.

S11.01.05. (Church in Society Committee), and S11.01.11. (Leadership Support Committee).

S10.06.07.

The election of members of the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches - in a number to be determined by the constitution of said council.

S11.01.05.

The Committee for Church in Society shall be composed of no more than 12 persons. A representative of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPA) and of each of the social ministry organizations on the territory of this synod shall serve as consultants. This committee shall work with congregations, conferences, institutions, and agencies of this synod to help the baptized carry out their baptismal affirmation to work to serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. This committee shall study this church’s theological and ethical analysis of social issues; relate this church’s social witness to the life of the congregations and to the ministry of members in daily life; encourage communication among people throughout this synod who are committed to study, service, and advocacy concerning social issues; and interpret and maintain, in partnership with the Domestic Mission Unit, concern for advocacy and corporate social responsibility. This committee shall advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love. This committee shall work closely with the social ministry organizations of this synod.

S11.01.11.

The Leadership Support Committee shall be composed of at least 8 persons, both ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service as well as non-rostered laypersons. This committee shall work in cooperation with the bishop to nurture faithful and effective rostered persons and lay leaders in congregational, institutional, and synodical ministries. This committee shall advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love. This committee shall work closely with the social ministry organizations of this synod.
with the bishop to nurture faithful and effective rostered persons and lay leaders in congregational, institutional, and synodical ministries. This committee shall plan and carry out events and provide resources to meet these responsibilities.

Vice President Bringman moved Recommendation 10: (SC19.05.34.) (SC19.05.35.) (SC19.05.36.) (SC19.05.35.)

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, meeting in assembly, adopt the proposed amendments to bylaws S11.01.02., S11.02.01., S12.02.01., and S12.03.01. of the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

S11.01.02. The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee shall be composed of 7 persons: the bishop and the treasurer of this synod and 5 members (one of whom shall be an attorney) appointed by the Synod Council. Three of the appointed members shall be lay voting members of congregations of this synod and 2 shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod. The committee shall administer the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The fund, established by the Synod Council, shall be supported by bequests, trusts, endowments, planned and deferred gifts, assets from closing congregations, gifts from merging and consolidating congregations, and gifts from other congregations, individuals, and entities. The committee, Synod Council, and bishop shall promote and encourage such gifts. The assets of the fund shall be invested in a manner consistent with the purpose of the fund.

The purpose of the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund shall be to provide initial funding support for the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries within the territory of this synod, such as funds to acquire sites and provide grants to congregations who have committed to specific plans to expand their ministries, and funds to provide grants to congregations who have elected to relocate or consolidate with other congregations. In addition to expenditures for the purposes described in this bylaw, the fund may make loans to congregations if, in the judgment of a majority of the committee, the purpose of the loan is consistent with the purpose described above and the loans are adequately secured. The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee may from time to time adopt rules and regulations governing administration of the fund, which rules and regulations shall at all times be consistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

S11.02.01. The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 10 persons.

S12.02.01. The boundaries and number of conferences shall be determined by the Synod Council by 1990 and thereafter at six-year intervals and reviewed at least every six years.

S12.03.01. Each conference shall hold an annual assembly of its rostered ministers and lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. This conference assembly shall be held within the sixty ninety days prior to the regular meeting of the synod assembly. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing 14 days in advance. Those rostered ministers and lay voting members present shall constitute a quorum and be eligible to vote.

The Rev. Brian A. McClinton, pastor of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, York, asked, “How will the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund be administered?” The vice president replied that there is a committee, the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee, that is entrusted with the administration of this fund.

Discussion centered on the amendment to S12.02.01.

The Rev. Stephen R. Herr asked, “When will the Synod Council take up the process of determining the boundaries and the number of conferences?” The vice president responded that 2020 would be the appointed year. Bishop Dunlop added that this has never happened since the number of conferences and their boundaries were first set when the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was formed.

Rich Heineman, voting member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hametown, asked, “If this bylaw amendment was adopted, what would the process look like?” Vice President Bringman said that this bylaw gives the responsibility for determining the number of conferences and their boundaries to Synod Council. The Committee of Deans discussed this at its March 2019 meeting and determined that it was the Synod Council’s responsibility to make these decisions. Pastor Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, added that because a change in the number or name of the conferences would take an amendment to S12.01.01., the final determination would have to come to the Synod Assembly.

The Rev. Beth J. Costlow, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Columbia, suggested changing the word, “determined,” to “recommended.”
The Rev. David W. Clark, retired pastor, serving Lower Bermudian Lutheran Church, East Berlin, Upper Bermudian Lutheran Church, Gardners, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Gardners, and St. Mark Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, asked whether we are dealing with a bylaw or a provision of our constitution. The vice president responded, “We are voting on changing a bylaw.”

The Rev. Stephen R. Herr moved to amend the amendment.

The boundaries and number of conferences shall be recommended to the Synod Assembly by the Synod Council and reviewed at least every six years.

The Rev. Patrick P. Wirick Jr., pastor of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, rose to move an amendment to the amendment to the amendment. He was ruled out of order. Pastor Wirick said that he would come back after lunch.

Stephen Feldman, a voting member of St. Matthew, Lancaster, spoke against the amendment to the amendment, saying that the process laid out in this provision is backward.

The assembly voted on the amendment to the amendment.

ADOPTED: To amend the amendment to read, “The boundaries and number of conferences shall be recommended to the Synod Assembly by the Synod Council and reviewed at least every six years.”

Pastor Wirick returned to the microphone and informed the assembly that he still does want this to be adopted. It makes sense that the Synod Council would determine the boundaries and number of conferences. He does not agree that the Synod Assembly should attempt to do this. Having the Synod Council determine the number and boundaries of the conferences is nice, neat, and clean.

The assembly voted on the amendment as it reads, “The boundaries and number of conferences shall be recommended to the Synod Assembly by the Synod Council and reviewed at least every six years,” was before the assembly.

ADOPTED: That the proposed amendment shall read, “The boundaries and number of conferences shall be recommended to the Synod Assembly by the Synod Council and reviewed at least every six years.”

The Rev. Christina H. Minnich, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, Jacobus, asked whether we could vote on these bylaw amendments separately. The vice president advised Pastor Minnich that she could move to divide the question.

Pastor Minnich moved:

To divide the question.

This motion was not debatable.

Bishop Dunlop asked the voting members to vote by show of hands. The outcome of the balloting was not distinguishable. The bishop asked the voting members to use their voting machines to cast their ballots.

LOST: To divide the question.

198 – YES
304 – NO

Bishop Dunlop announced that we will be dealing with all the bylaw changes together.

The Rev. Patrick J. Rooney, interim pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Manchester, moved a substitute amendment:

The boundaries and number of conferences shall be reviewed by the Synod Council at least every six years and any proposed changes be recommended to the Synod Assembly.

The Rev. Kathy A. Swords, pastor of Shiloh Lutheran Church, York, rose with a point of clarification. The constitutional provision S12.02. reads, “Boundaries of conferences shall be determined by the Synod Council.”

Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman moved:
To refer this whole matter to the Constitution Committee with the instructions that the Constitution Committee report back to the Synod Assembly at the time of unfinished business.

The Rev. Robert W. Lowden, retired pastor, moved:

**ADOPTED:** To end debate on this matter.

The vice president’s recommendation was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:** To refer this whole matter to the Constitution Committee with the instructions that the Constitution Committee report back to the Synod Assembly at the time of unfinished business.

Bishop Dunlop called for the Order of the Day.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES ON THE SECOND BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer assumed the chair. She called upon Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to provide to the assembly the list of the names that will be on the second ballot for bishop.

Joseph Stepansky read the following list of names on the second ballot for bishop:

- The Rev. James S. Dunlop
- The Rev. Stephen R. Herr
- The Rev. Lisa M. Leber
- The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer
- The Rev. Joel S. Folkemer
- The Rev. Matthew B. Best
- The Rev. Brian A. McClinton
- The Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson
- The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel
- The Rev. Brian A. Biery
- The Rev. Joseph Donnella, II
- The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus
- The Rev. Larry G. Hummer
- The Rev. Robert G. Moore

After all the names had been read and viewed on the screen, Deacon Rothmeyer announced a twenty-minute break for voting members to discern who God is calling to be bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. She urged the voting members to use this time to pray, think, and converse with other voting members.

The members of the assembly enjoyed a twenty-minute break.

**SECOND BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

After the break, Deacon Rothmeyer called the assembly to order. She provided information to the assembly about the second ballot for bishop. Seventy-five percent or ¾ of the legal vote will be necessary for election on the second ballot. If there is no election, the next ballot will contain the names of the seven nominees (plus any ties for the seventh position) who received the most legal votes on the second ballot.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, for an updated credential report. He reported that as of 11:00 a.m. there were 579 registered voting members.

Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, instructed the voting members on the casting of the second ballot:

a. You must be seated in the first two levels of Parmer Hall to vote.
b. As we begin, Deacon Rothmeyer will call for a moment of prayer and reflection.
c. When Deacon Rothmeyer tells you which color of ballot to use, take that ballot out of your packet of ballots.
d. Please WRITE ONLY ONE NAME among those nominated on the first ballot. If you write more than one name, write the name of someone not on the ballot, or mark your ballot in such a way that your intent is unclear, your ballot will be illegal.
e. At the end of the voting period, Deacon Rothmeyer will call for the ballot to be collected.
f. Please fold your ballot in half only once and pass it toward the aisle where the pages will pick them up.
g. Once Deacon Rothmeyer declares the ballot closed, no more ballots will be received.
h. We anticipate that the report on this second ballot will be given at 3:30 this afternoon.

Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, prepared the assembly for balloting by praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She asked the assembly to take a moment and breathe. She prayed, “Holy Spirit, guide us as we vote for bishop. Spirit of Wisdom and Truth, help us to discern whom you are calling to be bishop of our synod. Amen.”

After the devotional time, Deacon Rothmeyer instructed the voting members to vote now. After all had completed voting, she announced that the second ballot for bishop was closed.

She returned the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

Bishop Dunlop introduced Byron Borger to the assembly. Byron Borger is the proprietor of Hearts and Minds Bookstore in Dallastown, Pennsylvania. Hearts and Minds has provided a book display for this assembly. Byron Borger addressed the assembly. He said that he and his wife began Hearts and Minds Bookstore 38 years ago as an ecumenical bookstore. This seemed like a novel idea to his denominational friends who supported their denominational bookstore. By being an ecumenical bookstore, he was able to introduce his customers to a variety of books. He is willing to provide to his customers any books that they request.

Bishop Dunlop announced that forums will be held at 1:30 p.m. The list of forums, leaders, and places are in the Bulletin of Reports. Practice for this evening’s worship service will also be held at 1:30 p.m. in Parmer Hall.

Bishop Dunlop called upon Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, for a closing prayer.

Sister Dottie Almoney led the assembly in responsive prayer.

L: Good and gracious God, as we hunger for food,
C: Let us hunger for justice and peace.
L: As we look forward to eating a meal,
C: Let us remember those who are food insecure.
L: As we eat our meal,
C: Let us give thanks for what we are given. Amen.

The assembly joined in singing, “The Wonderful Cross,” accompanied by Erik Teichmann.

Following the prayer, Bishop Dunlop announced that the legislative meeting will continue at 2:45 in Parmer Hall.

Assembly members enjoyed lunch in the Lottie Nelson Dining Room. During lunch, some assembly members participated in open spaces discussions on a variety of subjects.

**FORUMS**

After lunch, members of the assembly were able to choose one of the following forums in which to participate: Banishing Bible Boredom, Dr. Tracy Radosevic; Bread for the Journey: Reading as a Transforming Missional Practice, Byron Boerger; Using Action Teams for God’s Mission, Chris Grant, Beth McKinley, and Ann Seitz-Brown; Engaging in Neighborhood Ministry, the Rev. Brenda Ritterpusch; Cultural Competency in a Changing Church, Vicar Carla Christopher, the Rev. Titus Clarke, and the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown; Beyond Binary: “Getting” Sex and Gender, Dr. Debra Doubrova and Nicole Smith-Merry; Lutheran Disaster Response 101, the Rev. Glenn A. Beard Jr; When Two Become One, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Harrisburg; Welcoming the Stranger, Sue Ellen Spotts; Christian Yoga Project – Faith Yoga, Carrie Hoff; Launching New Mission, the Rev. Matthew B. Best; A Rule of Prayer for a Spiritual Life, the Rev. Brian Biery; Breakthrough Stewardship, the Rev. Robert C. Bleazard; and Candidacy for Rostered Ministry in the ELCA, the Rev. Dr. Paul Baglyos; and On a Mission to Care for the World God Loves, Joseph Stepansky and Tracey DePasquale.

**THIRD ASSEMBLY SESSION**

**Friday afternoon, June 7, 2019**

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called to order the third assembly session of the thirty-second annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 2:45 p.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019, in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and Performing
Arts of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania.

Erik Teichmann led the assembly in the singing of “Everlasting God.” Sister Dottie Almoney and Tracey DePasquale, executive director of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania led the assembly in prayer.

The Rev. Shawn M. Berkebile, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Abbottstown, rose for a point of personal privilege. He announced that Friday, June 7th, is the National Turkey Federation’s annual Turkey Day of Service. Plainville Farms, located in New Oxford, donated over 4,000 pounds of whole turkeys to New Hope Ministries. The assembly showed their appreciation with applause.

**BIBLICAL STORYTELLING – Mark 1**

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly Dr. Tracy Radosevic, an internationally-acclaimed storyteller, educator, and retreat facilitator. Since 1991 she has traveled all over the United States, as well as to several foreign countries, bringing her special brand of humor, insight, and faith to audiences of all ages through the power of narrative. Dr. Radosevic is the dean of the Academy for Biblical Storytelling and adjunct professor at two seminaries. Her text is Mark 1. After she completed with her dramatic portrayal, she said, “This is the Word of the Lord.” The assembly responded, “Thanks be to God,” and with their applause.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Dr. Radosevic for her presentation and presented her with a gift of appreciation from the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

**BALLOTING**

Pastor McKee, synod secretary, reported that there were 580 voting members registered.

Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, led the assembly in prayer before the balloting began.

Sister Joy V. Hovis, deacon for St. Luke Lutheran Church, New Bridgeville, chair of the Elections Committee, led the voting members through the different election categories. After she announced the names of the nominees in each category, the bishop instructed the voting members to vote now. After all had finished casting their ballot for each category, he declared the balloting in that category to be closed.

**THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS**

Sister Joy V. Hovis, chair of the Committee on Elections, announced the results of the balloting.

**Synod Secretary**

Ballots cast – 527

Needed to elect – 265

Joyce E. Frigm - 137

The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel - 222

Nancy J. Martin - 168

The bishop declared that there was no election. The next ballot will contain the names of Nancy J. Martin and the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel.

Second ballot for Synod Secretary

Ballots cast – 530

Needed to elect – 266

Nancy J. Martin – 245

The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel – 285

The bishop declared the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel elected as synod secretary. This ticket was closed.

**Synod Council – clergy**

Ballots cast – 579

Needed to elect – 265

The Rev. Kathleen A. Kuehl - 137

The Rev. Gretchen S. Ierien - 251

The Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr. - 228

The Rev. Denise B. Horn - 175

The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus - 219

The bishop declared that there was no election. The next ballot will contain the names of the Rev. Gretchen S. Ierien, the Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr., the Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus, and the Rev. Denise B. Horn.
Second ballot for Synod Council – clergy
Ballots cast – 533
Needed to elect – 268

The Rev. Gretchen S. Ierien – 331
The Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr. – 266
The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus - 246
The Rev. Denise B. Horn – 196

Bishop Dunlop declared that Gretchen S. Ierien was elected to the Synod Council in the category of clergy. The next ballot will contain the name of the Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr. and the Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus.

Third ballot for Synod Council – clergy
Ballot cast – 525
Needed to elect – 264

The Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr. – 281
The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus – 248

The bishop declared that the Rev. Jack M. Horner Jr. was elected to the Synod Council in the category of clergy. This ticket was closed.

The bishop declared the order of the day. The assembly turned its attention to the Report of the Second Ballot for Bishop.

REPORT OF THE SECOND BALLOT FOR BISHOP
Deacon Sue Rothmeyer assumed the chair. She asked Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to announce the results of the third ballot.

Joseph Stepansky reported the following results of the second ballot:

On Ballot 2 in the election of bishop the results are as follows:

a. Total number of ballots cast: 571
b. Number of illegal ballots: 0
c. Total number of legal ballots: 571
d. Total number of ballots required for election: 429 [75% of Total Legal]

The Rev. James S. Dunlop 338
The Rev. Stephen R. Herr 152
The Rev. Lisa M. Leber 20
The Rev. Joel S. Folkemer 13
The Rev. Brian A. McClinton 12
The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer 11
The Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson 10
The Rev. Matthew B. Best 8
The Rev. Brian A. Biery 3
The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel 2
The Rev. Joseph Donnella, II 1
The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus 1

Joseph Stepansky announced that his concludes the report of the Bishop’s Election Committee.

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer announced that based on the report of the Bishop’s Election Committee, there is no election. The following seven persons will appear on the third ballot:

The Rev. James S. Dunlop
The Rev. Stephen R. Herr
The Rev. Lisa M. Leber
The Rev. Joel S. Folkemer
The Rev. Brian A. McClinton
The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer
The Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson

Their bios were available on the assembly page of the Lower Susquehanna Synod website. A limited number of copies of those bios not previously displayed were available at the pages’ table. The Rules of Procedure call for five-minute speeches from each of these
seven nominees. These speeches will be given this afternoon following the Mission Focus. Deacon Sue Rothmeyer requested that the seven nominees meet immediately with Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, on stage for instructions and for drawing of lots for the order of presentation.

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer yielded the chair to Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman.

MISSION FOCUS – ENCOURAGING COOPERATION
Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman introduced a video about the merger of Zion Lutheran Church, Penbrook, into the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Paxtang, Harrisburg.

In this video, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, including former members of Zion Lutheran Church, Penbrook, shared their feelings about the merger. Greg Borzok, current president of the congregation, said that as they came together, there was grieving by members of both congregations because things would never be the same for either congregation. There also were fears about how the merger would work out. However, the way that Pastor Baker and Pastor Carnes came together in such strong bonds of friendship was an inspiration and an example to the congregation. It is evident that God is present in the spirit of the congregation.

Pastor Jorgensen read from St. Matthew Gospel, 28th chapter, and lead the assembly in prayer. Pastor Jorgensen shared Just Mercy, a book written by Brian Stevenson, telling how an encounter can change lives. It speaks to who we are as the church, not wise enough or competent enough, yet we have all that we need. It was all about being there, being in the right place at the right time to give the message. We equip people for the ministry to which God has already called us, allowing each and every one of us to use the gifts God has given us to proclaim God’s Word together. We as a synod take equipping people very seriously.

After the video was shown, the vice president recognized the Rev. Kathleen Baker and the Rev. Pamela Carnes, and Donald Lausch, Susan Master, and Joseph Stepansky, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. The assembly greeted them with applause.

After all had opportunity to deliver their speeches, she asked the assembly to express its appreciation for the gifts of these seven nominees and for their willingness to engage in this call process. The assembly responded with a standing ovation. Deacon Rothmeyer announced that there will be a ten-minute break to allow the voting members to engage in prayer, reflection on the speeches, and informal conversation with other voting members.

At the conclusion of the ten-minute break, Bishop Dunlop assumed the chair.

MISSION FOCUS - EQUIPPING
Bishop Dunlop introduced the Rev. Richard E. T. Jorgensen, Director for Evangelical Mission for Renewing Mission, and Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe, Director for Mission Interpretation, to present information about the certificate in missional preaching, the certificate in evangelism, and the partnering with Stevenson School for Ministry.

Pastor Jorgensen read from St. Matthew Gospel, 28th chapter, and lead the assembly in prayer. Pastor Jorgensen shared Just Mercy, a book written by Brian Stevenson, telling how an encounter can change lives. It speaks to who we are as the church, not wise enough or competent enough, yet we have all that we need. It was all about being there, being in the right place at the right time to give the message. We equip people for the ministry to which God has already called us, allowing each and every one of us to use the gifts God has given us to proclaim God’s Word together. We as a synod take equipping people very seriously.

Pastor Jorgensen and Deacon Roscoe then recognized the assembly participants who have participated in the following equipping opportunities: Transforming Ministry, Renewal Coaches, R3, Readiness for Renewal, Vibrant Faith University, R3 Generosity,
Stevenson School for Ministry, the Wellness Retreat, Bishop’s Convocation, and anyone who has experienced preaching or teaching from our synod staff. The assembly responded with applause.

Pastor Jorgensen affirmed that we are all in this together. God has called us as the body of Christ to bear witness to God’s love in our words, deeds, and very lives. R3 has changed lives. Readiness for Renewal is all about preparing for God’s future. He said that we will have new rounds of these coming up this fall.

Pastor Jorgensen said, “St. Paul writes, ‘those who sow sparingly, reap sparingly; those who sow abundantly, reap abundantly.’” R3 is an invitation to re-commit ourselves to what matters most, our relationship with God, with each other, and with our communities where God has planted us. Pastor Jorgensen said that some congregations find the R3 process challenging; however, it changes lives and gives us courage to dream God’s dream. It allows us to live into hope. There is a real joy in seeing lives changed, ministries changed, and people becoming who they are in Christ Jesus. Readiness for Renewal is a process for any congregation looking for first steps in renewal. If a congregation is not ready for R3, then it will find value in Readiness for Renewal. He announced as we look forward to this fall, we are launching two new initiatives we invite you to consider: certificates in missional preaching and missional speaking.

Deacon Roscoe asked, “The word ‘evangelism’ gets a bad rap, doesn’t it? Yet, we are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We want to grow our church membership; however, research shows that we rarely invite anyone to worship and that congregations are not equipped to comfortably talk about Jesus. And even more painfully, for many, they are unable to see God already at work in our midst. For many congregations, Evangelism Committees do not even exist anymore; and if they do, what it takes to recruit Evangelism Committee members is alarming.”

Deacon Roscoe said that we believe this is, in great part, due to our inability to speak missionally about who God is and how God is already active in our midst. After working with congregations all around our synod and with the parishes in our partnering local Episcopal Diocese, we have learned how significant a need there is to learn how to share our and others’ stories with one another.

Evangelism is a biblical mandate, Deacon Roscoe continued. Acts 1:8 tells us that the very reason we receive the Holy Spirit is to be witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. We receive the Holy Spirit to be witnesses to Jesus. Yet, we don’t know how. Because evangelizing does not come natural to us, we want to provide a safe learning community that helps everyone better understand everyday evangelism. In this program, you will learn simple practices and behaviors to practice gospel hospitality, share our stories and listen to others’ stories, and most importantly, focus on what matters most to God. She announced that courses start this fall, and she invited assembly participants to contact her for more information.

Pastor Jorgensen said that the Certificate in Missional Preaching is all about equipping preachers to proclaim the kingdom of God that’s right here and now and helping us notice how God is present. It’s also about helping congregations listen and hear God’s Word ever more fully. We are able to offer Tracy Radosevic, who will equip participants in biblical storytelling, and Paul Scott Wilson, author of The Four Pages of the Sermon and a wonderful teacher, who will equip us to preach and to teach in ways that really matter to God. We are inviting people to learn together and support each other. We are partners in this ministry, and we want to live as partners in how we live out this ministry.

Pastor Jorgensen said that in the past seven years he has been blessed and privileged to do this. He has worshipped in hundreds of places, large and small, urban and rural, and everything in between. The thing that always amazes him is that no matter where God’s people are gathered, God is present with them. He invited the assembly always to notice God in our midst and to give thanks to God because God has made us siblings in Christ.

The assembly responded with applause.

Bishop Dunlop said he is blessed by the staff of this synod.

**CHURCHWIDE PRESENTATION**

Bishop Dunlop reintroduced to the assembly Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, the churchwide representative to this assembly. Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer is the Assistant to the ELCA Secretary, the Rev. Chris Boerger, and the Executive for the ELCA Office of the Secretary – Administration.

Deacon Rothmeyer presented the churchwide report.

She announced that the 2019 Churchwide Assembly will be held August 5-10, 2019, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The theme of the Churchwide Assembly is “We are Church,” one of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton’s four guiding principles. The churchwide organization has produced a video for Synod Assemblies entitled “For Such a Time as This.” Deacon Rothmeyer said that if she combined our synod’s assembly theme with the theme of the Churchwide Assembly and the theme of the churchwide video for Synod
Assemblies, she would come up with something like “We are Church - at such a time as this - hungry for God’s mission.” The assembly responded with applause. Deacon Rothmeyer asked that the churchwide Synod Assembly video be shown.

The video began with Presiding Bishop Eaton on a busy downtown street with people dashing everywhere. She said everyone has a story, and she wondered what were the stories of those persons who passed her. She noted that there is a lot of stress and anxiety in the world. The world seems even more divided now than ever before. How can we possibly find peace? Peace is possible for all of us despite the world around us and our individual circumstances because Jesus loves us and has claimed us in the waters of baptism. We have experienced already the only death that matters. Therefore, we are empowered to be bold and to have truly open conversations with those around us. We are called to engage with the world over the important issues that confront us and not shy away from such difficult discussions. We are called to bring the peace and hope of Jesus Christ to the world. Pastor Jeanette Leisk, a former pastor of our synod, now serving Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Virginia, cited two important mission outreaches that her congregation is doing. On God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday, she invited a local mosque to partner with her congregation to pack over 20,000 meals. Members of the mosque were fearful at first. The church building was strange with unfamiliar symbols, and the people were different. But they learned that the Lutherans were people like them, putting their faith in action. Good Shepherd congregation also serves a transition house for women returning from prison. The residents of the house come to the church building Monday through Friday for classes. Pastor Leisk said that she has learned how serious the opioid crisis is because she has been asked to do so many funerals for residents of the transition house who have overdosed. She explained how important it is to offer words of comfort and a place for worship at a time like this. One of the residents confessed she could not believe that people who did not even know her wanted to help her. That is what a church should do. Presiding Bishop Eaton returned to the video to tell the story of a congregation near her that is providing a free lunch every Saturday for anyone who wants or needs it. She referred to the Church as “the called out.” We have been called out to gather together in Christ’s name so that we can be sent back out into the world. Perfect love draws out all fear. God loves us perfectly. The peace of Christ is with us now. The assembly responded to this video with applause.

Deacon Rothmeyer expressed her appreciation to this synod for sharing 47% of our budget in mission support, for giving gifts of $593,000 to the Always Being Made New Campaign and $23.5 million to world hunger, the greatest amount of money received in the 44 years of this appeal. Deacon Rothmeyer praised the Lower Susquehanna Synod for being a generous synod. She recognized St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church, New Kingstown, as a recipient of a domestic hunger grant and complimented them on their ministry around the Flying J Truck Stop. She stressed that Lutheran Disaster Response has been active in 33 countries and 19 states. Deacon Rothmeyer announced that God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday will be held September 8, 2019, and urged all congregations to begin planning how they will serve their communities on this day. She informed that the ELCA is currently involved in a strategic planning process. We are church for such a time as this. Synods and congregations are developing vitality teams. She reminded the assembly that we have three synodical authorized worshipping communities on the territory of our synod, the South Sudanese Harrisburg Worshiping Community, Peter’s Porch, and Communities of Hope. She thanked us for sharing our leadership with the church: Bishop James S. Dunlop, Conference of Bishops, Portico Board of Directors, Ministry of Word and Service Entrance Rite Task Force, and Social Responsibility Committee; Seth Zimmann and Pastor Hans Becklin, Church Council; and Sister Dottie Almoney and Sister Davia Evans, the ELCA Deaconess Community.

Deacon Rothmeyer presented Pastor Thomas McKee a certificate of appreciation for his service to the ELCA signed by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and Secretary Chris Boerger as he retires after serving as synod secretary for 20 years. Pastor McKee had served on the Minutes Team for the Churchwide Assembly since 2003 until 2016 and served on the ELCA Nominating Committee. During the years he served as synod secretary, he also served the synod as acting treasurer for two years and as acting bishop on four different occasions. The assembly responded with applause.

Deacon Rothmeyer highlighted some of the actions coming before the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, which will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 5 – 10, 2019. On the agenda are the adoption of the Social Statement on Faith, Sexism, and Justice, decisions about the entrance rite for Ministers of Word and Service, adoption of the Inter-religious Policies Statement, an apology to persons of color, a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, adoption of amendments to Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, and election of a presiding bishop, secretary, members of the Church Council, and members of churchwide boards and committees.

Deacon Rothmeyer asked that the video, 2018 in Review, be shown so that all could see how the whole church has hungered for God’s mission. We are Church. We are Lutheran. We are Church together. We are Church for the sake of the world. In 2018 God has provided many blessings to the church and beyond. Through mission support, the ELCA is supporting 365 new congregations in 54 synods and 220 missionaries in 40 countries. Over 32,000 attended the National Youth Gathering where the faith of our youth was powerfully impacted and where youth began to think seriously about what God is calling them to be. The ELCA has published God’s Faithfulness for the Journey, stories and essays for 40 women of color, and Troubling Waters for the Healing of the Church, which provides valuable information about the impact of white privilege. Because of AMPARRO, we have 116 welcoming congregations in 30 synods. $23.6 million has been given to world hunger. Of that, $16.5 million has funded 537 projects in 61 countries and 43 states. Lutheran Disaster Response has answered the call to send aid following 47 emergencies in 33 countries and 32 emergencies in 19 states. Giving to Always Being Made New has amounted to $226 million in cash and commitments. The ELCA lifts up leaders, nurtures future
leaders, and strives for all to have a relationship with God, each other, and the communities in which God has planted us, creating vitality across this church. We have been freed by grace to live faithfully and to serve joyfully.

After the churchwide presentation, Bishop Dunlop thanked Deacon Sue Rothmeyer for serving as the churchwide representative to this assembly. He presented her with a gift to remember her time in our synod. The assembly responded with applause.

Bishop Dunlop encouraged the assembly to return at 7:00 p.m. to Parmer Hall for the Service of Word and Sacrament. At this service, four new pastors will be ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and six faithful-departed rostered ministers will be remembered with thanksgiving. He announced that the fifth session of this Synod Assembly will convene at 8:00 a.m.

Bishop Dunlop called upon assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney for hymn and prayer.

Sister Dottie called upon Zachary J. Weiss, a member of Synod Council and director of Camp Kirchenwald, one of the Lutheran Camping Corporation’s camps. He led the assembly in prayer. After the prayer, Sister Dottie invited the assembly to sing, “Open the Eyes of My Heart.” Erik Teichmann provided the accompaniment on his guitar.

After the hymn, the bishop declared the legislative session of this assembly adjourned until 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 8, 2019.

The members of the assembly enjoyed dinner at the Lottie Nelson Dining Room in the Eisenhower Conference Center.

FOURTH ASSEMBLY SESSION
Friday evening, June 7, 2019

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT WITH NECROLOGY AND
THE RITE OF ORDINATION

The Service of Word and Sacrament with Necrology and the Rite of Ordination, was held in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and Performing Arts, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 7, 2019. The service was Of the Land and Seasons. Of the Land and Seasons was originally published in 1990 under the title Of the Land and Seasons: A Folk-Song Paraphrase Setting of Holy Communion. It was dedicated to the members of Bendersville Lutheran Parish: Bethlehem, Bendersville; Christ, Aspers; and St. James, Wenksville. The service was prepared under the auspices of the Town and Country Institute, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

The version used at this assembly was the newly revised version of this setting, closely connected with the life of Appalachia. Intended for use once each quarter, the imagery of its lessons and other texts reflects the activity of that season in the orchards and other farms of this region. The music is drawn from the folk tradition of Appalachia. Music was arranged or composed, and the entire project coordinated, by the Reverend Dr. Stephen P. Folkemer. Texts of the liturgical music were written by the Reverend Beth Bergeron Folkemer and the Reverend Dr. Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr. Eucharistic prayers for each season were newly written for this revision by the Reverend Dr. Mark W. Oldenburg. Of the Land and Seasons, revised version is available for purchase from Augsburg Fortress.

Presiding and preaching at the service was the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Other participants included: Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president, assisting minister; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, presenter for the Rite of Ordination; the Rev. Kevin C. Stout, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Boiling Springs, chaplain to the bishop; the Rev. Dr. Stephen P. Folkemer, minister of music, St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, York, principal musician; Anika Ring, former roommate and best friend of Ordinand Marissa Becklin, and Charles R. Roberts III, mentor and friend of Ordinand Jay W. Eckman, lectors; Lisa Ellerman, council president of Big Spring United Lutheran Church, Newville, and Seminarian Elizabeth Peter and Justin Holmes, friends of Ordinand Jay W. Eckman, presenters; and the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, necrologist of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, intercessor. Serving as communion assistants were Bishop Dunlop, Lucinda L. Bringman, Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer, the Rev. Jay W. Eckman, the Rev. Mark L. Russell, Jennifer R. Lau, the Rev. Marissa K. Becklin, the Rev. John Sorenson, Dawn Freees, the Rev. Molly K. Haggerty, the Rev. Virginia Cover, Allen P. Stump, the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, and the Rev. Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr. Providing special music were the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer, bass; the Rev. Stephen Dr. Stephen P. Folkemer, concertina; the Reverend Kathleen A. Kuehl and Marian Noel, flute and recorder; the Rev. Beth Bergeron Folkemer, guitar and mountain dulcimers; the Rev. Dr. Mark W. Oldenburg, hammered dulcimer; Kevin Long, mandolin; Margaret M. B. Folkemer, penny whistles; Deacon Nancy Gable, piano; and Addison Dunlop and Connie Dunlop, fiddles. Ushers and greeters were Stephanie Strauss and the youth and young adults who are serving as assembly pages.

Ordained at this service were:
The Rev. James Scott Anderson, a member of Southwood Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Nebraska. He was called as pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Maytown, Pennsylvania. His sponsor at ordination was the Rev. Timothy Mentzer. Participating in the laying on of hands were the Reverend Adam Morton, the Reverend Tasha Genck Morton, and the Reverend Pamela Stalheim Lane.

The Rev. Marissa Kay Becklin, a member of Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Dubuque, Iowa. She was called as pastor of Faith United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Denver, Pennsylvania. Her sponsor at ordination was the Reverend John Sorenson. Participating in the laying on of hands were the Reverend Jay McDivitt, the Reverend Delaney Schlake-Kruse, and the Reverend Matthew Schlake-Kruse.

The Rev. Jay Warren Eckman, a member of The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He was called as associate pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. His sponsor at ordination was the Rev. Mark L. Russell. Participating in the laying on of hands were Reverend Dana Blouch-Hanson, the Reverend David Asendorf, the Reverend Jillian Riddle, and the Reverend Stephen Herr.

The Rev. Molly Kathryne Haggerty, a member of Bethel Lutheran Church, Green Bay, Wisconsin. She was called to be pastor of Big Spring United Lutheran Church, Newville, Pennsylvania. Her sponsor at ordination was the Rev. Virginia Cover. Participating in the laying on of hands were the Reverend D. Evan Houck, the Reverend Sheila Ireland, the Reverend Elaine Dent, and Deacon David Hope-Tringali.

During the Prayers of the Church, the assembly remembered with thanksgiving the following rostered ministers who had died since the last Assembly:

Sister Sandy Elaine Lehr, who was born March 14, 1949, who was consecrated June 25, 1983, and who died August 27, 2018, at the age of 69 years, 5 months, 13 days;

The Rev. Leonard Eugene Shertzer, who was born May 1, 1929, who was ordained June 15, 1957, and who died October 23, 2018, at the age of 89 years, 5 months, 13 days;

The Rev. William Andrew Martin, who was born on August 7, 1937, who was ordained June 5, 1962, and who died October 28, 2018, at the age of 81 years, 2 months, 21 days;

The Rev. George Henry DeFrehn, who was born August 15, 1926, who was ordained May 23, 1950, and who died November 30, 2018, at the age of 92 years, 3 months, 15 days;

The Rev. Kenneth G. Swick, who was born on July 12, 1943, who was ordained May 15, 1977, and who died February 17, 2019, at the age of 75 years, 7 months, 5 days; and

The Rev. Donald Richard Gallion, who was born on May 26, 1924, who was ordained May 24, 1951, and who died March 30, 2019, at the age of 94 years, 10 months, 4 days.

FIFTH ASSEMBLY SESSION
Saturday morning, June 8, 2019

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called to order the fifth assembly session of the thirty-second annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 8, 2019, in Parmar Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and Performing Arts of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania.

Erik Teichmann introduced the hymn, “At this Altar.” This hymn was commissioned by St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster, and written by the Rev. Dr. Mark W. Oldenburg. The assembly greeted this announcement with applause. The assembly joined in singing “At this Altar,” accompanied by Erik Teichmann.

Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, led the assembly in praying Luther’s morning prayer:

L: Let us pray Luther’s morning prayer together:
C: I thank you, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your
holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.”

Bishop Dunlop thanked Sister Dottie Almoney and Erik Teichmann for this devotional time.

**BIBLICAL STORYTELLING – Mark 6**

Bishop Dunlop introduced the Rev. Tonya Lynn Eza to the assembly. Pastor Eza is pastor of St. John’s Lutheran Church, Steelton, and Salem Lutheran Church, Oberlin. Pastor Eza’s text was Mark 6.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Pastor Eza for sharing God’s Word with the assembly through the art of storytelling. The assembly responded with applause.

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly the four pastors who were ordained last evening: The Rev. James S. Anderson, called to be pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Maytown; the Rev. Marissa K. Becklin, called to be pastor of Faith United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Denver; the Rev. Jay W. Eckman, called to be associate pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Gettysburg; and the Rev. Molly K. Haggarty, called to be pastor of Big Spring United Lutheran Church, Newville.

**THIRD BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer assumed the chair. She announced to the assembly that it was now time to cast the third ballot for bishop. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop, the seven nominees (plus ties for the seventh position) who received the most legal votes on the second ballot will appear on the third ballot. On the third ballot, 2/3 of the legal votes cast are necessary for election. If there is not an election, the names of the three persons (plus ties for the third position) will appear on the fourth ballot. Prior to the casting of the fourth ballot, there will be a question and answer period with the three nominees.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Pastor Thomas E. McKee to give an updated Credentials Report. Pastor McKee reported that there were 587 voting members registered as of 8:00 a.m. this morning when registration closed.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to give instructions to the voting members.

Joseph Stepansky provided the following instructions for Ballot 3:

- Ballot 3 is an electronic ballot. Please have your voting device at the ready. But do NOT press any buttons until it is time. You must be on the first two levels of Parmer Hall to be sure your vote is transmitted correctly.
- Please wait to vote until Deacon Rothmeyer calls for voting to begin.
- Deacon Rothmeyer will call for a moment of prayer and reflection and tell you when you may begin voting.
- When everyone has had opportunity to cast an electronic ballot, Deacon Rothmeyer will declare that the voting is closed. When she announces this, all voting machines will be turned off.
- The results of Ballot 3 will be displayed on screen shortly after the voting is closed.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Sister Dottie Almoney, assembly chaplain, to lead the assembly in an invocation of the Holy Spirit.

When voting machines were activated, Deacon Rothmeyer gave the instructions to vote now. When balloting was completed, she declared the third ballot for bishop closed.

**REPORT OF THE THIRD BALLOT FOR BISHOP**

Deacon Rothmeyer asked Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to show the results of the balloting.

Joseph Stepansky provided a report of the third ballot for bishop.

The results of Ballot 3 are as follows:

- Total number of ballots cast: 489
- Total number of ballots required for election: 326 [2/3 of Total Legal]

[Reading from the on-screen projection]

- The Rev. James S. Dunlop 292
- The Rev. Stephen R. Herr 120
- The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer 27
- The Rev. Brian A. McClinton 24
- The Rev. Lisa M. Leber 13
- The Rev. Joel S. Folkemer 10
- The Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson 3
Deacon Rothmeyer declared that, based on the report of Ballot 3, there was no election. The following three persons will appear on the fourth ballot: the Rev. James S. Dunlop, the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, and the Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer. Deacon Rothmeyer asked the three nominees to meet immediately on the stage with Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to receive instructions about the question and answer period and to draw lots for order.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, and assembly musician, Erik Teichmann to provide a musical interlude. They led the assembly in singing, “Lord, Prepare Me to Be A Sanctuary,” “Jesus Lover of My Soul,” and “Wretched.” At the conclusion of the singing, the assembly showed their appreciation to Sister Dottie Almoney and Erik Teichmann with applause

**QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD WITH THREE NOMINEES**

The three nominees who participated in this question and answer period were the Rev. James S. Dunlop, the Rev. Stephen R. Herr, and the Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer. The same six questions will be asked of each nominee. They will have two minutes to answer each question. All three nominees will be on the stage at the same time. They drew lots of the starting order. The order of answering will alternate with each question.

The questions asked of each nominee were:

- The Churchwide Assembly will consider adoption of the draft statement: Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action. If adopted, how would you as bishop educate rostered ministers and congregations on this social statement and implement changes in our synod in support of the statement?

- What vision do you have to bolster the future of our synod and its churches and how does faith formation and renewal fit into this vision?

- As bishop, what strategy and priority will you give to the shortage of pastors, working with and caring for the deacon roster, and lifting up lay leaders?

- In light of the ELCA’s 2009 ministry decisions and our synod’s Reconciling in Christ status which seeks full welcome, inclusion and equity of LGBTQIA+ persons, how will you lead our commitment to full inclusion while seeking mutual understanding for the common good?

- How would you enhance the relationship between our synod and our congregations to encourage an increase in Mission Support or what other strategies would you use regarding the financial needs of our synod?

- Share a story about a time when you experienced the Holy Spirit in your life, other than your call story.

After all three nominees had answered all six questions, Deacon Rothmeyer asked the assembly to show their appreciation to these talented individuals for sharing themselves, their vision, and their faith with the assembly. The assembly showed its appreciation with applause.

Deacon Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

**MISSION FOCUS – ENGAGING IN NEW MISSION**

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, Director for Evangelical Mission for New Mission. Pastor Hope-Tringali introduced the assembly to the material on our synod website for the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund and to the procedures for grant application and for awarding grants.

Pastor Hope-Tringali gave a tutorial to the assembly about how to access the synod website and to the grant application for grants from the Lower Susquehanna Mission Fund. She showed the assembly how to find the box that says, “New Mission Grants Available,” and how to click on the box labeled, “Apply now.”

The team that reviews the grant applications are the members of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee. This team networks, prays, questions, advises, debates, and finally awards grants. They are governed by the fund’s purpose statement as stated in our bylaws and as restated on the website. The first question that grant applicants should consider is, “How does our request match with our synod’s missional goals, equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission?” Pastor Hope-Tringali reminded the assembly that these goals can be interpreted very broadly. Applications are due January 1, April 1, and September 1. After grant applications are submitted, the applicants will receive confirmation that the grant applications have been received. Grant applicants will receive notice by January 31, April 30, or September 30 that their grants have been approved or denied, or whether the committee needs additional information or if the applicants needs to do additional work on their project.
Some of the creative challenges with the grant application are providing a creative name for the project, detailing how much the congregation is investing in this project, and listing who are the partners and what are they investing in the project. The applications ask for a rationale for the project, what is hoped to be accomplished, what is needed to accomplish the goal, what strategies will be used, what are the total expenditures, and how does the project support the missional goals of our synod. The application asked, “Does this application have the support of the pastor?” and “Does this application have the support of the Congregation Council?” There is also a space to add anything that an applicant would like to say about the project or the application.

The members of the assembly responded to Pastor Hope-Tringali’s presentation with applause.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Pastor Hope-Tringali for her presentation. The assembly responded with applause.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE AND COUNSEL**

Bishop Dunlop called upon Kay A. Hinkle, member of the Synod Council and the chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, to present the report of this committee. Kay Hinkle is a member of the Synod Council and of Trinity Lutheran Church, East Berlin.

She explained to the members of the assembly the purpose of the committee and announced that there was one resolution to come before the assembly.

Kay presented the Resolution to Implement the ELCA AMMPARO Strategy in the Lower Susquehanna Synod. The Committee of Reference and Counsel recommended the adoption of this resolution.

**ADOPTED:**

**SA19.06.10.**

**Resolution to Implement the ELCA AMMPARO Strategy in the Lower Susquehanna Synod**

*WHEREAS,* the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a strategy on Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities or AMMPARO (based on the Spanish word “amparo,” meaning the protection of a living creature from suffering or damage), in response to the plight of children who are forced to flee their communities because of complex and interrelated reasons, including chronic violence, poverty, environmental displacement and lack of opportunities, with a primary commitment of the strategy to uphold and guarantee basic human rights and safety of migrant children and their families; therefore, let it be

*RESOLVED,* that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in Assembly direct the Synod Council to appoint a task force to implement the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s AMMPARO strategy within the Lower Susquehanna Synod in our synod and congregation expressions, with a progress report to be presented to the 2020 Synod Assembly.

Adopted by Synod Council, April 6, 2019.
Amended by the Committee of Reference and Counsel, May 7, 2019.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Kay Hinkle and the Committee of Reference and Counsel for their dedicated work.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MEMORIALS**

Bishop Dunlop introduced Allen P. Stump, chair of the Committee on Memorials, a member of St. David Lutheran Church, Hanover, and a member of Synod Council, to give the report of the Committee on Memorials. Allen Stump reported that there were three memorials to consider.

Bishop Dunlop explained that we address the ELCA Churchwide Assembly by sending memorials from our Synod Assembly to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Allen Stump introduced the first memorial, Memorial to Restore Access to Affordable Healthcare for Churchwide Staff.

**Memorial to Restore Access to Affordable Healthcare for Churchwide Staff**

*WHEREAS,* Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10), and spent his earthly ministry proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God and healing all who were brought to him (Matthew 4:23); Jesus healed those who had spent all the money they had on doctors as a free gift (Luke 8:43); and Jesus gave his disciples the authority and empowerment to continue his work of healing (Luke 9:1); and
WHEREAS, although the official stance of the ELCA that the Portico Gold + plan is the recommended benchmark health plan for synods and congregations, the ELCA Church Council at its November 8-11, 2018 meeting, approved a health insurance reduction as part of the approved spending authorization for the 2019 budget, which switched Churchwide employees from the Portico Gold+ plan to the Silver plan (EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA CHURCH COUNCIL November 8-11, 2018 MINUTES, Page 18 CC18.11.20); and

WHEREAS, this change disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable Churchwide employees financially, and could cost them up to $1200-2400 extra per year in deductible costs; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take immediate action to restore Churchwide Employees to the Portico Gold + plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Portico to provide information in a timely manner regarding the financial impact incurred by churchwide employees while insured under the Silver plan to the Church Council for budgetary consideration.

ESTIMATED COST ASSOCIATED

1) Difference between Gold+ and Silver plan for Churchwide Employees - $700,000

Submitted by the York Conference, drafted by Pastor Laura Haupt, Pastor Janyce Jorgensen and Pastor Elizabeth Polanzke.
Amended by the Committee on Memorials, May 15, 2019.
Amendments accepted by original authors, May 16, 2019.

The Committee on Memorials presented this memorial to the assembly without recommendation.

The Rev. Janyce Jorgensen, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, York, dean of the York Conference, and co-author of the original memorial, spoke in favor of the proposed memorial. She explained that the ones who were most vulnerable and were hurt the most by the change in the level of health care plans were the support and administrative staff of the churchwide organization. She addressed this as a justice issue, stressing the importance of our lifting up those who serve us in the churchwide office. Pastor Jorgensen also talked about the lack of consistency shown by the Church Council in adopting this change. While the Church Council still recommends the gold+ plan for synods, it has gone to the silver plan for churchwide employees to save $700,000. This memorial requests them to reconsider their action and to return the gold+ plan to churchwide employees.

The Rev. Jason Northridge, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Mt. Wolf, and dean of the North York Conference, moved:

To strike the second resolved clause.

Pastor Jason Northridge spoke to his motion, saying that he is concerned about the words, “in a timely manner.” He added that, individually, the resulting effects of this decision may be catastrophic.

Molly Wirick, voting member of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, and a member of the Memorials Committee, spoke against Pastor Northridge’s motion. She stated that the Memorials Committee wrestled with this issue. The committee believed that it did not have enough information to make an informed decision. There are a variety of different experiences resulting from this action. The Church Council had to make a difficult decision to remove $700,000 from the churchwide budget. If the level of health care was not lessened, would jobs have been lost. What would have been the impact of that. It is important to have more information from Portico about how this decision has impacted churchwide employees.

The Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke, intentional interim pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, York, and one of the co-authors of the proposed memorial, spoke against striking the second resolved clause. The impact of this decision and the costs can be measured and weighed. It is important that the Church Council knows the full impact of its decision.

The vote to amend by striking the second resolved was before the assembly.

LOST: To strike the second resolved clause.

The memorial was before the assembly for action.

ADOPTED:
SA19.06.11.
405 – YES
69 – NO
Memorial to Restore Access to Affordable Healthcare for Churchwide Staff

WHEREAS, Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10), and spent his earthly ministry proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God and healing all who were brought to him (Matthew 4:23); Jesus healed those who had spent all the money they had on doctors as a free gift (Luke 8:43); and Jesus gave his disciples the authority and empowerment to continue his work of healing (Luke 9:1); and

WHEREAS, although the official stance of the ELCA that the Portico Gold + plan is the recommended benchmark health plan for synods and congregations, the ELCA Church Council at its November 8-11, 2018 meeting, approved a health insurance reduction as part of the approved spending authorization for the 2019 budget, which switched Churchwide employees from the Portico Gold+ plan to the Silver plan (EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA CHURCH COUNCIL November 8-11, 2018 MINUTES, Page 18 CC18.11.20) ; and

WHEREAS, this change disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable Churchwide employees financially, and could cost them up to $1200-2400 extra per year in deductible costs; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to take immediate action to restore Churchwide Employees to the Portico Gold + plan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Portico to provide information in a timely manner regarding the financial impact incurred by churchwide employees while insured under the Silver plan to the Church Council for budgetary consideration.

ESTIMATED COST ASSOCIATED

2) Difference between Gold+ and Silver plan for Churchwide Employees - $700,000

Submitted by the York Conference, drafted by Pastor Laura Haupt, Pastor Janyce Jorgensen and Pastor Elizabeth Polanzke.
Amended by the Committee on Memorials, May 15, 2019.
Amendments accepted by original authors, May 16, 2019.

Allen Stump presented the second memorial, Memorial Regarding Support for Humanitarian Aid to Palestinian Hospitals.

Memorial to ELCA Churchwide Assembly from The Lower Susquehanna Synod Regarding Support for Humanitarian Aid to Palestinian Hospitals

WHEREAS, the ELCA Social Statement on health, healing and health care, as amended and adopted by more than two-thirds majority vote (935 - 34) as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) by the eighth biennial Churchwide Assembly on August 15, 2003, at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, states: “Health is central to our well-being, vital to relationships, and helps us live out our vocations in family, work, and community. Caring for one’s own health is a matter of human necessity and good stewardship. Caring for the health of others expresses both love for our neighbor and responsibility for a just society. As a personal and social responsibility, health care is a shared endeavor;” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA has a long history of engagement with the Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land. In 2005, the ELCA established an initiative, “Peace Not Walls (PNW): Stand for Justice in the Holy Land,” which seeks “peace with justice for both Palestinians and Israelis and the continuation of the Christian witness in the Holy Land;” and

WHEREAS, the primary outcomes of the PNW campaign are accompaniment, advocacy and awareness raising about the context and situation of Palestinians people; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran World Federation has operated the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) since 1950 and is a center of medical excellence in East Jerusalem, serving all Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza. AVH has the following care centers and departments: Cancer Care Center, Hematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation Center, Kidney Care Center, Surgery and Ear, Nose and Throat Care Center, Community Care Department, Specialized Center for Child Care, Skilled Nursing and Long-Term Care Facility, Laboratory Medicine Department, and the Diagnostic Radiology Department. In 2018, AVH had 20,918 inpatient admissions, 21,064 dialysis sessions, 17,590 chemotherapy sessions, and 24,570 radiation sessions; and

WHEREAS, in 2017 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Assembly adopted a resolution to express “appreciation for the life-saving work of the Lutheran World Federation’s ministries, including the Augusta Victoria Hospital and calls upon the LWF member churches, governments and intergovernmental bodies to continue to support these ministries in their humanitarian service to the Palestinian people;” and
Whereas, the United States Government historically provided financial aid to the Palestinian Authority (PA), primarily through the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). However, aid to both agencies was severely cut in 2018 by direct action of the U.S. Administration and as a result of legislation enacted in 2018. These actions could result in no aid being provided to the Palestinian people in any form from the United States in the future, which could have a devastating effect on life-saving services for over five million Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank; and

Whereas, for several years, AVH and other East Jerusalem hospitals have been facing cash-flow problems because the PA has been unable to pay the bills of the patients whom it refers to these hospitals. In December 2018, the total debt for AVH alone was $38M. Foreign aid from the US, the European Union and others have contributed financially to the PA to help them pay the bills and to avoid a mounting financial crisis, even collapse, of the hospitals. In FY2017, $25M in US funding was appropriated for the hospitals but not sent, because in September 2018, the Administration reprogrammed that funding along with another $200M for bilateral aid to the PA. Funding for FY2018 and FY2019 is in doubt, due to stated Administration policy and the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act of 2018 (ACTA), which makes any bilateral or economic aid illegal; and

Whereas, compounding the cuts to direct aid are similar cuts to UNRWA. US funding to UNRWA in FY2018 was only $65M, contrasted with $359.3M in FY2017. The US government’s decision to end contributions could greatly affect UNRWA, which provides education, health care, and other forms of humanitarian assistance for about 5.4 million Palestinian civilian refugees throughout the Middle East. The US has been a major contributor to UNRWA since its establishment shortly after the 1948 Arab/Israeli War. US funding provided approximately one-third of UNRWA’s annual budget in 2017; and

Whereas, the ELCA Peace Not Walls initiative issued an Action Alert in January 2018 communicating to the members of the ELCA these drastic funding cuts and urging them to contact the Administration and their applicable legislators to advocate for the restoration of aid to the hospitals; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and urge ELCA members, to request the President of the United States and appropriate legislators to expend before the end of fiscal year 2019 all bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza that Congress appropriated for such assistance in fiscal year 2018, including funding for the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network, and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved; and be it further

Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and urge ELCA members, to advocate to request the President and all applicable legislators to restore funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in FY2018, and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved; and be it further

Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and urge ELCA members, to request the President and all applicable legislators to amend the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act of 2018 to remove legislative barriers to future funding of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian Authority so that regular payments can be made to the hospitals for basic life-saving medical treatment.

This Memorial to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly regarding support for humanitarian aid to Palestinian hospitals is signed and endorsed by the following rostered leaders of the Lower Susquehanna Synod in April 2019:

The Reverend Sandra Mackie
The Reverend Fredrica Meitz
The Reverend Linda Trout
The Reverend Brenda Ritterpusch
The Reverend David Ritterpusch

The Reverend Timothy Seitz-Brown
The Reverend Paul Haack
The Reverend Terrence McCarthy

Allen Stump moved a substitute memorial on behalf of the Committee on Memorials:

Memorial to ELCA Churchwide Assembly from The Lower Susquehanna Synod Regarding Support for Humanitarian Aid to Palestinian Hospitals

Whereas, the Lutheran World Federation has operated the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) since 1950 and is a center of medical excellence in East Jerusalem, serving all Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza; and

Whereas, in 2017 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Assembly adopted a resolution to express “appreciation for the life-saving work of the Lutheran World Federation’s ministries, including the Augusta Victoria Hospital and calls upon the LWF member churches, governments and intergovernmental bodies to continue to support these ministries in their humanitarian service to the Palestinian people;” therefore be it
Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and urge ELCA members, to request the President of the United States and appropriate legislators to expend before the end of fiscal year 2019 all bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza that Congress appropriated for such assistance in fiscal year 2018, including funding for the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network, and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved; and be it further

Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and urge ELCA members, to request the President of the United States and appropriate legislators to restore funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved.

The Committee on Memorials recommends to the assembly the adoption of this memorial.

Bishop Dunlop explained to the assembly that both proposed memorials were before the assembly for the assembly to decide which one the assembly would prefer.

Allen Stump, chair of the Committee on Memorials, spoke in favor of the substitute memorial. The whereas clauses in the original memorial were too long. The action requested in the third resolved clause may not be necessary.

The Rev. David L. Ritterpusch, a retired pastor and member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lancaster, spoke against the motion to substitute. He recognized the issue of the length of the whereas clauses. However, he said that the more you read, the more helpful it is, and the more you understand.

The Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown, a member of Synod Council and interim pastor of Bender’s Lutheran Church, Biglerville, and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Biglerville, stated that he would like to keep the original. He stated that he believes we need the details.

The Rev. Hans Becklin, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, Lititz, and a member of the Church Council, rose to support the motion to substitute. As a former member of the ELCA Committee of Memorials, he knows that the issues centering around the Holy Land, Palestine and Israel, are the subject of numerous memorials. The members of the committee are aware of the details; there is no need to rehash them.

The Rev. Linda Trout, a rostered minister who is a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Etters, stated that the members of our synod need the wealth of information that is found in the whereas clauses of the original memorial.

The Rev. Fredrica Meitzen, a retired pastor and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Arendtsville, spoke in support of the original memorial. She told the story of a young woman who needed medical care from Augusta Victoria Hospital, but who died without it, because she was unable to get through the checkpoint in the wall surrounding Bethlehem. She stated that sadly strategies keep Palestinians and Jews separate. She urged the assembly to read Peace Without Walls. She reiterated that it was important to keep the whereas clauses stated in the original memorial.

The Rev. Terrence McCarthy, chaplain at the United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg Campus, rose to oppose the motion to substitute. He reminded the assembly of our connection to God and to one another. This connection impels us to be here for one another. The original memorial reinforces our connection with one another, our synod, the churchwide organization, and the Lutheran World Federation. To show our connectedness, we need to keep the whereas clauses in the original memorial. Pastor McCarthy stated that he did not think the extra three whereas clauses make the original memorial too burdensome to read.

The Rev. Robert B. Ierien, pastor of the Lebanon Lutheran Cooperative Ministry, moved:

ADOPTED: To call the previous question.

The vote on whether to substitute the Committee on Memorials proposed memorial for the original memorial was before the assembly.

ADOPTED To substitute the memorial presented by the Committee on Memorials for the original memorial.

257 – YES
211 – NO

The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel, pastor of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, York, rose for a point of personal privilege, stating that the rules of procedure call for alternating speeches from those who want to speak in favor and those who want to speak against a motion.

Discussion continued on the memorial submitted by the Committee on Memorials.
Susan Feldmann, a voting member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lancaster, and a member of the Memorials Committee, told the assembly that the committee did not have enough knowledge on the subject to verify the specifics. However, this memorial as substituted keeps the focus on the central issues. It is necessary that we provide humanitarian aid for all the people of the Holy Land. It is important that humanitarian aid continue to be given to the Augusta Victoria Hospital and the other hospitals and institutions that provide needed service for Palestinians.

The Rev. Hans Becklin, pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, Lititz, moved:

> To strike the name of the Presiding Bishop in both resolved clauses and amend the resolved clauses to read “direct the presiding bishop.”

Pastor Becklin spoke to his amendment, saying that we will be electing a new presiding bishop at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, and we as a synod should not be telling the church who that will be.

The motion to amend was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:** To strike the name of the Presiding Bishop in both resolved clauses and amend the resolved clauses to read “direct the presiding bishop.”

The Rev. Sandra R. Mackie, a retired pastor and member of Christ (Filey) Lutheran Church, Dillsburg, rose to speak in favor of the memorial. We are called to work for justice for all people. Palestinians are a displaced people, deposed of their lands, living in what are refugee camps, targets of random killings and imprisonments. The United States government wants to defend their right to receive healthcare; Lutheran World Federation is supportive of these efforts. Jesus desires that all have life abundantly. We must stand in solidarity with the Palestinians and all who suffer so that they can have the hope of abundant life.

The Rev. Linda S. Trout, member of Zion Lutheran Church, Etters, spoke in support of this memorial, asking the assembly to support Augusta Victoria Hospital. In the Jerusalem program, the Lutheran World Federation address the issues of suffering and injustice and advocates for love, reconciliation, and justice for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land. Augusta Victoria Hospital is the only hospital that offers radiation therapy and pediatric kidney dialysis to Palestinians. It is the only facility that offers palliative care and the care for the elderly. The elderly and the dying should be able to receive compassionate care. Pastor Trout urged the assembly to adopt this memorial.

The Rev. Jonathan Jenkins, pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church, Klingerstown, and Zion Lutheran Church, Erdman, and dean of the Upper Dauphin Conference, moved:

**ADOPTED:** To call the previous question.

Memorial 2 was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:**

SA19.06.12.  
415 – YES  
51 – NO

**Memorial to ELCA Churchwide Assembly from The Lower Susquehanna Synod Regarding Support for Humanitarian Aid to Palestinian Hospitals**

**Whereas,** the Lutheran World Federation has operated the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) since 1950 and is a center of medical excellence in East Jerusalem, serving all Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza; and

**Whereas,** in 2017 the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Assembly adopted a resolution to express “appreciation for the life-saving work of the Lutheran World Federation’s ministries, including the Augusta Victoria Hospital and calls upon the LWF member churches, governments and intergovernmental bodies to continue to support these ministries in their humanitarian service to the Palestinian people;” therefore be it

**Resolved,** that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the presiding bishop, and urge ELCA members, to request the President of the United States and appropriate legislators to expend before the end of fiscal year 2019 all bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza that Congress appropriated for such assistance in fiscal year 2018, including funding for the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network, and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved; and be it further

...
Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the presiding bishop, and urge ELCA members, to advocate to request the President and all applicable legislators to restore funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and continue funding at previous levels until the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is resolved.

Allen Stump introduced Memorial 3, Memorial on Engagement in the Holy Land.

Memorial on Engagement in the Holy Land

Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to continuing its awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy on behalf of a peaceful and just resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine and on behalf of ending the occupation; and

Whereas, the ELCA in its three expressions continues to pray for and accompany the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (“ELCJHL”); and

Whereas, the ELCA’s 2013 Glocal Mission Gathering document “Accompaniment” states “…we are called to love and be loved by those who are not like us, whom we might have to work quite hard to understand, or who may not understand us at all. God’s reconciliation is across borders and boundaries.”¹; and

Whereas, the ELCA’s 2013 Glocal Mission Gathering document “Accompaniment” further states “God calls us to include everyone in the mission of reconciliation…In accompanying one another, we look to see who is excluded, and why, and commit to change community structures and habits that can exclude people without any deliberate intention.”² Therefore, accompaniment of our companion churches should not mean excluding people outside of the church; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to encourage this church’s members, congregations, synods, and churchwide office, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to expand our relationships and dialogue beyond accompaniment with companion churches to engagement with those non-church groups and individuals in the Holy Land whose perspective we may not yet understand, including mainstream Jewish Israelis, “to undo the boundary of strangeness or suspicion between us”³ while at the same time continuing to affirm our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).

Submitted by the Rev. Stephen R. Herr and Sister Davia A. Baldauf Evans, deacon.
Amended by the Committee on Memorials, May 15, 2019.
Amendments accepted by original authors, May 16, 2019.
The Committee on Memorials presented this memorial to the assembly without recommendation.


Discussion on the proposed memorial followed.

Sister Davia A. Evans, rostered minister and member of St. Matthias Lutheran Church, Carlisle, spoke in favor of the memorial. She called for a holy conversation so that we can understand the perspectives of all who live in the Holy Land. The problems of the Middle East are complex problems. Peace also will be complex. We need to model and foster peacemaking, issuing new talks among important segments of the population. We need to hear from all people. This dialogue adds to our understanding and to the possibility of a creative peace.

Rose Tonkin, a voting member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Highspire, shared that she has recently come back from a trip to the Holy Land where she met many wonderful persons who have different perspectives on what is needed to bring peace to this land. She encouraged the church to open more opportunities for more people to join in conversation. She quoted John 13:34, “A new commandment I give you. Love one another as I have loved you.”

The Rev. Darlis J. Swan, retired pastor who is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, and our synod’s ecumenical representative, spoke in favor of the memorial. Our model of accompaniment has produced varied results. Accompaniment has created new boundaries, an unintentional result of our policy. It is good to accompany our Palestinian sisters and brothers unless our accompaniment begins to exclude others. We must be careful that the special relationship we have with Palestine does not turn us against Israel.
The Rev. Bonnie M. Oplinger, pastor of Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Rothsville, Lititz, questioned the use of the word “glocal” in lines 10 and 14. She stated she believes we should use a proper word. Bishop Dunlop explained that this is the proper name of an actual event.

The Rev. Stephen R. Herr, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, said that this is a complicated problem. We need to be able to listen to all sides. To be supportive of the peacemaking process, we need to expand our engagement to hear other voices.

Daniel Bringman, voting member of St. James Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, moved:

**ADOPTED:** To move the previous question.

Memorial 3 was before the assembly for vote.

**ADOPTED:**

SA19.06.13.
412 – YES
58 – NO

**Memorial on Engagement in the Holy Land**

**Whereas,** the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is committed to continuing its awareness-building, accompaniment, and advocacy on behalf of a peaceful and just resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine and on behalf of ending the occupation; and

**Whereas,** the ELCA in its three expressions continues to pray for and accompany the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (“ELCJHL”); and

**Whereas,** the ELCA’s 2013 Glocal Mission Gathering document “Accompaniment” states “…we are called to love and be loved by those who are not like us, whom we might have to work quite hard to understand, or who may not understand us at all. God’s reconciliation is across borders and boundaries.”¹; and

**Whereas,** the ELCA’s 2013 Glocal Mission Gathering document “Accompaniment” further states “God calls us to include everyone in the mission of reconciliation….In accompanying one another, we look to see who is excluded, and why, and commit to change community structures and habits that can exclude people without any deliberate intention.”² Therefore, accompaniment of our companion churches should not mean excluding people outside of the church; therefore, be it

**Resolved,** that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to encourage this church’s members, congregations, synods, and churchwide office, including the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to expand our relationships and dialogue beyond accompaniment with companion churches to engagement with those non-church groups and individuals in the Holy Land whose perspective we may not yet understand, including mainstream Jewish Israelis, “to undo the boundary of strangeness or suspicion between us”³ while at the same time continuing to affirm our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL).

Submitted by the Rev. Stephen R. Herr and Sister Davia A. Baldauf Evans, deacon.
Amended by the Committee on Memorials, May 15, 2019.
Amendments accepted by original authors, May 16, 2019.

The Committee on Memorials presented this memorial to the assembly without recommendation.


This concluded the report of the Committee on Memorials. Bishop Dunlop thanked Allen Stump and the members of the Committee on Memorials for their faithful service.

The assembly enjoyed a brief break.

Susan Master requested a point of personal privilege. She expressed her appreciation for all those who helped with the merger of Zion Lutheran Church, Penbrook, into the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Paxtang. She recognized Pastor Pamela J. Carnes, who understood that Zion congregation had to make some important decisions about its future; Sister Marianne B. Brock and Pastor Richard F. Michael, who led the congregations through two learning and discernment processes; Pastor Kathleen J. Baker and the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, who were willing to enter into discussions about a possible
merger, Pastor Thomas E. McKee, and Pastor Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr., who worked with both congregations in forming a new alliance. Susan Master reported that most members of Zion have joined Good Shepherd, that Good Shepherd has been most welcoming, and that members of both former congregations have been renewed through this process and are experiencing new life in the congregation.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP AND OFFICERS

Bishop Dunlop announced that these reports are found in pages 201 through 504 of the Bulletin of Reports.

As part of his report, Bishop Dunlop provided a final report of the Always Being Made New Campaign.

As of March 31, 2019, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has received more than $184.4 million in cash and multi-year commitments as well as $50.2 million in planned gifts. The ELCA goal was $198 million. In 2014, the Lower Susquehanna Synod adopted a resolution creating our own Always Being Made New Campaign with a goal of receiving $2.75 million for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and $2.75 million for the Lower Susquehanna Synod. The ministries of the Lower Susquehanna Synod strengthened through this campaign included the Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania, the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund, the Lower Susquehanna Disaster Fund, hunger initiatives on the territory of our synod, seminarian support, and youth and young adults. Bishop Dunlop thanked the assembly for supporting these important ministries. He stated that giving to the campaign has allowed us to do the work that we have been called to do. He stated, “This synod is a generous synod; thank you for your generosity.” Bishop Dunlop encouraged members of the assembly to consider another gift during the last month of the campaign.

A video was shown documenting our synod’s ministry with youth and young adults. Charles R. Roberts, III, director of faith formation and youth ministry for the Lower Susquehanna Synod, narrated this video. He noted that we as a synod have been feeding others as we have been fed by Christ. We have been working with our youth and young adults coaching them on how to feed others, but also on how to be fed. As a synod, we have identified as our priorities the three “E’s”: equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission. Even before our synod identified these as our priorities, we have been practicing these priorities with our young people. They have practiced being leaders with their peers, and they have lived into their baptismal covenant, developing the gifts with which God has blessed them. Over 75% of the adults involved in our youth and family ministries have participated in these ministries as young people. Leadership Training Camp is the cornerstone of our ministries. It is where most of our young people discover their gifts for service and leadership. Some of these young people learned that they had gifts for rostered ministry. He cited as examples three pastors active in our synod’s leadership: the Rev. Jillian E. Riddle, the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, and the Rev. Jay W. Eckman. But others developed their gifts and are now council presidents, lay leaders, faithful parents, and good citizens advocating and working for justice and peace. They can remember the exact moment when they began to realize that God was calling them to use their gifts for the sake of the world. In order that this ministry can continue, Charlie Roberts asked the assembly participants to consider gifts to support our youth and family ministries. He thanked the assembly for their support.

The bishop asked the members of the assembly if there were any questions on these reports. There were none.

Bishop Dunlop honored Pastor McKee on the forty-fifth anniversary of his ordination and Pastor Richard E.T. Jorgensen Jr. on the thirtieth anniversary of his ordination. He presented them gifts on behalf of a grateful synod. The assembly responded with a standing ovation.

Pastor McKee said, “Thank you.” Pastor Jorgensen also expressed his appreciation and addressed the synod, finishing with the story from his ordination, how Bishop Lazareth gave him a Bible as Pastor Jorgensen knelt before him. Bishop Lazareth said to him, “I bet your knees are locked, hold onto the Bible and I will lift you up.” Pastor Jorgensen has always remembered how the Scripture has lifted him up. The assembly responded with applause.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES, AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS AND SYNODICAL UNITS

Bishop Dunlop announced that these reports are found in pages 901 through 1403 of the Bulletin of Reports. He asked the members of the assembly if there were any questions on these reports. There were no questions.

FOURTH BALLOT FOR BISHOP

Deacon Sue Rothmeyer assumed the chair for the fourth ballot for bishop. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop, the three nominees (plus ties for the third position) who received the most legal votes on the third ballot will appear on this ballot. On the fourth ballot, 60% of the legal votes cast are necessary for election. If there is no election, the names of the two persons (plus ties) who receive the most legal votes on the fourth ballot will appear on the fifth ballot.

Deacon Rothmeyer called upon Pastor Thomas McKee, synod secretary, to give an updated Credentials Report. The secretary reported that as of 8:00 a.m. when registration closed there were 587 voting members registered.
Deacon Rothmeyer asked Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to provide instructions about casting the fourth ballot.

Joseph Stepansky gave the following instructions concerning the fourth ballot.

a. Ballot 4 is an electronic ballot. Please have your voting device at the ready. But do NOT press any buttons until it is time. You must be on the first two levels of Parmer Hall to be sure your vote is transmitted correctly.

b. Please wait to vote until Deacon Rothmeyer calls for voting to begin.

c. Deacon Rothmeyer will call for a moment of prayer and reflection and tell you when you may begin voting.

d. When everyone has had opportunity to cast an electronic ballot, Deacon Rothmeyer will declare that the voting is closed. When she announces this, all voting machines will be turned off.

e. The results of Ballot 4 will be displayed on screen shortly after the voting is closed.

Deacon Rothmeyer thanked Joseph Stepansky, asked for any questions, and then called upon assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, to invoke the Holy Spirit. After this time of prayer, she announced that it was time to vote. After everyone had opportunity to cast their electronic ballot, Deacon Rothmeyer declared the fourth ballot for bishop to be closed.

Erik Teichmann, assembly musician, led the assembly in singing, “Spirit of the Living God.”

Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali, director for evangelical mission for new mission, oriented the assembly to Mission InSite, a digital tool to help congregations learn more about their communities, including trends for the future.

Our synod has subscribed to this service, and it is available to all our congregations after a leader has received training in it. Over 100 people in 80 congregations have been trained. Pastor Hope-Tringali asked all those who have received training to stand. The assembly greeted these individuals with applause. She invited anyone interested in learning more about this program to give her a call.

RESULTS OF THE FOURTH BALLOT FOR BISHOP

Deacon Rothmeyer asked Joseph Stepansky, chair of the Bishop’s Election Committee, to inform the assembly about the results of the fourth ballot.

Joseph Stepansky gave the following report of the fourth ballot.

The results of Ballot 4 are as follows:

- Total number of ballots cast: 496
- Total number of ballots required for election: 298 [60% of Total Legal]

The Rev. James S. Dunlop – 319
The Rev. Stephen R. Herr – 141
The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer – 36

Deacon Rothmeyer announced that based on the report of the fourth ballot, the Rev. James S. Dunlop has been reelected bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. The assembly received this announcement with a standing ovation.

Deacon Rothmeyer expressed her appreciation to all the nominees in this process. The assembly expressed its appreciation with applause. Deacon Rothmeyer invited the Rev. James S. Dunlop, reelected as bishop by this assembly, to come forward and address this assembly. The assembly greeted our reelected bishop with applause.

RESPONSE OF THE REELECTED BISHOP

Bishop Dunlop gave thanks be to God for the work of the Spirit. He jested that the Spirit could have worked a little faster. He expressed his thanks for all who responded to the call of the Holy Spirit. He said that he was humbled by the response of those who said that they were praying for him, who encouraged him along the way, and who expressed appreciation for his ministry as bishop and the hope that his ministry would continue. He stressed that our church is changing. We will need to face challenges that we have not faced before. But we know that our God is with us to help us face and overcome these challenges as we trust in the Spirit to guide us. He said that he truly believes that the church must be shaped as closely as possible by local congregations, our outposts for ministry.

Bishop Dunlop said that he has had to deal with many competing interests and many complex problems. He has had his share of travel and meetings. But he shared that he loves serving as bishop every day. “I love it because this is what I am called to do. This whole election process was a challenge to me because I could not fathom not doing this work that I believe God is calling on me to do.” Bishop Dunlop expressed his appreciation to the members of his staff, who sustain him and give him joy. He expressed his love and appreciation to the members of his family, who are a source of strength and joy. He said that few people understand the sacrifices that Connie has
made, except perhaps the spouses of other bishops. Finally, he praised God for the strength that comes only from God. Remembering the words of Emma Harner, he closed, by saying, “It is all about Jesus, Jesus, Jesus.” The assembly gave a standing ovation.

Deacon Rothmeyer returned the chair to Bishop Dunlop.

The bishop announced that lunch will be served in the Lottie Nelson Dining Room in the Eisenhower Conference Center. During lunch, there will be open spaces conversations in which voting members can participate. This afternoon’s session will begin at 1:30 in Parmer Hall.

Bishop Dunlop called upon Sister Dottie Almoney for the hymn and prayer before lunch.

Sister Dottie Almoney invited members of the United Lutheran Seminary to participate in this hymn and prayer time. Deacon Chelle Huth, Director of Lifelong Learning at the United Lutheran Seminary gave an update on the state of the United Lutheran Seminary. She expressed her appreciation to Bishop Dunlop for serving as acting president of the seminary at a critical time in its infancy. She noted that only Bishop Dunlop had the gifts needed to provide stability to this institution and that it was only because of Bishop Dunlop that the seminary is in such a healthy state now. Deacon Huth said that she now is assured that the seminary will continue and will move forward with its mission. She requested continued support for the seminary.

Deacon Chelle Huth led the assembly in prayer. After the prayer, the assembly sang “Let’s go down to pray,” accompanied by Erik Teichmann and his wife, the Rev. Sarah E. Teichmann, who identified as a sister and who is associate pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Lancaster.

The bishop thanked Sister Dottie Almoney, Deacon Chelle Huth, Erik Teichmann, and Pastor Sarah Teichmann for the hymn and prayer period. He declared that the assembly was in recess until 1:30 on Saturday afternoon, June 8, 2019.

The members of the assembly enjoyed lunch in the Lottie Nelson Dining Room.

SIXTH ASSEMBLY SESSION
Saturday afternoon, June 8, 2019

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, called to order the sixth assembly session of the thirty-second annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 8, 2019, in Parmer Hall of the Calvin and Janet High Center for Worship and Performing Arts of Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania.

Sister Dottie Almoney led the assembly in a time of hymn and prayer. She noted that the assembly has been in session for a long time, but holy work has been done. She prayed for safe travel and blessings upon Bishop Dunlop as he continues his ministry. After Sister Dottie led the assembly in prayer, the assembly sang “Be the Center,” accompanied by Erik Teichmann.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Sister Dottie Almoney and Erik Teichmann for this devotional time.

BIBLICAL STORYTELLING – Mark 8

Bishop Dunlop introduced to the assembly the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown. Pastor Seitz-Brown is a member of Synod Council and the interim pastor of Bender’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Biglerville, and St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Biglerville. He used Mark 8:14-21 as the basis of his presentation.

Bishop Dunlop thanked Pastor Seitz-Brown for sharing his gift of storytelling with the assembly. The assembly expressed its appreciation with applause.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to come before the assembly except the continuation of balloting for Synod Council and Discipline Committee and the Report of Synod Council – Constitution.

Bishop Dunlop called upon Sister Joy V. Hovis, chair of the Committee on Elections and interim at St. Luke Lutheran Church, New Bridgeville, to continue the balloting for Synod Council and Discipline Committee.

Sister Joy Hovis explained the balloting process to the assembly. Before balloting began, Bishop Dunlop called upon the assembly chaplain, Sister Dottie Almoney, to lead the assembly in prayers for discernment.
Sister Joy Hovis led the assembly through the balloting process.

**Synod Council – lay female**

- Ballots cast – 325
- Needed to elect – 164

- Meredith Killian Askey - 197
- Shirley McGowan - 114
- Gale W. du Pont - 73
- M. Jane Wigand - 110
- Debra K. Barrett - 150

Bishop Dunlop declared Meredith Killian Askey elected as a member of the Synod Council in the category of lay female. The second ballot will contain the names of Debra K. Barrett and Shirley McGowan.

**Second ballot – Synod Council – lay female**

- Ballots cast – 324
- Needed to elect – 163

- Debra K. Barrett – 230
- Shirley McGowan – 93

The bishop declared Debra K. Barrett elected as a member of Synod Council in the category of lay female. This ballot was closed.

**Synod Council – lay male**

- Ballots cast - 331
- Needed to elect – 167

- Dallas Joseph Barcliff Jr. - 208
- Allen Paul Stump - 123

The bishop declared Dallas Joseph Barcliff Jr. elected as a member of Synod Council in the category of lay male. This ballot was closed.

**Synod Council – young adult**

- Ballots cast – 326
- Needed to elect – 164

- Karl A. Segletes - 145
- Daniel P. Picone - 177

The bishop declared Daniel P. Picone elected as a member of the Synod Council in the category of young adult. This ballot was closed.

**Synod Council - youth**

- Ballots cast – 322
- Needed to elect – 162

- Theodore D. Wolfe - 205
- Hunter A. Nelson - 117

The bishop declared Theodore D. Wolfe elected as a member of the Synod Council in the category of youth. This ballot was closed.

**Discipline Committee - clergy**

- Ballots cast – 327
- Needed to elect – 165

- The Rev. Robert B. Ierien II - 104
- The Rev. Michael Cooper-White - 156
- The Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke - 197
- The Rev. Edward John Robbins - 73
- The Rev. Christopher A. Frye - 128

The bishop declared the Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke elected as member of the Discipline Committee in the category of clergy. The second ballot will contain the names of the Rev. Michael Cooper-White and the Rev. Christopher Frye.

**Second ballot – Discipline Committee – clergy**

- Ballots cast – 311
- Needed to elect - 157
Bishop Dunlop declared the Rev. Christopher A. Frye elected as a member of the Discipline Committee in the category of clergy. This ballot was closed.

**Discipline Committee - lay**

- Ballots cast – 322
- Needed to elect – 162

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eric H. Crump</td>
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<tr>
<td>Molly A. Wirick</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan R. Leedom</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evan P. Williams</td>
<td>160</td>
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Bishop Dunlop declared Molly A. Wirick elected as a member of the Discipline Committee in the category of lay. The second ballot will contain the names of Evan P. Williams and Eric H. Crump.

**Second ballot – Discipline Committee – lay**

- Ballots cast – 318
- Needed to elect – 160

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<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evan P. Williams</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric H. Crump</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bishop declared Evan P. Williams elected as a member of the Discipline Committee in the category of lay. This ballot was closed.

Sister Joy Hovis announced that this concludes the report of the Elections Committee. The assembly responded with applause.

Bishop Dunlop returned to the Report of Synod Council: Constitution Amendments. He asked Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman to return to her place at the podium. The following recommendation, Recommendation 10, was before the assembly.

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, meeting in assembly, adopt the proposed amendments to bylaws S11.01.02., S11.02.01., S12.02.01., and S12.03.01. of the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

S11.01.02.  
The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee shall be composed of 7 persons: the bishop and the treasurer of this synod and 5 members (one of whom shall be an attorney) appointed by the Synod Council. Three of the appointed members shall be lay voting members of congregations of this synod and 2 shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod. The committee shall administer the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The fund, established by the Synod Council, shall be supported by bequests, trusts, endowments, planned and deferred gifts, assets from closing congregations, gifts from merging and consolidating congregations, and gifts from other congregations, individuals, and entities. The committee, Synod Council, and bishop shall promote and encourage such gifts. The assets of the fund shall be invested in a manner consistent with the purpose of the fund.

The purpose of the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund shall be to provide initial funding support for the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries within the territory of this synod, such as funds to acquire sites and provide grants to congregations who have committed to specific plans to expand their ministries, and funds to provide grants to congregations who have elected to relocate or consolidate with other congregations. In addition to expenditures for the purposes described in this bylaw, the fund may make loans to congregations if, in the judgment of a majority of the committee, the purpose of the loan is consistent with the purpose described above and the loans are adequately secured. The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee may from time to time adopt rules and regulations governing administration of the fund, which rules and regulations shall at all times be consistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

S11.02.01.  
The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 6 10 persons.

S12.02.01.  
The boundaries and number of conferences shall be determined by the Synod Council by 1990 and thereafter at six-year intervals and reviewed at least every six years.

S12.03.01.  
Each conference shall hold an annual assembly of its rostered ministers and lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. This conference assembly shall be held within the sixty ninety days prior to the regular meeting of the
The vice president provided the assembly with the advice of the Constitution Committee. The constitution provision, S12.02, specifies that “Boundaries of conferences shall be determined by Synod Council.” Bylaws cannot be in contradiction to the constitution provision that precede them. The proposed amendment to bylaw S12.02.01., “The boundaries and number of conferences shall be reviewed by the Synod Council at least every six years, and any proposed changes be recommended to the Synod Assembly,” is in opposition to the constitutional provision that says, “Boundaries of conferences shall be determined by Synod Council.” Since the difficulty seems to be with the constitutional provision, there is nothing we can do to amend that provision this year. The Constitution Committee will continue to discuss this matter and will plan to bring recommendations to next year’s assembly.

Lucinda L. Bringman moved on behalf of the Constitution Committee

**ADOPTED:**  To delete action on S12.02.01. from Recommendation 10.

The amended Recommendation 10 was before the assembly.

**ADOPTED:**  That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, meeting in assembly, adopt the proposed amendments to bylaws S11.01.02., S11.02.01., and S12.03.01. of the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

S11.01.02.  The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee shall be composed of 7 persons: the bishop and the treasurer of this synod and 5 members (one of whom shall be an attorney) appointed by the Synod Council. Three of the appointed members shall be lay voting members of congregations of this synod and 2 shall be ministers of Word and Sacrament on the roster of this synod. The committee shall administer the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The fund, established by the Synod Council, shall be supported by bequests, trusts, endowments, planned and deferred gifts, assets from closing congregations, gifts from merging and consolidating congregations, and gifts from other congregations, individuals, and entities. The committee, Synod Council, and bishop shall promote and encourage such gifts. The assets of the fund shall be invested in a manner consistent with the purpose of the fund. The purpose of the Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund shall be to provide initial funding support for the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries within the territory of this synod, such as funds to acquire sites and provide grants to congregations who have committed to specific plans to expand their ministries, and funds to provide grants to congregations who have elected to relocate or consolidate with other congregations. In addition to expenditures for the purposes described in this bylaw, the fund may make loans to congregations if, in the judgment of a majority of the committee, the purpose of the loan is consistent with the purpose described above and the loans are adequately secured. The Bishop’s Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee may from time to time adopt rules and regulations governing administration of the fund, which rules and regulations shall at all times be consistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

S11.02.01.  The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 6 10 persons.

S12.03.01.  Each conference shall hold an annual assembly of its rostered ministers and lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. This conference assembly shall be held within the sixty ninety days prior to the regular meeting of the synod assembly. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing 14 days in advance. Those rostered ministers and lay voting members present shall constitute a quorum and be eligible to vote.

There were no other items of unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Sister Davia A. Evans, a member of the ELCA Deaconess Committee and of St. Matthias Lutheran Church, Carlisle, moved:

That the compensation for both rosters be the same.

Sister Davia Evans spoke to her motion. She said that having two different levels for compensating Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service is a remnant of a historic reality in our church: keeping women in their place and devaluing their work. It has been 50 years since women could be ordained in this church and its predecessor bodies. Before that women could only serve as deaconesses and as lay professionals. Lay professionals were mostly women, and therefore received a lower wage. They were doing important work, establishing hospitals, schools, nursing homes, but they were not compensated fairly for their ministries.
Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president and a member of St. James Lutheran Church, Gettysburg moved a substitute motion:

That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum salary for 2020 of $46,000 for Ministers of Word and Service who serve full time at the time of their consecration.

Lucinda L. Bringman spoke to her motion saying, that $46,000 would be a 7% increase in the beginning minimum salary for Ministers of Word and Service. She stated that she believes there is a need to move incrementally. Governor Wolf is encouraging setting the beginning salaries for teachers at $45,000. The vice president says that she intentionally has chosen to recommend a beginning salary higher than for teachers.

Bishop Dunlop informed the assembly that the discussion is to center on whether to substitute.

The Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke, intentional interim pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, York, spoke against the substitute motion. She stated that salaries are negotiable. There is no need to do this incrementally.

Sister Dottie Almoney, Director of Christian Education and Outreach, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Lancaster, said that we changed the titles of deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry to Ministers of Word and Service. Using the terms ministers for both pastors and deacons has helped to equalize the rosters. A Minister of Word and Service does the same work as a Minister of Word and Sacrament except a Minister of Word and Service does not preside over the Sacrament.

The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel, pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church, York, spoke in support of the substitution. The differential cost of the required education is not being taken into consideration.

Deacon Chelle Huth, Director of Lifelong Learning at the United Lutheran Seminary, countered that deacons still must have a master’s degree and they still need to go through candidacy. It is all about what we value. She said that we must remember these are guidelines, which make possible entering into a conversation about salaries.

Jennifer DeStephano, voting member of Christ Lutheran Church, Loganville, asked for a clarification of the educational requirements for a deacon. Sister Davia Evans responded by saying that Ministers of Word and Sacrament must have a Master of Divinity. A Minister of Word and Service must have a master’s degree in their specialty plus a master’s degree in religion, such as MAMS, M.Div., STM, or DMin.

The Rev. Lisa M. Leber, pastor of First Lutheran Church, Carlisle, expressed surprise at the beginning minimum salaries being referred to as just guidelines that can be negotiated. The bishop will not certify a call if the calling body does not meet the minimum salary guidelines.

The Rev. Wicky Barnes III, pastor of Shells Lutheran Church, Grantville, asked, “If the Churchwide Assembly votes to ordain deacons, will they be eligible for a housing allowance?” Bishop Dunlop reported that there is a ruling from the IRS that ordained deacons will not be eligible for a housing allowance.

Sister Davia A. Evans, member of St. Matthias Lutheran Church, Carlisle, asked, “How many deacons work with salaries below minimum guidelines?” Bishop Dunlop reported that that information was not readily available at assembly.

Wanda Baker, a voting member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Orrstown, offered that she has never gotten paid that kind of money as a teacher. At most, she received a two percent raise. Congregations would have a difficult time coming up with the money to support a seven percent raise.

Rachel Johnson, voting member of Zion Lutheran Church, Enola, asked, “If the IRS does not recommend giving a housing allowance to deacons, can the church do anything?” The vice president answered, housing needs are considered as part of the minimum salary guidelines, but deacons will not be able to claim the costs of their housing for tax purposes.

The Rev. Elaine Miller Dent, interim pastor at Garden of Grace Community of Churches, York Springs, spoke against the substitute motion. She said that she sees the need for the ministry of Word and Service. They are vital in connecting with the members of our congregations and our communities. They deserve equal compensation.

Daniel Bringman, voting member of St. James Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, moved:

**ADOPTED:** To call the previous question.

The motion to substitute was before the assembly.
ADOPTED: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum salary for 2020 of $46,000 for Ministers of Word and Service who serve full time at the time of their consecration.

165 – YES
135 – NO

The Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke, intentional interim pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, York, stated that the Lutheran Church confesses the priesthood of all believers. The ministries of Ministers of Word and Service are as valued as the ministries of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. She expressed concern that we continue to perpetuate the idea that Ministers of Word and Sacrament should be paid more than Ministers of Word and Service.

The Rev. William Snyder, Vice President of Philanthropy and Community Engagement for Luthercare, Lititz, asked, “Could we refer this matter back to the Compensation and Benefits Committee for a total review of this whole issue?” Bishop Dunlop said that we are dealing with a motion on the floor. If we would refer to the Compensation and Benefits Committee at this time, there would be no action on this motion and the beginning minimum salary for deacons would remain at the 2019 level. After we have decided the beginning minimum salary for deacons, a motion to refer the discussion of equal compensation for deacons and pastors to the Compensation and Benefits Committee would be in order.

The Rev. James D. Polanzke, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Spry, York, proposed making a friendly amendment to increase incrementally the beginning minimum salary for deacons until their beginning minimum salary is equal with pastors for whom no housing is provided. Lucinda L. Bringman said that there are no such things as friendly amendments, and, if there were, she would not agree with the proposed one.

Rick Heineman, voting member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hametown, asked how many deacons are under call. Secretary McKee answered 16. There are several others who are on retired status but who are working under contract.

Sister Davia A. Evans, member of the Deaconess Community and St. Matthias Lutheran Church, Carlisle, said that she will support this motion if this is the best that the assembly can do.

The Rev. Becca M. Ajer Frantz, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Littlestown, reminded that assembly that, if this is not passed, there would be no recommended pay increase for Ministers of Word and Service.

Mr. Robert Walton, voting member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Lancaster, introduced the concept of income parity.

The Rev. Jonathan L. Jenkins, pastor of St. Michael Lutheran Church, Klingerstown, and Zion Lutheran Church, Erdman, moved:

ADOPTED: To call the previous question.

The assembly voted on the motion before the house.

ADOPTED: That the Lower Susquehanna Synod, in assembly, adopt the beginning minimum salary for 2020 of $46,000 for Ministers of Word and Service who serve full time at the time of their consecration.

Bishop Dunlop called upon Pastor William Snyder. Pastor Snyder said that he has decided not to move to commend the discussion of equalization of minimum salaries to the Compensation and Benefits Committee at this time.

There was no other new business to come before the assembly.

INSTALLATION OF NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF SYNOD COUNCIL, DEANS, AND SECRETARIES


Bishop Dunlop read to them from Romans 12:4-8, questioned them about their willingness to assume the office to which they had been elected, and conferred the office of Synod Council member, conference dean, or conference secretary upon them.
The assembly responded with applause.

ORDER FOR THE SENDING OF THE VOTING MEMBERS OF THE 2019 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY


Bishop Dunlop led the Order for the Sending of the Voting Members of the 2019 Churchwide Assembly, leading the assembly in intercessions for those serving as voting members of the Churchwide Assembly from the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Following the order for sending, the assembly showed their support for and appreciation of our churchwide voting members with applause.

BISHOP’S CONCLUDING REMARKS

Bishop James S. Dunlop addressed the assembly. Bishop Dunlop expressed his appreciation to: Messiah College, especially its Events and Technical staff for all their help and cooperation; Sister Dottie Almoney and Erik Teichmann for the spiritual leadership they provided; Deacon Sue E. Rothmeyer for leading us gracefully through the election process for bishop; the members of the Committee on Memorials and the Committee of Reference and Counsel; Joseph Ricci, our parliamentarian; the members of the Worship Committee and all those who participated in our worship experiences; Byron Borger and Hearts and Minds Bookstore for providing such a host of resources; those ministries that provided displays; the members of the Synod Council; Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson and the members of the Assembly Planning Committee; the synod staff, Cathy Deitrich, Cathy Paul, Denise Ferguson, and Marty Shifflett; Debbie Clark; Charlie Roberts and the pages; Pastor Richard Jorgensen, Pastor Rob Blezard, Pastor Beth Martini, and Pastor Sharron Blezard, for whom he commended prayers for remission; Deacon Marsha Roscoe, the person to whom the bishop looks to for advice and direction; and the team of officers of which he is blessed to be part, Pastor Thomas McKee, Lucinda Bringman, and Joseph Stepansky.

He announced that one thing that he can say is that the assembly will be different next year as it has been different each year. He urged assembly registrants to fill out the survey that will help us plan next year’s assembly.

Our synod continues to be a place where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ. After last assembly, Mikka S.J. McCracken wrote saying that there is no other synod that embodies its mission as the Lower Susquehanna Synod. We are cooperating with the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania in new ways. We are working for full inclusion of all people. We welcome all because God welcomes all. We need to be the full embodiment of the body of Christ. Bishop Dunlop thanked Pastor Brian A. McClinton for reminding us of that during his speech. Our synod needs to be a place of innovation. We must become nimble. Change is happening rapidly in the world and we must keep up with those changes. The bishop showed a video showing the time it took to change a tire in 1950 at the Indy 500 and the time it takes to change a tire today.

Bishop Dunlop thanked the assembly for their vote of confidence. He announced that he is not done. He lifted up the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund and made an appeal to receive $150,000 in additional funds for this fund before the next assembly. He thanked the members of our synod for their time, commitment, and money.

At the end of the bishop’s remarks, the assembly responded with applause.

The Rev. David W. Clark, retired serving St. Mark Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Lower Bermudian Lutheran Church, East Berlin, Upper Bermudian Lutheran Church, Gardners, and Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Gardners, asked if the handout highlighting our youth ministry was distributed. Charlie Roberts replied that it was distributed. Additional copies may be picked up at the pages table.

RITE OF AFFIRMATION

Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, led the assembly in the Rite of Affirmation for the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

The assembly showed its approval of this affirmation of Bishop Dunlop with a standing ovation.

ORDER FOR THE CLOSING OF THE ASSEMBLY

Bishop James S. Dunlop led the assembly in the Order for the Closing of the Assembly.
During the order, Bishop Dunlop installed the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel as secretary of our synod. The assembly responded to her installation with applause.

The Order for the Closing of the Assembly continued with prayers for safe travel and happy homecomings.

At the end of the order, Bishop Dunlop declared the Thirty-Second Annual Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod closed. The assembly responded with applause.

**REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL**

Following the sixth assembly meeting, the members of the Synod Council met for its reorganizational meeting. The Synod Council elected the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer as vice chair of Synod Council and the Rev. Matthew B. Best and Jennifer R. Lau as members at large of the Synod Council Executive Committee.

**REPORT ON THE ASSEMBLY OFFERING**

The total offering received at the assembly was $4,463.06. The offering was equally divided: $2,231.53 for the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund and $2,231.53 for the Konde Medical Needs Task Force toward the purchase of a new institutional washing machine for the Itete Hospital.

**REPORT ON ATTENDANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordained voting members</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Including 66 retired ordained ministers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay voting members</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Including 17 deacons, two officers, and nine lay members of Synod Council)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Voting Members</td>
<td>587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL ATTENDANCE** 671

Approved by:

James S. Dunlop, bishop

Thomas E. McKee, secretary
BULLETIN OF REPORTS

Thirty-Second Annual Assembly
Lower Susquehanna Synod

June 6 - 8, 2019

Messiah College in Grantham, PA

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God’s work. Our hands.
REPORT OF THE BISHOP

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. (Rom. 5:1-2 NRSV)

Vision
Where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ.
We do this by equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission. This vision statement, that we developed in 2015, continues to guide the work of our Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Listening
An important responsibility of the office of bishop is to be in conversation and to listen to the people of our congregations, rostered ministers and laity in our congregations, and people from our neighborhoods and communities. It can be time consuming; however, it is enlightening to hear what is happening in our congregations. I continue to visit congregations each and every week. I have been in over 80 percent of our congregations in the last five years.

We conducted listening sessions throughout the synod a year ago, and last fall I met with all our rostered ministers who are 45 years of age and under. These are the people who will be leading our church for the next several decades. People are always honest about their concerns, and this is helpful in our ministry. At the same time these meetings are uplifting because of the hope that we share in the grace of God.

Equipping Leaders
Programs that we conduct in leadership development of our young people, our camping ministries, and our shared ministry with roster candidates and the seminary are all ways that we work to develop new leaders. In the last several years we have through concerted efforts increased the number of people discerning candidacy by 400 percent. We are very heartened by the number of people discerning ministry in the church. This is a sign of health in our synod. This will continue to be a priority as we see a significant number of our current rostered ministers retiring. There were 17 retirements last year and an additional 12 retirements since our last assembly.

We also work with our current leadership to encourage ongoing formation. We do this through our partnership with the seminary as well as the Stevenson School for Ministry of the Episcopal Church of Central Pennsylvania. Our relationship is expanding with the Episcopal Church in this area as we are working to develop a collaborative mission center that responds to the urgent and practical realities of ministry through spiritual training and essential ministry tools that keep Christ at the center of mission and ministry. To help us live into this vision, we have applied for a Lilly Endowment grant which seeks to equip more than 100 leaders for collaborative, innovative ministry over the next five years. In addition, we have partnered with the Stevenson School For Ministry as the online learning platform for our newly launching Certificate in Missional Preaching. Kicking off this fall beginning with Bishop’s Convocation, through a series of retreats, webinars, and cohort gatherings, each participant will grow by listening and reflecting in community. Designed to engage the entire congregation or ministry context, the certificate program draws from the wisdom of the Rev. Paul Scott Wilson, Professor of Homiletics from the University of Toronto. This will be a way that we will focus on one of the priorities that we heard in our listening sessions by strengthening the preaching in our synod.

We continue to support our rostered ministers and laity by hosting the Healthy Leaders’ Retreat. This event which we have sponsored for a number of years has allowed our rostered ministers, lay leaders, and spouses to gather in retreat to enjoy fellowship and learning opportunities. We know that healthy leaders mean healthy congregations.

We continue to put a strong focus on the mobility process for finding calls for our rostered ministers. We work with congregations in developing profiles and finding candidates to meet their needs. We have put emphasis on making these processes as efficient as possible. Over the last five years, we have reduced by one-half the average time taken to fill an open call to a congregation. We have in the last five years processed about fifty percent of the calls in the synod.

Encouraging Cooperation
We continue to work with congregations throughout our synod in finding ways to strengthen our mission together. New cooperative ministry and sharing of staffs in changing times are being imagined constantly. We have also witnessed new ways of cooperation in the R3 initiative when congregations have joined together in cohort groups to support one another in new mission opportunities.

We continue to strengthen our ecumenical cooperation with the Episcopal Church. We are collaborating on continuing education efforts, working together to obtain grants for new programs, and inviting Episcopal congregations to participate in the next round of R3. We are also engaging the Upper Susquehanna Synod congregations in the opportunity to participate in the R3 initiative.

We continue to be active in the wider church. You have enabled me to serve on the Entrance Rite Discernment Group, who will make recommendations to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly on the Word and Service roster of the ELCA. I have also participated in the Corporate Social Responsibility Group, who reviews and implements the social screens for investments of the ELCA and Portico. We
are also participating with the approval of the ELCA Church Council in an experiment to reallocate Mission Support to strengthen mission growth in five synods. Beyond our leadership in the ELCA, we continue our long-standing relationship with the Konde Diocese of the Lutheran Church in Tanzania. This relationship continues to inform our congregations of the dynamic force that the Lutheran Church is for proclaiming the gospel in Africa.

Engaging in New Mission
The first round of R3 (reFORM + reNEW + reVISION), an 18-month coaching process engaging 23 congregations with the energy, ideas, and tools they need to renew their mission to God’s people, completed its 18-month program. I had the opportunity to attend the training event in March and heard many powerful stories from the congregations that participated. New excitement and growth for their renewal of mission was hopeful. It is clear the R3 initiative was not the conclusion; it was the beginning of applying new gifts to continue to strengthen the mission and ministry of these congregations. This model of renewal has been lifted in the ELCA as an example of how renewal can be done. We will begin the next round of R3 this fall. The strengthening and renewal of our mission in the congregations is the most important work we do together as synod.

We continue to look at new mission opportunities. Communities of Hope, a new mission start in Harrisburg, continues to expand with additional worshiping sites. Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali has turned this community over to new pastoral leadership, Pastor Jennifer Richards. Pastor Hope-Tringali has been working with congregation leaders throughout the synod using a demographic tool, Mission-Insite, which helps congregations understand the demographics of their neighborhoods in order to create mission objectives based on their neighbors. This has been helpful in establishing clear mission goals.

Administration
We continue to work to be the best stewards of the resources that are shared with us. We continue to reduce staff in light of the current realities. Last year we operated the synod at $39,000 surplus, which allowed us to strengthen our financial reserves. Mission Support was $177,000 under the budget forecast, and we were able to reduce operating expenses by over $200,000 from the budget, a 7.5% reduction.

An important aspect of the ministry of the office of the bishop is to address any alleged misconduct situations by our rostered ministers. Sadly, no organization is immune from misconduct. The critical issue is for us to deal with these situations with integrity and transparency as appropriate. We must hold our leaders accountable and protect the vulnerable and offer contrition and care for those who have been harmed.

I give thanks for the staff that supports the work that we do in our Lower Susquehanna Synod. We have one of the most gifted synod staffs in the ELCA. We had significant staffing changes in the treasurer’s office in the last year and a half. Led by the Treasurer Joe Stepansky, the staff of Denise Ferguson and Cathy Paul have streamlined many aspects of our financial responsibilities. This has led our staff to better manage our resources.

The support staff of Cathy Dietrich and Marty Shifflett handles thousands of details from our resource center, supply pastors, mobility, event planning and, of course, the assembly. The program staff including Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Charlie Roberts, Deborah Clark, the Assistants to the Bishop: Pastor Tom McKee, Pastor Rob Blezard, and Pastor Beth Martini, and Directors for Evangelical Mission: Pastor Richard Jorgensen and Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali, are essential to the programs and care that the Office of the Bishop provides to our congregations and rostered ministers.

We have had staffing changes in this year with Pastor Sharron Blezard gong on a medical leave. We are blessed that Pastor Beth Martini was willing to step in on a part-time basis to help fill this staffing gap. In addition, Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali will be moving this summer to Guatemala to oversee the new school being built there, Hope Academy. This has been a calling for Pastor Jenn, and we wish her God’s blessing on her endeavor to develop this school for girls in one of the poorest countries in Central America. Finally, Pastor Tom McKee will be retiring this year as he completes his term as Synod Secretary. Tom has been a constant presence in this synod and a blessing to me, as bishop, over my first six years in this office. His leadership will be deeply missed.

In addition to the staff, we are blessed with outstanding officers: Vice President Lucinda Bringman, Secretary Tom McKee, and Treasurer Joe Stepansky. They are committed faithful servants in these roles. I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve alongside of them in this ministry.

God’s peace be with you.

†The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop
HONOR ROLL - 2019
Rostered Fifty Years or More

1945:  The Rev. Howard J. McCarney
1947:  The Rev. Arthur L. Ruths
1948:  The Rev. Howard W. Hinkeldey
1952:  The Rev. Philip S. Lambdin
      The Rev. Peter W. F. Nodyne
      The Rev. Kenneth C. Senft
1953:  The Rev. C. Roger Burkins
      The Rev. Sterlen S. Sheaffer
1945:  The Rev. Howard J. McCarney
1947:  The Rev. Arthur L. Ruths
1948:  The Rev. Howard W. Hinkeldey
1952:  The Rev. Philip S. Lambdin
      The Rev. Peter W. F. Nodyne
      The Rev. Kenneth C. Senft
1953:  The Rev. C. Roger Burkins
      The Rev. Sterlen S. Sheaffer
1945:  The Rev. Howard J. McCarney
1947:  The Rev. Arthur L. Ruths
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      The Rev. Kenneth C. Senft
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1952:  The Rev. Philip S. Lambdin
      The Rev. Peter W. F. Nodyne
      The Rev. Kenneth C. Senft
1953:  The Rev. C. Roger Burkins
      The Rev. Sterlen S. Sheaffer

ANNIVERSARY OF ROSTERING – 2019

1974 – 45 years:
  The Rev. Walter D. Carlson
  The Rev. Steven D. Dorsett
  The Rev. J. Richard Eckert
  The Rev. Robert S. McEllroy III
  The Rev. Judith A. McKee
  The Rev. Thomas E. McKee
  The Rev. John D. Merkel
  The Rev. Jeffrey H. Pretz
1974 – 45 years:
  The Rev. Walter D. Carlson
  The Rev. Steven D. Dorsett
  The Rev. J. Richard Eckert
  The Rev. Robert S. McEllroy III
  The Rev. Judith A. McKee
  The Rev. Thomas E. McKee
  The Rev. John D. Merkel
  The Rev. Jeffrey H. Pretz

1979 – 40 years:
  The Rev. Henry E. Herbener
  The Rev. David D. Kreider
1984 – 35 years:
Deacon June W. Albers
The Rev. Steven R. Bowser
Sister Phyllis J. Enck
The Rev. Carol S. Hendrix
The Rev. Martin H. Horn
The Rev. Robert W. Moore
The Rev. Kevin T. Shively
The Rev. Richard A. Whitesel

1989 – 30 years:
Deacon Janice M. Davis
The Rev. Linda L. Hostetter
The Rev. Janyce C. Jorgensen
The Rev. Brenda M. Ritterpusch
The Rev. Mark L. Russell
The Rev. Stephen P. Verkouw

1994 – 25 years:
The Rev. Sandra L. Gideon
The Rev. Stephen R. Herr
The Rev. Kathleen A. Kuehl
The Rev. Miriam L. Nicholson
The Rev. Patrick J. Rooney
The Rev. LaDonna E. Thomas
The Rev. Nancy J. Werner

1999 – 20 years:
The Rev. Margareta M. Breden
The Rev. Marleen E. Griffith-Stull
The Rev. Dione M. Klepetka
The Rev. Timothy W. Sadler

2004 – 15 years:
The Rev. Cindy A. Brommer
The Rev. Elizabeth D. George
The Rev. Robert B. Ierien III
The Rev. Mark S. Kopp
The Rev. Robert A. Kramer
The Rev. Michael L. Reist

2009 – 10 years:
The Rev. Barbara A. Barry
The Rev. Shawn M. Berkebile
The Rev. Jeffrey H. Goodman
Deacon Emily Renee Myallis
The Rev. Darcy M. Reis
The Rev. Kathryn A. Schroeder

2014 – 5 years:
The Rev. Rebecca M. Ajer Frantz
Sister Dorothy K. Almoney
The Rev. Laura L. Haupt
The Rev. Nancy W. Knol
The Rev. Dennis J. Probst
The Rev. Ursula E. Schreffler
The Rev. David E. Sensenig
The Rev. Ben W. Siebert

IN MEMORIAM

Sister Sandra E. Lehr…………………………….. Denver, PA
August 27, 2018
The Rev. George H. DeFrehn……………….. Mechanicsburg, PA
November 30, 2018

The Rev. Leonard E. Shertzer………………… York, PA
October 23, 2018
The Rev. Kenneth G. Swick…………………. Wachapreague, VA
February 17, 2019

The Rev. William A. Martin…………………. Ephrata, PA
October 28, 2018
The Rev. Donald R. Gallion…………………. Mechanicsburg, PA
March 30, 2019

ROSTERED MINISTERS RETIRED

The Rev. Nancy W. Knol……………………….. June 15, 2018
The Rev. Robert M. Lescallette………………September 1, 2018

The Rev. Mary Josita Silliker………………….. June 15, 2018
The Rev. David D. Kreider…………………. September 5, 2018

The Rev. Daniel M. Long…………………. June 30, 2018
The Rev. Joseph A. Veres…………………. October 1, 2018

The Rev. Michael L. Seifried………………….. June 30, 2018
The Rev. Mary-Margaret O. Ruth…………….November 1, 2018

The Rev. Parris C. Beckhardt………………….. July 1, 2018
The Rev. Daniel V. Biles III…………………. January 1, 2019

The Rev. Robert W. Lowden………………….. July 15, 2018
The Rev. Brenda M. Ritterpusch……………March 5, 2019
### ORDINATIONS/CONSECRATIONS

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<th>NAME</th>
<th>CALL</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costen, Ronald A.</td>
<td>Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Messiah College Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Ordination June 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frey, Elizabeth E.</td>
<td>Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Camp Hill, PA</td>
<td>Messiah College Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Ordination June 1, 2018</td>
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<td>Hope-Tringali, David A.</td>
<td>Harrisburg Area Youth Initiative, The Tribe, and Harrisburg Community Experiencing Homelessness Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Messiah College Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Consecration June 1, 2018</td>
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<td>Barnes, Wicky L. III</td>
<td>Shells Evangelical Lutheran Church Grantville, PA</td>
<td>Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lebanon, PA</td>
<td>Ordination February 17, 2019</td>
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<td>Becklin, Hans E.</td>
<td>Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kissel Hill Lititz, PA</td>
<td>Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lebanon, PA</td>
<td>Ordination February 17, 2019</td>
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### ROSTERED PERSONS TRANSFERRING TO THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

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<tr>
<td>Probst, Dennis J.</td>
<td>West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod</td>
<td>June 4, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warn, Kathryn L.</td>
<td>Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod</td>
<td>June 11, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darr, Thomas E.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>July 1, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldenborg, Mark W.</td>
<td>Upstate New York Synod</td>
<td>July 13, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larson, Karen E.</td>
<td>Delaware-Maryland Synod</td>
<td>July 16, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baxter, Cynthia K.</td>
<td>Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>August 22, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerchoff, Robert A.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>October 19, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stuckey, Gene R. Sr.</td>
<td>Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>January 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reist, Michael L.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>April 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goodyear, James L. Jr.</td>
<td>Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>April 8, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rabbe, Carl P.</td>
<td>Metropolitan Chicago Synod</td>
<td>April 11, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitch, Andrew S.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>May 29, 2019</td>
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### ROSTERED PERSONS TRANSFERRING FROM THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

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<th>DATE OF TRANSFER</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strek, Gerald P.</td>
<td>Virginia Synod</td>
<td>June 14, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuebler, Jean N.</td>
<td>Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>July 9, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoffman, Robert J.</td>
<td>Florida-Bahamas Synod</td>
<td>September 1, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison, Neil P.</td>
<td>Southeastern Iowa Synod</td>
<td>October 15, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly, Sharon F.</td>
<td>South-Central Synod of Wisconsin</td>
<td>December 9, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petresky, Michael T.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>January 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veres, Joseph A.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>February 6, 2019</td>
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### ROSTER CHANGES

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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Eric N.</td>
<td>Mechanicsburg, St. Mark</td>
<td>Halifax, Messiah and St. Peter</td>
<td>January 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnes, Wicky Ludwig III</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Grantville, Shells</td>
<td>February 17, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baxter, Cynthia K.</td>
<td>Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>York, SpiriTrust Lutheran</td>
<td>August 22, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baxter, Cynthia K.</td>
<td>York, SpiriTrust Lutheran</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>February 8, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckhardt, Parris C.</td>
<td>Newmanstown, Millcreek</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>July 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becklin, Hans Eric</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Lititz, Salem (Kissel Hill)</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biles, Daniel V. III</td>
<td>York, Advent</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>January 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blezard, Sharron R.</td>
<td>Assistant to the Bishop</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowlan, Alison Schmidt</td>
<td>Lititz, Salem</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>July 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowlan, Alison Schmidt</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Spring Grove, St. Paul</td>
<td>August 24, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnes, Pamela J.</td>
<td>Harrisburg, Zion (Penbrook)</td>
<td>Harrisburg, Good Shepherd (term call)</td>
<td>September 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnes, Pamela J.</td>
<td>Harrisburg, Good Shepherd</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>March 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarke, Titus D.</td>
<td>York, St. Mark</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>December 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Synod</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darr, Thomas E.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>East Earl, St. John Center</td>
<td>July 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>DeFrehn, George H.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>November 30, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitch, Andrew S.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>Lewisberry, Mount Zion (Cedar Point)</td>
<td>May 29, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frey, Elizabeth E.</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Camp Hill, Trinity</td>
<td>June 24, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gallion, Donald R.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>March 30, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goodyear, James L. Jr.</td>
<td>Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>Ephrata, Bergstrasse</td>
<td>April 8, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Griffith-Stull, Marleen E.</td>
<td>Mercersburg, St. John</td>
<td>Mechanicsburg, St. Mark</td>
<td>January 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harrison, Neil P.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Southeastern Iowa Synod</td>
<td>October 15, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoffman, Robert J.</td>
<td>Lebanon, St. Matthew</td>
<td>Florida-Bahamas Synod</td>
<td>September 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly, Sharon F.</td>
<td>Chambersburg, Trinity</td>
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<td>October 1, 2018</td>
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<td>Kelly, Sharon F.</td>
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<td>South-Central Synod of Wisconsin</td>
<td>December 9, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerchoff, Robert A.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>October 19, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knol, Nancy W.</td>
<td>Liverpool, St. John (Barner's)</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>June 15, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kreider, David D.</td>
<td>Lancaster, Redeemer</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>September 5, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuebler, Jean N.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>July 9, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuehl, Kathleen A.</td>
<td>Brogue, St. James; Felton, St. Paul (Lebanon) - synod admin.</td>
<td>Brogue, St. James; Felton, St. Paul (Lebanon) - regularized call</td>
<td>January 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Largen, John G.</td>
<td>ULS - Contextual Formation Dir. and Adjunct Instructor</td>
<td>ULS - Dean of the Chapel</td>
<td>July 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larson, Karen E.</td>
<td>Delaware-Maryland Synod</td>
<td>Leola, Zion</td>
<td>July 16, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leese, Abigail C.</td>
<td>Etters, Zion</td>
<td>Dover, Calvary Evangelical</td>
<td>April 22, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leese, Benjamin E.</td>
<td>Garden of Grace Community of Churches - Chestnut Grove, St. John's, St. Paul's, Holy Trinity</td>
<td>Resigned from ELCA Roster</td>
<td>February 22, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<td>Lehr, Sandra E.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>East Petersburg, Zion</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lescallette, Robert M.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Maytown, St. John</td>
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<td>Long, Daniel M.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>East Petersburg, Zion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowden, Janice Marie</td>
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<td>Landisville, Zion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowden, Robert W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin, William A.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martini, Elizabeth G.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call - Family Leave</td>
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<td>Assistant to the Bishop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentzer, Constance L.</td>
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<td>Moore, Robert W.</td>
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<td>Oldenburg, Mark W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petresky, Michael T.</td>
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<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polanzke, Elizabeth</td>
<td>ELCA Foundation</td>
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<td>On Leave From Call</td>
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<td>Polanzke, Elizabeth</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td></td>
<td>York, St. Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probst, Dennis J.</td>
<td>West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod</td>
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<td>McKnightstown, Flohr's</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rabbe, Carl P.</td>
<td>Metropolitan Chicago Synod</td>
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<td>Palm, Palmyra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reist, Michael L.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
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<td>Annville, St. Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richards, Jennifer H.</td>
<td>Lebanon, Lebanon Lutheran Cooperative Ministry</td>
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<td>Harrisburg, Communities of Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ritterpusch, Brenda M.</td>
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<td>Retirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruth, Mary-Margaret O.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Retirement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sadler, Timothy W.</td>
<td>Wyomissing, Heartland Hospice</td>
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<td>Lancaster, Hospice and Community Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>RETIREMENT LOCATION</td>
<td>RETIREMENT DETAIL</td>
<td>DATE</td>
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<td>Seifried, Michael L.</td>
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<td>Shertz, Leonard E.</td>
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<td>October 23, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silliker, Mary Josita</td>
<td>Harrisburg, Christ</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>June 15, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith, Aaron T.</td>
<td>East Berlin, Trinity</td>
<td>Chambersburg, Trinity</td>
<td>October 1, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stockstill, Andrew</td>
<td>Harrisburg, Christ</td>
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<td>July 8, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strek, Gerald P.</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>Virginia Synod - retired</td>
<td>June 14, 2018</td>
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<td>Stuckey, Gene R. Sr.</td>
<td>Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod - retired</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>January 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swick, Kenneth G.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>February 17, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veres, Joseph A.</td>
<td>Denver, Faith United</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>October 1, 2018</td>
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<td>Veres, Joseph A.</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod - retired</td>
<td>February 6, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warn, Kathryn L.</td>
<td>Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod</td>
<td>Manheim, Zion</td>
<td>June 11, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeiser, Daniel M.</td>
<td>Hanover, St. Matthew</td>
<td>Lancaster, Redeemer</td>
<td>October 1, 2018</td>
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### CONGREGATION CHANGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DISSOLVED/REMOVED/CONSOLIDATION/DISBANDED/TRANSFERRED/MERGER/RECEIVED</th>
<th>TO</th>
<th>EFFECTIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zion (Penbrook) Lutheran Church (#01115) Harrisburg, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Merger</td>
<td>Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (#01104) Harrisburg, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>September 1, 2018</td>
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</table>
2019 – ORDAINED FIFTY YEARS

The Reverend George William Fitch Jr., a son of the late George William and Alverta B. Fitch was born on July 16, 1942, at Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained by the Maryland Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, on September 24, 1969, at St. John Lutheran Church, Parkville, Baltimore, Maryland, while a member of St. John Lutheran Church, Parkville, Baltimore, Maryland.

Pastor Fitch graduated from Parkville Senior High School, Parkville, Baltimore, Maryland, in 1960; from Baltimore Junior College, Baltimore, Maryland, with an associate of arts degree, in 1963; from the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1965; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a master of divinity degree, in 1969; and from Loyola College of Baltimore, Columbia, Maryland, with a master of science degree in counseling, in 1989.

Pastor Fitch served as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jefferson, Maryland, 1969-1973; Evangelical Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Lansdowne, Maryland, 1974-1979; St. Mark Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1980-1990; and St. James Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, from 1990 until he retired in 2004. He has been certified as an intentional interim pastor by the Interim Ministry Network. In retirement, he served as intentional interim pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hametown, Pennsylvania. He is a member of Union Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, where he has sung with the choir and preaches and presides at the invitation of the pastor. He handcrafted the congregation’s beautiful free-standing altar. He has served as a volunteer for relief efforts in Biloxi, Mississippi, and with Habitat for Humanity.

Pastor Fitch served as a member of the Agenda Planning Committee and the Goals Task Force for the Baltimore Council for Mission; a member of the Reformation Service Planning Committee and the Spiritual Retreat Committee for the Baltimore West Quadrant; and a member of the Love Compels Action Committee, the Parish Education Committee, the Urban Mission Development Task Force, and the Synodical Town and Country Task Force of the Maryland Synod. Pastor Fitch served as dean of the York Conference. He was a facilitator for Lutheran Social Service’s Advance Program and for the York Conference’s Workshop on Marriage Preparation for Engaged Couples. He volunteered as a York Hospital Night Chaplain and was a member of the Clergy Committee on Domestic Violence for Access York. He is interested in trains, model and real, and was the first president of the Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad Preservation and Historical Society. He served on the board of Baltimore County Committee on Aging and Southwestern Mental Health Association. He was a member of the Colonial Park Ministerium and the Susquehanna Township High School Music Boosters. He was certified in the Word and Witness Program and as a Pastoral Mission Developer. He enjoys wood-working and remodeling.

On June 27, 1964, at St. John Lutheran Church, Parkville, Baltimore, Maryland, he married the former Janet McAllen. Their union has been blessed with three children: Kathryn Susann, 1969; Michael James, 1970; and (the Rev.) Andrew Stephen, 1971.

The Reverend Charles H. Lisse, a son of William G. and Alice M. (Sharp) Lisse, was born on September 7, 1942, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America on June 12, 1969, at Weber Chapel and Auditorium, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, while a member of Lakeside Lutheran Church, Harrisburg.

Pastor Lisse graduated from William Penn High School, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1964; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a master of divinity degree, in 1969.


Pastor Lisse served as Director of Maryland Synod Music and Worship Camp for four summers; Convener of Recruitment and Interpretation Group of the Metropolitan New York Synod’s Personnel Commission; and member of the Special Needs Task Force and the Konde Diocese Committee of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

The Rev. E. Gordon Ross, a son of Ellis G. and Susan M. J. (Watts) Ross, was born on October 6, 1937, at St. John, New Brunswick, Canada. He was ordained on May 19, 1969, at Bloomington, Indiana, by the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, while a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Muncie, Indiana.

Pastor Ross graduated from St. John High School, St. John, New Brunswick, Canada in 1955; from Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1959; from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, with a master of divinity degree, in 1963; from Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana, with a master of sacred theology, in 1965; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a doctor of ministry, in 1979; and from the Graduate Theological Foundation, Mishawaka, Indiana, with a doctor of philosophy degree, in 1996.

Pastor Ross served as pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Napoleon, Indiana, 1969-1972; Zion Lutheran Church, Turbotville, Pennsylvania, 1972-1976; First Lutheran Church, Louisville, Kentucky, 1976-1977; St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, 1977-1985; and St. Matthew Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, from 1985 until he retired in 2001. In retirement, he has served on the pastoral staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and as interim pastor of St. John (Sadler’s) Lutheran Church, Stewartstown, where he is a member as well as serving as interim pastor of St. James Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania. He currently serves as stated supply pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Ross is a member of the International Society of Theta Phi and the Lutheran Society for Worship, Music, and the Arts. He has authored The Christian Life Is a Daily Baptism. He served as dean of the Batesville District, the Milton District, and the Bloomsburg District. He is a member of the Commission on the Ministry, the Committee of Professional Preparation, the Joint Planning Committee for Lutheran Parishes, the Youth Ministry Committee, and the Parish Life Committee of the Central Pennsylvania Synod. He has been a member of a local ministeria. He has led spiritual growth workshops and retreats. He is an oblate of St. Benedict, Mt. Savior Monastery, Elmira, New York.

On June 2, 1959, at Cranston, Rhode Island, he married Jean C. Ross. Their union was blessed with four children: Rick, 1961; the late Mark, 1962; Jana, 1964; and David, 1968.

The Reverend Daniel M. Shutters, son of the Reverend Malcolm and Janet Shutters, was born on October 17, 1942, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and was baptized on November 1, 1942. He was ordained on June 8, 1969, at Rock Island, Illinois, by the Illinois Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, while a member of Wicker Park Lutheran Church, Chicago, Illinois.

Pastor Shutters graduated from Tuley High School, Chicago, Illinois, in 1960; from North Park College, Chicago, Illinois, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1965; and from Waterloo Seminary, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, with a master of divinity degree, in 1969.

Pastor Shutters served as assistant pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Warren, Ohio, 1969-1971; pastor of St. John Lutheran Church, Steelton, Pennsylvania, 1971-1978; pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Dauphin, Pennsylvania, 1978-1988; pastor of St. Christopher Lutheran Church, Lykens, Pennsylvania, 1988-2000; and pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Grantville, Pennsylvania, 2001 until he retired in 2013. While serving parishes, he also served as interim pastor for Salem Lutheran Church, Oberlin, Pennsylvania, and Shells Lutheran Church, Grantville, Pennsylvania. He is a member of Concordia Lutheran Church, Chicago, Illinois, where he has sung with the choir, led the adult forum, and served with the property team. He has supplied at several congregations and is currently full-time supply pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Ingleside, Illinois.

Pastor Shutters received a homiletic award from Waterloo Seminary. He is an author, having written meditations for the September 1971 edition of Light for Today and other devotional guides, the children’s book, The Mouse with the Broken Tail, several other books and computer programs including Farway, on the Commodore-64, which was commissioned for the National Youth Convention. He is past president of the Society of American Magicians Assembly #110 and creator of the Magic in Ministry program. He was formerly a conference dean and a member of Central Pennsylvania Synod’s Evangelism Task Force to the Unchurched. He was president of Upper Dauphin Human Services, coordinator of the Crop Walk in Upper Dauphin, coordinator of the Meals on Wheels Ministry in Dauphin and Lykens, a member of the Red Cross Dauphin Disaster Action Team during the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, founder of the Lykens Little Theater Group, a Contact telephone volunteer, a Night Ministry volunteer, and a literacy tutor. He was president and secretary of the Steelton Ministerium, a board member of the Council of Churches of Greater Harrisburg, a board member of Telerad, and past president of the Upper Dauphin Lions Club. He was in charge of Thought for Today (sign-off meditations for Channel 27-TV). He ran four marathons.

ALWAYS BEING MADE NEW

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ.” – 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

In 2014, members at our Lower Susquehanna Synod (LSS) Assembly voted to adopt a 25th Anniversary Campaign for the ELCA in the Lower Susquehanna Synod with a goal of raising $5.5 million in five years. Always Being Made New (ABMN) has been our opportunity to invest in the future of Christ’s church, deepen relationships with God, and expand ministry opportunities that serve our neighbors and communities in the United States and around the world. We have made tremendous progress.

We are a synod who feeds the hungry as we have been fed by Christ. Eighty-eight percent of our congregations (203) supported ELCA or LSS hunger initiatives. We exceeded our ELCA World Hunger goal by more than 18 percent. Campaign gifts have been supported by 212 congregations, 223 individuals, and 38 other supporting organizations. Four conferences had 100 percent congregational participation; five conferences had more than 90 percent congregational participation; and five conferences had more than 80 percent congregational participation. Every one of our campaign categories received significant support. We exceeded our LSS Disaster Response goal by more than 10 percent.

At the end of 2016, we had more than $1.9 million in contributions and pledges. Today, we have almost $9 million in contributions and pledges. In the first year of the campaign, 100 percent of the contributors gave a second gift. Half of our new contributors made contributions each of the five years, and more than 32 percent contributed in four of the five years. Ninety-nine percent of campaign pledges have received contributions toward their commitment. Five years into the campaign, and we are still receiving new supporters.

I would like to thank Donna Nicholson, former ABMN campaign director, Denise Ferguson, and the ABMN Advisory Committee who faithfully shepherded the early years of the campaign. Additionally, my sincere gratitude goes to Pastor Liz Polanzke, former ELCA Foundation Gift Planner, who worked tirelessly to obtain millions of dollars in planned gifts earmarked for ABMN support in the many years to come.

Thanks to the prayerful and faithful support of many, check out our ABMN campaign progress:

- $4.2 million Cash Gifts Received
- $4.7 million Outstanding Planned Gifts
- $8.9 million Campaign Total with Planned Gifts
- 75% Campaign total gifts received to date
- 91% of LSS Congregations have supported ABMN

As of April 30, 2019, our ABMN campaign has received the following contributions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSS-Designated Ministries</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Received</th>
<th>ELCA-Designated Ministries</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Received</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lutheran Camping Corp</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$227,940</td>
<td>ELCA World Hunger</td>
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<td>$2,354,960</td>
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<td>LSS Mission Fund</td>
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<td>$197,280</td>
<td>ELCA Malaria</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSS Disaster Response</td>
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<td>$113,895</td>
<td>Additional Initiatives</td>
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<td>LSS Hunger Initiatives</td>
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<td>Seminarian Support</td>
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<td>Youth and Young Adults</td>
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<td>Where Needed Most</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,750,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,084,555</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,750,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,089,745</strong></td>
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While we are celebrating many successes, you will notice that we have fallen far short on our Youth and Young Adults portion of the campaign. This area of the campaign was added at the Synod Assembly’s request in 2014. We hope that you will prayerfully consider helping us get closer to our goal of $150,000. For a glimpse inside the way synodical youth and young adults’ ministry is impacting the lives of faithful young leaders, please check out this video: https://bit.ly/2JnPkdQ. For other campaign supporting materials, please check out our website: https://www.lss-elca.org/always-being-made-new/.

As a result of your generosity, 26 new and renewing mission grants were supported by this campaign; we are sending more leaders to seminary with less of a financial burden; we are strengthening faith through our youth and young adult ministries; we are providing disaster support when people need it most; and together, we are strengthening the church one camper at a time through outdoor camping ministries. Together, we are investing in the future of God’s church. Thank you for your support!

Deacon Marsha Roscoe, director for mission interpretation & ABMN campaign director
REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” And immediately they dropped their nets and followed him.

Mark 1: 17-18

Immediately. Immediately they dropped their nets and followed him. Probably the only time I’ve ever done anything in my life immediately has been when something seemed to have urgency. Extreme urgency. Like one of my children screaming in that voice that lets you know whether or not something terrible has happened—to them it seems terrible. Or when someone is hurt. Or you have to slam on your brakes because someone else isn’t driving the way they should. But if someone came by when I’m working and tells me to drop everything and follow them immediately? No. (And really, my first thought is that a nurse who walks away from a patient can be charged with abandonment, so nurses can’t just walk away. Ever.) But the disciples listened and walked away. What was it about Jesus that made them immediately answer his call? And what will it take for us to answer the call he gives us today?

At our synod level, everything we do represents all of us journeying together trying to answer God’s call to be and do what God asks of us in this day. It’s all of us together trying to listen when God calls us to mission and then to follow him.

If you have ever read any of my reports, you would know that I prefer to end it with thanks for all the people who make a difference for all of us and for me in this role to which you called me in your last vote, in 2015. But this year I need to write my report a little differently. I need to start with someone who has answered and still answers God’s call every day. Twenty years ago our synod voted for a new secretary, the second secretary in the history of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, Pastor Thomas E. McKee. And for all of those 20 years, Tom has been a good and faithful steward for our synod. He has maintained meticulous records, made certain to attend to the important details, kept track of numerous committees, policies, and documents. He has been the gentle diplomat, the source of correct language for parliamentary proceedings and the shepherd of so many candidates coming through our synod in their answer to God’s call to ministry. Tom is a genuine servant leader. He is very likely the only person in the history of the ELCA who has served as a synod secretary, an acting synod treasurer and an acting bishop (four times). When you need to know how to do or write something, Tom can help you. When you need to figure out the correct way to go about something, Tom can find it. When something is not going the way it should, he never says much of anything, but you still know by the way he does everything from a place of humility. Tom dropped his net of paying more attention to what he wanted than what his Lord wanted a long, long time ago; 45 years since he has been ordained into Word and Sacrament ministry. Tom has served our synod and our church by following Jesus and he has fished for many people. Tom loves the church. And he is a true churchman. We have all been blessed in too many ways to count because we have worked with Tom. I am so grateful to God for having worked with Tom all these years.

One of the major tasks of a synod vice president comes in the year of an election of a bishop. So many people in our church have no idea or knowledge of what the vice president does. Most of the time if I speak to someone about it, they figure it can’t be that much of a task because there is a president, right? Trust me, this is a conversation I have even had with a pastor (not my congregation’s) who could not understand why I was not available on a Saturday when the Synod Council was meeting (Why did I need to be there? There is a president to run it, right? Um, no. The vice president is the chair of the Synod Council.) On top of the things I usually do, in an election year there are additional tasks. One of those times when something cannot be run by a minister of Word and Sacrament because every pastor in the ELCA is eligible to be elected as bishop. Our synod has also adopted our own preliminary process and last year made it a part of our constitution. The requirements of this process include details of developing the various documents and setting up guidelines for extra meetings so all of us in our synod have the opportunity to talk together and listen together to the Holy Spirit about God’s Mission for us and who should lead us. I thank the members of the Synod Council for the extra work they put in last summer to prepare the Mission Snapshot and A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission and to develop the conference discussion questions. Thanks are also due the deans who carried out the special meetings called for in the process and to all conference attendees who responded to the documents and helped the Synod Council refine them. Together we all developed a picture of who we are as our Lower Susquehanna Synod and who might have the gifts for bishop of this work. And one other thing, our particular process also makes me feel like one of my main responsibilities for the year leading to the election of the bishop is to make my public mantra be “There are NO NOMINEES prior to Synod Assembly!”

Coming in addition to this once-every-6-years election is the ongoing work of doing our best to carry out God’s Mission. What are the important tasks which require a synod; what can’t we do unless we do it together? One of the things we have realized is that what we have already identified and what we are already doing is key to our life together. We need to be about the work of equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission as much and more than ever before. These priorities have not changed, even while we need to think about what they look like in the future.

Equipping Leaders

Within Christ’s church, we are constantly confronted with being pulled in different directions; our culture is changing, our society is changing, our communities are changing, and our congregations are changing. We cannot get away from the reality that nothing stays the same; if we think we have a final answer figured out, we don’t! But we know that our synod needs to continue the important work
of raising up new leaders, helping current leaders be the best they can be, and enabling folks to make changes they need to make to follow Jesus where He calls them. So, we work together to equip leaders for this age, for these communities, and for what our congregations need most. We work together for renewal that all may be formed into God’s people. This applies to raising up faithful leaders for the church both lay leaders and trained ministers.

Caring for candidacy and the mobility of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service is work that must be and can best be carried out by our synod. Our bishop and those who serve in our synod office work diligently in this area. Attention is paid to care of our rostered ministers, as well as holding them accountable for their further development, education, and formation as ministers. Our synod leaders equip leaders in many ways: leading boundary workshops, racial awareness workshops, working with congregations in the renewal process, faithfully attending conference gatherings, and meeting one-on-one with any who request it, just to name a few.

As vice president of our synod, I noted above that one of my responsibilities is to chair our Synod Council, which serves as the elected leaders of our synod, our “board of directors” with responsibilities to oversee the governance of our synod between the annual Synod Assemblies. At the Synod Council, we take seriously the duties we have as elected leaders, both lay and rostered, to serve and make decisions in the best interest of our congregations and our church. We strive first to ask the questions that need to be asked before we even begin to make decisions or plans. Our Synod Council works as a fellowship, holding one another in prayer, and spending substantial time making certain that we carry out our responsibilities.

I also continue to serve as chair of our Region 8 Steering Committee, which is comprised of the bishops and vice presidents of the eight synods in our region. Through this work, we participate in activities to equip leaders while cooperating with others. Our region together sponsors an annual First Call Theological retreat where ministers in their first three years of ministry come together in retreat for sharing, mutual support, learning, and fellowship.

Bishop Dunlop has graciously included me in the regular conversations of our synod’s program staff: our assistants to the bishop, our directors for evangelical mission, and our director for mission interpretation, and director for faith formation and youth ministry. This has allowed me to stay completely current on the work that we share and decreases the time the bishop and I needed to spend keeping each other informed. Our synod treasurer has now joined us for these meetings, and we have developed into a most effective staff. This has been a real gift to all of us who work together at our synod office.

**Encouraging Cooperation**

The very nature of synod is that we work together. So as the Synod Council we are continually focused on how we might better assist our congregations and ministries to be in cooperative work together. We do this by assigning a liaison from Synod Council to every conference, in order that strong lines of communication are always open. In this way, we hope to make certain those who attend conference meetings receive clear information about the work of our synod and Synod Council, and the Synod Council is able to hear from the conferences in return. We also liaison to every committee that is part of our synod structure, again to keep important lines of communication open and so that everyone is aware of the work being done by our synod.

I attended the annual Gathering of the Synodical Vice Presidents in Chicago last October. This time is always such a help in my functioning as vice president. It allows VPs to cooperate together to learn how others function and hopefully find better ways to do things. In addition, the VPs always share new ideas, knowledge, and suggestions for effective board functioning. I am grateful that our synod is able to cover the cost of my travel. The churchwide organization covered all the costs of this meeting for the first several years I was in this role but has switched to requiring the synods to pay the cost of the flight. There are many synods that are unable to cover this cost, and I am thankful that ours recognizes this as a way for lay leadership in our synod to be supported in cooperation with others.

Additional work with our Region 8 Steering Committee continues to be around the focus of “what can we do better if we do it together?” This is an ongoing challenge as our synods are so very different from our mix of rural and small city, to West Virginia/Western Maryland and Northwest Pennsylvania being almost entirely rural and Metropolitan D.C. being entirely urban/suburban. Although the needs and challenges of our congregations can vary greatly, we are in conversation about potential improvement of how we all do our work.

**Engaging in New Mission**

The Synod Council is constantly at work seeking ways for all of us together to engage in new mission. Most of the time new mission does not take the form we traditionally expect; new mission can mean so much more than planting a new worshiping community. In addition to the responsibilities we have for regular fiduciary oversight, we move to generative conversations, most recently thinking about where the Christian church in the world is moving and what does this mean for us as Lutheran Christians in the USA. The Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund (formerly the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund) Committee considers financial requests from a fund which has been established for this use. Bishop Dunlop has encouraged people to step out and take risks for the sake of the gospel, and this fund helps to provide some of the startup costs for this work. The importance of this work is why adding additional funding to the Mission Fund is part of the Always Being Made New campaign.
Synod Council members serve as the chairs of review committees for the congregations which are currently under Synod Administration. These committees meet to review the work which the congregation is doing under the covenant to which they agreed. Reports are provided to the Synod Council in order that all are aware of these areas of renewed mission.

How can we help you realize the mission to which your congregation is being called? Being part of this in our synod means all of us will pray for our brothers and sisters in their work, most of all for those who are discovering who they are and listening for what nets God is telling them to drop.

Where do we go from here?
The next steps belong, as always, to God. As vice president of our synod, I see my role to be one of moving our mission forward. We are completely invested in the mission of our synod, which begins in feeding the hungry, as we have been fed in Christ. We will continue to equip new leaders even while we seek to find better and expanded ways to do that. We will continue to encourage cooperation, even while we seek to expand the ways we work together at every level. We will continue to engage in new mission, recognizing that some things we risk will not succeed, but we will learn the lessons they bring. In everything, we rely on the Holy Spirit to lead us to know the kingdom is coming.

I am happy and willing to continue to serve our synod as vice president for a third term. However, it is important for members of our synod to be aware of the following additional information:

The term for vice president of our synod is four years. The term for bishop of our synod is six years. Every 12 years, both the bishop and the vice president are elected at the same assembly. This sets up a situation when both begin serving at the same time. Both positions have a significant learning curve, so a new bishop and a new vice president at the same time can lead to a delay in effective leadership for our synod. Offsetting these elections would provide for strong transitions when one or the other are newly elected. For this reason, it is my intent to serve only one year of a new term and resign my position as vice president effective August 31, 2020. I will make this official in plenty of time for our assembly to elect a new vice president in June 2020. The new term would be four years, as set by our constitution. In this way going forward, the elections of the bishop and vice president will always be offset from each other and both will never be elected at the same time again.

In Gratitude
I especially want to recognize and thank those members of Synod Council who are completing their terms following this assembly: the Rev. Eric Anderson (3 years), the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson (6 years), Dawn Frees, Linda Long, Emma Johns (2 years), Stephanie Strauss (6 years), and Allen Stump (3 years). Particular thanks to Dawn and Linda who were willing to come on board to complete unexpired terms. Thank you all for your years of attendance at many, many meetings; your work on committees; and your willingness to serve as elected leaders of this synod. I pray the Spirit’s guidance for all the balloting at assembly.

I always give thanks for our bishop, Jim Dunlop, for his partnership in the Gospel and for his zeal for the church. The relationship that we have developed as leaders for our synod is far beyond anything I imagined. We work extremely well together, and I respect him immensely. His love for and care of the rostered ministers of this church is a real blessing to all. He gives people the space and support they need to truly step out in faith. He has dropped his own net many times and I always see him trying to follow Jesus in all he does. I am so grateful for having been able to work with him. He is a gift to our synod and Christ’s church.

I certainly don’t think I can fish for people, and I’m terrible at dropping my net. I pray we can all follow Jesus when he calls. Soli Deo Gloria.

Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

“May the God who has given you the will to do these things, grant you the strength and compassion to perform them.”

It is hard for me to believe that it has been twenty years since Bishop Edmiston said these words to me when I was installed as secretary of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. But I have thought of these words many times, rehearsed them in my mind, and prayed for God to provide for these gifts; these words have helped sustain and strength me during the past twenty years.

It has been my privilege to work with four bishops: Bishop Edmiston, Bishop Hendrix, Bishop Hoover, and Bishop Dunlop; for vice presidents: Fae Appleby, Judy Garber, Ron Price, and Lucinda L. Bringman; three treasurers: Barry Herr, Bruce Seagrist, and Joe Stepansky; four different configurations of synod staff; many Synod Council members, Conference deans and secretaries, and members of synod committees and task forces; countless congregation presidents, call committee chairs, congregational members, and participants in the larger church; and a faithful and loving family and trusted friends. I thank you for the opportunity you have given me as secretary of our synod to work with all these individuals, and I thank each of them for the gifts that they have shared with me. I have been given the opportunities to do some things that I never imagined that I would do. Most of these have been positive: visiting in the Konde Diocese six times as an official representative of our synod, serving as acting bishop four times, presenting and laying my hands on the
heads of those being ordained and consecrated, representing our bishop at special events including anniversaries of ordination and the founding of congregations, hearing the faithful witness of our members, and seeing deeds of love and compassion being done in the name of Jesus Christ. However, I must share that some of the opportunities that I have been given were unpleasant things that I never would have even dreamed that I would need to do. It is especially on these occasions that I remembered Bishop Edmiston’s words from the Rite of Installation and found strength in them. I found the courage to move forward, desperately aware of my own imperfections and my own unpreparedness but acting to the best of my abilities. I found that God did provide the gifts that were needed to perform these things that I was called on to do. Many of the gifts that God provided were the people that God raised up to help and support me in these times. Thank you for your support and encouragement, your kind words and deeds, and especially your prayers during the years. There will be many things that I will truly miss, but there are many things about retirement that I am looking forward to enjoying. The writing of Ecclesiastes reminds us there is a time for everything under the sun. For me it is time for retirement.

When I was elected secretary, my predecessor Dorothy Peterman, was so gracious and helpful to me. As our first synod secretary, she charted the course for me. She initiated many systems that, if followed, insured that we had good and precise records and ways to access them and that we had good policies and procedures in place to help our synod move forward in mission and ministry. She also spent many hours teaching and training me in the responsibilities of the secretary’s position, but always reminding me that I could make any adaptations to meet my own style and abilities. She never inserted herself, but she was always available to answer questions and to provide advice if I sought it, which I often did. Even after her retirement from the office of secretary, she continued to review constitutions and later served on Synod Council where she continued to offer wise advice and dedicated labor on the Executive, Assembly Planning, and Constitution Committees. I pledge to pass on Dottie’s blessings to my successor. I will try desperately to be as gracious and helpful as Dottie was to me. I vow not to insert myself as the new secretary begins her term of office, but I do vow to be available to give advice and aid as requested. Thank you, Dottie, part of the great cloud of witnesses, for the wonderful role model you were to me.

This year, in preparation for the election of a new secretary, who most likely will not be an Assistant to the Bishop, I have carefully separated the duties that I do as synod secretary and those I do as Assistant to the Bishop. Therefore, I will organize my report according to these areas of responsibility instead of around our synod’s mission goals.

As Secretary of Synod
A major responsibility of the synod secretary is the Synod Assembly. I served as a member of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee for the 2019 Synod Assembly, as secretary for this committee, and as a member of the Agenda Sub-committee. I sent out the meetings notices, took minutes at the meetings, and distributed those minutes to the Assembly Planning Committee, the Synod Council, and the staff. I prepared and submitted the first draft of the assembly agenda, the first draft of the rules of procedure for the Synod Assembly, and the first draft of the rules of procedure for the election of a bishop to the Agenda Sub-Committee and worked with them, the Assembly Planning Committee, and the Synod Council to prepare them for recommendation to the Synod Assembly. This year I have worked with the Synod Council to implement the Preliminary Procedure for the Identification of Those Having Gifts To Be Bishop, served on the Bishop’s Profile Committee, helped prepare the devotional materials for the Conference Assemblies, received feedback from the conferences about the bishop’s and synod’s profile, received the information about those individuals the conferences lifted up and their disclosure information, and facilitated the posting of their photos and biographies on the website by April 22, and joined conference calls with the ELCA Secretary’s Office about the details of planning for and implementing a bishop’s election. I prepared the official notice of the assembly; prepared the letters requesting reports, displays, and spokespersons; received and proofed the reports for the Bulletin of Reports; prepared the assembly script for the Conference Assembly; prepared the timed script for the assembly; served as the liaison to the Committee of Reference and Counsel, the Committee on Memorials, and the Worship at Assembly committees; and prepared this report, the biographies of those ordained fifty years, and the Synod Council report. I will take minutes at the assembly, write the preliminary minutes, do the necessary correspondence, and finally help prepare the final Minute Book.

The synod secretary also serves as secretary of Synod Council and its Executive Committee. I prepared the Orientation Handbook and assisted Vice President Bringman in conducting the orientation. I assisted the vice president administratively in appointing the Synod Council committees. For each meeting, I prepared the call of meeting, wrote the report of the synod secretary, received copies of minutes and reports and arranged them for emailing to committee and council members, prepared the agenda, took and distributed the minutes, did the necessary correspondence, maintained the corporate records, and recorded the actions taken in the Index of Actions.

The synod secretary also serves as secretary to the Gifts Discernment and Nominating Committees. I prepared the Nominating Handbook for the 2019 Synod Assembly. I worked to identify and encourage potential nominees for secretary of synod. I coordinated the scheduling of interviews with the six individuals who submitted nominee information forms for synod secretary. I sat in on those interviews to answer any questions from the potential nominees and the committee. I communicated the committee’s decision to the three persons who were recommended for nomination and to the three persons who were not. I provided minutes of the committee’s recommendations to Synod Council for their action. In the appointment of the members of the Nominating Committee, I worked with the deans to try to ensure that there is a representative from every conference. I both actively solicit nominees as well as receive the nominee information forms that are submitted. I prepared the agenda for the meeting, distributed the nominee information forms submitted to committee members, took minutes, contacted those nominated as well as those who had not been nominated, received
updated nominee information forms, and worked with Debbie Clark who prepared the Report of the Nominating Committee for the Bulletin of Reports. I have continued to stress the importance of upholding the role of women, youth and young adults, and persons of color or whose primary language is other than English in our synod and of identifying representatives from these parts of our church for nomination and election.

The synod secretary also serves as secretary to the Constitution Committee. I have prepared calls of meeting, participated in their deliberations, took minutes, and reported actions to Synod Council for recommendation to the 2019 Synod Assembly. This year the committee reviewed and approved the amended bylaws of Luthercare and Greenstone Living. The committee also made several recommendations for amendments to our bylaws. The synod secretary has the responsibility of reviewing and approving congregation constitutions. I have dealt with many congregations this year who have been working on updating their constitutions just in time for the many changes that will come from the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

The synod secretary has the constitutional responsibility of registering the voting members of the Churchwide Assemblies for his or her synod. I registered those voting members elected at our 2018 Synod Assembly. I also am working with Bishop Dunlop and Vice President Bringman in coordinating two voting members meetings to prepare our voting members for their responsibilities at the Churchwide Assembly.

The synod secretary also has the responsibility of sending items to the Region 8 East Archives in the Wentz Library on the Gettysburg campus of the United Lutheran Seminary. This year the records of Zion Lutheran Church, Penbrook, were submitted to the archives. I am working to retrieve the records from St. Paul Lutheran Church, York Haven, and to prepare them for submission to the archives. Before I leave office, I will also send to the archives my record, and the materials collected from our synod for the last two years.

Finally, I have prepared numerous letters of congratulations for anniversaries of ordinations and anniversaries of congregations. I have been privileged to represent the bishop and our synod at many of these events as well as conducting call votes, attending council meetings, and participating in other significant events in the lives of our rostered ministers and congregations.

I want to thank Debbie Clark, who serves as the executive assistant to the bishop’s office and supports the synod vice president and secretary also, for the extraordinarily fine level of support that she has provided me. She was able to anticipate what I have needed often before I asked for it. She always did whatever I asked in a most cheerful way. She is an extremely organized person and really helped to keep me and the Secretary’s Office organized. She is a great asset to our synod and will be a great help to my successor.

I thank you for the privilege of serving as synod secretary for the past twenty years. It has been my honor and privilege to serve in this way. To God be the glory.

As assistant to the bishop
I serve as personnel officer for our synod. As such I am an advisor and scribe for the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee met three times this past year. It made recommendations to the Synod Council for 2019 compensation increases for staff members, made recommendations to the Finance and Budget Committee for increases in the salary and benefit lines in the proposed budget for FY2020, reviewed our Personnel Policies and recommended their reapproval to Synod Council, reviewed our staff job descriptions and restated them in a uniform format, and recommended to Synod Council the salary for a new assistant to the bishop. It is my duty as personnel officer to see that our Personnel Policies are carried out. Bishop Dunlop conducted yearly evaluations of all executive staff and Deacon Marsha Roscoe and I conducted yearly evaluations for all administrative staff. This year we celebrated the following staff anniversaries: Bishop James Dunlop, Pastor Robert Blezard, Pastor Sharron Blezard, and Debbie Clark, all five years, and Cathy Deitrich, 20 years. In March, Pastor Sharron Blezard took medical leave to concentrate on her self-care as she is dealing with stage-4 breast cancer. Our synod continues to care for her under our synod’s disability policy. While we miss Pastor Sharron tremendously in our daily interactions, we are glad that she could take this leave to concentrate on her health. We invite your prayers for a full remission. Synod Council has called Pastor Beth Martini to serve as assistant to the bishop, effective March 1, 2019, until August 31, 2019. We welcome Pastor Beth Martini to our synod staff. She already has a good handle on her responsibilities and is doing fine ministry for our synod. We appreciate her willingness to serve our synod in this way. We have a fine administrative staff who provide the support necessary to conduct efficiently the business affairs of our synod. It was our honor to celebrate Administrative Professionals’ Day with them on April 24. Our entire staff enjoyed a lunch at Dafnos in Hershey and then tried our hand at a glass art project at Art on Derry.

I support Bishop Dunlop and the Candidacy Committee by coordinating our candidacy process. The candidacy process is an accompanying process as the members of the Candidacy Committee walk with applicants and candidates as they discern God’s call to rostered ministry. I am the first point of synodical contact for applicants discerning vocations as rostered ministers. I meet with the candidates, learning about their call story, their relationship with Jesus Christ, their service within the congregation and community, their educational experiences, and their support systems. I talk with them about options for seminary and urge them to be in contact with the seminary director of admission. I orient them to the Candidacy Manual and the stages of the candidacy process, entrance, endorsement, and approval. I walk them through the steps that they must take to prepare for entrance, the candidacy application and essay, the congregational registration, the background checks, the psychological testing, the transcripts and certificates, the two letters
of reference, and the health and financial forms. When they have submitted all these things, I assign a relator to them, a member of the Candidacy Committee who will walk with them during their entire candidacy process, supporting and advising them. After meeting with the assigned relator, the applicant is ready to meet with the Candidacy Committee for entrance. The committee can grant the applicant positive entrance, postpone entrance, or deny entrance. I continue to work with those postponed or denied, helping them discern what God is calling them to do. I continue to work with those entranced, the assigned relator, the Candidacy Committee, and the seminary on the candidate’s plan. With the valuable help of Debbie Clark, who maintains the candidacy files, I keep track of the progress of all our candidates, so that the committee and the candidates have a clear understanding of what must happen next in the process. This is becoming ever so more difficult with the various schedules and options offered by the seminary. Every candidate plan has its own peculiarities and its own timeline. I serve as staff liaison to the Candidacy Committee, taking minutes of its meetings and informing the candidates, in person and in writing, of the committee’s decision. In October, Pastor Cynthia Chambers and I spent two days at the ELCA churchwide office, getting an orientation to the new Candidacy Manual. On Saturday, February 2, 2019, the Candidacy Committee hosted a Day of Formation for the candidates, their spouses, and the committee at St. John’s Herr Estate in Columbia. Together we worshiped; heard presentations about discernment, spiritual direction, and assignment; and enjoyed a question and answer session with Bishop Dunlop. We currently have 41 individuals who are discerning God’s call to rostered ministry and 37 candidates in the process. We are very thankful to have the Rev. Dr. Paul Baglyos, the Candidacy and Leadership Manager – Region 7 and 8, present with us at our meetings and available in between to advise us and to keep us faithful to the candidacy process as outlined in the Candidacy Manual. We thank our chair, Pastor Cynthia Chambers, and Celia Domines, committee member, as they leave the committee, for serving faithfully on this committee for the past ten years. We welcome to the committee Joy Gross, David Hostetter, Pastor Elizabeth Frey, and Pastor James Goodyear, and as committee chair, Jeffrey Weaver.

I relate to five conferences: Lancaster, North Lancaster, North York, South York, and York. I attended the two conference assemblies in each of these conferences; and I attended most of the monthly meetings of rostered ministers. I also attended the five meetings of the Committee of Deans. As part of serving as a liaison to these conferences, I work with congregations in transition in these conferences. During this year, I worked with the following congregations: St. John, Maytown; Calvary, Dover; Salem, Lititz; Redeemer, Lancaster; Christ, Harrisburg; Zion, Glen Rock; St. James, Brogue and St. Paul (Lebanon) Felton; Holy Trinity, Ephrata; Zion, East Petersburg; Advent, York; Faith United, Denver; Christ, Starview; Zion, Landisville; St. Mark, York; Christ, Manchester; Quickel, York; St. Paul, Millersville; Trinity, Wrightsville; Bergstrasse, Ephrata; Zion, Etters; and St. Paul, Penryn. I attended meetings of the North York Conference pastors and council presidents about developing a shared ministry. I attended meetings of St. Peter, Highspire, and Trinity, Steelton, as they developed a covenant for sharing a pastor and engaging in cooperative ministry to their communities. I met with Trinity, York; Grace, Roundtown; and St. Mark, Emigsville, about the future of their ministry. I conducted call votes at Christ, Harrisburg; Christ, Duncannon; St. James, Brogue, and St. Paul (Lebanon), Felton; Advent, York; Salem, Lititz; Faith United, Denver; Calvary, Dover; and Bergstrasse, Ephrata.

I am the staff liaison to three committees and serve as the scribe at a fourth committee, Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund Committee, which Synod Council is recommending be renamed the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee. The Konde Diocese relates to our companion diocese, the Konde Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. This committee meets monthly. In the summer of 2018, Pastor Cliff Eshbach, committee chair, led a trip to the diocese for members of our synod. They visited the diocese office and all the major institutions of the diocese, and they visited their companion congregations. This summer,Seminarian Angela Hammer, who with her family spent a year in the diocese, will be leading a group visit. This group will spend some time doing repairs to the Lower Susquehanna House on the campus of Manow Lutheran Secondary School as well as visiting companion congregations, the diocese office, and the institutions sponsored by the diocese. These visits are important in establishing relationships with our sisters and brothers there and in stimulating important conversations about our faith and life within our respective churches. I work closely with the Treasurer’s Office to send wire transfers to the Konde Diocese quarterly, sending donations that our congregations give to support pastors’ salaries, provide student scholarships, buy needed medical supplies, and present gifts to companion congregations. The Medical Needs Task Force of the Konde Diocese Committee is currently accepting donations to buy an industrial washing machine for Itete Hospital.

The Synodical Worship Committee plans and helps secure participants for synodical worship services. During this year, the committee provided the planning structure for worship at the Bishop’s Convocation, the Healthy Leaders’ Retreat, the Service of Word and Sacrament at which Pastor Hans Becklin and Pastor Wicky Barnes were ordained, the Renewal of Vows and the Blessing of Oil service and the two Eucharists at the 2019 Synod Assembly. Along with Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali, I coordinate these services with the bishop and synod staff, arrange for the typing and printing of bulletins, and transport supplies from the synod office.

The Compensation and Benefits Committee provides informed guidance and recommendations to our synod on matters of compensation and benefits for our rostered ministers. The committee met three times this year. They discussed the available information about the number of pastors who are being paid within synod minimum guidelines, recommended to the Synod Council minimum salary guidelines for 2020, and revised the worksheet to give more accurate and fair results when using other factors to compute minimum salaries for rostered ministers.

I represent our synod on the board of directors of Ecumenical Communities and St. Barnabas Center for Ministry. I also serve as chair of the Personnel Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches.
I participated in the following important events in the lives of our congregations and rostered ministers: the 40th anniversary of ordination of Pastor Daniel Biles; the 125th anniversary of Zion, Penbrook; the rededication of the sanctuary at Salem, Ephrata; the rededication of Advent, York; the ordination of Pastor Hans Becklin and Pastor Wicky Barnes; the 200th anniversary of Christ, Starview; the installation of Pastor Karen Larson; the 25th anniversary of the St. Barnabas Center for Ministry; the 150th anniversary of Holy Trinity, Ephrata; the retirement luncheon for Pastor Mimi Ruth; and the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology Banquet commemorating the ministry of Dr. Robert Jenson.

My Sunday morning visits included St. Paul (Lebanon), Felton, and St. James, Brogue; St. Paul, York; Salem, Lititz; Zion, Penbrook; St. Paul, New Cumberland; St. Mark, York; the combined worship service of Trinity, Steelton, St. Peter, Highspire, St. John, Steelton, and Salem, Oberlin; St. John, Hoernerstown; and Second, Chambersburg as well as occasionally worshiping at my home congregation, Union, York. I also attended two midweek Advent services at St. Paul, York; conducted four midweek Lenten services at St. Paul, New Cumberland, and attended Lenten midweek services and Stations of the Cross at Union, York. I also preached and presided at the Lutheran Men’s Club’s Advent and Lenten Breakfasts. I participated regularly in the midweek services held in our synod office chapel.

I have met with numerous rostered ministers and congregational leaders; answered countless phone calls and letters; made hospital visits; and represented our synod at funerals for Sister Sandra Lehr, Judith Davis, Dexter Weikel, Barbara Klepper, Pastor Leonard Shertzer, and Pastor Donald Gallion and the viewing for Pastor George DeFrehn.

I attend weekly program staff meetings and monthly full staff meetings. I participated in two calendaring days, the assembly debriefing, our executive staff retreat, and our Lenten Day of Prayer. I attended Boundary Training and Racial Justice Training. I also participated in the Bishop’s Convocation, the Deans and Secretaries’ Retreat, the Women and Justice Hearing, the Healthy Leaders’ Retreat, the Renewal of Vows Service, the Ascension Day Service and Luncheon, and the Commonwealth Interfaith Service. I was honored to help in a small way our R3 Initiative by helping with registration and overhearing the sessions. I was thrilled to listen to the excited reports of what was being done in each of our renewing congregations at the R3 Reunion Event.

I would like to take this final opportunity to express my appreciation to our wonderful synod staff. It has been my joy to work with them.

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary

SYNOD COUNCIL ACTIONS SINCE JUNE 1, 2018

Calls, Appointments, Elections

+ Elected to the Synod Council Executive Committee the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer, Jennifer R. Lau, and Virgil L. Gibson
+ Elected as vice chair of Synod Council the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer
+ Appointed to the Synodical Worship Committee the Rev. Rebecca M. Ajer Frantz, Daniel Deitzel, Margaret Folkemer, the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, the Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg, the Rev. Kevin Stout, and the Rev. Amy Wagner, for first year terms, expiring 2021
+ Appointed to the Konde Diocese Committee Martina Uffelman, for a first term, expiring in 2021
+ Reappointed to the Audit Committee Edward J. Straley, for a second term, expiring 2021
+ Reappointed to the Global Mission Committee Cornelia Taylor and Sarah Person Williams, for a second term, expiring in 2021
+ Appointed to the Youth Ministry Team Chuck Bissell, the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, Molly Crouser, Zoe Clark, Jay Eckman, Darren Hamric, the Rev. Jillian Riddle, Sarah Person Williams, and Jesse Woodrow
+ Appointed to the Compensation and Benefits Committee the Rev. Douglas Johnson and the Rev. Stanley Reep, for a first three-year term, expiring in 2021
+ Appointed to the Candidacy Committee the Rev. Alex Martini, Sister Marianne Brock, and the Rev. Tasha Genck Morton, for a first five-year term, expiring in 2023
+ Elected to the Consultation Committee the Rev. Barbara Barry, for an unexpired term, expiring in 2023
+ Elected to the Discipline Committee Linda M. Bennett, for an unexpired term, expiring in 2023
+ Appointed to the Assembly Planning Committee the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, chair, SC; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary, assembly manager; Charlie Roberts, staff; Deacon Marsha Roscoe, staff; the Rev. Tim Seitz-Brown, SC; the Rev. Becca Ajer Frantz; Tracey DePasquale; the Rev. Elizabeth George; the Rev. Edward J. Robbins; and the Rev. Gwen Trout
+ Appointed to the Constitution Committee Chucki Strevig, chair, SC; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary; Jen Lau, SC; the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton; Jered L. Hock; the Rev. Beth Schlegel; Jane Wigand; and Joanne Wilhelm
+ Appointed to the Finance and Budget Committee Virgil Gibson, chair, SC; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; Joseph M. Stepansky, synod treasurer; Brenda Hartzell, SC; Allen Stump, SC; Dawn O. Frees; Joyce E. Frigm; Wayne R. Gongaware; and Dee Wells
+ Appointed to the Gifts Discernment Committee Stella Ludwig, chair, SC; the Rev. Eric Anderson, SC; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary; Allen Stump, SC; the Rev. Douglas DeStephano; Holly Freas-Webster; Robert Walton; and Jane Wigand
Appointed to the Mission Committee the Rev. Joel Folkemer, chair, SC; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Sharron Blezard, assistant to the bishop; the Rev. Richard E. Jorgensen Jr., DEM; Emma Johns, SC; Jennifer Lau, SC; the Rev. Jillian Riddle, SC; Stephanie Strauss, SC; the Rev. Matthew Best, SC; the Rev. Kathleen J. Baker; the Rev. J. Richard Eckert; and Holly Freas-Webster

Appointed to the Personnel Committee Zach Weiss, chair, SC; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary; Kay Hinkle, SC; Linda Long, SC; the Rev. Martha Boyd; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George; Gary L. Laabs; the Rev. Timothy W. Sadler; and Joanne Wilhelm

Appointed the following Synod Council liaisons to committees: Audit, Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund, Jennifer Lau, SC; Children, Youth and Family Ministries Table, the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, SC; Compensation and Benefits, Virgil Gibson, SC; Criminal Justice System Ministries, the Rev. Eric Anderson, SC; Evangelism Mission Tables, the Rev. Joel Folkemer, SC; Global Mission, Stephanie Strauss, SC; Konde Diocese, Allen Stump, SC; Racial Justice Task Force, Kay Hinkle, SC; Synodical Worship, Stella Ludwig, SC; World Hunger, the Rev. Jillian Riddle, SC; Region 8 Steering Committee, Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president

Appointed the following Synod Council liaisons to conferences: Chambersburg, the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, SC; Gettysburg, the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, SC; Hanover, Kay Hinkle, SC; Harrisburg, Stephanie Strauss, SC; Lancaster, Zachary Weiss, SC; Lebanon, the Rev. Jillian Riddle, SC; North Lancaster, Stella Ludwig, SC; North York, Jennifer Lau, SC; Perry, Brenda Hartzell, SC; South York, Allen Stump, SC; Upper Dauphin, Linda Long, SC; West Cumberland, the Rev. Eric Anderson, SC; West Shore, the Rev. Matthew Best, SC; and York, the Rev. Joel Folkemer, SC

Called the Rev. Timothy W. Sadler to serve as hospice chaplain for Lancaster Hospice and Community Care, effective July 2, 2018

Called the Rev. Cynthia Baxter, for a three-year term, to serve as part-time chaplain of SpiriTrust Lutheran Village at Kelly Drive, effective August 22, 2018, through August 22, 2021, contingent upon the approval of the Conference of Bishops

Appointed to the Synodical Worship Committee the Rev. Jillian E. Riddle for a first term, expiring in 2021

Appointed to the World Hunger Committee Cheryl Burns and Fay Nichols for first terms, expiring in 2021

Elected to the board of directors of SpiriTrust Lutheran Lawrence Young, Esquire, and Stephanie Kessler, for first three-year terms, beginning January 1, 2019, and ending December 31, 2021

Called the Rev. Robert W. Moore to serve as intentional interim pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hanover, effective November 12, 2018, until November 11, 2019

Elected to the board of directors of the Lutheran Camping Corporation Thomas Sites, for a first three-year term, expiring in 2021

Reelected to the board of directors of the Lutheran Camping Corporation the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, Andrew Heaton, and the Rev. Lisa M. Leber, for second three-year terms, expiring in 2021

Called the Rev. Eric N. Anderson to serve as Intentional Interim Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Halifax, for the Messiah and St. Peter Lutheran Churches of Halifax, effective January 1, 2019, until December 31, 2019

Called the Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke to serve as Intentional Interim Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, York, effective January 28, 2019, until January 27, 2021

Elected Dawn Frees to fill an unexpired term on the Synod Council, expiring June 2019

Appointed to the Candidacy Committee Joy Gross, the Rev. James Goodyear, and the Rev. Elizabeth E. Frey, for first five-year terms, expiring 2024

Reappointed to the Compensation and Benefits Committee the Rev. Thomas G. Bruner Jr. and June Wolf, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022, and appointed Bruce Senft and the Rev. Barbara Barry, for first three-year terms expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Global Mission Committee the Rev. Kevin Stout, for a second three-year term, expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Synodical Worship Committee Stephen Strauss and Debra E. Reeder, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022

Appointed to the World Hunger Committee Andrea Oslikova, Stephanie Johnson, Shirley McGowan, Keith Shively, the Rev. Ronald Costen, and the Rev. Godfred Effisah, for first three-year terms, expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Audit Committee Linda M. Bennett and Robert Rundle, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee the Rev. Rob Myallis, Terry Snyder, and Angela Thomas, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022, and appointed the Rev. Jack Horner and Rose Tonkin, for first three-year terms, expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Congregational Leadership Resource Team the Rev. Daniel V. Biles III, the Rev. Caitlin Kurtz, the Rev. Tasha K. Genck Morton, the Rev. Constance L. Mentzer, the Rev. Mark L. Russell, and Lois D. Strause, for second three-year terms, expiring in 2022 and appoint the Rev. Glenn Ludwig and the Rev. William C. Snyder, for first three-year terms, expiring 2022

Reappointed to the Konde Diocese Committee Martha Brunner and Linda Bell, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022; appointed the Rev. Kate Warn, for a first three-year term, expiring 2022; and appointed the Rev. Clifton D. Eshbach as consultant

Reelected to the board of directors of Luthercare the Rev. David Fisher, Stuart Smith, and Dr. Joan Harrold, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022; reelected the Rev. Henry Herbener and Jim Smarilli, for expanded terms, expiring 2020; and elected the Rev. Thomas McKee, David Stoudt, and Keith Boyer, for first three-year terms, expiring 2022

Called the Rev. Elizabeth G. Martini as Assistant to the Bishop, effective March 1, 2019, until August 31, 2019
Called the Rev. Jennifer H. Richards to serve as pastor of Communities of Hope, effective May 6, 2019
Called the Rev. Daniel M. Yeiser to serve as Intentional Interim Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lancaster, effective October 1, 2018 until September 30, 2019, or until a new pastor is called
Appointed to the Candidacy Committee David Hostetter, for a first five-year term, expiring 2024
Appointed to the Audit Committee Terry Snyder, for a first three-year term, expiring 2022
Reappointed to the Stewardship Education and Mission Support Table the Rev. Kevin C. Stout and Linda M. Bennett, for second three-year terms, expiring 2022; and appointed the Rev. Matthew B. Best for a first three-year term, expiring 2022
Renewed the Synod Council call of the Rev. Pamela M. Illick to serve as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rouzerville, under the terms of synod administration for renewal, effective June 1, 2019, until May 31, 2022

New Business

Continued the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Linda Trout, for one additional year, effective October 1, 2018, until October 1, 2019, and the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, for one additional year, effective September 22, 2018, until September 22, 2019
Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Michael T. Petresky, effective January 1, 2018, until January 1, 2019; the Rev. Alison S. Bowlan, effective July 1, 2018, until August 23, 2018; the Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke, effective September 4, 2018, until September 4, 2019; the Reverend Janice M. Lowden, effective September 18, 2018, until September 18, 2019; and the Rev. Daniel M. Yeiser, effective October 1, 2018, until October 1, 2019
Approved the retirement requests of the Rev. Joseph A. Veres, effective October 1, 2018, and the Rev. Mary-Margaret Ruth, effective November 1, 2018
Granted the Rev. Susan McCarthy the roster status of on disability, effective October 1, 2018
Through the bishop and the secretary, certified the minutes of the 2018 Synod Assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, to be deposited in the archives
Appointed John Coles, Esquire, Barley and Snyder Law Firm, as synod counsel
Approved a $10,000 yearly stipend for the synod secretary-elect for fulfilling the duties and obligations of the office of synod secretary, beginning September 1, 2019, if the synod secretary-elect does not serve on the bishop’s staff, the stipend to be allotted in the Human Resources section of the synod budget
Approved the Synod Administration Covenant for St. Paul Lutheran Church, New Cumberland, effective June 24, 2018, until June 24, 2021
Adopted the audit for the Fiscal Year 2017
Retained RKL as the auditor for FY 2018
Participated in a board training session led by the Rev. William C. Snyder
Continued the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Dr. Chad Rimmer, for one additional year, effective December 31, 2018, until December 31, 2019; the Rev. Brenda M. Ritterpusch, effective January 1, 2019, until March 4, 2019; and the Rev. Michael T. Petresky, effective January 1, 2019, until January 1, 2020
Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Sharon Kelly, effective October 1, 2018, until October 1, 2019, and to the Rev. Titus Clarke, effective December 1, 2018, until December 1, 2019
Approved the retirement requests of the Rev. Robert Lowden, effective July 15, 2018; the Rev. Daniel V. Biles, III, effective January 1, 2019; and the Rev. Brenda M. Ritterpusch, effective March 5, 2019
Approved that the total compensation paid to the Rev. James S. Dunlop for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $20,000 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Robert C. Blezard for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $12,500 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Sharon R. Blezard for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $12,500 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr. for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $19,000 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Thomas E. McKee for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $20,000 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali for the period beginning January 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $20,000 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code
Approved the Synod Administration Covenant for St. Paul Lutheran Church, Dillsburg, from Synodical Administration to enable the Congregation Council to contract with an interim pastor, the Rev. Glenn Ludwig, for a three-year term
Adopted formally a resolution calling the Lower Susquehanna Synod to prayerful deliberation as our synod prepares to elect a bishop
Set the dates of the 2019 Synod Assembly as June 6, 2019, beginning at 6:45 p.m., through Saturday afternoon, June 8, 2019
Set the 2019 salary and housing allowance for Bishop James S. Dunlop at $99,000

Authorized a two-percent increase in salaries across the board for all remaining staff in 2019

Established a task force to prepare a resolution to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council regarding clergy misconduct

Prepared the “Mission Snapshot” and “A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission” for use at the January Conference Assemblies

Heard a Ministry Highlight about the renewal ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rouzerville, presented by the Rev. Pamela Illick

Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Cynthia Baxter, effective February 8, 2019, until February 8, 2020

Affirmed the work of the Synod Council’s Personnel Committee in reviewing our synod’s personnel policies on January 19, 2019

Renamed the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund

Designated the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund and the Konde Medical Needs Task Force as the recipients of the offerings taken at the 2019 Synod Assembly

Adopted the Proposed Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop for recommendation to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption

Recommended the Proposed Agenda for the 2019 Synod Assembly to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption

Recommended the 2019 Proposed Rules of Procedure to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption

Adopted as the complimentary package for retired rostered ministers, rostered ministers on leave from call or on disability, rostered ministers called by Synod Council whose agency or institution does not fund their attendance at Synod Assembly, seminarians under the care of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Candidacy Committee, lay officers, lay members of the Synod Council, the Assembly Planning Committee, and the Worship at Assembly Committee who are not voting members from their congregations, and synod staff $300 for residents, $240 for commuters

Adopted a Spending Authorization, reducing the 2019 budget by $135,000 from $2,685,000 to $2,550,000

Nominated Lucinda L. Bringman for the office of synod vice president

Nominated Joyce E. Frigm, Nancy J. Martin, and the Rev. Beth A. Schlefel for the office of synod secretary

Recommended to the 2019 Synod Assembly the adoption of $52,306 as the 2020 minimum base salary and housing allowance for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and no parsonage provided and the adoption of $36,388 as the 2020 minimum base salary for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and with a parsonage provided

Recommended to the 2019 Synod Assembly the adoption of $44,023 as the 2020 minimum base salary for Ministers of Word and Service with no years of experience

Adopted a Resolution to the ELCA Church Council asking for a constitutional amendment granting power to a bishop to discipline rostered ministers who commit a felony or who are named as a perpetrator in an indicated report of child abuse

Amended the Sexual Misconduct Policy, Page 9, Part D, Paragraph 5, removing the phrases, “either with or without pay” and “If the accused refuses, the bishop may ask the congregation to place the accused on involuntary leave of absence, or,”

Adopted the amended Sexual Misconduct Policy

Adopted the Child Protection Policy as reviewed by Synod Council as of February 16, 2019, pending further review by counsel

Finalized the “Mission Snapshot” and “A Bishop’s Gifts for God’s Mission” for use at the Spring Conference Assemblies

Heard a Ministry Highlight about the Afterschool Program of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Middletown

Heard and discussed a presentation on “The Future of our Faith”

Discussed possible future revenue sources for our synod

Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Pamela Carnes, effective March 1, 2019, until March 1, 2020

Continued the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Nancy R. Easton, for one additional year, effective May 1, 2019 until May 1, 2020

Approved that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Jennifer H. Richards for the period beginning May 6, 2019, shall include an annual payment of $27,000 to be designed as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code

Approved the amended bylaws for Luthercare and the bylaws of Greenstone Living

Approved the amended Investment Policy for the Vision of Mission Legacy Fund

Approved a distribution of 5% of the value of the fund assets (as defined by the Statement of Policy for the Vision of Mission Legacy Fund) from the Vision of Mission Legacy Fund

Set the annual salary and housing allowance paid to the Rev. Elizabeth G. Martini for fifteen hours a week for the six months March 1, 2019, through August 31, 2019, at $22,500 a year

Adopted the Resolution to Recognize and Respond to the Plight of Central American Migrants for submission to the 2019 Synod Assembly for action

Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Michael K. Fisher, effective May 23, 2019, until May 23, 2020

Continued the on-leave-from-call-family-leave status the Rev. Martine Joseph for one additional year, from June 19, 2019, until June 19, 2020

Approved the retirement request of the Rev. Hobart Charles Utter, effective July 1, 2019

Amended the proposed agenda for the 2019 Synod Assembly for recommendation to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption
Amended the proposed Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop for recommendation to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Instructed the office of the treasurer to distribute the “Where Needed Most” proceeds from the ABMN campaign in proportion to the shortfall to the goals set at the beginning of the campaign for the Lower Susquehanna Synod Ministries.

Approved the Articles of Agreement for the Renewed in Grace Cooperative Ministry of St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Highspire, and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Steelton.

Recommended to the 2019 Synod Assembly the amendment by deletion of bylaws S10.06.07.c. (the election of members to the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches; S11.01.05 (Church in Society Committee), and S11.01.11. (Leadership Support Committee).

Recommended to the 2019 Synod Assembly amendments to bylaws S11.01.02., S11.02.01., S12.02.01., and S12.03.01.

Amended our governing documents by deletion S11.01.r.C.16.2) (Learning Ministries Team).

Recommended the proposed budget for FY 2020 to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Accepted the recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel to substitute the Resolution to Implement the ELCA AMMPARO Strategy in the Lower Susquehanna Synod for the Resolution to Recognize and Respond to the Plight of Central American Migrants.

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary
May 11, 2019

AMENDED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY
Page 9, part D, paragraph 5

Depending upon the circumstances, the bishop may ask the accused to voluntarily agree to certain restrictions upon his or her ministry – such as agreeing not to have contact with children – until the investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings are concluded. If the accused refuses, the bishop may ask the congregation to impose the restrictions upon the accused. The bishop also may ask the accused to take a leave of absence until the investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings are concluded. In extreme circumstances, the bishop may ask the accused to resign his or her call or to resign from the roster of the ELCA. The bishop cannot force the accused to resign. Only a discipline hearing committee can remove the accused from the roster.

Adopted by Synod Council
February 16, 2019
SC19.02.16.

AMENDMENT TO OUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS
DELETION OF CONTINUING RESOLUTION
S11.01.r.C.16.

2) The Learning Ministries Team shall be composed of no more than 10 persons who are experienced Christian educators who currently serve or who have served in congregational, institutional or middle judicatory settings of the ELCA or that of an ecumenical partner. The team shall be responsible for providing continuing education and resourcing of congregational leaders in keeping with standard and emerging faith-formative practices. This shall include but not be limited to workshops and events in addition to electronic resources and social networking. The Learning Ministries Team shall work cooperatively with established ELCA partners such as the ELCA Youth Ministry Network and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg’s Youth Ministry Certification School.

Adopted by Synod Council
May 11, 2019
SC19.05.38.

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary
May 11, 2019

ACTION ON THE 2018 RESOLUTION TO END HOMELESSNESS

At the September meeting of the Committee of Deans, Bishop James S. Dunlop invited and encouraged the conferences within the Lower Susquehanna Synod to form task forces in the communities to promote and advocate for affordable and sustainable housing for all people. He further called upon our conferences to be in prayer and study about ending homelessness with families in partnership ecumenically, with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania, and with social services agencies.

The reports of the actions of the various conferences reported to me are as follows.
Chambersburg Conference: The Chambersburg Conference has been discussing ways to end homelessness with families at our recent conference meetings. We have also met with the following agencies and are partnering with local housing authorities to address this issue:

- Support for the Habitat for Humanity and Thrivent 2019 Faith Build in Franklin County. Volunteers and financial support for the new build at 228 Dickenson Avenue in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania.
- Bob Rundle, CEO of SpiriTrust Lutheran, spoke at a recent conference meeting on initiatives to acquire and rehabilitate existing housing for lower income individuals. We are considering ways we could partner or collaborate with SpiriTrust Lutheran.
- Pastor Jane Nicholson, First Lutheran, Chambersburg, hosted a neighborhood meeting at First on April 25. A number of entities, including BOPIC (Building Our Pride in Chambersburg), Valley Community Housing Authority, Main Street Community Development, First Start Partnership and the Borough of Chambersburg, reported on housing initiatives in Chambersburg. The Chambersburg Housing Authority is also coordinating this effort to address affordable housing for low-income persons of any age and senior housing for those over age 62.
- Chambersburg Conference pastors and lay leaders are evaluating our church buildings and brainstorming ways we might be able to consolidate and/or re-purpose underused/unused space for residential or community gathering space.

We recognize that this is a complex issue but we look forward to looking at ways we can alleviate housing insecurity and homelessness in our area.

Hanover Conference: With the schedule of Easter, the Hanover Conference did not meet in April and therefore has no report on this topic.

Lebanon Conference: One of the congregations is engaged in a housing project in Lebanon, and it along with three others participate in the homeless shelter.

North Lancaster: North Lancaster is planning to appoint a task force to address this important issue. Most of the congregations generously help those in need with temporary housing. The conference also supports the new Declaration House project in Denver, which addresses homelessness as well as other social issues. Also, the North Lancaster Conference is addressing the important and related matter of food insecurity with Peter’s Porch, offering community meals, supporting the Wittel Farm growing project, participating in a summer lunch program for school students, and helping individual families in need. In addition, Mellinger is in the process of developing a garden project on its property to help feed those in need.

Perry Conference: Perry Conference and congregations are currently addressing homelessness by serving in partnership with Helping Hands, The Perry Literacy Council, The Perry County Prison (providing for inmates and families), The Backpack Feeding Program through the schools, providing space for and/or supporting local food banks, and by our various ecumenical ministeriums offering assistance and guidance to families in need. The conference is planning to contact the Perry County schools, Helping Hands, the Perry Literacy Council, and the prison to see how our congregations and conference might further address and assist individuals and families facing homelessness. Tied in with this, an ecumenical group of rostered ministers who serve in Perry County are meeting, training and will be putting together a strategy how to effectively address the addiction crisis caused by the use of opioids that often leads to homelessness. We, as rostered ministers and members of the body of Christ, are called to provide care and counseling to people and families impacted by the disease of addiction. We are beginning by educating ourselves and then moving outward to congregations, families, and the community. We have scheduled an initial workshop for rostered ministers’ training for this May.

Upper Dauphin Conference: The conference discussed this issue. In its region there are a few facilities that are supported by some of our congregations. Most homelessness in the region consists of transients living in cars. Some of our ecumenical partners are involved on an on-going basis with individuals and families that stay, but it is a very challenging ministry.

West Shore Conference: The West Shore Conference has a Homelessness task force composed of Pastors Dave Schreffler, Matthew Best, Debbie Mahady, and Glenn Ludwig. At their initial meeting, they shared stories about homelessness ministry in their particular congregations. They have four goals for 2019:

1. Create a resource list for homeless help – preferably electronic so that it is easily accessible. They are also exploring a web app that can direct people to social services in the region – potentially Cumberland/Dauphin County geographically.
2. Educate the leaders (rostered and lay) of the conference about homelessness in Cumberland, Dauphin, and Northern York Counties.
3. Find ways to partner with LAMPa in combating homelessness in Pennsylvania.
4. Explore ways for all of our conference churches to join together in developing affordable housing within our conference area.

LAMPa regularly works with the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance to monitor legislation affecting homelessness. We reached out to Pastors Jennifer Hope-Tringali, Sharron Blezard and Matthew Best to see what was going on in the conferences that we could support or connect with, but it didn’t seem that anything was going on. We did connect Pastor Best with our DC housing staffer regarding a federal definition.
Social service agencies: SpiroTrust Lutheran has included in its long term strategic plan the development of an additional complement of low income senior housing as part of its housing ministries.

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary
May 1, 2019

REPORT OF THE NECROLOGIST – 2019

SISTER SANDRA ELAINE LEHR, DEACON
Born March 14, 1949 – Died August 27, 2018
Age 69 years, 5 months, 13 days

SISTER SANDRA ELAINE LEHR, DEACON, daughter of the late Arthur W. Lehr and Ethel A. Lehr, was born March 14, 1949, at Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, and died August 27, 2018, at Reading, Pennsylvania.

She was baptized in 1949 and confirmed in 1963 at Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania.

She was graduated from Pine Grove High School, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, in 1967; from Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, in 1971 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1982 with a master of arts and religion degree.

Following graduation from college, Sandra worked several years as a bank teller.

Having been invested by the Deaconess Community of the Lutheran Church in America, August 22, 1982, she was consecrated by the Northeast Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, June 25, 1983, at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Hanover, Pennsylvania, while she was a member of Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania. She served at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Hanover, Pennsylvania, 1983 – 1984; and Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1984 – 1987, when she retired on disability.

Her twin passions were education and the ministry of healing.

In retirement, Sister Lehr taught adult Sunday Church School, Bible Study, and Vacation Church School, served as a member and chair of her congregation’s Christian Education Committee, and took part in fellowship events. She volunteered with the Red Cross, the Humane League, and Zion Lutheran Church, Leola, Pennsylvania.

Sister Lehr is survived by a brother, James Lehr and wife Shirley, and nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by two sisters, Irene Lehr and Nancy Hess.

At the time of her death, Sister Sandra Elaine Lehr was a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Leola, Pennsylvania. Her memorial service was held September 20, 2018, at Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, with the Rev. Karen E. Larson, pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Leola, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. Barry Spatz, pastor of Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania, officiating. Interment of Sister Lehr’s cremains took place the same day in Jacob’s Lutheran Cemetery, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. LEONARD EUGENE SHERTZER
Born May 1, 1929 – Died October 23, 2018
Age 89 years, 5 months, 22 days

THE REV. LEONARD EUGENE SHERTZER, son of the late Charles Stephen Shertz and Charlotte Ellen Etzweiler Shertzer, was born May 1, 1929, at Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, and died October 23, 2018, at York, Pennsylvania.

He was baptized May 30, 1929.

He was graduated from Swatara Township High School, Oberlin, Pennsylvania, in 1948; from Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, in 1953 with a bachelor of arts degree; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1957 with a master of divinity degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1975 with a master of sacred theology degree. He also engaged in biblical studies in Austria and studies in urban ministries in Chicago.
Pastor Shertzer was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, June 15, 1957, at First Lutheran Church, Portage, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Hummelstown, Pennsylvania. He served as pastor, First Lutheran Church, Portage, Pennsylvania, 1957 – 1961; Augsburg Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1961 – 1969; St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1970 – 1979; and Union Evangelical Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, 1979 – 1995, when he retired. He was awarded the title Pastor Emeritus by Union Evangelical Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania.

During his active ministry, Pastor Shertzer served as a member of the board of Tressler Lutheran Services, as dean of the Harrisburg District, Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, and as a seminary intern supervisor. In retirement, he served as supply pastor and, briefly, as interim pastor. He was a member of the East York Optimist Club and Retired Pastors and Spouses.

On June 5, 1990, at York, Pennsylvania, Pastor Shertzer was married to Evelyn Arlene Sowers McCarty Shertzer, who survives him. He is survived by three children, Denise Williamson, David Shertzer, and Diane Vestal. He is also survived by three stepdaughters, Debra Sallade and husband Chris, Barbara Oyler and husband Paul, and Susan Hunter and husband Christian. He is survived by six grandchildren, Rhiannon and Justin Fabie, Olivia Vestal, and Autumn Farrell. Four step-grandchildren also survive him, Ben Sallade, Jessica and Lauryn Oyler, and Hailey Hunter. Two great-grandchildren, Cavan and Callen, survive him. A sister, Hazel Kurz and husband Rev. W. Robert, survive him. He was pre-deceased by sister Joyce Bale.

His memorial service was held November 18, 2018, at Union Evangelical Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Joel S. B. Folkemer and the Rev. Judith A. McKee officiating. Interment was private at the convenience of his family in Mount Rose Cemetery, York, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. WILLIAM ANDREW MARTIN
Born August 7, 1937 – Died October 28, 2018
Age 81 years, 2 months, 21 days

THE REV. WILLIAM ANDREW MARTIN, son of the late Benjamin F. Martin and Helen Duchon Martin, was born August 7, 1937, at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, and died October 28, 2018, at Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

He was baptized December 31, 1937.

He was graduated from Williamsport High School, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1955; from Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1959 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1962 with a master of divinity degree. He also engaged in post-graduate study at Marywood College, Scranton, Pennsylvania.


At various times, he served as interim pastor, St. John Center, East Earl, Pennsylvania; Salem Lutheran Church of Kissel Hill, Lititz, Pennsylvania; and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Penryn, Pennsylvania.

During his active ministry, Pastor Martin served in many capacities, among them dean of the Williamsport District, member of the Lycoming County Council of Churches Board of Directors, Reserve Chaplain at the Williamsport Hospital, and member of the Bowmansville Lion’s Club.

In retirement, Pastor Martin served as Sunday School teacher, supply pastor, and interim pastor.

On June 19, 1971, at Bethany Lutheran Church, Montoursville, Pennsylvania, Pastor Martin was married to Laoma Ruth Fellinger Martin, who survives him. He is survived by three children, David Todd Martin and wife Joni, Sharon Marie Mueller and husband Mark, and Robin Lynne Bennington and husband Jim. He is survived by nine grandchildren, Zachary, Benjamin, and Rachel Mueller, Elijah, Noah, and Isaiah Martin, and Travis, Colin, and Miles Bennington. A sister, Helen Lehman and husband Charles, also survives him. He was pre-deceased by brother Robert Martin.

At the time of his death, Pastor Martin was a member of Salem Lutheran Church of Kissel Hill, Lititz, Pennsylvania. His memorial service was held November 3, 2018, at Mellingers Evangelical Lutheran Church, Stevens, Pennsylvania, with the Rev. Timothy L. Craven officiating. Interment was private.
THE REV. GEORGE HENRY DEFREHN
Born August 15, 1926 – Died November 30, 2018
Age 92 years, 3 months, 15 days

THE REV. GEORGE HENRY DEFREHN, son of the late Maurice Morgan DeFrehn and Mabel Spotts DeFrehn, was born August 15, 1926, at Sunbury, Pennsylvania, and died November 30, 2018, at Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from Highspire High School, Highspire, Pennsylvania, in 1944; from Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, in 1947 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1950 with a master of divinity degree.

Pastor DeFrehn was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, United Lutheran Church in America, May 23, 1950, at First Lutheran Church, Altoona, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Highspire, Pennsylvania.


In retirement, Pastor DeFrehn served as “pastor in residence,” St. Mark Lutheran Church, West Fairview, Pennsylvania, 1991 – 2011; as supply pastor, and as deacon and assisting minister, St. John Lutheran Church, Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania. He was awarded the title Pastor Emeritus by St. John Lutheran Church, Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania.

During his active ministry, Pastor DeFrehn served as representative, Mechanicsburg Area School District Liaison Committee; secretary and dean of the West Shore District, Central Pennsylvania Synod; chair of the Committee of Deans; member of the Executive Board of the Central Pennsylvania Synod; secretary of the Lancaster District, Central Pennsylvania Synod; and chair of the Synodical Commission on Worship and Music.

On August 14, 1949, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hershey, Pennsylvania, he was married to Jeanette Arlene Hetrick DeFrehn, who predeceased him. His second wife, Geraldine Cropf DeFrehn also predeceased him. He is survived by four children, Linda A. Walker and husband Robert, George H. DeFrehn Jr. and wife Margaret, Sandra L. Snyder and husband Frank, and Jeanette D. DeFrehn. He is also survived by four grandchildren, Robert “JR” and Chad Walker, Kristen DeFrehn, and Ashton Maxwell. Four great-grandchildren survive him.

His memorial service was held December 6, 2018, at St. John Lutheran Church, Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Sarah M. Keilholtz, the Rev. Richard A. Whitesel, and the Rev. Michael L. Seifried officiating. Interment was in Rolling Green Cemetery, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. KENNETH G. SWICK
Born July 12, 1943 – Died February 17, 2019
Age 75 years, 7 months, 5 days

THE REV. KENNETH G. SWICK, son of the late Wilton G. Swick and Marian L. Swick, was born July 12, 1943, at Plainfield, New Jersey, and died February 17, 2019, in Panama.

He was graduated from Somerville High School, Somerville, New Jersey, in 1961; from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Oklahoma, in 1970 with a bachelor of arts degree; from Memphis State University, Memphis, Tennessee, in 1974 with a master of education degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1978 with a master of divinity degree.

He served in the United States Air Force and Air National Guard 193rd Special Operations Unit. He served in Vietnam, Desert Storm, and Afghanistan.

Pastor Swick was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, May 15, 1977, at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Heidlersburg, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of Benders Lutheran Church, Biglerville, Pennsylvania. He served as pastor, Hampton-Heidlersburg Pastoral Charge, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1977 – 1983; and Upper Bermudian Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1983 – 2008, when he retired.
Following the Vietnam War and for the remainder of his life, he worked to build relationships in Laos and to re-settle Laotian families in the United States. He was committed to working with Laotian agencies to educate Laotian children. These efforts included construction of schools and funding of scholarships.


Pastor Swick was a tent-making pastor devoted to ministry in small, struggling congregations. As such, he was the business owner of "Orient Expressions."

At various times, he served as softball coach, Bermudian School District; member of the Bermudian Jaycees; part-time chaplain at the Lutheran Home in Gettysburg; and member of the Adams County Advisory Committee on Juvenile Delinquents. He was a Mason and a member of National Sojourners. In retirement, he was a member of the town council, Wachapreague, Virginia.

On May 19, 1979, at Arendtsville, Pennsylvania, Pastor Swick was married to Anne Terry Swick, who survives him. Five children survive him: William C. Swick, Mary Ellen Love, Rachel T. Mavity and husband Ryan, Eden T. Hade and husband Andrew, and Kendra T. Stilwell and husband Tim. He is survived by 10 grandchildren: Aidan and Anya Swick; Grace, Hannah, and Eli Love; Alex and Jane Mavity; and Laine, Ray, and Kent Hade. He was predeceased by sister Bonnie Mae Mech.

His memorial service was held April 6, 2019, at Upper Bermudian Lutheran Church, Gardners, Pennsylvania, with the Rev. David Clark officiating. Interment of cremains was at Upper Bermudian Lutheran Church, Gardners, Pennsylvania. A second memorial service was held April 13, 2019, at Melfa United Methodist Church, Melfa, Virginia.

THE REV. DONALD RICHARD GALLION
Born May 26, 1924 – Died March 30, 2019
Age 94 years, 10 months, 4 days

THE REV. DONALD RICHARD GALLION, son of the late Joseph Anthony Gallion and Mamie Anna Klein Gallion, was born May 26, 1924, at Baltimore, Maryland, and died March 30, 2019, at Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from Southern Baltimore High School, Baltimore, Maryland, in 1942; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1948 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1951 with a master of divinity degree. He engaged in post-graduate studies at Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. and Millersville University, Millersville, Pennsylvania.

He enlisted in the United States Army, serving 1942 – 1945 and taking part in several campaigns in the European Theatre. Before serving in Europe, he studied at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to become a medic.

Pastor Gallion was ordained by the Maryland Synod, United Lutheran Church in America, May 24, 1951, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of Christ Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Maryland. He served as pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, Oakland, Maryland, 1951 – 1953; Holy Communion Lutheran Church, Yeagertown, Pennsylvania, 1953 – 1957; St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1957 – 1965, where his work included specialized ministry with the deaf population; Salem Lutheran Church, Dover, Pennsylvania, 1984 – 1990; and Rohler’s Lutheran Church, Dover, Pennsylvania, 1991 – 2010, when he retired.


At various times, Pastor Gallion served as member, secretary, and chair of the Central Pennsylvania Synod Committee on Ministry with Deaf Persons; member of the Central Pennsylvania Synod Commission on Mission and Ecumenism; member of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Task Force on Barrier Free Buildings; pastor for the Field Education component, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg; member of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Task Force on Pastoral Care; member of the Center Committee, Lutheran Social Services, South Region; secretary and dean of the North York Conference, Lower Susquehanna Synod; president of the Dover Ministerium; member of the Advisory Council, New Hope Ministries – Dover Center; instructor, Department of English Bible, Gettysburg College; and instructor, “Ministry with Deaf People,” Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

He was a contributing writer, Complete Guide to Employing Persons with Disabilities, editor, Henry McCarthy and author of “The Johnstown Experience: An Adventure in Awareness Training.”
On October 14, 1967, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lemoyne, Pennsylvania, Pastor Gallion was married to Susan Elizabeth Thompson Gallion, who survives him. His children survive him: Lesley Noelle Jackson, Stephen Parker Gallion and wife Janet, and Michael Anthony Gallion and wife Kathy. He is survived by grandson Thomas Gallion and wife Michelle, granddaughter Megan Guise and husband Benjamin, granddaughter Nicole Beyer and husband Andrew, and grandsons Aaron and Lyle Jackson. Several great-grandchildren survive him. He was pre-deceased by brother Harold and wife Marie, friend Lamar Libhart, and great-granddaughter Addison Guise.

His memorial service was held April 27, 2019, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, with the Rev. Kevin Shively officiating and the Rev. James R. Haun serving as homilist. Inurnment was private at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Annville, Pennsylvania.

The Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, synod necrologist

ELCA REGION 8 ARCHIVES
Managed by the United Lutheran Seminary Library

The ELCA Region 8 Archives are managed by the A. R. Wentz Branch of the United Lutheran Seminary Library, providing archival services for the eastern portion of Region 8. Sheila Joy, Archivist and Cataloger for ULS and Region 8, continues to manage the day to day operations of the Region 8 Archives. Evan Boyd, Library Director and Archivist of United Lutheran Seminary, supervises her work and sets archives policy.

2018 was a year of processing collections and assisting researchers via telephone, email, and walk-in. Goals for the Region 8 Archives this year included meeting with synod representatives, continuing to research and process materials from synod offices, and creating volunteer opportunities.

The Library hired its first student assistants and offered a paid summer internship. Students spent most of their time processing collections while our intern, Ms. Anne-Louise Monn, spent her internship processing six congregations, wrote for the Branches United blog, and reached out to synod offices to update contacts and strengthen communication with the synods.

Ms. Joy’s time is still split between three major areas of work: the Region 8 Archives, the Seminary Archives, and cataloging materials for the Wentz Library. Although the workload is heavy, Ms. Joy places processing of Region 8 collections a top priority in the summer. Having a student worker and summer intern helped to complete these projects in an efficient manner. The archives continue to actively seek student workers, interns, and volunteers to assist in its processing work.

Mr. Boyd and Ms. Joy submitted a proposal for the ELCA Regional Archives Grant to digitize and make available online the minutes of the General Synod and the General Council. The grant was approved in February 2019 and the grant period will be March 1, 2019-February 28, 2020. The archives is very excited to receive this grant of $2,907.60.

The library and archives continue to be an evolving organism and space continues to be an area of concern. Mr. Boyd and Ms. Joy have begun implementing a space reorganization to better utilize our building. Currently, around 170 active congregations have material in our archives, but we no longer accept materials for active congregations. We will continue to urge active congregations to manage their own archives, rather than have us care for them.

Major Actions, 2018: Received 67 research inquiries, up from 56 the previous. Hosted 8 in-person research visits. Received materials from Allegheny and Upper Susquehanna Synods. Processed 12 collections from Lower Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Metro DC, and Upper Susquehanna that have long waited to be processed. Successfully submitted an ELCA grant proposal for digitization


It continues to be a pleasure to serve the needs of Region 8 synods.

If you have questions, concerns, or interested in volunteering with the archives in any way, please contact Evan Boyd via email at eboyd@uls.edu

Evan Boyd, library director and archivist

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Fiscal 2018 in Review
Fiscal year 2018 is, as they say, “in the books”. We have a reasonably good story to tell, so let’s tell it.
Unrestricted/Undesignated Fund

Despite a decrease in mission support (more on that later), we ended fiscal 2018 with a $39,221 surplus.

How did we do that? Well, we received additional revenue from two different sources:

- $60,000 from a covenant with St. Paul’s, New Cumberland for pastoral services, and
- $28,000 from the bishop’s time at United Lutheran Seminary, though $8,000 of that went to seminarian support.

The second item obviously won’t repeat. However, this illustrates a significant point. As one revenue source declines, we are faced with a choice. Either reduce our mission (less staff, less outreach) or find additional revenue sources. As most companies do, the answer is usually to find additional revenue sources. I expect we will see more of this in future years.

We also significantly reduced expenses through reduced office space rental and small staff reductions due to attrition. The additional revenue and reduced expenses combined to allow an annual surplus for the first time since fiscal year 2013.

The one fly in our ointment was congregational mission support. After recovering in 2017 vs. 2016, mission support fell below even the 2016 level, to $2.522 million. The main reason for the decrease is that more congregations are faced with the decision to send mission support to the synod or keep the lights on. To nobody’s surprise, they are choosing to keep the lights on. The reality is that we might need to consider income sources other than mission support in the future.

The 2018 operating fund surplus leads to an increase in net assets. Net assets are basically the same as corporate retained earnings. They provide a measure of how well the synod operating fund could withstand a significant downturn.
Our goal is to reach a net asset value of $100,000, which we believe will provide a significant operating cushion for any future adverse events. Another year like 2018 will allow us to reach our goal.

**Forecast methodology**
This year we used a “forecast” method to estimate the amount of surplus or deficit at year-end. We took year to date actual amounts and estimated future revenue and expenses to determine where we would end up. The advantage of the method is that, as we see future trends changing, we can adjust the forecast for those events.

For most of 2018 we would forecast a total year surplus of between $60,000 and $70,000. August is an outlier, but that was my mistake. As we recognized that total year mission support would be well below what we expected, the total year forecast also decreased. The final January numbers ended up between the November and December forecast amounts.

For 2019, and with a year of experience, we hope to better refine our forecast methodology. The biggest variable is mission support, which has proven to be a wild card. But we are providing the best information we can with the data we have available. The forecast will better help us determine any mid-year expense adjustments we need to make.

**Investments (Legacy Fund)**
Through February 28 our investments were valued at $2,355,055, a $121,628 (5.4%) increase over the fiscal year 2019 beginning balance of $2,233,427. February’s results continued calendar year’s 2019 gains after December’s losses. The chart below shows the fiscal-year end (January 31) balances in the Legacy Fund for the past five years.
We will have two Legacy Fund withdrawals in 2019. The first will be for $14,089 to reimburse the unrestricted account for quarterly fees paid to Emerald, our investment advisors. The second will be for an estimated $108,599 for the annual distribution from the Legacy Fund.

**Restitution Fund**
As of January 31, 2019, the Restitution Fund had a cash balance of $3,410. The fund was allocated toward ABMN campaign costs but does not appear to have any current purpose. We are eliminating the Restitution Fund and distributing the cash balance into the Legacy Fund.

**Audit**
RKL performed an audit from March 20-22. This was a month earlier than normal so that we were not rushed in providing the final report before Synod Assembly. My thanks to Cathy Paul, Denise Ferguson, Linda Lubold, and Lucinda Bringman for their extremely valuable assistance during the audit.

**Activities and Goals within the Treasurer’s Office**
The following sections detail the current challenges and activities within the treasurer’s office.

**Better, more timely reporting**
This effort was very successful. A preliminary report on the prior month’s statement of activities was usually issued by around the 15th of the next month, sometimes as early as the 10th. A final report was usually issued by the end of the next month. We feel this helped synod staff better monitor our financial activities and contributed to achieving a year-end surplus.

**Accounting simplification**
This is still a goal we would like to achieve. However, we had higher priority issues to tackle during the year. We have not forgotten about this goal and hope to renew our efforts sometime during 2019.

**Automation**
One area we are currently working on is email distribution of quarterly mission support reports. Several congregations have volunteered to receive those reports via email. As sometimes happens with software/programming efforts, we ran into technical issues that have delayed our efforts. The issues are not unsurmountable; we just need more time to resolve them.

**Cash Management**
We are monitoring our cash balances more closely and moving excess cash from our checking to our money market accounts as appropriate to get a better interest rate. We are also planning to purchase short term CDs to obtain even better interest rates (and more cash) for synod activities.

**Other Activities Within the Treasurer’s Office**
- Monitored investment activity of the synod’s Legacy Fund.
- Reviewing the need to mail annually congregational treasurer remittance reports.
- Consulted with congregations about accounting and reporting issues.
**Treasurer’s office staff**

I cannot say enough good things about Cathy Paul and Denise Ferguson, who make my life and the lives of the synod staff much easier. If people have questions, they are ready to provide answers. It’s a true pleasure to work with them both.

**Conclusion**

We welcome questions relating to the synod’s finances. You can call Cathy, Denise, or me at the synod office, or email me at jstepansky@lss-elca.org.

Joseph M. Stepansky, treasurer
Independent Auditor’s Report

To the Synod Council
Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which comprise the statement of financial position as of January 31, 2019 and 2018, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management’s Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor’s Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor’s judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.
Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as of January 31, 2019 and 2018, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

June 24, 2019
Wyomissing, Pennsylvania
**ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The members of the Assembly Planning Committee are: Bishop James Dunlop; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Thomas McKee, synod secretary/assembly co-manager; Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Director for Mission Interpretation/assembly co-manager; the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, Synod Council, chair; the Rev. Becca Ajer Frantz; Tracey DePasquale, the Rev. Elizabeth George, the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, Director of Evangelical Mission for New Mission; the Rev. Richard Jorgensen, Director of Evangelical Mission for Renewing Mission; the Rev. Edward Robbins; the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown; the Rev. Gwenn Trout; and Cathy Deitrich and Charlie Roberts, synod staff.

The Assembly Planning Committee, a constitutionally established standing committee, is required to plan the annual assembly’s agenda and program to fulfill the constitutional mandate for “worship, edification and the legislative business of this synod conducted with the greatest possible involvement to those entitled to participate.” To that end, the committee met in 2018 on October 24 and December 13 and in 2019 on February 7 and March 28 with plans for additional meetings, if necessary, to complete assembly preparations.

During the committee’s initial meeting the results of the evaluations of the 2018 Synod Assembly Survey were reviewed and discussed.

During the October meeting, the committee work led to a motion that the committee recommends to Synod Council that the 2019 Synod Assembly be held on June 6, 7, 8 at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. The committee will proceed with plans as follows: Thursday evening opening worship, first ballot for bishop; Friday business with forums, edification; and Saturday, business. The dates for the annual assembly were adopted by Synod Council as presented by the committee.

The other meetings included conversation and planning around the agenda, rules of procedure, forums, rates and other integral parts that make our assembly run smoothly.

My sincerest thanks to the members of the Synod Assembly Planning Committee for their many hours of meetings, travel and other preparations for this year’s assembly. Our synod staff makes this planning and event run smoothly. I am eternally grateful for Marsha, Tom, Lucinda, Cathy and Charlie who guided me in chairing this committee and for the important behind the scenes work they all do.

The Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, chair

**CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**

The committee did not meet during the past year; however, the committee took action on a request to the ELCA to change the constitution and to change wording in our current constitution. Both actions do not require assembly approval.

1. A recommendation was made and approved that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council send a resolution to the ELCA Church Council, asking for a Constitutional Amendment granting power to the bishop to discipline rostered ministers who commit a felony or are named as a perpetrator in an indicated report of child abuse.

   **Resolution from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Regarding Rostered Ministers Convicted of a Felony or Named as a Perpetrator in an Indicated Report of Child Abuse**

   Whereas, the health and safety of all God’s children are of the highest concern of this church;

   Whereas, the current law requires reporting of all inappropriate behavior between adult and children;

   Whereas, current statues require evidence and appropriate due process, which may continue over an unduly long period of time;

   Whereas, applicants cannot be entranced into the Candidacy Process if they cannot receive clearance to work with children or if allegations of inappropriate sexual behavior have been made against them;

   Whereas, it is expensive to congregations to provide salary and benefits to rostered ministers when suspended and waiting for the outcome of legal action and disruptive to the congregation’s mission and ministry; therefore, be it

   Resolved, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council request that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America direct its Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to propose amendments to Chapter 20 of the ELCA constitution that would allow a synodical bishop automatically the options of disciplining a rostered minister who has been convicted of a felony or named as a perpetrator in an indicated report of child abuse by the government by private censure and admonition; suspension from the role and functions of a minister of Word and Sacrament or a minister of Word and Service for a designated
period or until there is satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment; or recommendation to Synod Council that the Synod Council remove the rostered minister from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church or the roster of Ministers of Word and Service of this church.

2. With the approval of changing the name of the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund, the Constitution Committee will meet to recommend changes to our bylaws updating the wording in those areas that apply.

Carlotta “Chucki” Strevig, chair

FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE
The 2018-2019 members of the Finance and Budget Committee are Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; Joseph Stepansky, synod treasurer; Virgil Gibson, SC, chair, Joyce Frigm; Dawn Frees, SC; Wayne Gongaware; Alan Stump, SC; and Dee Wells. “It shall oversee the financial affairs of this synod; confirm that all obligations are being met and that mission support is forwarded to the churchwide office; exercise oversight responsibility for this synod’s investments, insurance, and banking procedures; receive the annual audit and the accompanying financial statements; and make recommendations to Synod Council on financial matters. It shall project anticipated income for the coming fiscal years and, based on anticipated income, program requests, and adopted goals, develop a proposed budget for recommendation to the Synod Council and Synod Assembly.”

The budget is developed with much input from the bishop and staff and their recommendation to this committee. With changing conditions in our congregations, it is difficult to project future Mission Support two years out. With careful attention to trends in giving, honest assessment of expenses needed to carry out our mission, and trust in the Holy Spirit to guide our decisions, we present an annual budget to each year’s Synod Assembly. This year, because the trend in Mission Support was declining, we decided to recommend to Synod Council that a Spending Authorization be implemented. This action by the Synod Council sets limits within the previously approved budget to maintain the stability of the synod’s overall fiscal condition. If the Mission Support trend reverses, the Spending Authorization can be modified accordingly.

Additionally, it is our duty to oversee the investment portfolio of this synod, in keeping with the Legacy Fund Investment Policy, which we reviewed this year and recommended a revision to Synod Council. The Vision for Mission Legacy Fund is managed by Emerald Partners, and annual distributions help to fund and support mission initiatives not funded through the current operating budget. Many missions are supported including the Konde Diocese, new worshiping communities, renewing congregations, and eliminating hunger.

We receive electronic reports monthly from the treasurer and meet regularly to discuss the status of our synod’s finances. We feel it is important that we keep a close watch on our financial position so that we can be more proactive in responding to any necessary changes.

Our synod is committed to reFORM + reNEW + reVISION. It is with these commitments in mind that we present our 2020 budget.

Virgil Gibson, chair

GIFTS DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE
The task of the Gifts Discernment Committee is to identify individuals to be nominated for all open officer positions. This year we needed to fill the nominations for vice president of the synod and secretary of the synod. It was the consensus of the committee to recommend Lucinda L. Bringman for vice president. It is Lucinda’s intention to resign after the first year in order to permanently offset the vice president’s election from the bishop’s and other officers’.

The committee interviewed six persons for the office of synod secretary. We appreciate all those who were willing to be interviewed for this position. It was the consensus of the committee to recommend that the Synod Council nominate Joyce E. Frigm, Nancy J. Martin, and the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel for synod secretary.

I would like to thank all those who serve as committee members: the Rev. Eric Anderson; Bishop James Dunlop; the Rev. Thomas McKee; Deborah Clark, staff; the Rev. Doug DeStephano; Allen Stump, SC; Holly Freas-Webster; Robert Walton; and M. Jane Wigand.

Stella Ludwig, chair

MISSION COMMITTEE
The responsibility of the Mission Committee is to fulfill its charge as articulated in the synod’s constitution: to uphold the vision and goals of this synod by proposing, developing, maintaining, and promoting priority ministries and by advocating that these priority ministries receive adequate financial and human resources.

Since the 2018 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, the Mission Committee was tasked with duties to follow the plan laid out in the Preliminary Identification Process Leading to the Election of a Bishop,
“Mission Committee: Reference Process section #4 (current mission statement, mission documents may need to include information from Renewal Team report, consider if SC has adopted any strategic planning). Develop set of questions designed to recognize conferences’ understanding of our synod’s mission (#5).”

The committee met in order to help form the questions shared with conference assemblies in preparing and reviewing the documents provided to our 2019 voting members for the election of bishop. Our committee put together six questions. Three questions for the document titled “A Bishop’s Gifts for Mission” and three for the document titled, “Mission Snapshot.”

As always, the Mission Committee is only a partner in the many wonderful ministries that are happening in the congregations and by the people of our Lower Susquehanna Synod. We are united by Christ in doing God’s work in this place.

The members of the Mission Committee are: the Rev. Kathleen J. Baker; the Rev. Matthew Best, Synod Council; the Rev. Sharron Blezard, assistant to the bishop; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; the Rev. J. Richard Eckert; the Rev. Joel Folkemer, chair, Synod Council; Holly Freas-Webster, Emma Johns, Synod Council; the Rev. Richard Jorgensen Jr., director for evangelical mission; Jennifer Lau, Synod Council; the Rev. Jillian Riddle, Synod Council; Stephanie Strauss, Synod Council; and Allen Stump, Synod Council.

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PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee of the Lower Susquehanna Synod serves to support Synod Council through administration of and interpretation of its personnel policies. It reviews salaries, job descriptions, and other pertinent policies to make educated recommendations to Synod Council and other related committees. Members of this committee include: the Rev. Thomas McKee, personnel officer; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Martha Boyd; the Rev. Elizabeth George; Kay Hinkle, SC; Gary Laabs; Linda Long, SC; the Rev Timothy Sadler; Zachary Weiss, SC, chair; and Joanne Wilhelm.

Based on recommendations from the bishop and discussion, the Personnel Committee recommended the following salary and housing allowances for 2019 to Synod Council: Bishop Dunlop, $99,000; the Rev Thomas McKee, $79,900; the Rev Robert Blezard, $65,600; the Rev Sharron Blezard, $65,600; the Rev Richard Jorgensen, $79,300; the Rev Jennifer Hope-Tringali, $30,400 (half time). Also recommended was a 2% increase for all remaining staff. All salary recommendations were approved by Synod Council.

The committee also made recommendations to the Finance and Budget Committee for a 2.2% increase for salary and benefits for the 2020 budget (based on publicly available national data on salaries and cost of living).

Additionally, the Personnel Committee addressed its responsibility to review the personnel policies and job descriptions through careful reading of and thoughtful discussion around these documents. The committee determined the personnel policies are comprehensive and need no revision at this time. Job descriptions will be revised for formatting and content (including the addition of a job description for Cathy Paul) with the acknowledgement that these documents are subject to change at the bishop’s discretion.

The committee is dedicated to supporting the staff of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and is energized by the ministry we share together.

Zachary J. Weiss, chair

CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

As the body of Christ, we the church participate in God’s mission of continually making all things new. The Candidacy Committee helps identify and guide prospective leaders through the discernment process in order to become rostered ministers. Those leaders then in turn help equip others to work in this world doing Gods’ work to serve their neighbors.

The Candidacy Committee meets almost monthly both at the synod offices and at United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg Campus. Interviews are conducted at both sites while the seminary campus visits allow us to conduct interviews and to have some time to interact with the students over lunch after attending chapel with them.

In these interviews we follow the same manual that all other synods follow. Though the grapevine says there are no set guidelines for becoming a rostered minister, both the manual and all forms an applicant may need are found at the ELCA website for everyone and anyone to see.

Each year the committee conducts a day long retreat in order to give the candidates and future applicants some information that is outside the normal course work. This year the retreat was held at St. John’s Herr Estate in Columbia where once again the most popular speaker was Bishop Dunlop conducting a question and answer period.

Many thanks for all of the dedicated pastors, deacons and other members of the baptized priesthood who make up this committee.
As of March 1, 2019, the following individuals have come under the care of the Candidacy Committee following a positive entrance decision. Please note that while candidates are identified by roster, those roster classifications are subject to change as individuals struggle with their sense of call and discern where God is leading them.

**Minister of Word and Sacrament**
- DeAnn Books
- Scott Brubaker
- Thomas Busteed
- Richard Cassem II
- Carla Christopher
- Jessica Davis
- Jay Eckman
- Michael Faust
- Mark Fischer
- Angela Hammer
- Melissa Hoffman
- Sharon Kaya
- Jessica Lee
- Jennifer Morris
- Susan Mull
- Kurt Nielsen
- Benjamin Olewiler
- Emily Orner
- Elizabeth Peter
- Pál Pusztai
- Susan Scott
- Keith Shively
- Troy Spencer
- Vanessa Storlie
- Kathleen Stump
- Rebekah Thomas
- Rodney Warfield
- Michael Zimmerman

**Minister of Word and Service**
- Stephen Boyhont
- Margaret Folkemer
- Holly Gainor
- Robert Kivlan
- Gregory Neuhauser
- Mindy Shively
- Timothy Swartz
- Susan Scott
- Keith Shively
- Troy Spencer
- Vanessa Storlie
- Kathleen Stump
- Pál Pusztai
- Mary Louise Aims
- Megan McClinton

The following individuals have been given approval for assignment to the Roster of the ELCA:

**Minister of Word and Sacrament**: Wicky Barnes III, Jay Eckman, Mark Fischer, Kathleen Stump

**Minister of Word and Service**: David Hope-Tringali

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### Statistical Summary of Action Taken by LSS Candidacy Committee March 2018 – February 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Positive Entrance</th>
<th>Entrance Postponed</th>
<th>Entrance Denied</th>
<th>Positive Endorsement</th>
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<th>Endorsement Withdrawn</th>
<th>Positive Approval</th>
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**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE**

The committee finalized its work on the Salary Development Worksheets for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service which were presented to the 2018 Assembly. Both worksheets were approved as presented and remain in use. Using the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for December 2018, released January 11, 2019, the CPI increased 1.9 percent for the 12 months ending December 2018 which was the first time the 12-month change has been under 2.0 percent since August 2017. The decrease in December was due to sharp food and energy decreases, skewing the CPI for the year. As of November 2018, the CPI was 2.2 percent which was more representable of the rest of the year. Based upon the CPI, the recommendation of the Personnel Committee for a 2.2 percent increase to the Finance and Budget Committee for staff salary and an increase of 2.8 percent in Social Security payments percent for 2019, the committee recommends an increase of 2.2 percent in the “Unadjusted Minimum Salary” for BOTH Ministers of Word and Sacrament and for Ministers of Word and Service for the fiscal year 2020.

**For Ministers of Word and Sacrament**

- The recommended minimum salary with no years of experience, no parsonage: $52,290.
  
  [2018 Unadjusted Minimum Base Salary $51,165 * 1.022 = $52,290]

- The recommended minimum salary with no years of experience, parsonage provided: $36,390.
  
  [2018 Unadjusted minimum Base Salary $35,606 * 1.022 = $36,390]
**For Ministers of Word and Service**

The recommended minimum salary with no years of experience $44,023.

[2018 Unadjusted minimum Base Salary $43,075 * 1.022 = $44,023]

The spreadsheets and guidelines for completion are available on our synod website at www.lss-elce.org/roster-ministers/ under Salary Guidelines. It is this committee’s belief that many rostered ministers and their congregational councils are not consulting the guidelines or do not know how to use the guidelines as a base for discussion and determining salary. Therefore, the committee will present an educational piece on using the form at the 2019 Synod Assembly.

A sub-committee was formed to address some concerns about the Salary Development Worksheet. This sub-committee is tasked with making recommendations for changes at our next meeting which will not go into effect until after 2020.

The committee is also researching whether the current housing allowance falls in line with current housing costs. There is concern that the housing allowance is not adequate given the sharp rise in housing costs, thus discouraging first-call pastors and pastors needing to move to accept a call due to the financial impact upon them and their families. Congregations in the call process should consider average housing costs in their geographical area and current property taxes when extending a call until this committee has time to formulate any changes.

This committee was tasked with reviewing the parental leave policy which will be done in the coming months.

Committee membership comprises laity and rostered ministers who are gifted in the areas of human resources, economics and finance. Current members are as follows: the Rev. Thomas Bruner, the Rev. Thomas McKee, the Rev. Rob Blezard (who filled in for the Rev. Thomas McKee when unavailable), the Rev. Debbie Mahady, the Rev. Doug Johnson, the Rev. Stan Reep, Jered Hock, Esq., and Virgil Gibson (Synod Council liaisons), Bishop Jim Dunlop, Joseph Stepansky (synod treasurer), Ted Shumaker, June Wolf, Robert Getz, and Debbie Clark (Executive Assistant for the Bishop’s Office).

The Rev. Debbie Mahady, chair

**COMMITTEE OF DEANS**

Each of the 14 conferences of the Lower Susquehanna Synod is served by a dean and a secretary. These two positions are elected in alternate years at the Conference Spring Assembly. Each term is for two years, and each dean and secretary may serve three terms. Deans are elected in years ending in odd numbers and secretaries in the even years.

“First and last, the office of conference dean is an office of daily prayer…” (from the Dean’s Manual). Each conference dean is asked to pray for the congregations, rostered ministers, and seminarians, as well as for the bishop and the staff of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

The conference deans serve as an extension of the bishop’s office on the territory of the synod. Within the conference, the dean:

- Leads conference meetings and assemblies;
- Cares for the development of the church;
- Provides leadership to congregations in the call process, including arrangement of interim pastors to congregations in transition and installing newly-called pastors in their congregation; and
- Serves as a liaison between the synod office and the congregations of the conference.

The deans gather every other month or so throughout the year at the United Church Center, with October’s meeting expanded to a retreat setting for deeper conversation and learning. These meetings are a time for reports from the bishop and staff on issues important to our congregations and shared ministry as synod, a time for sharing among the deans, and to receive occasional presentations from groups/entities related to the church. We also have a chance to give feedback to the bishop and staff, who seek to serve our congregations well.

This year these conversations concerned topics such as synodical support for renewal through the R3 program and other mission efforts, the re-structuring proposals for conference boundaries, the difficulties imposed on the larger church and synod staff by pastoral boundary violations, the seminary unification and ensuing difficulties requiring the special service of Bishop Dunlop, and our retreat took on the topic of racism, with anti-racism training offered by Pastor Matt Lenahan and Sr. Dottie Almoney who attended such training through the ELCA.

At September’s meeting, the following officers were elected:

- Chair – the Rev. Dr. Stephen Verkouw, Lancaster Conference
- Vice-Chair – the Rev. Denise Horn, Hanover Conference
- Member-at-large – the Rev. Janyce Jorgensen, York Conference
- Secretary – the Rev. Jeffrey Compton, who has continued in this service to the Committee of Deans for many years.
I’m sure I speak also for the bishop and synod staff in thanking the deans for their collegial service and participation in these deanly conversations:

Chambersburg Conference - the Rev. Denise B. Horn
Gettysburg Conference - the Rev. Michael E. Allwein
Hanover Conference - the Rev. Elizabeth D. George
Harrisburg Conference - the Rev. Kirk C. Kerns
Lancaster Conference - the Rev. Dr. Stephen P. Verkouw
North Lancaster Conference - the Rev. Timothy L. Craven

North York Conference - the Rev. Jason P. Northridge
Perry Conference - the Rev. David A. Sensenig
South York Conference - the Rev. Douglas L. DeStephano
Upper Dauphin Conference - the Rev. Jonathan L. Jenkins
West Cumberland Conference - the Rev. David A. Sensenig
West Shore Conference - the Rev. Alexander R. Martini
York Conference - the Rev. Janye C. Jorgensen

We also thank those conference secretaries who occasionally attend these meetings in place of their absent dean.

The deans are grateful for our bishop, the Rev. Jim Dunlop; the assistants to the bishop, the Revs. Rob and Sharron Blezard; synod secretary, the Rev. Thomas McKee; Director for Evangelical Mission, the Rev. Richard Jorgenson; and synod vice president, Lucinda Bringman. Their reports and experiences bring breadth and depth to our conversations. We also offer thanks to Cathy Deitrich, who prepares meeting agenda and provides other administrative support, including coffee and tea for each of our meetings.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Verkouw, chair

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Mutual Ministry Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod Council and exists to provide support and counsel to the bishop. The committee meets with the bishop approximately three times a year and is available to meet additionally at the bishop’s request or by request of the committee. Committee members were identified in consultation with the bishop and represent a cross section of members of congregations of the Lower Susquehanna Synod including Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service, and ELCA related agencies and institutions.

Members of the committee for 2018-2019 were: Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president, Synod council; the Rev. Shawn M. Berkebile; Tracey DePasquale; the Rev. Aaron M. Erdley; Deacon Michelle J. Huth; the Rev. Michael J. Martine; Joseph A. Ricci; the Rev. LaDonna E. Thomas.

Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president of synod

ABX (ALPHA BETA CHRISTOS)

ABX is a three-year program designed to help integrate first-call rostered ministers into the life of our synod, to foster collegiality, and to provide tools and education for first-call ministry contexts. ABX meets monthly (September – May) for worship, reflection on a particular topic, time for checking in with one another, and lunch and conversation. Topics this year included Ministry and Addiction Disorders; Spiritual Grounding and Practice in Context: Emerging Paradigms in Generosity; Intersectionality and the Gospel; Conversation with Bishop Dunlop; Policies, Procedures, and Personnel; Leadership and the Courage to be Vulnerable; and Weddings and Funerals.

If participants desire to be matched with a mentor, we try to facilitate a successful match. Occasionally participation in additional seminars or educational programs, such as Lutheran Day at the Capitol, are offered at a reduced cost to ABX participants. This year participants were given a copy of Grief: The Event, the Work, the Forever by Lynn Shiner and Lisa Zoll.

ABX meets the requirement for first-call theological education and provides approximately 30 hours of continuing education time each year. First-call rostered ministers also attend the annual Region 8 First-Call Retreat held in November of each year at Capital Retreat Center near Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. Congregations are expected to make financial and time provision for their new ministers to attend these required formation events. The cost for ABX and the retreat are split equally between our synod and congregations.

The Rev. Sharron R. Blezard, assistant to the bishop, first call education and ABX coordinator

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCE TEAM (CLRT)

The Congregational Leadership Resource Team (CLRT) exists to help congregations and leaders to develop skills and embody practices that foster health and wholeness within the Body of Christ. The team utilizes resources such as Healthy Congregations, Bowen Family Systems Theory, and the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center to provide a scripturally based framework and employ problem-solving
strategies which are non-anxious and mission-driven for support and guidance in conflict mediation and resolution, clergy coaching, mutual ministry, and support of congregations in leadership transition.

The team is comprised of lay and rostered members of the Lower Susquehanna Synod who are specifically trained to assist in these ways. CLRT is available for conversation and consultation by contacting Pr. Rob Blezard, assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Those currently serving on the team are: Pr. Dan Biles, Pr. Caitlin Kurtz, Pr. Glenn Ludwig, Pr. Connie Mentzer, Pr. Tasha Genck Morton, Pr. Mark Russell, Pr. Bill Snyder, Mrs. Lois Strause, Pr. Mark Russell, chair, and Pr. Rob Blezard, synod staff liaison.

**DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION FOR RENEWING MISSION**

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)*

I was first called as our synod’s second Director for Evangelical Mission almost seven years ago. I was blessed to follow the faithful ministry of the Rev. David Fisher, who did so much to set the stage for the ministry we continue to share together. When I first discerned my call, I was moved by my love of Christ and my love for the people of God. And I continue to believe in the mission we share together throughout our synod. I have always believed that my primary role on our synod staff is to partner with you as we seek to serve God ever more faithfully.

For the past year and a half, we have been leading the first round of our synod’s R3 Renewal Process, and I am pleased to say that we have seen 23 congregations move through process, and together we have grown in our faith and in our love toward one another and in our ministry among our neighbors. Throughout this process, I have been grateful for the support of our whole synod staff, and especially for the partnership of Charlie Roberts in leading this ministry and for the administrative support of Cathy Deitrich. I am also grateful for the ongoing partnership of our consultant and presenter, the Rev. Dr. Dave Daubert. And finally, I must express my gratitude for 20 coaches who have accompanied the congregations and leaders throughout this R3 process. This ministry would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of our coaches who have helped all of us learn and grow more fully.

In the past year and a half, we have also seen over one dozen congregations participate in our synod’s Readiness for Renewal Process, and I rejoice that we are able to offer this opportunity for congregations to explore their mission and purpose, to reflect on what it means to be a healthy congregation, to practice hospitality and to plan for the future.

And looking forward to second half of 2019, there are several major programs which we will offer to leaders and congregations who are being renewed in their ministry and mission. First, I rejoice that we will launch a second round of R3 beginning in September 2019. If your congregation is interested, please contact me as soon as possible, so we can talk and discern together if this may be the right time and opportunity to help you move forward in mission.

We will also be continuing the Readiness for Renewal Program this fall, and again, this is a wonderful opportunity to learn about possibilities for renewed ministries and mission.

Finally, I rejoice that this fall, we will offer a six-month continuing education opportunity with our Certificate in Missional Preaching. I am especially excited that our primary presenters for this training will be Paul Scott Wilson, author of the book, *The Four Pages of the Sermon,* and Traci Radosevic, the Dean of the Academy of Biblical Storytelling. This training is intended not just for rostered ministers but also will include opportunities for congregations to learn and grow together as we reflect on how the Gospel is proclaimed in our midst.

In addition to coordinating these opportunities for us learn and grow together, I also continue to travel throughout our synod to meet with congregations and leaders. I am delighted to lead leadership retreats, to preach on Sunday mornings and to also teach in whatever ways are most helpful. I believe that God has woven our hearts and lives together, so that we may continue to bear witness to God’s loving purpose among us. I also continue to believe that the one who began a good work among us will indeed “bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6b).

As always, I would like to affirm that the ongoing renewal of the church is always God’s work among us and through us, and I rejoice that we are partners in this ministry. I am always grateful to my colleagues on our synod staff who continue to encourage and equip me in this work and for my many colleagues and partners throughout our synod and beyond, who share in this ministry. I am grateful that God has called us to share this ministry together, and I look forward to seeing where God will lead us in the future.

The Rev. Richard E. Jorgensen, Jr., director for evangelical mission for renewing mission
I have spent time with other Region 7 and 8 DEMs for planning and networking purposes for future initiative. I have also attended Churchwide Domestic Mission's All Staff meeting and DEM day in March, undergoing what I value as important training in unconscious bias, storytelling, and techniques to help large groups implement strategies to problems. One churchwide initiative that I have become involved with at Bishop Dunlop's recommendation is the “Experiment Measurement Team” which is a team consisting of people from both churchwide and synodical groups. We are working toward measuring the impact of the “Five Synod Experiment,” of which our synod is one of the five. We have met multiple times to determine what needs to be measured and are currently working on the methods that will be used to collect data.

**Syndical Emphases**

The DEM for Congregational Renewal, the Rev. Richard Jorgensen, and I collaborate frequently as renewing and new mission areas often overlap and interplay. I co-facilitated four pre-screening interviews for potential mission developers and re-developers. I am also working with the Rev. Richard Jorgensen to identify leaders to recommend for congregational vitality training in August 2019. I attended several conference meetings, providing educational opportunities for Mission Insite, along with new mission visioning.

I researched and contributed to the synod profile being prepared for Synod Assembly, using Mission Insite to create reports that show our synodical demographics. I am working with the Synod Assembly planning team to coordinate specifically cohesive programming for our theme, “Hungry for God's Mission,” and to weave this theme through worship, programming, and forums. I am also contributing to the Worship Committee’s coordination of worship for our Bishop’s Convocation, Healthy Leaders’ Retreat, Renewal of Vows, and Synod Assembly.

As far as synod-wide initiatives, I researched and completed a study using Mission Insite to formulate a plan for new conference lines for our synod and presented this plan to the Committee of Deans. I have been working on a resolution for our synod to become a “Welcoming Synod” under the churchwide AMMPARO initiative.

**Congregational and Community-Based Emphases**

This past year, I have continued meeting with congregations and launching workshops for our demographic platform, Mission Insite. Overall, I held 17 workshops with 109 congregational leaders, representing 80 congregations and worshiping communities. In addition, I have worked with many congregations and conferences to implement the use of Mission Insite. I am pleased to report that many congregations have begun to map their members and compare demographics of membership with the surrounding community.

Over this past year, I have met in person with 99 leaders of congregations, both pastors and lay leaders, to discuss and move forward with new mission ideas in their contexts. I have begun to facilitate the gathering of two new groups of leaders for new initiatives. One effort is in conjunction with Charlie Roberts and the identification of the need for digital outreach and faith formation throughout our synod. Another is a collaborative gathering of the leaders of congregations who surround an area of growth around the Carlisle Pike corridor who are visioning how to collaborate to reach out to this growing community.

I continued to gather six leaders of Communities of Hope together to support and develop leadership growth and ministry discernment and am now facilitating their transition to leadership under a new pastor to be called this spring. In addition, I have been providing Sunday coverage at St. Paul, New Cumberland, during the months of March and April.

I have worked with United Lutheran Seminary’s lifelong learning program to implement a certificate for lay leaders. In addition, I have taught a Praxis class at United Lutheran Seminary this semester, entitled “Missional Evangelism: Creativity in Context,” which concluded with a presentation to multiple congregations in Gettysburg, along with the implementation of three new mission ideas for their community. The class was very well received by students, faculty, congregation members, and is being featured in an upcoming article. I hope to continue offering this class in a variety of formats in the future.

The Rev. Jennifer Anne Hope-Tringali, *director of evangelical mission for new mission*
OFFICE FOR FAITH FORMATION AND YOUTH MINISTRY

“I have much to do, so I shall spend the next three hours in prayer....”  
Martin Luther, Protestant reformer

Call it reformation, revitalization, or renewal, congregations within our synod are listening intently to the Spirit and trying to respond in ways that bring the Gospel to life and that infuses their congregations and neighborhoods with a vital and living faith. For congregations to enter fully into the transformative work of God that is happening through the Spirit in community, their leaders must be open to entering into the spiritual formation that happens personally and communally and that often begins with prayer.

Listening for God or encountering our Lord’s presence daily in faithful practices like prayer does not necessarily require resources, but our office continues to look for opportunities to help accompany both lay leaders and clergy in these practices, as needed and as requested. Resource Center Administrator Marty Shifflett and I strive to make our synod Resource Center a trusted source for human and practical resources to help equip congregations, teams, and individuals. As a result, we are growing the diversity of resources online and in the office available to congregations.

In the synod Office for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, that has also meant accompanying congregations and their leaders in a number of specific ministries these past 18+ months:

- Congregations and their congregational teams in intentional renewal (R3)
- Congregations and their teams in the Readiness for Renewal
- Congregational leaders in the Vibrant Faith University Faith Formation Training
- Congregational leaders in spiritual formation at the annual Bishop’s Convocation and at the annual Healthy Leaders Retreat

And while these specific ministries have impacted well over 100 synod congregations, our office also continues to provide event planning and management for ministries to youth and their families, congregational staff, and in partnership with outdoor ministries and service learning ministries like LutheranHANDS.

Equipping young leaders, while encouraging cooperation, in ongoing ministries with youth like our annual Leadership Training Camp continues to lead to a number of our young people discerning a call to church vocations or to careers that allow them to volunteer and serve in their congregational settings. Our annual synod youth events like Winterfest and ALiVE give youth and their leaders a glimpse of the power of being part of a larger community of faith. Emerging ministries that engage us in new mission continue to include the Harrisburg Area Youth Initiative or HAYI, a cooperative online ministry resource called The Table, and partnering with outdoor ministries on the Growing Project at Wittel Farm.

At a time culturally, when our lives have become so busy and sometimes chaotic, Luther’s words become even more powerful. As we strive in our faith formation ministries to help equip others to engage more deeply in the relationship we have with God through Christ Jesus on a daily basis, we are truly helping others to grow into more faithful disciples.

The Gospel of Christ is lived out, thanks to the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Kingdom of God becomes nearer.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation & youth ministry

DIRECTOR FOR MISSION INTERPRETATION

God’s Mission in Lower Susquehanna Synod
At our 2018 Synod Assembly, we shared the renewal team report which identified the following missional priorities named across our synod:

- Deepening the faith of existing lay leadership and inspiring new disciples to nurture vital congregations.
- Deepening the faith lives of our youngest members in their first third of life.
- Developing new models for congregational life together that help us nurture deeper connections with God, one another, and the world.
- Speaking and teaching about the relationship between Jesus, justice, and the Christian life.
- Starting new missions that re-root us in gospel-starved communities.
- Strengthening our leaders to proclaim God’s Word with passion and power.

As part of a post-assembly survey, we asked our 2018 Synod Assembly Voting Members to identify the top two priorities for our life together (or three, if there was an area of priority not on the list). By a clear margin, the top two focus areas identified by assembly participants were:

- Developing new models for congregational life together that help us nurture deeper connections with God, one another, and the world.
- Deepening the faith lives of our youngest members in their first third of life.
The work we did together last year shaped how we moved forward and focused on these missional priorities. We have honed in on the building blocks, tools, and trainings that focus on congregational vitality and help congregations grow as communities of Jesus; support current congregational renewal and redevelopment efforts; encourage risk taking, missional imagination and holy experimentation; recognize opportunities for mission and respond with fluidity; and encourage congregations to identify and respond to the physical, emotional and spiritual hungers around us.

**Equipping Leaders, Encouraging Cooperation and Engaging in New Mission**

During our 2018 season of listening and renewal process, members of our synod requested more opportunities to grow, strengthen and equip spiritual leaders, particularly in the areas of congregational renewal, discipleship, proclamation, spiritual practices, faith formation, evangelism, stewardship, social justice, and advocacy.

To faithfully respond to God’s mission for us in this time and place, we are excited to share that in deeper cooperation and partnership with the Episcopal Church in Central Pennsylvania and the state-wide Stevenson School For Ministry (SSFM), there are more opportunities than ever before to grow, strengthen and equip lifelong spiritual leaders. The SSFM is a learning community forming lay and ordained leadership for the church of today and the future. We have written new five- and ten-week courses that directly respond to your identified ministry needs. Our goal is to expand the online course offerings fall of 2019 and in 2020. View more details online here: [https://bit.ly/2VrZJqy](https://bit.ly/2VrZJqy).

I invite you to consider any of these new, transformational courses designed to help all the baptized keep Jesus at the center of our lives.

**Development Efforts**

To grow our sustainability, we are working even more collaboratively with the Episcopal Diocese of Central PA. In addition to the equipping opportunities shared above, we have identified a variety of grant opportunities, including one significant multi-year Lilly Endowment grant, that would deepen our capacity to respond to the urgent and practical realities of ministry. We have begun submitting cooperative applications for grant funding that would help us expand existing equipping opportunities and increase access to ministry practices and tools that keep Christ at the center of mission and ministry.

Deacon Marsha Roscoe, director for mission interpretation

**TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM**

The Transformational Ministry Team (TMT) works under the synod Mission Committee and does much of the field work involved with the continued mission of our synod. The TMT works closely with our synod’s director for evangelical mission, the Rev. Richard Jorgensen Jr.

Throughout the year the TMT participates in and leads workshops, training sessions, coaching, planning, and visioning for our synod, especially around the areas of redevelopment and renewal of congregations. The TMT has been largely involved in the R3 initiative of our Lower Susquehanna Synod. A few examples of their work include: Congregational Story Matters workshops, Congregational Guiding Principles workshops, Congregational Purpose Statement workshops, R3 Planning/Visioning, R3 Coaching, Forum Leaders at Synod Assembly, and more.

The members of the Transformational Ministry Team are: the Rev. Brian Biery, Seminarian Carla Christopher, the Rev. Titus Clarke, the Rev. Newell Embley III, the Rev. Joel Folkemer (Synod Council liaison), the Rev. Richard Jorgensen Jr. (director for evangelical mission), the Rev. Mary Anne Kingsborough, the Rev. Dione Klepetka, the Rev. Kathy Kuehl, Jennifer Lau (Synod Council), the Rev. Tina Minnich, the Rev. Brenda Ritterpusch, and the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown.

The Rev. Joel Folkemer, synod council liaison

**VIBRANT FAITH UNIVERSITY: FAITH FORMATION RENEWAL TRAINING**

Nearly all non-Christians (identify with a faith other than Christianity or no faith at all) and lapsed Christians (identify as Christian but have not attended church within the past month) have a friend or family member who practices and prioritizes Christianity—but these believers may not be their ideal conversation partners when it comes to faith. For instance, more than six in 10 non-Christians and lapsed Christians (62%) say they would be open to talking about faith matters with someone who listens without judgment—the top quality they value—but only one-third (34%) sees this trait in the Christians they know personally.

_Barna Research Group, Reviving Evangelism Study, 2019_

Why begin a report on the Vibrant Faith training with statistics like these from Barna? Because Vibrant Faith is challenging their students to think about the ways we offer spiritual and faith formation to not only the “churched” in our culture, but the “unchurched” or disenfranchised. In many cases the disenfranchised or lapsed church-goer will not engage with those of us they consider “insiders.”
Instead, they are searching for a way to enter into faithful dialogue with those they perceive open to their questions, a less-judgmental listener perhaps. “But I’m not judgmental,” you might insist. Unfortunately, perception can become reality for those who are looking to re-enter a community of faith, especially with questions.

Much of what Vibrant Faith is striving to equip leaders to do is to find new ways to engage both those within their churches and those who are searching. They further strive to help leaders engage the people of God on all days, not only Sundays.

Deepening relationships with God in Christ Jesus and with one another in worship, prayer, scripture study and conversation, meeting Christ at His table, and gathering in faithful community is at the heart of spiritual formation and faith formation. While many of us enter into these practices and take them for granted, the unchurched or lapsed Christian needs different entry points for connecting them to God in their daily lives. Meanwhile, much of Vibrant Faith’s research has led to techniques to assist even the most faithful in revealing God’s will for us, equipping us to be faithful disciples and responding to the needs of others in ways that reflect Christ’s love for us all.

We partnered with Vibrant Faith, https://www.vibrantfaith.org/, an organization devoted to faithful leadership development, coaching, and faith formation, to help provide primarily online training, provided over the course of one calendar year, in three 10-week trimesters. Participants focused on intergenerational faith formation design for congregations, missional outreach to the uninvolved and unaffiliated, and utilizing digitally connected approaches to share faith formation.

Twelve synod pastors, congregational staff, and volunteers, plus three of our Episcopal partners, participated in the course during calendar year 2018. We were the first synod in the country to provide the training to a cohort group of leaders and to provide accompaniment by our Office for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry. About nine of our leaders completed that coursework. While we will not re-enter that training as a synod cohort, additional training continues to be available to individual leaders in 2019.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation & youth ministry

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The primary purpose of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Audit Committee is to assist the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of the synod’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and financial statement audit function. No officer of this synod or staff member serves on this committee, although the synod treasurer serves as a consultant. The synod vice president serves as the liaison to the Synod Council. The committee meets the requirements that at least two members of the committee should be certified public accountants.

Audit for the Year Ending January 31, 2018

The Audit Committee met with representatives of Reinsel Kuntz Lesher (RKL) to review the Independent Auditor’s Report and related communications for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2018. The report included the statement of financial statements of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which comprise the statement of financial position as of January 31, 2018, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the year then ended. RKL issued an unmodified opinion on those statements which are prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The committee recommended that the Synod Council approve the financial statements for fiscal year 2018 and made them publicly available on the synod website.

Current Members of the Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is currently comprised of Edward J. Straley, chair; Linda Bennett; Robert L. Rundle Jr.; and Carol L. Sieck. The committee is assisted by Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president, SC liaison; and Joseph M. Stepansky, synod treasurer, consultant.

Edward J. Straley, chair

BISHOP’S CONGREGATIONAL MISSION FUND COMMITTEE

The Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund Committee has been constituted to administer the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund. This fund, established by Synod Council, is supported by bequests, trusts, endowments, planned and deferred gifts, assets from closing congregations, gifts from merging and consolidating congregations, gifts received through the Always Being Made New Campaign, and gifts from other congregations, individuals, and entities. The assets of the fund shall be invested in a manner consistent with the purpose of the fund. The purpose of this fund is to provide initial funding support for the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries within the territory of this synod, such as funds to acquire sites and to provide grants to new mission congregations, funds to provide grants to congregations who have committed to special plans to expand their ministries, and funds to provide grants to congregations who have elected to relocate or consolidate with other congregations. In addition to the expenditures for these purposes, the fund may make loans to congregations, if, in the judgment of most of the committee, the purpose of the loan is consistent with the purpose described above and the loans are adequately insured.
The amount of money in the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund as of January 31, 2019, is $177,284.54. Most of this money is deposited in the Mission Investment Fund in Mission Plus or Mission Term Select 2-year funds. Not included in this amount is the $46,700 in an outstanding loan to Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Lancaster.

The Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund is one of the recipients of the proceeds of this synod’s Always Being Made New Campaign. The anticipated funds would provide an additional $750,000 to the fund. The additional funds donated through this campaign will enable our synod to partner with existing congregations, new worshipping communities, and developing congregations to feed God’s people who are hungry to respond to God’s Word. We are most thankful to those who are contributing to this campaign. You are making an important investment in God’s mission and ministry in our Lower Susquehanna Synod. Received for this fund through the campaign since its inception until January 31, 2019, is $194,402.12.

The members of the committee are Bishop James S. Dunlop; Joseph Stepansky, synod treasurer; the Rev. Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr., director of evangelical mission; the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, director of evangelical mission for new mission; the Rev. Robert J. Myallis; Terry Snyder; Angela Thomas; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president, and Jennifer Lau, Synod Council liaison. The Rev. Thomas E. McKee serves as scribe. The Rev. Joseph A. Veres served on this committee until he retired and moved from the territory of this synod.

The committee met on July 25, 2018. The committee reviewed the financial report. Concern was expressed about the outstanding balance on the loan to Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Lancaster. It was the consensus of the committee that these funds are needed at this time to help other congregations. The committee requested that Bishop Dunlop and Pastor McKee meet with the Congregation Council of Holy Spirit to see if its situation has improved enough for them to begin accelerating the repayment of their loan.

At this meeting a grant of $3,000 was awarded to St. Bartholomew United Church ELCA, Hanover. Most of this grant, $2,500, is to add 50 weeks of chair yoga to their already existing ministry of Christian yoga taught by Carrie Hoff, yoga that incorporates Christian scripture and Christian meditation. The ministry is an outreach to the community and opens the door to exposure to the St. Bartholomew congregation. The targeted audience for this ministry is the large senior citizen population in this area. The Executive InSite Report supports the fact that there are many seniors within a five-mile radius of St. Bartholomew’s church building. The remaining $500 is to provide funds for Carrie Hoff to equip others to begin such a ministry at their location.

The committee discussed the importance of placing information about the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund on our website. Included in the information planned for the website are information about the criteria used to award grants and a standard application form for a grant. The committee also discussed the importance of reporting on what was accomplished with the grant money. Reporting could take the form of a celebration, sharing with others what the supported ministries have accomplished. Including these reports on the website would enable members of our synod to know how the funds given to the Bishop’s Congregational Mission are being used and would encourage other congregations to expand their horizons and to engage in similar ministries.

This year Bishop Dunlop met with rostered ministers under forty years of age to hear their concerns and their joys about ministry. Through one of these conversations came the suggestion to change the name of the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. Synod Council acted on this suggestion at its February 16, 2019, meeting and officially changed the name to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The Constitution Committee will bring bylaw amendments to the 2019 Synod Assembly relating to this name change. Half of the offering received at the assembly will go to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund.

The members of this committee urge our rostered ministers, lay leaders, and congregations to support the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund with gifts and offerings. Your generosity will enable our congregations and other ministries to expand their mission, to take advantage of new opportunities, and to meet new challenges in order that we may be a vital church, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in this new day.

Thomas E. McKee, synod secretary

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM MINISTRIES

The Criminal Justice System Ministry (CJSM) Committee is eager to involve as many members as possible in our ministry as we are dedicated to addressing justice issues and to seeking loving care of everyone in God’s creation. The Mission Statement of our committee, “We are called through the gospel of liberation, hope, and justice to connect the church with the Criminal Justice System,” guides our meetings and actions on behalf of the incarcerated. Our Vision/Purpose Statement, “To increase awareness of the tremendous needs and ministry opportunities with those in the Criminal Justice System,” directs our efforts to educate and inform members of the LSS.

This committee has collected numerous resources and coordinated efforts to provide basic needs to the incarcerated and their families. We gather Baskets of Love, Backpacks of Love, books and T.O.S.S. items to remind incarcerated individuals and their families that they are not alone. We strive to be a live contact that shows incarcerated individuals that they are cared for and will be supported.
throughout incarceration and during reentry to their communities upon release. No matter the crime, people can and do, with God’s help, change.

We are called to seek justice and defend the oppressed. * Therefore we are currently researching, developing and producing several instructional videos that will be available for streaming next year. These videos will highlight the gross injustices within the Pennsylvania justice system and actions individuals and congregations can take toward rectifying these conditions. Members of our committee and formerly incarcerated individuals are willing to speak to congregations, Sunday School classes and other groups interested in criminal justice reform. Our speakers are flexible and can speak to any age group, school-age through adult. We also have a collection of primary resources about incarceration and how our criminal justice system fails to provide restorative justice.

We are looking forward to providing information about Criminal Justice Reform and will gladly speak to anyone to provide information and create a presentation that addresses your needs. Please feel free to contact our committee.

We have been blessed by the inspiration and guidance of Pastor Sadie Pounder, and we continually strive to fulfill her vision and mission addressing the needs of incarcerated people.

* Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

**COMMITTEE FOR GLOBAL MISSION**

The Committee for Global Mission is a Synod Council committee responsible for furthering the global mission of the Lower Susquehanna Synod. Members of this committee are Sister Dottie Almoney, chair; the Rev. Sharron Blezard, synod staff; Deacon Jan Davis; the Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke; the Rev. Faye Snyder; the Rev. Kevin Stout; Stephanie Strauss, Synod Council liaison; Cornelia Taylor; Sarah Person Williams; and consultants Christine Mummert; Richard Sarker; and Tracey DePasquale, executive director of LAMPa.

The committee strives to fulfill its responsibilities by raising awareness of the global mission of the church. The committee promotes and cooperates with the various Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ministries and Lower Susquehanna Synod such as: World Hunger; Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services; Lutheran World Relief; Hope for Haiti; the Malaria Campaign; and the Konde Diocese Partnership. On the more local level, the committee supports the Lower Susquehanna Synod and congregational ministries to include Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM). Members of the committee also travel to various locations to do hands-on ministries.

Over the past year the committee has place renewed emphasis on raising awareness and advocacy for particular issues. This past year, we sponsored a workshop with AMMPARO. Participants were taught how to lead the simulation that was available at the 2018 Youth Gathering in Houston. We continue to look at how we live in our global world and how we continue to welcome our global neighbors who come to our country in search of a better life. We also work hand in hand with LAMPa and its executive director, Tracey DePasquale. Most importantly, members of the committee engage in prayerful thought for victims, survivors, those in need, and for those serving the needy.

Committee members meet on a bi-monthly to quarterly basis and would welcome all wish to join. Please contact Sister Dottie Almoney at dottie@stpeterslutheran-lanc.org or the Rev. Sharron Blezard in the synod office for more information on how to get involved.

**KONDE DIOCESE COMMITTEE**

The Mission of the Konde Diocese Committee is to assist congregations and the bishop fulfill the covenant agreement between the Lower Susquehanna Synod and the Konde Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. This mission is fulfilled by providing opportunities to learn about our covenant relationship, encourage dialog, discovery, and ministry opportunities among congregations of this synod and congregations of the Konde Diocese, and where possible, encourage personal meetings by way of visits to our respective churches.

We offer you this report of the past year:

This was the first year in office for Bishop Edward Mwaikali. As the transition to new leadership began, the bishop and the staff of the diocese took time to establish new work patterns and relationships. In other words, it was a typical transition. The bishop took much time visiting the seven church districts (similar to our conferences) of the diocese. We encouraged him to visit as many of the congregations with whom we have congregation to congregation relationships.
Relationships were enhanced by the visit of five members of our synod in late July/early August. They visited their respective companion congregations, as well as the major institutions which the diocese bears responsibility for operating. Another opportunity for a synod sponsored trip will occur in 2020. This September and October we will begin orientation meetings for anyone interested in traveling next year. Additionally, Pastor Clifton Eshbach and two others attended a gathering of all the ELCA synods and ELCT dioceses with companion relationships. This first of its kind meeting gave both national church bodies a great deal of information to consider as they work on strengthening their ties.

Major achievements were made in 2018 by our Medical Needs Task Force, chaired by Pastor Beth Schlegel. Our work is with the Itete Hospital. The hospital has developed a master plan for development and expansion. Our task force follows the lead of the hospital’s plan to support them with prayer, advice and material support. Working within our synod, as well with third party organizations with an interest in health care, we were able to help the hospital secure: sterilizers for baby bottles, purchase two labor and delivery beds, two refrigerators for milk and formula, seven monitors for fetal health, four-foot operated suction aspirators, and one vertical sterilizer. Thank you very much for your support of the Itete Hospital. The next project is to assist in purchasing a washing machine for bed linens, scrubs, etc. Our display table has information about this project.

The committee continues to work on improving the lines of communication between our churches. This is easier said than done. It requires persistence and patience on our part. While personal visits are the best way to solidify this communication, we continue to work with the bishop and his staff to find ways to improve communications between congregations.

The committee strives to work with individuals, congregations, and other third-party organizations to further the mission of our covenant agreement. As previously mentioned, such partnerships have help support the expansion of the Itete Hospital, especially their ability to provide health care to women, pregnant women, new born and young children. The hospital has opened a new building to provide care to these groups, and our partnerships with you, as well as our international partners, are helping to improve health care in this rural area.

Several people from the committee are available to come to your congregation to discuss this unique partnership in ministry. We also are seeking persons interested in serving as a member of the committee.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support of this most vital ministry of our synod. We continue to focus on education, health care and church to church relations as our priorities. Your ongoing support ensures that these goals may be addressed. There is more to accomplish, and we invite your participation in future endeavors.

The Rev. Clifton Eshbach, chairperson

TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Racial Justice Task Force was formed in April 2017 at the request of Bishop James S. Dunlop. At the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2016, the voting members adopted a Resolution on Racial Justice (CA 16.05.22) that “strongly encourages every synod to develop or maintain resources for anti-racism training for rostered leaders and congregations at least every two years.” The LSS task force was charged with compiling a list of resources and assessing how our synod might move forward in response to the reality of racism and the churchwide resolution.

In 2018, our synod sent three rostered ministers, Sister Dottie Almoney, Pastor Sharon Kelly, and Pastor Matthew Lenahan, to Chicago for anti-racism training. Sister Almoney and Pastor Lenahan provided training to the Conference Deans and Secretaries at their annual retreat.

At our 2018 Synod Assembly, Pastor Titus Clarke, Vicar Carla Christopher, and Pastor Timothy Seitz-Brown offered a forum on the subject of racial justice. The trio also provided two all-day trainings for rostered and congregational leaders in January and February of 2019.

The task force has reformed under the name “Toward Racial Justice,” and will be planning additional training opportunities, compiling resources, and collaborating with other teams, committees, and ministry partners to address racism in its many forms.

Task force members are Sister Dottie Almoney, Pastor Titus Clarke, Vicar Carla Christopher (co-chair), Pastor Courtney Erzkus, Pastor Penrose Hoover, Pastor Matthew Lenahan, Megan McClinton, Pastor Timothy Seitz-Brown (co-chair), Pastor Drew Stockstill, and Pastor Sharron Blezard, synod staff liaison.

The Rev. Sharron R. Blezard, assistant to the bishop, staff liaison

STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION AND MISSION SUPPORT TABLE

Congregational stewardship education continues to be the main focus of the table as more and more churches report a decrease in their income from members. This, of course, affects Mission Support because congregations have less money to share with the wider church. The table has been helping to equip, lead and inspire congregations to make stewardship and generosity a priority part of their church life.
The Table provides quality free or low-cost stewardship education and leadership resources on our synod stewardship page, www.lss-elca.org/stewardship. Most of these are web-based resources of the ELCA and the wider Mainline church. They include Bible studies, workshops, devotionals, study guides, programs, think pieces and ideas. Stewardship topics include generosity, creation care, stewardship with children, and tithing.

The Rev. Rob Blezard has continued to offer workshops and classes for church leaders, both in individual congregations and groups. He continues “R3 Generosity,” a four-part series of two-hour classes that provides grounding in congregational stewardship. A journalist by profession before turning to the ministry, Pastor Blezard continues to write his monthly “Stewardship Toolkits” for congregations and started a bi-weekly stewardship blog to provide commentary and ideas related to congregational stewardship.

The Table sponsored a stewardship event in October, bringing noted ELCA pastor, theologian and author Mark Allan Powell to Trinity, Camp Hill, for a talk and series of morning stewardship workshops.

In Mission Support, we have been working to provide education and communication to educate congregations about the work of our synod and wider church that Mission Support helps to fund. Communications also includes letters to thank congregations for their giving and to encourage continued generosity.

For the year coming up, we hope to continue these efforts and revitalize the table with stewardship leaders from around the synod.

The Rev. Rob Blezard, assistant to the bishop

SYNODICAL WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Lower Susquehanna Synodical Worship Committee works to plan and provide for meaningful and creative worship services that use leadership from around our synod. We seek to utilize resources from Evangelical Lutheran Worship and other worship resources in order to serve our bishop and our synod in our corporate worship life. That includes worship for Synod Assembly, Renewal of Vows, Ordinations/Consecrations, Synod Leadership Retreats, as well as other services at the request of the Bishop’s Office.

In order to be most effect in our work, this committee had to do some rebuilding of its membership. So immediately after the 2018 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, in conjunction with the bishop, we worked on rebuilding the committee membership to its intended number, which is 12 people. That number includes a mix of rostered ministers and lay members.

Current members of the committee include: Debra Reeder; the Rev. Jillian Riddle, Steve Strauss, the Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg, the Rev. Amy Wagner, the Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz, the Rev. Kevin Stout, Dan Deitzel, Margaret Folkemer, the Rev. Aaron Erdley (chair), and the Rev. Thomas McKee (synod staff), the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali (synod staff), and Stella Ludwig (Synod Council liaison).

Since the 2018 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, the committee has worked on a number of synod worship services listed below:
- 2018 Bishop’s Convocation worship at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church, York.
- 2019 Healthy Leaders Retreat at Spooky Nook Sports, Manheim.
- Ordination service for Wicky Barnes III and Hans Becklin held on February 17 at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lebanon.
- Synod renewal of vows service and chrism mass held on Thursday, April 11 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill.
- 2019 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly worship services including Necrology, Rite of Ordination/Consecration which will take place in Parmer Hall at Messiah College.

I do want to take a moment to thank the Rev. Gwenn Trout, who completed her tenure on the committee. She served on the committee for a number of years, and she also served as its chair for several years. I am grateful for her service and leadership. The committee also offers its deep thanks to Carol Krouse for continued work in preparing bulletins for the synodical worship services.

Pastor Aaron M. Erdley, chair

VOLUNTEER COODINATOR FOR RELIEF PROJECTS

This is my last report on what the congregations of the Lower Susquehanna Synod have done to help the people in our world who are hungry and suffering in so many ways. For the last 30 years, I have assisted congregations to do God’s work through Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and Heifer International. After telling you of accomplishments in 2018, I pass the work of LWR to two volunteers, the Rev. Martha Boyd and Sue Gordon, and I will continue to be the contact person for Heifer for synod congregations.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

This organization has been enabling U.S. Lutherans for 75 years to reach out to communities living in poverty overseas. LWR’s mission statement reads, “Affirming God’s love for all people, we work with Lutherans and partners around the world to end poverty, injustice
and human suffering.” Their vision statement is “Empowered by God’s unconditional love in Jesus Christ, we envision a world in which each person, every community and all generations live in justice, dignity and peace.”

October’s annual LWR Ingathering Appeal is coordinated by volunteers from our synod’s 14 conferences. In 2018 those volunteers were Sandra Brandt, the Rev. Katie Brantner, Linda Brocious, the Rev. Cynthia Chambers, Susan DeLong, Pam Dobbs, Karen Fisher, Donna Greifzu, Elaine Hock, Joan Kerchner, Kathleen Kerr, Sarah Krumbine, Susan Lyons, the Rev. Judy McKee, Kathleen Moe, Theda Raffauf, the Rev. Edgar Reed, Carolyn Reeder, Janet Schroeder, Pamela Wagner, Katharine Whittner, and Linda Zilinski. The Ingathering provided both material aid items made and collected by congregations and money donated to ship these gifts to areas where they were needed. The 2018 reports are: mission quilts – 3,981; personal care kits – 4,308; school kits – 4,787; fabric kits – 142; baby care kits – 114; bars of soap 3,971; blankets – 125; fleece-tied blankets – 132; also reported to me were 807 mission quilts and blankets that were distributed locally. We also collected and transported items from congregations in other synods and from other Lutheran church bodies. 2018 monetary donations to the LWR Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund totaled $11,965.74, from 33 congregations in our synod. There were 12 more bricks engraved in the Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza at LWR headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, as a result of contributions of at least $500 sent through our synod’s Treasurer’s Office between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018.

LWR does much more than distribute food, water, tools, medicines, tarps, quilts, blankets, kits and soap in response to emergency needs. Long range help that feeds the hungry is in the forms of training in new farming methods, irrigation and food preservation as well as supplying tools, seeds, trees, safe water, and food-producing animals. In 2018 our synod congregations contributed $37,586.81 to the LWR General Fund that allows these development programs to happen. There was also a donation to LWR for Syria Relief.

Fair Trade sales programs assured that farmers and craft people received a just wage for their products, enabling them to buy food for their families, educate their children and have better housing and medical care. Many congregations purchased and used Fair Trade Eco-Palms at Palm Sunday Services.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL
The Lower Susquehanna Synod works in cooperation with Heifer International to educate about the hunger problems and to solicit support for this non-profit humanitarian organization. The mission statement reads, “Heifer International works with communities in need around the world to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth.” This is done by supplying food and/or income-producing animals plus training in their care to the neediest people. Heifer, like LWR, has been helping the hungry and unemployed for 75 years. Their work continues because of the “Passing on the Gift” where recipients of training and animals agree to give the first-born female animal and training in its care to another person in need in their community.

Lutherans from our synod that serve on the Southeast Pennsylvania Heifer Volunteer Committee are Harold and Norma Good, Kathleen and Ron Kerr, Mark and Hazel Nestleroth, and Vinton Smith.

In 2018, educational and fundraising activities were held by many congregations and contributions of $5,993.20 were sent to Heifer through our synod’s Treasurer’s Office.

HELP AVAILABLE TO CONGREGATIONS
The new coordinators who will be handling LWR will be available to provide congregations with resources in the form of presentations, displays, literature, supplies, and answers to questions. You may reach the Rev. Martha Boyd at (717) 440-1177 (cell) or at stjohnpastor158@gmail.com; and Sue Gordon at (717) 448-5074 (cell) or at sap4joys@comcast.net. I will continue to be your resource person for Heifer International and can be reached at a new telephone number (717) 869-6527.

Thank you for all that you have done to feed the hungry through LWR and Heifer in the years that it has been my privilege to work with you!

Norma R. Good, volunteer coordinator for relief projects

WORLD HUNGER COMMITTEE
The ELCA Lower Susquehanna Synod’s World Hunger Committee (LSS-WHC) is tasked with serving as hunger advocates, sharing information about local, national and international hunger issues, and with an ongoing financial support for and engagement with ELCA World Hunger. The committee meets periodically and works with both our synod and churchwide organization. Rostered ministers and laity from across our Lower Susquehanna Synod serving appointments to the committee in 2018 include: Cheryl Burns, Crystal Houser, Fay Nichols, the Rev. Jillian Riddle, and the Rev. Maureen Seifried. Synod staff representative, the Rev. Sharron Blezard, advises the committee.

The committee continues to support hunger education and advocacy within our synod and throughout the state by collaborating with the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa). Display kits containing samples of materials developed by ELCA World Hunger, as well as current handouts relating to synod specific activities, are available upon request to congregations, youth groups, and Legacy Fund Hunger Grant recipients. Visit www.elca.org/hunger to view examples or access ELCA resources.
In an effort to further promote the resources developed by ELCA World Hunger, the committee coordinated the creation of supplements for the Vacation Bible School (VBS) curriculum “God’s Good Creation”. The supplements include recommendations for alternative or adapted crafts, a resource highlighting a variety of hunger relief organizations throughout the synod, and five original songs to complement the daily themes featured in the curriculum. The committee wants to express our gratitude to Bennett Williams and his team for sharing their gifts to write and record these songs.

Each year the committee oversees the distribution of a portion of the Legacy Fund distribution to benefit local hunger initiatives. In early 2018, funds provided support for the Wittel Farm Growing Project, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania, and a ministry partnership in Harrisburg, as well as a contribution to ELCA World Hunger. The committee also held an open grant request period and received applications from 22 ministries and organizations, totaling over $118,000. The flexibility of the Legacy Fund Hunger Grants enables the committee to support ministries needing unrestricted funds or materials often excluded from “wish lists,” and the committee was excited to see requests from both new and existing programs, including meal ministries, weekend backpack and summer lunch programs, meal packing support, gardens, and ministries upgrading facilities and expanding service offerings such as laundry and showers.

The Lower Susquehanna Synod World Hunger Committee looks forward to continuing the important work of hunger education, financial support, and community outreach in 2019. If you are interested in assisting the committee with events, activities, grant management, or serving as a committee member, please contact Pastor Sharron Blezard, Pastor Beth Martini, or Cheryl Burns.

Cheryl Burns, chair

DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES & DIAKON CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

2018: A CELEBRATION OF 150 YEARS OF CARING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

2018 was a very special year for the Diakon family of organizations—it was our 150th anniversary! And we spent much of the year rededicating Diakon for another century-and-a-half of caring for our neighbors in need. In fact, the ministry that began it all in 1868—the Tressler Lutheran Home for Children—originated in Loysville in what is now the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

To celebrate this milestone of uninterrupted service, we created various materials including a history booklet and video (filmed in Gettysburg) and held numerous activities and programs including a number within the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

- Staff-appreciation events at all locations in February.
- Rededication and celebratory events at all senior living communities, as well as key community-based program sites; these included Frey Village at Middletown, Cumberland Crossings at Carlisle and the Diakon Wilderness Center, Boiling Springs.
- Recognition activities and items for residents, clients, supporters and partner congregations.
- A public event in October featuring nationally-recognized humorist Jeanne Robertson; held at the Strand Performing Arts Theater in York, the event sold out.

We express appreciation for and celebrate our partnership with the Lower Susquehanna Synod and its congregations for their role in helping to make possible our 150-year-old mission. Through Many Hands, guided by One Heart, Diakon serves people in need of all ages, especially those with limited financial resources. In 2018, Diakon provided $19.43 million in benevolent care, including $4.1 million within the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Frey Village and Cumberland Crossings continued to serve hundreds of people in an ever-changing health-care environment. Frey Village maintained its focus on short-term rehabilitation services, part of a continuing emphasis on short-term rehab and wellness. In addition, Cumberland Crossings renovated cottage-homes into new configurations as vacancies occurred, establishing individualized homes for older adults.

Diakon Adoption & Foster Care seeks permanency for waiting children and youths, with local services provided through offices in York and Mechanicsburg. The two offices served more than 1,200 children, youths and families through adoption, foster care and such specialized services as foster care for children with medically fragile conditions. In addition, the local Wendy’s Wonderful Kids recruiter continued to focus on child-specific recruitment for older youths in danger of aging out of the foster-care system without a permanent family. As just one statistic, the two offices were responsible for provision of 26,455 days of foster care in 2018, as compared with 24,175 days the prior year, a 9% increase.

Separately, Diakon continues to manage Pennsylvania’s Statewide Adoption & Permanency Network, or SWAN, meaning Diakon as an overall organization plays a role in all public adoptions. In 2018, that work had an impact on the lives of more than 3,700 children and youths within the Lower Susquehanna Synod, as well as 856 family members.
Diakon Family Life Services offers counseling services at Mechanicsburg and a satellite location in Perry County. Among its specialized programs are family-based mental health care and services for youths who have exhibited or experienced problematic sexual behaviors. The counseling centers also offer trauma-focused therapies.

Diakon Youth Services, which offers the Weekend Alternative, Flight, and Center Point Day Treatment programs at the Diakon Wilderness Center, served hundreds of youths from throughout the territory of the synod. The center’s vocationally focused Wilderness Greenhouse & Native Plant Nursery continued to grow while the Lancaster County-based Turning Point program, Columbia, served at-risk teens from both Lancaster and York counties. Various Diakon Youth Services in York County had significant impact through the responsibility- and accountability-focused Bridge Program, York PREP and drug-court weekend programming.

We thank God for the gifts of staff, volunteers, congregations, donors, and board members who, together, enabled us to touch the lives of thousands of people last year within the Lower Susquehanna Synod, all while upholding and celebrating 150 years of ministry!

Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW, president/CEO

EASTERN CLUSTER OF LUTHERAN SEMINARIES

No report submitted by March 15, 2019.

ELCA FOUNDATION REGIONAL GIFT PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

This church and its ministries mean a lot to you. And they mean a lot to the communities they serve. The ELCA Foundation is here to help you ensure the continuation of God’s work in the world for years to come.

Gift planning services for individuals:
We can help you navigate your options to create a gift plan that benefits the ministries that mean the most to you, while maximizing your financial and estate-planning goals. Options include:

- Gifts made through wills, trusts or estates
- Charitable gift annuities
- Donor-advised funds
- Named endowment funds
- Gifts of cash, securities and real estate
- Qualified charitable distributions from your IRA
- And more

Gift planning services for congregations:
We offer expertise and guidance for congregations exploring their options for endowment investing and planning for the future. We offer:

- Endowment fund planning and guidance
- Gift planning education, through seminars on wills, estate plans and charitable gift planning
- Investment options for endowments, including the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust

The Regional Gift Planner position for the Central Pennsylvania Gift Planning Partnership is currently vacant. It is the intention of the ELCA Foundation to fill this vacancy at some point in the second half of this year. In the meantime, please contact Ryan Ebner, Regional Gift Planner at 814.823.3285 or ryan.ebner@elca.org.

Ryan Ebner, regional gift planner, ELCA Foundation

ELCA CANDIDACY FOR REGIONS 7 & 8

Called to Lead

Called to Lead is the title of a new discernment guide regarding ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Baptism includes a call from God to share the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world, and some baptized people discern a call from God to the particular ministries of pastors and deacons in the church. Called to Lead is intended to help people figure out whether God is calling them to become pastors or deacons.

Trying to figure that out involves paying attention to the suggestions, encouragements and nudges we might receive from the people around us. Has anyone ever suggested that you might become a pastor or a deacon? Has anyone ever encouraged you to consider that possibility? Has anyone ever nudged you to take some steps in that direction? Perhaps the suggestions, encouragements and nudges have occurred as internal stirrings, leading you to wonder about becoming a pastor or deacon or to imagine yourself serving in those particular ministry roles. In any case, Called to Lead can help you to decide whether and how to act upon those suggestions, encouragements and nudges.
**Called to Lead** can also help you to give other people the suggestions, encouragements and nudges they might need to figure out whether God is calling them to become pastors or deacons. Do you know anyone you believe would serve well as a pastor or a deacon? Do you know anyone you perceive to be well suited to those particular ministry roles? If so, *Called to Lead* is a resource you can recommend to that person.

*Called to Lead* is available on the ELCA website as a downloadable resource. Click “Resources” on the ELCA homepage, then click “Candidacy” on the menu of photo icons. A Spanish translation of *Called to Lead* will soon be available as well.

I am pleased to recommend *Called to Lead* to your use in discernment, as I am pleased also to work with your synod’s candidacy leaders and candidacy committees in our churchwide work of guiding the people God has called to become pastors and deacons in the ELCA.

Paul Baglyos, ELCA candidacy and leadership manager for Regions 7 & 8

**ELCA REGION 8 STEERING COMMITTEE**

The synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are grouped in regions as a partnership between groups of synods and the churchwide organization for the purpose of exercising mutual responsibilities. According to the ELCA Constitution, the functions of regions shall be a means for coordinated responses by synods and the churchwide organization to mission and program opportunities within the region.

Region 8, of which we are part, includes the following synods: Northwestern Pennsylvania, Southwestern Pennsylvania, Allegheny, Lower Susquehanna, Upper Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Metropolitan Washington DC, and West Virginia-Western Maryland.

You may recall that in 2017 Region 8 made a decision that we could continue to do our work better if we worked together, so Deacon Nancy Gable now serves as Assistant to the Bishops of Region 8, called on behalf of the region by the Synod Council of Allegheny Synod.

The Region 8 Steering committee consists of the bishops and vice presidents of the eight synods. The committee meets annually and on occasion more often when need arises. The most recent meeting was in September 2018. The region’s finances are housed in the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and overseen by their treasurer; the Steering Committee determines the amount of money to be contributed to our shared work by each synod annually, as well as setting a budget for the region.

One of the ongoing efforts of our region is to continually consider the question “what can we do better if we do it together?” Prior to our meeting Candidacy Manager Paul Baglyos met with the bishops to discuss churchwide assignment protocols. The 2018 meeting included time for follow-up on some of the initiatives established during the September 2016 retreat: the areas of working together on training and development for both rostered ministers and laity, strengthening synodical functioning, areas for collaboration and supporting bishops and rostered ministers.

The region works closely together on the First Call Theological Education retreat held annually. There was discussion of a Word and Service roster related event for September 2019. Deacon Mindy Holland, Campus Minister at the University of Delaware, joined us for conversation about how to best support Campus Ministry. Finally, as we continue to support United Lutheran Seminary, we discussed seminary relations.

Finally, we said goodbye to faithful Region 8 Secretary Dorcas Friedline, thanking her for over 30 years of service in this capacity. We also honored retiring Bishops Ralph Jones (Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod) and Richard Graham (Metropolitan Washington DC Synod).

Deacon Nancy Gable, assistant to the bishops, Region 8

**GETTYSBURG COLLEGE**

The academic year 2018-2019 has been a rich, busy one for the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life and the Chaplain’s Office. We are fully staffed, which includes a Director of Catholic Campus Ministries, a Director of Hillel, and an advisor to our Muslim Student Association. We meet regularly so that we can collaborate on programming and enhance the religious and spiritual life of our students in particular.

This is the first year that the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life has been open from the beginning of the academic year, and we have seen increasing student traffic, which we love; many more students know who we are and where we are, and they find the house a comfortable, safe place to study and relax. In addition, a variety of groups use the house for meetings and social events. The interfaith meditation room, open 24/7, gets regular use as well.

There are several programming highlights for this academic year:
1. **Breathe Gettysburg:** We received a small grant from the Of Many Institute at NYU to launch a suite of programming around mindfulness and stress-reduction for the calendar year 2019. Our classes include several kinds of meditation, yoga, Qi Gong, knitting, and reflective reading. This programming has been very successful, and we look forward to expanding the offerings in the fall.

2. **Interfaith Youth Core Leadership Training/Grant:** Last summer, we received a grant to implement some explicitly interreligious programming on campus through the Interfaith Youth Core, which was founded by Eboo Patel and runs out of Chicago. We have had retreats for the Student Association [mentioned below] and also monthly dinners with faculty members on different topics. These have been very successful, and we hope to continue them next year if we can get the funding. In addition, I took two students to the Leadership Training Institute in Chicago in August. The three of us had a great time; we learned so much and met some great people from around the country. We also attended an ELCA breakfast for the different Lutheran institutions who were attending the event.

3. **Interfaith Student Association:** This fall, an Interfaith Student Association also became a recognized student group on campus. The group has members from the different religious student organizations on campus and has met regularly to design programming and build more community among the different religious groups.

4. **FaithZone Training:** This spring, we plan to pilot a program that we hope will become a more regular part of campus life. The program is modified from the “FaithZone” training designed at NYU. This training is not World Religions 101, but rather learning how to be allies for one another and how to wrestle with difficult, practical interfaith issues. We hope to train students to participate in the trainings for other students as well.

5. **Parliament of the World’s Religions:** I took six students to the Parliament of the World’s Religions in Toronto in November 2018. We had SUCH a great time, and the students were amazing; they met so many people and engaged the whole experience with openness and enthusiasm. I was so proud of them.

6. **Sunday Evening Worship:** We continue with a Sunday evening vespers service; it is very small. After spring break, I will experiment with a worship/dinner/Bible study combination; we’ll see how that goes.

Finally, the last thing I want to mention is the retirement of President Janet Riggs. If you know anything about Gettysburg College, you know that President Riggs has been an absolutely outstanding leader in every way, and she is both loved and respected across all college constituencies. She also has been a champion of religious and spiritual life on campus and the work of the chaplain, and for that I have been very grateful. We all will miss her very much, and we wish her the very best in this next stage of life for her and her family.

My work at the college continues to be very rewarding for me, and I am grateful for my call to this institution.

The Rev. Dr. Kristin Johnston Largen, associate dean of religious and spiritual life/college chaplain

**LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA**

*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 ELCA Domestic Mission unit, 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.

In 2018, LAMPa celebrated 39 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, human trafficking, immigration, school funding inequity, racism and environmental threats to health and safety. Thanks be to God for the support of our Lower Susquehanna Synod Policy Council representatives, Cheryl Burns and the Rev. Titus Clarke.

Our work in 2018 was guided by both the LAMPa issue agenda adopted by our policy council in December 2017 as well as the principles of ELCA World Hunger to be transformative, holistic and integrated with attention to fostering vital congregations and equipping leaders.

**Equipping disciples, growing leaders, supporting vital congregations**

We began 2018 by accompanying and supporting Pennsylvania hunger leaders in learning and legislative visits during the ELCA World Hunger Gathering in Washington, D.C. In May, Lutheran Day in the Capitol saw us celebrate what God is doing through advocates in each synod as well as equip advocates for justice-seeking on issues from hunger to clean water and put that into practice in legislative visits in the state Capitol. As keynote, Nobel-Prize-winning geophysicist Dr. Richard inspired, informed and encouraged advocates to address climate change. LAMPa staff took that message to the National Youth Gathering, connecting with youth to share ways they could care for our common home when they returned to Pennsylvania.

LAMPa staff helped organize and engage Lutherans in a statewide EnergyStar tour to help congregations understand government resources and research available to reduce their contributions to climate change as well as to save money. We also joined other faith-based organizations to host a webinar on community solar programs, laying the groundwork for related legislation introduced in early 2019. LAMPa staff worked with individuals and congregations who were led by their ministry of service into advocacy and shared...
grant opportunities with those engaged in related ministry. LAMPa also invited and supported advocates and those with lived experiences of hunger, poverty, and violence in testifying, making legislative visits, speaking at press conferences, or leading letter-writing campaigns.

**Progress on LAMPa’s Issue Agenda**

The 2018 session saw success on several items on LAMPa’s issue agenda.

**Hunger** – Maintained funding for the State Food Purchase Program and the Pa. Agriculture Surplus System, the state’s major anti-hunger programs.

**Clean Slate** – The legislature passed and the governor signed clean slate legislation that seals the records of those with nonviolent misdemeanor convictions after an individual has remained crime-free for 10 years and would also seal non-conviction records as a matter of course. This is now being held up as a model for criminal justice reform in other states.

**Firearms and Domestic Violence** – The legislature passed and the governor signed legislation that would require those involved in domestic violence to turn over firearms to police within 24 hours. The previous legislation allowed firearms to be turned over to friends and family members within 60 days.

**Safe Harbor** – The legislature passed and the governor signed legislation that would divert child sex-trafficking victims away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate services.

**Protecting the Social Safety Net** – LAMPa advocates helped defeat legislation that would have created barriers to food aid by mandating burdensome work requirements, even in areas with high unemployment.

**Payday Lending** – Payday lending legislation was introduced, but quick and firm response by advocates kept it from getting anywhere.

**Creation Care** – An outpouring from advocates helped defeat a last-minute attempt to pass legislation shared at Lutheran Day that would have rolled back environmental regulation of the oil and gas industry to standards of 30 years ago.

The passion of our advocates is recognized. We are the only organization in Pennsylvania that garners signatures for hunger funding and policy in every legislative district in the state. We have been invited to participate in the Governor’s Food Policy. Our work on Safe Harbor has led to an invitation to work on further legislation to end human trafficking.

We look forward to strengthening ecumenical and interfaith work in 2019, building on the foundation that has been laid in recent years and in response to the glaring need to heal division and promote unity in such a time as this when our differences have been fed by fear and turned into paralysis at one extreme and violence at the other. We lean into that work with the theme of “Set a Welcome Table” and a day of ecumenical and interfaith fellowship, service, learning and preparation for advocacy in May.

**Connecting Service to Advocacy:** In 2018, LAMPa resourced congregations participating in the Churchwide Day of Service, garnering more than 1,000 letters to lawmakers on a variety of topics. LAMPa will again share service-and-advocacy projects for September 8, 2019. We would be glad to help your congregation plan to make that day one of “God’s work. Our hands. Our voices.”

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

Tracey DePasquale, LAMPa director

**LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION OF CENTRAL PA**

**Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, Wittel Farm**

The Lutheran Camping Corporation (LCC) strives to be a gracious expression of God’s love in its ministry supporting and serving the congregations of the Lower Susquehanna Synod and their members. When speaking with adults about Nawakwa, Kirchenwald, or Wittel Farm it’s common to hear them enthusiastically proclaim something like, “I am the person I am today because of experiences I had as a camper at Nawakwa (or Kirchenwald, or at Wittel Farm).” Camp and retreat experiences with the LCC truly are faith formation experiences set in intentional Christian communities where God’s creation is explored, spiritual growth is nurtured, and discipleship is practiced. LCC outdoor ministry is experiential and relational as we worship together, do Bible study, and live in camp together. Lutheran leadership training and service learning is a priority in all our programs. We know that those who experience our outdoor ministry return to their homes, schools, congregations, and places of employment excited about their faith and encouraged to put it into action as faithful Christian disciples.

**2018 Ministry Accomplishments**

- Supported confirmation ministry of nearly 40 congregations which brought 386 youth to confirmation camps.
749 youth attended summer camp at Kirchenwald and Nawakwa, 472 of whom came from 115 LSS congregations; 30 were from Lutheran Churches in other synods, and 247 came from other denominations or had no church affiliation.

Additionally, 331 children and adults attended family camps, 15 adults attended Elder Camp, 6 adults attended Bring Your Own Craft Camp, 2 congregational day camps were conducted.

42 youth attended Kirchenwald’s Diaconos servant ministry camps.

84 college and high school aged youth gained valuable Lutheran leadership experience serving on the summer ministry teams as they shared their faith and proclaimed the gospel.

$35,568 in “Campership” assistance was provided to 109 children who would not have attended camp due to family financial hardship. $30,346 in registration discounts were claimed to help keep camp attendance affordable to families.

In its third year, the Wittel Farm Growing Project engaged nearly 400 volunteers who planted, tended, harvested, and distributed nearly 29,000 pounds of vegetables to food insecure persons through the Lancaster county food relief system.

Over 90 LSS congregations used the camps and farm for retreats, meetings, picnics and other events bringing around 1,800 persons to the ministry sites. The ministry sites were used for a variety of Synod events including but not limited to the ALIVE Middle School Youth Retreat and Leadership Training Camp.

Over 350 people attended LCC sponsored events including the Winter Youth Retreat, Lenten and Advent days at Wittel Farm, Winter Fun Days, Fall Foliage Days, Capture the Flag Extravaganza, Women’s Craft Retreat, Book Study Retreat, Quilt Retreat, and work days.

Thanks to the generosity of many caring donors and congregations that participated in the Seeding The Future Campaign and the Always Being Made New Campaign, the debt on Nawakwa ministry site expansion mortgage has been reduced to $227,000 without impacting the operating budget.

Facility improvements include new roofs on Adirondack shelters, Nawakwa Dining Hall, and Nawakwa Office; Kirchenwald Dining Hall renovations; and many other smaller yet equally significant projects which keep the facilities safe and attractive.

The 2019 summer camp Bible study and worship theme is “Transformed Community”. Campers will learn about Christian discipleship and their role in being God’s agents of change in the world. 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 2019 we thank all those who support this outstanding ministry. Go to www.lutherancamping to get information and get involved!!!!

Michael Youse, executive director

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY
LUTHERAN STUDENT COMMUNITY AT PENN STATE

Meals together are an important part of the life of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Around the table you’ll find students who study education, engineering, political science, languages, and many more. Among them are young people who grew up in Lutheran congregations as near as Hershey and Sunbury or far as North Dakota and Washington. There are students from other faith traditions, and some who’ve never been involved in a church before. With Lutheran Campus Ministry, they all find welcome at the table. They share a nourishing meal in an accepting group of peers and enjoy the opportunity to step back from the demands of campus life. This is a community without requirements, without grades or judgement, where the invitation to “Come as you are” is sincere and grounded in the love and grace of God.

Worship At the heart of Lutheran Campus Ministry and our outreach to the university community is Word and Sacrament. Students gather with the worshipping community at Grace Lutheran on Sunday mornings. Students also take part in the casual worship Sunday evening shared by Lutheran Campus Ministry and Grace Lutheran. On Thursdays, Lutheran Campus Ministry offers Holden Evening Prayer on campus in the midst of religious diversity at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. Each worship option brings a different flavor and style and has the familiar rhythms of liturgy with Gospel-centered preaching, relevant prayer, and weekly communion. Students encounter God, share prayer requests, learn and grow, and are strengthened for the challenges they will encounter as their journey of faith unfolds.

Community Life On a campus with 46,000 students, finding authentic community and life-giving connections is challenging. When students gather each week at meals (dinner after worship Sunday and Thursday, lunch after worship Sunday) they share so much more than a meal. Together, they live what it means to be people of God, celebrating one another’s joys and bearing one another’s burdens. Special events like picnics, turkey-dinner potluck, Christmas celebration, and retreats gather students to relax and enjoy time together. Social media connects students to Lutheran Campus Ministry and each other through Facebook, weekly listserve messages, and our webpage.

Deepening Faith Opportunities for learning and growth are many and varied in a campus setting. In September 2019 we hosted author and speaker Nadia Bolz-Webber (with the help of some university funding and other Protestant campus ministries). She shared from her writings and engaged student leaders, the general public, and faith leaders in meaningful conversation of faith and real life. In October 2019 we joined with ecumenical partners and the Penn State LGBTQA Student Resource Center to host Mikah Meyer to hear about his
world-record breaking travels and so much more. His story of feeling unseen by his faith community, then embraced by Christians across the nation is powerful and hope-filled. Due to weather, a January visit from Austin Channing Brown, author of *I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*, was rescheduled for late March. Her visit has prompted book discussions and a variety of partnerships around faith and race. Weekly Bible study explored the book of Romans, and a newly-formed book group has been discussing books by Rachel Held Evans and Nadia Bolz-Weber. Last spring’s Interfaith Seder was a delightful opportunity to truly share traditions and experiences with our Jewish brothers and sisters, and plans are underway for another this April with Hillel.

**Service-Learning** Students are eager to live out their love of God and neighbor by responding to the needs around them. We joined “God’s Work. Our Hands. Day of Service” in September with an afternoon volunteering in a local coat closet for international students in need. We volunteered with *We Are Family* on a weekend retreat at the Steinbruck Center in Washington, DC, exploring issues of race and poverty. Partnering with the Muslim Student Association, students continue to help with “Free Pizza Friday,” handing out pizza on campus to create connections and good-will. Our ministry continues as part of the “Green Team,” washing dishes after community meals on Sundays and Thursdays, as well as washing mugs from Grace Lutheran’s Sunday coffee hour each week, eliminating the use of disposable items. We joined Penn State Hillel’s “Challah for Hunger” for an interfaith bake, learning how to braid dough and baking bread to raise funds for hunger programs. Through a grant from the Knutson Endowment, Lutheran Campus Ministry supports Penn State’s new Clothing Transit. In cooperation with the LGBTQ Center and others, this resource provides support and help for a truly marginalized population on campus. At the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, senior music education student, Maggie VanBrakle, joined campus minister, Alicia Anderson, as part of the LCM Builds team that helped youth gathering participants learn about Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran Campus Ministry while building the walls of two houses for families affected by Hurricane Harvey.

**Spring Break** Alternative spring break trips provide a welcome chance to discover the world away from campus. Spring Break 2018 we traveled to with Lutheran Campus Ministry groups from Tucson, AZ and Raleigh, NC to Luther sites in Germany. The opportunity to explore how Luther’s work has shaped religious thought and life in Germany, in the rest of the world, and in our own lives was a marvelous experience. Highlights included time in Eisleben, visiting the Wartburg Castle, and two days in Wittenberg. This year our alternative spring break trip will take us to the Arizona/Mexico border in partnership with three other campus ministries at Penn State. We will explore issues of migration, poverty, faith, and ministry along the border, working with *Frontera de Christo*.

**Focus on Vocation** Through a Lilly Endowment funded project called *discernPSU*, Lutheran Campus Ministry is working with Westminster Presbyterian Fellowship, inviting the wider campus to explore how our beliefs and values shape our work, activities and relationships. Speakers, quotes, interviews, lunch conversations, and retreats provide students and those who work with them opportunities to explore their sense of vocation in the broadest possible sense. This year’s “Discerning Our Stories” retreat was well-received and helped students connect the stories of their lives with the stories of God’s people from scripture. Learn more about discernPSU at [sites.psu.edu/discern](sites.psu.edu/discern).

**Connections** A wide and complex network of relationships make the work of Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State possible. On campus, connections to the university and 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 and provide 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.

*Year after year, 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. They are encouraged, pulled, and challenged as they live their faith and grow in it, too. Each time they gather, these children of God are reassured of God’s presence and forgiveness and reminded of God’s unconditional love and constant embrace.*

**Visit our website:** [www.lutheranpennstate.org](www.lutheranpennstate.org)

**Sign up to receive our e-newsletter for friends and alumni**

**Add a student to our weekly student listserve**

**Like us on facebook:** [Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State](https://www.facebook.com/luhcammin)

Deacon Alicia Anderson, campus minister

**LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE**

For almost 80 years, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has been a champion for migrants and refugees from around the world. As we look at our immigrant roots, we are reminded daily to renew our passionate commitment to welcoming newcomers, especially
those who are most in need. Through partnership with community-based legal and social services, LIRS has supported over 500,000 migrants and refugees as they rebuild their lives in America.

2018 brought its own challenges as migrant and refugee admission numbers were decreased, and the administration introduced the “zero-tolerance” policy at the Southwest border that resulted in the family separation crisis. LIRS responded to the family separation crisis by designing and implementing a new service model in Phoenix and Las Cruces that assisted the US government with family reunification. The model included:

- a safe place to sleep for the night
- food (a hot meal)
- clothing and other immediate needs (first aid, etc.)
- basic case management and needs assessment
- coordination of travel to a final destination

LIRS provides opportunities for individuals, groups, and congregations to engage with refugees and migrants through several initiatives and programs:

- **Circle of Welcome:** Support newcomers with the integration process once they are resettled in the United States and stand with newcomers as advocates, friends and community members.
- **Refugee Sunday:** Every congregation in the ELCA is invited to lift up the gifts that migrants and refugees bring to our communities. A variety of resources for preaching, Bible study, prayers, devotions, advocacy and community gatherings is available [https://www.lirs.org/refugee-sunday/](https://www.lirs.org/refugee-sunday/).
- **Hope for the Holidays:** Congregations, groups, and individuals are encouraged to write/make cards to those held in detention centers during the holiday season.
- **Detention Visitation:** Join a visitation ministry through LIRS or our partners on the ground around the country.

**Congregational Engagement & Outreach**

In 2018, the Outreach Unit at LIRS engaged with eighteen ELCA Synod Assemblies, eleven LC-MS District Conventions, one LWML District Convention, and the tri-annual LCMS National Hispanic Convention. Through these engagements, the LIRS Outreach unit strengthened our relationship with Lutheran allies while developing new relationships with partners, advocates, and volunteers. The LIRS Outreach Team offered an interactive learning station on the experience of Rohingya refugees being resettled in the U.S. in collaboration with AMMPARO and Lutheran Disaster Relief at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas.

**Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy**

LIRS has been intentional in supporting migrant and refugee leaders through the Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy (MRLA). In 2018, LIRS focused on five key states for 2018 MRLA instead of a nationwide MRLA. The state-level academies collectively trained 123 new migrant and refugee leaders with active participation from 30 Academy alumni leaders. The academies focused on enhancing migrant and refugee leadership skills, “know-your-rights” workshops, civic engagement strategies, and storytelling. MRLA participants advocated for increased refugee resettlement and an end to family separation by several in-district congressional visits. The current Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy is comprised of 305 migrant and refugee leaders in 39 states across the US, representing 46 countries of origin.

To learn more about LIRS and how to get involved, visit: [https://www.lirs.org/](https://www.lirs.org/).

Sue Ellen Spotts, manager for congregational outreach

**LUTHERCARE**

As we celebrate 70 years of service to Lancaster and Lebanon Counties, Luthercare continues to celebrate our on-going partnership with the Lower Susquehanna Synod! Through our three senior living communities - Luther Acres, Spang Crest and St. John’s Herr Estate - and four early learning centers - in Lancaster, Marietta, Reamstown and Annville - we have been able to reflect the love of Christ with those we have the pleasure to serve.

2018 was another year of collaboration, challenge and celebration! We have continued our strong collaborative desire and heart for service in the work of *Your Neighborhood Connection*, our joint venture with Moravian Manor formed in 2014 to provide in-home services. YNC has expanded its reach and is fast becoming recognized as one of the go-to agencies for seniors needing assistance as they seek to age in place. YNC experienced record growth in the number of hours spent serving those who are aging in place!

Luthercare’s commitment to the health and well-being of our seniors flourished in 2018. Luther Acres and Spang Crest continue to be recognized as preferred providers of rehabilitative and restorative care by both Wellspan Health System and Lancaster General Health/Penn Medicine Health System. Newly renovated rehab wings at both healthcare centers have made our facilities a top choice for those seeking care. Quality of care continues to be a core priority at Luthercare and we are pleased that both of our healthcare centers received a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
Luthercare for Kids continues to be a leader in providing quality care for children in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties! Whether in one of our four early learning centers or through the influence and impact of our mentoring program, Luthercare for Kids is making a difference in the lives of children and enabling young people to have the skills they need to succeed in school. We continue to enjoy the collaboration with our partners in the SAIL (Systems Aligned in Learning) Initiative and we are thankful for the publicity and recognition these efforts receive as unique programs making a tangible difference in our communities. Luthercare for Kids in Marietta, our newest center, celebrated one year of service to the community in May, and already has 13+ classrooms open, providing care for children ranging in age from infant to 5th grade.

Luthercare also celebrates the work of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Lutheran Disaster Response Network, coordinated by the Rev. Glenn Beard, Jr., Luthercare’s Director of Church Relations & Pastoral Care. The network continues its work of recruiting, training and mobilizing volunteers to provide long-term recovery work in disaster zones across the country. The Network has also provided congregational security workshops and assessments and disaster preparedness education as well. The summer floods of 2018 brought a tremendous amount of need for local residents in our synod, particularly in Lancaster, Lebanon and York Counties. Volunteers from across the synod donated 500 hours of service as they helped put lives and homes back together again. The synod disaster team also made a trip to Dorado, Puerto Rico, in November to provide much needed disaster relief. 2019 will bring several opportunities for service. A youth-focused disaster response trip will be held in August and there will be another trip to Puerto Rico in November once again. Luthercare is pleased to be an active partner in this very important ministry.

The philanthropic support of individuals and congregations across the synod, through the giving of financial resources and volunteer time, is a crucial part of what we are able to do each year. 2018 was a successful year due, in large part, to the generosity of so many. Generous lifetime donors remembered us in their final plans and estate and planned gifts, our appeals were met with a strong response, and our annual Luthercare for Kids Golf Tournament generated significant support to provide scholarships for children and families we serve in our early learning programs. Through the generosity of so many Luthercare was able to provide more than $6.2 million dollars in benevolence care (direct benevolence and undercompensated care) and nearly $160,000.00 in childcare scholarships.

For 70 years Luthercare has been serving residents of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. We look forward to the next 70 years and all that they will bring as we continue to reflect Christ’s love through service to others!

Carl R. McAloose, president and CEO

MISSION INVESTMENT FUND, ELCA
The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is the lending ministry of the ELCA. MIF makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects. With MIF loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

MIF loans expand the capacity for ministry. MIF loans help create expanded worship spaces, updated space for education and youth ministry, new kitchens for community meals and soup kitchens, affordable housing units for the community and much more.

At year-end 2018, MIF had 917 loans outstanding, totaling $556.6 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2018, MIF investments totaled $499.1 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of $705.4 million and net assets of $200.8 million at year-end 2018, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds. For more information, visit mif.elca.org.

MIF loans and investments in the Lower Susquehanna Synod (as of December 31, 2018):
- 12 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of $2,569,824
- $12,815,099 in Mission Investment Fund investments

MIF representative:
Gerry Lauro, Regional Manager, Tel: (312) 805-6502; email: gerry.lauro@elca.org

Gerry Lauro, regional manager

PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is church bodies and agencies representing Anabaptist, Episcopal, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Protestant communions in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania working together for Christian unity for the sake of the world.

[John 17:23]
IMPORTANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Future Planning Work. The Future Task Group completed its work in 2018. The group recommended changes in the composition of the council’s Board of Directors to reduce the size of the board by having a single member representing each member denomination in order to improve efficiency—a model much like the National Council of Churches. The Board voted to make this change in October 2018, effective for meetings beginning in 2019. The group also recommended the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee to lay the foundation for the council’s future, with consideration to be given to members with the skills needed to address many of the council’s perceived needs, which might include persons with gifts and experience, such as: similar work working with and coaching other religious organizations; fundraising/development; communications; and legal, among others. The board will name this group at its first 2019 meeting, with work to be completed by the end of 2020.

Conferences and Meetings. The council did not hold a single statewide conference in 2018 but conducted workshops around the issues of criminal justice reform and gun violence.

Continuing from 2017, the council held an event in Lancaster in April 2018 called “Faithful Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform: Principles and Practice.” This session was designed to educate participants about the criminal justice system/mass incarceration at the federal and state levels, “Clean Slate” legislation (designed to remove a barrier for formerly incarcerated persons for qualified offenses at the state level), and how to advocate effectively for this legislation. Participants were asked/encouraged to participate in advocacy visits with their Pennsylvania representatives with support from the council’s Public Witness program. This effort was supported in part by funds from the Mennonite Central Committee. The Clean Slate legislation passed in May 2018, supported by these significant efforts by the faith community.

The council held another session in Pittsburgh in August 2018 called “Faithful Advocacy for Gun Violence Prevention: Principles and Practice.” This session followed the same format of the Clean Slate sessions but focused on gun-violence-prevention legislation designed to remove guns from domestic abusers and others who could be a danger to themselves or others. Legislation aimed at domestic abusers was passed in October 2018, and, like Clean Slate, was supported by significant efforts by the faith community. More workshops are planned for 2019.

The council also presented to various congregations seeking to learn more about the Berks County Residential Center, used to detain immigrant families often for long periods of time. It also presented two sessions on climate change using slides and information provided by the Climate Leadership Program attended by the Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach in 2017.

Finally, the council conducted a Healing Communities training in Bethlehem in June for over 20 participants from the Lehigh Valley. Healing Communities aims to train congregations to be welcoming and supportive of formerly incarcerated persons.

2018 was a year of gearing up for additional “School-to-Prison Pipeline” sessions around the state, using a trauma-informed lens to help participants understand the role of funding to ensure that all students have the resources they need to overcome barriers to learning, including poverty, race, disabilities, and language, among other things. The newer sessions will focus more on how racism plays a role in the distribution of school funding by the state in Pennsylvania. Given the high correlation between students facing traumatic conditions without sufficient support and those who end up in prison, these sessions will continue to make the case for a fair-school-funding formula and adequate funding in order to bridge the gap. These sessions are being supported by funds from the William Penn Foundation through a collaborative grant from POWER in Philadelphia (a PICO organizing group).

Support for Collaborative Efforts. The council has received support from several different sources aimed at supporting collaborative efforts involving the council and other denominations and coalitions.

- The Mennonite Central Committee’s (MCC) East Coast Office has again reauthorized a $10,000 grant to support advocacy in areas that are particularly important to Anabaptist traditions: criminal justice reform, immigration, gun violence, and education. The grant runs through March 2020. It is the council’s hope that this funding will continue to be renewed. There has been a continuing focus on building a Healing Communities network in Pennsylvania, and on calling for closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee families far in excess of the time they should be held. Additional efforts in 2018 included the “Faithful Advocacy” events described above, continuing to build networks among stakeholders active in work around immigration/immigration reform, and conversations with groups involved with reducing gun violence, including Heeding God’s Call and CeaseFirePA.

- A grant of $16,000 from the William Penn Foundation (through POWER: $8,000/year for 2 years—an increase from the previous grant amount) continues to support the council’s efforts to reform school funding in Pennsylvania. The funds have been used to do basic education on equity and adequacy of public school funding in Pennsylvania, and to support the “school to prison pipeline” sessions described above.

These grants have continued to support part-time efforts by an Advocacy Programs Coordinator, John-Michael Cotignola-Pickens.
During the summer of 2018, the Council was invited to apply for a substantial grant from the Van Ameringen Foundation, in conjunction with the Abolitionist Law Center, to do work in the area of criminal justice reform, particularly with regard to the use of solitary confinement and treatment of incarcerated persons with mental health conditions. While not as much as was hoped, the foundation awarded a three-year grant to be divided between the two organizations: $75,000 in Year 1, $100,000 in Year 2, and $125,000 in Year 3. Work will begin in 2019.

Other Activities
- The Board of Directors adopted one resolution on gun violence reduction in October 2018.
- The council:
  - Issued a public statement: A Statement on Separation of Families at the Border (June 19, 2018); and
  - Offered official greetings to: (1) the Western PA Conference of the United Methodist Church; and (2) Church Women United.
- Both of the council’s websites, www.pachurches.org and www.pachurchesadvocacy.org, have continued to evolve.
- The Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach participated in an editorial board meeting with the Harrisburg Patriot News with Bishop Audrey Scanlan of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania to discuss media coverage of the faith community and interfaith relations.

COUNCIL MINISTRIES

Commission on Public Witness & Public Witness Ministry. The council’s advocacy efforts in 2018 focused on the following areas:
- Advocacy for a Pennsylvania budget with sufficient revenues that addresses the concerns of people of faith.
- Human needs/poverty-related work.
- Efforts to raise the minimum wage, primarily in coordination with the Raise the Wage PA Coalition.
- Public education funding, primarily in coordination with POWER.
- Criminal justice reform.
- Immigration, particularly around calling for the closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee women and children for long periods of time, and for ending the separation of families at the border.
- Environment, primarily climate change and protecting water resources, in coordination with several organizations.

The commission continues to work on efforts aimed at improving the lives of people on the margins and addressing problems with our political system.

Commission on Unity & Relationships. The council, working with Lancaster Theological Seminary intern Teman Cooke, worked on refining an approach for conducting “difficult” conversations within and between congregations. These are conversations designed to bring people with widely disparate beliefs/opinions together to hear each other’s stories and discuss their differences in a safe environment. One session was held in December 2018 at Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster, and others are being planned for 2019.

Commission on Common Ministries. The council has continued to provide support to its Trucker/Traveler Ministry, Campground Ministries, and Farmworker Ministries. Work continues on building a Healing Communities network in Pennsylvania.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
Council staff continue to discuss activities and areas where the council might engage to be of service to our members, the wider faith community.

Jan Gulick, interim executive director and director of finance & facilities

PORTICO BENEFITS SERVICES
Benefits in Action: Walking Our Promise to Support Those Who Serve

Yes, things have changed in the church, especially in the last decade. But like Martin Luther's description of faith - "a living, busy, active, mighty thing" - Portico Benefit Services is constantly evolving, finding more efficient ways to help clergy and employees steward their gifts for the sake of the world.

As the ELCA’s benefit ministry, we’re called to live out a 200+ year legacy of service to clergy and employees. Our talented staff leverage Portico’s long-term experience, industry partnerships, and innovation-embracing culture to deliver benefits that can help people live well throughout their service and into retirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By the Numbers – Helping People Live With More Confidence</th>
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<td>640 Members Retired</td>
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Thirty-Second Annual Assembly Book
in 2018, and we celebrated with every one!

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<tr>
<th><strong>23 Companies Screened</strong></th>
<th><strong>$1M Debt Paid Off</strong></th>
<th><strong>4.5% Baseline Rate Increase</strong></th>
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<td>from ELCA social purpose funds for holding reserves of oil shale and tar sands,</td>
<td>by plan members working with LSS Financial Counseling, as of year-end 2018.</td>
<td>for employer health contributions in 2019 – on average, the lowest increase in 5 years.</td>
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<th><strong>$94 Less Per Month</strong></th>
<th><strong>2,500 Worries Released</strong></th>
<th><strong>6,080 Learning Hours</strong></th>
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<td>paid in premiums by most ELCA Medicare-Primary retired members in 2019 thanks to our switch to Humana.</td>
<td>by ELCA Youth Gathering attendees at Portico’s unbinding prayer station.</td>
<td>invested by members in Portico’s financial education seminars, webinars, and videos last year.</td>
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Blessings on your ministry. It’s a privilege to serve you.

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, president & CEO

**SPIRITRUST LUTHERAN®**

*A gratia Dei pro gloria Dei.* The year 2018 was an exciting one for SpiriTrust Lutheran®. It began with construction of a new $15.4 million skilled-care residence at The Village at Luther Ridge nearly 15 months ago. The construction is nearly completed, and we expect to welcome our first resident this spring. The new skilled-care residence not only completes the continuum of care on the campus, but fulfills a promise made more than 25 years ago.

The transfer of skilled beds from The Village at Gettysburg to The Village at Luther Ridge and the plan to renovate the remaining skilled care rooms in Gettysburg affords us the opportunity to expand our independent living options in both Chambersburg and Gettysburg. The $2.9 million Gettysburg revitalization will begin in the summer of 2019.

In 2018 SpiriTrust Lutheran hit a major milestone when SpiriTrust Lutheran LIFE surpassed a daily census of 100. This milestone is significant for the sustainability of the program as we look to provide alternatives for people who wish to remain living at home and receive the benefits of skilled care in a non-institutional setting. Our LIFE program serves Cumberland, Franklin and Perry County residents at centers in Chambersburg and Enola.

Our Annual Cornerstone Dinner in April raised more than $200,000 to support our life-enhancing services. This event increased the total raised to more than $2.5 million since the dinner’s inception in 2004. This community support has allowed SpiriTrust Lutheran to serve more than 9,000 people, helping them to achieve a higher quality of life in 2018. Also noteworthy is that in 2018 our VITA program assisted more than 7,600 clients in filing their tax returns, resulting in an estimated $7.3 million being returned to York County in federal and state tax refunds.

Although we have always been mission-focused on quality in our skilled-care residences, a renewed commitment and laser-focused approach to quality resulted in each of our four skilled-care residences attaining 5-Star Rating for quality. Maintaining this standard helps insure that those for whom we are called to provide care receive the quality of care they deserve.

Our agency wide commitment to “The Lean Way” helps us to stay true to our Core Value of Stewardship. SpiriTrust Lutheran is one of the early CCRC adaptors of the Lean process. Across the agency multiple teams are working on finding ways for us to be better stewards of the blessings we have received.

All of this was made possible by the dedication and commitment of more than 1,400 team members, 4,270 volunteers and nearly 1,700 donors. Because of their collective support of our mission, SpiriTrust Lutheran was able to witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ in service to 22,893 clients, residents and participants.

For all of this and your partnership and prayers, we give thanks through the grace of God’s glory.

Robert Rundle, president and CEO

**ST. BARNABAS CENTER FOR MINISTRY**

On Monday, June 18, 2018, St. Barnabas Center for Ministry began the twentieth-fifth year of summer camp at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Uptown Harrisburg. Things have changed since St. Barnabas began in 1993. The program has grown, including a wider range of ages included in the program. Technology has been added to both the instructional program and the administrative area. More children are served. Policies and procedures have become more complicated. Staff and board members have evolved, and the area has changed but St. Barnabas has kept the same core mission of keeping young people in a safe, nurturing Christian environment for 25 years.
Camp again hosted a daily average of 80 campers. Breakfast followed by Bible study starts the day at St. Barnabas. Then the camp splits into groups designated by age to start their daily activities which include soccer, basketball, math, reading, crafts and, new this year in the music department, drumming. Needless to say, the kids thoroughly enjoying the drumming classes taught by a local Harrisburg teacher. Breakfast, lunch and a snack are served every day, and these again were provided by local churches and the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. The Food Bank started assisting with meals last year and was so successful that the program continued in 2018. This not only helps the local churches but also provides training for staff in safe food handling and nutritious well-balanced meals. The Food Bank does periodic inspections of the kitchen and staff during camp. The staff did so well last summer that the camp received a certificate of recognition for excellence for meeting and exceeding the Food Bank's regulations. The camp was also able to accommodate the churches requesting more than two days a week serving meals.

The closing ceremony was held Thursday evening, August 9, 2018, and was well attended by parents and families. The students performed not only their Zumba routine but treated the audience to a drumming performance. Each age group is assigned a body part to study during camp. The groups not only learn the specific functions of their body part but also compose a skit or song to perform at the ceremony. Each year while the body parts remain the same, the program is different due to the creativity of the counselors who try to outdo each other with their group's performance. The staff works very hard with the students on these performances every year, and it pays off in an outstanding program.

The St. Barnabas Twentieth-Fifth Anniversary Celebration was held Saturday afternoon, October 20, 2018, at the Goodwin Memorial Baptist Church Friendship Center on North Third Street. Board member, Bert Fry, chaired the event which included performances by the campers and presentations on the Seven Pillars of Character: Respect, Caring, Fairness, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Citizenship and Forgiveness presented by local dignitaries. The Seven Pillars were introduced to the camp program by Mr. Hines, and one is featured weekly coordinating in the morning with the Bible lesson. The program was a fitting tribute to St. Barnabas history of ministry and was enjoyed by a large crowd which included many former staff members and participants.

Once again, the board and staff of St. Barnabas would like to thank the Lower Susquehanna Synod for your continued support. We again found St. Barnabas in a difficult financial position at the end of the year. We started a strategic planning program to alleviate this challenge in the future. We will be meeting in 2019 to address issues that the board has identified.

Carol Witzeman, St. Barnabas board chair

**SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY**

**Life of the University**

The 2018-2019 academic year marks the 161st for Susquehanna University. The university continues to serve a religiously diverse student body, about 8% of whom self-identify as Lutheran and who hail from 35 states and 22 countries. Dr. Jonathan Green, Susquehanna’s 15th president, is completing his second year of service.

**Campus Religious Activities**

Religious Life continues to help members of the academic community integrate faith, life, and learning. Many religious life organizations and various ministries and programs offered by the Chaplain’s Office help students grow spiritually as they grow intellectually.

Sunday worship services are held in Weber Chapel when classes are in session. The student deacon program allows select students to explore Christian service through formal servant-leadership roles.

Last April, “Lutheran Youth Day” once again brought middle and high school students, pastors and youth ministers into contact and conversation with college students for whom the Christian faith is vibrant and alive.

In January, for the third year Chaplain Scott Kershner co-directed (with Rabbi Nina Mandel, an adjunct professor at Susquehanna) an interfaith student travel seminar to the Holy Land called GO Jerusalem: Interfaith Encounters. The program studies the ways in which the three Abrahamic faiths regard Jerusalem as a holy city and work together to seek peace, justice, and mutual understanding.

Susquehanna received a grant from Interfaith Youth Core to host a regional interfaith leadership gathering in February, which brought together students and educators from seven colleges and universities around Central PA for a day of leadership development around issues of religious pluralism and civic life.

Interfaith engagement is a strong commitment of ELCA institutions of higher education generally, and Susquehanna in particular. Ours is a religiously diverse campus, a reality which we embrace not in spite of but because of our Lutheran tradition, which teaches that the other is to be welcomed as Christ and that education serves the common good.
In our world where religious conflicts are routinely in the headlines, the work of building bridges of understanding and cooperation across lines of religious and philosophical difference is an essential civic and spiritual task. Such work has been an important part of religious life at Susquehanna in the past year.

In Conclusion
Susquehanna University deeply appreciates the ongoing support and encouragement that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lower Susquehanna Synod give to its efforts to be a strong and successful college of the church, including the faithful service on the Board of Trustees of Mr. Frank Leber (‘64) and the Rev. Linda Shank, and Bishop Howard McCarney, trustee emeritus.

The Rev. Scott M. Kershner, chaplain to the university

UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT MILLERSVILLE

Campus Ministry at Millersville hosted by St. Paul Lutheran, Millersville, is a newly formed organization offering students enrolled at Millersville University a ministry “home-away-from-home.” In 2018 about 20 students were involved in activities sponsored by the Campus Ministry with attendance at student suppers averaging eight attendees a week. The student suppers were held every Wednesday during the school year. They were prepared and served by volunteers from the St. Paul congregation on a rotating basis. It is a wonderful opportunity for the students and St. Paul members to become better acquainted, sharing life experiences and goals as each explores their faith journey.

In February members of the group participated in a three-day retreat at Camp Nawakwa, sharing fellowship and learning activities led by Pastor Connie Mentzer. Once each semester a lock-in was held at St. Paul Church where students enjoyed snacks, engaged in games and spent time planning events for the coming months. The night ended with a short worship service and a pancake breakfast. A few social gatherings were held with students going to local venues to play mini golf, laser tag or arcade games.

Throughout the year students participated in service projects in the parish. Some served as activity leaders during Vacation Bible School. Some helped prepare kits for Lutheran World Relief. One student shared his musical talents by offering instrumental solos during Sunday worship. On Campus Reading Day just prior to finals each semester, students helped St. Paul members distribute 250 “care packages” in the Student Memorial Center. These packs contained various snack items as well as an inspirational message and a card about Lutheran Campus Ministry.

As an outreach to the university campus, St. Paul Campus Ministry manned a Welcome Station during freshman move-in day. Students and adult leaders set up a table along George Street where they grilled hot dogs and provided them to families and students. Bottled water was also available to those who stopped by. Every student was given a card describing the group and inviting them to Campus Ministry dinners and worship services at St. Paul.

During the month of July, Pastor Mentzer sent letters to all Lutheran parishes in south central Pennsylvania, asking the pastor to inform any students in their parish who planned to attend Millersville University about our outreach. She also asked that those pastors send her the names and contact information for those students.

While the numbers may as yet be small, Campus Ministry at Millersville has a core of dedicated students who have found a ministry home-away-from-home at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Millersville.

Lauren Buchmann, campus ministry committee chair, St. Paul Lutheran, Millersville

UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

No report submitted by March 15, 2019.

UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Gettysburg + Philadelphia

Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard

And loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.

Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace.

Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: All are welcome!

All are welcome! All are welcome in this place! – Marty Haugen

In our second year of being United Lutheran Seminary, we are pleased to report that we have 167 students seeking to serve in the ministry of Word and Sacrament and Word and Service, which is a ten percent increase from two years ago.
With your synodical support, a secure foundation exists on which to “build a house” that provides for the faculty, staff and facilities, but most importantly provides full tuition to all our ELCA students seeking rostered positions within the church. This year, less than one in four students applied for loans due in large part to your synod’s faithful giving. Our students will be graduating with less debt, which means your congregations in need of a servant leader will have more options for a call. We could not be here without your synod’s amazing grace.

**Our goal is to provide full tuition to ELCA students for the sake of your synodical ministries.**

In our second year as United, we lay claim to the lyrics of Marty Haugen—building a house (on two campuses!) where all are named, their songs and visions heard. We seek to love and treasure our students, to teach them and claim them as words within the Word. Through Unifying, Learning, and Serving, we model for our students a vision of the church—not perfect by any means but striving to live into the grace that frees us all and echoes across the needs of this turbulent time and space. While we have students from over twenty-five denominations and welcome the nuanced discussions that result in our classrooms about theology, culture, and witness, our historical ties to the earliest expressions of Lutheranism in America continue to guide us into a rich and meaningful expression of our denominational heritage and theology of grace.

**United Lutheran Seminary is a community committed to changing the world through the transformative grace of God, inclusive hospitality, and radical welcome. We commit ourselves to making this seminary open, welcoming, accepting, and affirming to all of God’s children.**

Our diversity task force, in conjunction with the diversity committee of the Board of Directors, has undertaken a nine-month process to craft a Welcome and Equity Statement. We are committed to building a house where restorative justice, equity, and full inclusion at God’s banquet table are afforded to all members of the seminary community. You can read the full statement here: www.uls.edu/about/welcome-equity/.

We cannot continue without your support, of course. We ask that you prayerfully consider three ways to help us:

- Recognize those individuals within the Lower Susquehanna Synod who have gifts for ministry and encourage them to answer God’s call to rostered leadership in the ELCA.
- Make a personal contribution to ULS on a monthly basis. If you are already doing this, consider increasing your monthly gift to the seminary by ten percent (www.uls.edu/giving).
- Encourage your Synod Council to increase synodical giving by three percent of your current level over a three year period (an incremental increase with each passing year).

In return, we will strive to raise up new leaders for the congregations within your synod, doing our utmost to prepare them for the challenges of today’s church with the added benefit of little or no graduate school debt. **We are grateful for you, your ministry, and the support by which we continue to thrive.**

Dr. Richard Green, *interim president*

**CHRIST LUTHERAN HEALTH MINISTRIES**

[http://www.pcvsoftware.net/christlutheran/index.html#health](http://www.pcvsoftware.net/christlutheran/index.html#health)

**Prenatal Clinic**

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 are written off to the charity budget by Holy Spirit Hospital (under the sponsorship and guidance of the Sisters of Christian Charity)
- In addition to prenatal care, we give out pack-n-play cribs, car seats, baby clothing and diaper bags that are donated by church members from a number of area churches
Board
+ The Congregation Council of Christ Lutheran Church, Harrisburg
+ Rev. Drew Stockstill, Executive Director
+ Holly Hoffman, MD, MAMS, ELCA Deacon and Medical Director

Accomplishments
+ 122 patient visits across 32 clinics during Year 12 of our program.
+ Since inception twelve years ago, 169 babies have been born at Geisinger-Holy Spirit Hospital from the clinic and 206 women have received care through the clinic.
+ The clinic was the first free-standing prenatal clinic in the US 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.
+ Health Ministries is also the umbrella organization over a busy free dental clinic. A team of volunteer dentists, support staff and translators offer care 3 days a month for urgent dental conditions requiring simple extractions and fillings. Work is under way to have preventive dentistry added through partnership with HACC dental hygiene students.

Relationship to the Lower Susquehanna Synod
Most current board members are LSS-ELCA members. 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
seeking to explore faith in new and creative ways
Communities of Hope (COH) is an ELCA Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community. It began as a response to a group of individuals who wanted a safe space outside of a church building to gather and explore faith and expression. As we began to engage in Word, Sacrament, and service as a group - drawing from the experiences of our diverse backgrounds and religious understandings - we experienced authentic community. We began engaging in faith conversations that were honest and non-judgmental. COH continues to be a creative and ever-evolving ministry, focused on God’s restoration of a broken humanity through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

God is calling us to provide diverse opportunities for people to participate in COH in ways that encourage a sense of belonging without judgement. COH seeks to serve underrepresented groups in the Harrisburg area, including: youth and young adults, people of color, those experiencing poverty and homelessness, people with a high school diploma or less, and people with little or no church background or involvement. God is calling us to be vessels for healing through tender listening to those who are suffering.

As a group, we find meaning and purpose expressing our faith through local and global service with our neighbor, particularly with the community experiencing homelessness in downtown Harrisburg and children and their families living in poverty locally and globally. We have learned that our participants with little to no religious identity experience faith through service in local and global mission contexts.

This community was founded by the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali in 2015. Each expression has its own leader who develops the format and content of their gatherings, but the Rev. Hope-Tringali provides overall leadership and direction. The board is made up of eight members who possess a broad variety of experiences and skills, and there are currently five leaders.

We began 2018 with four expressions in and around Harrisburg: The Tribe, World Café/VFW Church, Parking Lot Church and Salon Church. The 2018 average monthly attendance was 55, and over the course of the year we identified several opportunities to expand our ministries into additional communities. We are excited to take our ministry into communities who are hungry for a deeper experience with God!

The Tribe: Led by Deacon David Hope-Tringali
The Tribe is in its second year of helping youth explore their spirituality and faith through wrestling. This ministry attracted national attention in the form of an article published in *Living Lutheran* magazine, as well as a visit from Ruben Duran from the churchwide organization.

**Opportunities for growth:**
1. In March of 2019, we will be launching the Tribe at St. Paul’s in New Cumberland. The congregation is very excited to host and participate in our ministry.
2. Messiah in Harrisburg has also requested our return to assist them with Vacation Bible School during the last week of June and to help with ongoing youth engagement once a month, beginning in the fall.
3. We have developed relationships with the families of Tribe participants and identified a need for mentors and tutors at the elementary school. We launched a tutoring program at Steelton-Highspire Elementary School in the fall of 2018. We have several tutors working with small groups of children identified by the school and are searching for more adults to volunteer, with a goal of 1:1 tutoring in the coming months.

**World Café/VFW Church: Led by Rose Tonkin**
This expression experienced significant growth in 2018. We started out with seven people and now have 30 involved. Monthly attendance is steady at 18 participants. This group is made up of folks with diverse experiences, from Veterans who do not feel a part of the larger church to those who have been hurt by the church and want to find their way back. The group includes members of the LGBTQ community, as well as people who currently don’t feel that they believe in God. The group worked together to collect items for two teachers’ classrooms. At Christmas we collected money to buy chickens, roosters, a goat, pigs, school supplies and honey bees through ELCA Good Gifts.

**Opportunity for growth:**
Several members expressed interest in bringing their families to worship as well and wanted to do so outside of the VFW. As a result, Rose launched a new community in January 2019 at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oberlin.

**Parking Lot Church: Led by Deacon David Hope-Tringali**
Gathering in the parking lot of St. Michael’s Lutheran Church on State Street, we shepherd and care for the community experiencing homelessness in downtown Harrisburg. We offer a monthly worship service, share communion, assist Helping Hands Ministries in serving a meal, and listen to those who need the support of a faith leader. Through these actions, those that gather for Parking Lot Church work to see the face of Christ in all people in our community, especially those who struggle and live on the margins.

Those who attend the community meal provided at St. Michael's are all amazing people with rich stories and much lived experience. They have come into poverty or homelessness through a variety of reasons and often find themselves then trapped in this lifestyle. The community that gathers for Parking Lot Church does so not out of a desire to simply do charitable work, but out of a deep belief that our liberation through Christ is intimately tied to those who suffer under systems of oppression. Together we are one body in Christ.

**Salon Church: Led by Carol Caring**
For the past two years this group of 10 - 12 has been meeting monthly at Perfect Image Salon in Mountville, PA. We have integrated various meditation techniques that include contemplative prayer to add to the spiritual perspective. We also incorporate art expressions to deepen the spiritual growth and make scripture relevant to personal enlightenment. We have had several social events to build fellowship, such as picnics and campfires with traditional activities like sing-alongs and roasting marshmallows!

In September the group began to meet a second time each month to study *Let Yourself Be Loved* by Phillip Bennett. This book study will continue through August 2019, at which time the group will select a new book. This group has attracted several people who do not attend a church yet seek spiritual growth.

The Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, *director for evangelical mission for new mission*

**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 that would help expose young people to shared experiences of living out their faith. In those early months, 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 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 towards 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 constructed 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 our synod, a three-year proposal was constructed. 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.

A candidate was identified, and the position of HAYI Director for Youth Ministry was paired with two other city ministries, The Tribe and the role of Harrisburg Missioner to the homeless community who gathered to worship in the parking lot at St Michael’s, Harrisburg. Synod Council approved the partnership and the new position, with the call being extended by our synod. Consecrated as a deacon at the 2018 Synod Assembly, David Hope-Tringali accepted the call and began serving on June 1, 2018.

As we approach the end of the first year of the partnership, there have been some victories and some challenges that we are addressing. Youth meet for a meal and faith formation one or two times a month and serve together monthly at Caitlin’s Smiles, St Michael’s, or other local venues. Some congregations have assigned adult liaisons to minister alongside the director and the young people, in an advisory role, which is in keeping with the covenant established between the congregations, our synod, and the director. However, congregations that have not yet assigned an adult to fill that role must take that step as we move into year-two since this seems to have an influence on the feeling of connectedness and communication that exists between the director and partner congregations.

The clearest hurdle to date will be filling the director’s role since David will soon be spending half his time tending to a ministry in Guatemala. The pastors involved in the partnership and I are meeting regularly as we strategize next steps, including identifying a candidate to fill that role. The position may shift to a layperson under contract, as opposed to a rostered minister under call, which will ultimately influence the compensation package. The partners also agree that the position requires a leader be passionate about the ministry with youth and young adults and to have youth ministry as their primary mission, so as not to be distracted by other responsibilities. I am confident the Spirit will lead us to the correct candidate to accompany the youth as they discern God’s will for them, strengthen relationships with their peers and their churches, and grow into mature disciples.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation & youth ministry

**LIVING WATER DENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY**

https://www.facebook.com/LivingWaterDentalHealthMinistry/

A ministry of St. John’s Lutheran Church, Hampton

**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 St. John’s Lutheran Church, Hampton. 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 2018 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, Chairwoman (Latino Missioner for Gettysburg Conference)
- Casey Williams, DMD Vice-Chairman (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 provided comprehensive dental care, with 154 patient visits over the past year (as of Feb. 2019) and 1,375 patient visits across almost seven years of operation.
- The clinic has received grant funding from Wheat Ridge and the Lutheran Deaconesses of the ELCA.
The clinic has provided free dentures to six patients over the past year and 25 patients overall, a unique service that was so joyously supported by the deaconesses that they gave us double the amount of funding we requested in 2016! Implants were provided for two patients.

Students from nearby Boiling Springs High School Spanish Honor Society and Dickinson College provide volunteer service hours as interpreters at the clinic.

The clinic provides user-friendly scheduling and communications by providing a dedicated phone line/answering machine staffed by a fluently bilingual scheduler.

Unsolicited patient donations continue to fund about one third of our operating expenses (supplies plus panorexes); this is “ministry with” rather than “ministry for” our patients. Patients and providers are a TEAM, working together to provide what is needed.

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, St. Paul, Carlisle

SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
123 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003
212-677-4800 (seven days a week, 24 hours a day) -- info@sihnyc.org -- www.sihnyc.org

2018 has been a year of “building.” First literally, when during the course of a municipal-mandated exterior- façade inspection of tall buildings in NYC, engineers discovered that the parapet of our guesthouse had to be replaced, at an unbudgeted expense of over $130,000. We were blessed that the ITF Seafarers’ Trust awarded SIH a $100,000 grant to offset that expense. With several other unexpected repairs becoming necessary as the guesthouse (built in 1964) is aging, we tasked a Facilities Workgroup and hired outside experts to analyze the long-term needs of the building and undertook several projects to address deferred maintenance.

We also did some building of our staff as we hired new talent, Jeni Janis, Administrative Assistant, and Henryk Behnke, Development Director, after their highly respected predecessors Noreen Fleming and Christopher Roehrer retired after almost two decades of service each.

To advance our mission and better serve immigrants and seafarers, we are building relationships with trusted partners such as American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Bronx Defenders, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York, First Friends of New Jersey and New York, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Human Rights First, Immigration Equality, The Marine Society of the City of New York, New Sanctuary Coalition of NYC, North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA), Red Cross, Restore NYC, Sierra Club, and Safe Horizon.

Figuratively, last year’s 28 asylees built upon the advice of mentors, who had preceded them on the journey from asylum seeker to new American. The asylees, who we provided with free lodging, food and Metro cards and assisted in finding a job and their own home, often became contributing members of their new communities within less than three months. We have built capacity to offer 50% more rooms to refugees, who will be granted asylum, in 2019.

In the meantime, our seven port chaplains built upon 145 years of experience assisting seafarers in the ports, serving a total of 25,183. Many of the seafaring men and women suffer from isolation, missing their family and friends. Some had traumatic experiences when mates got hurt, or worse, in fires and accidents, pirate attacks, and storms. SIH port chaplains are often the first outside contact with whom seafarers can share their experiences. They help mariners deal with traumas and through Wi-Fi or SIM cards provide needed contact to families back home. The trips to the mall or local sights are highlights for those that spend months on end on sea as they bring us the goods we often take for granted.

2018 Program Impact

33,985 immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services

1,853 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by volunteers

28 new Americans found their first home in the US in our guesthouse, staying a total of 1,182 nights

25,183 total of seafarers who were either visited or transported from 1,793 ships

432 youth, church and community gatherings accommodated serving about 6,480 people

1 successful completion of mandatory building inspection and reconstruction of a parapet with IFT Seafarers’ Trust funding
66 volunteer visitors brought hope to 26 asylum seekers, who were locked up in detention centers

57 survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking and local disasters were accommodated

3 advocacy events hosted to draw attention to the plight of asylum seekers

2 memorial services hosted by Christ Lutheran Church for seafarers, who had no immediate kin

25 guest rooms renovated and Wi-Fi installed throughout the guesthouse

1 Platinum Seal of Transparency earned: www.guidestar.org/profile/13-5562413

2018 Financial Report
In 2018, SIH allocated $124,000 to accommodate asylees and provided a room subsidy of $184,000 to seafarers. The operating expenses exceeded revenues by $228,851 because of unexpected capital repairs. Program services accounted for 84 percent of expenses with only 16 percent spent on support services and fundraising. Net assets were $5,374,369.

The Rev. Marsh Luther Drege, executive director

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION
Our synod Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Board of Leaders has been on an intentional sabbath in school year 2018-2019. As a result, no officers were identified or elected in 2018.

In our current synod staffing configuration, the position of Director for Children, Youth & Family position was merged with the position of Director of Faith Formation and Resources, to create the position of Director for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry. One person now fills the role of two previous full-time staff positions.

Since each position was full-time, there were responsibilities within each role that had to be re-examined, so that the responsibilities of the new position might be fulfilled. In that interim, the LYO Board or LYO Leadership Team, was one of the ministry responsibilities that had to be sacrificed. This is not to suggest that growing and shepherding young leaders through the ministry of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) has not continued. It does continue. However, the intentional election of a leadership team and the work that goes along with accompaniment of that team had to be re-evaluated in the short term.

The ministry that has continued, specifically designed to foster the growth of young leaders, which aligns with our missional goal of equipping leaders for service in Christ’s name, is our annual Leadership Training Camp (LT Camp). Since all Lutheran youth qualify as members of LYO, our LYO remains strong, and within our structure we have always recognized our LT Camp alumnus, as leaders within that organization.

As such, LT Camp Alums, functioning as LYO leaders:
1. Faithfully served at the annual 2018 Synod Assembly.
2. Served as cabin counselors for their peers at LT Camp 2018 and assisted our staff in all aspects of event management from meal prep, to small group leadership, worship leadership, community-building, and more.
3. Served as volunteers at our annual ALiVE Event in September 2018. In their role, they served alongside adult Small Group Leaders, helping to lead small group discussions and implementing the event curriculum. In addition, they served as song leaders for large group, campfires, and helped lead games and activities during free-time.
4. Some also served on the Winterfest 2018 planning team that helped manage the annual senior-high youth event, held at the Spooky Nook complex in December 2018.

Our Synod Youth Ministry Team and I continue to find ways to call-out (name) and celebrate the gifts of our young leaders in their first-third of life, to give them significant roles of leadership to help put those gifts into practice, and to encourage our young leaders to discern a call to vocations both inside and outside the church that reflect the Gospel in powerful ways.

As our synod traverses a period of renewal and continues to be reformed, our LYO continues to struggle with their role, in the midst of an ever-changing church ecosystem. At the heart of the organization continues to be a commitment to engage and equip young leaders for service to their Lord, God’s church, their congregations, communities, families, and the world.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation & youth ministry

WOMEN OF THE ELCA, LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD
“As a community of woman created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.”
“...For Just Such A Time As This” Esther 4:14, our Thirty-First Annual Convention was held at St. Paul, Carlisle, on August 18, 2018. Our convention goals were to conduct the business of the convention, to embolden women to live their faith as Esther did and to increase our awareness and support for our Women of the ELCA mission and ministries. Bishop Dunlop spoke of our work especially on sex trafficking. He encouraged us to not fear change. His challenge was “We need more Esther’s.”

We commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, and support one another in our callings,

In September, present and former WELCA Synod Board members attended Zion, York. It was a time to study and give input on the Draft Statement on Women and Justice.

In November, we spent time in retreats. Our synodical board met at Wittel Farm for a planning retreat. Camp Hebron is our Annual Fall Weekend Retreat. This year our theme was, “Standing on the Promise of God” by Tawn Battiste. Her “Woohoo” ministry celebrates joy in Christ.

May 11, 2019 is our Day of Renewal. It will be held at St. Bartholomew United, Hanover. The Rev. Angela Zimmann, United Lutheran Seminary, will speak about the hospitality she experienced during her time in Jerusalem. Our special offering will go to the Annual Fund for the seminary.

August 16-17, 2019 is our Thirty-Second Lower Susquehanna Synodical Women’s Organization Convention at St. Paul, Lititz. Camp Hebron Fall Retreat will be November 1-3, 2019.

February 22-24, 2019 was our Conference of Presidents. That Sunday was our Bold Woman’s Day. There were workshops on AMMPARO- Reflections on Family Separation and Suicide. Esther Up-Advocacy 101 was presented by Jennifer DeLeon, WELCA director for Justice and Region 8 Coordinator. We discussed Esther's BOLD. We related her example to the present. We shared stories of women doing advocacy work. Jennifer told about the February Living Lutheran article, “When Disciples Use Their Voice” about Pennsylvania passing the Safe Harbor bill. This bill protects children who are sex trafficked from becoming part of the criminal justice system. LAMPa, WELCA, and many faith groups advocated for its passage.

This has been a year of BOLD women advocating and praying that Lutheran women will join us in mission as together we

“Engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, society and the world.”

Lois Griffiths, president, Lower Susquehanna Synodical Women’s Organization

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION, LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

VISION: For every man to be a bold, daring follower of Jesus Christ.

MISSION: By God’s grace, to intentionally disciple men by personally modeling the character of Jesus Christ by living and leading a lifestyle intended to help transform them from having an inward focus to a culture of naturally loving and serving our neighbors.

At the synod level we have been relatively inactive this past year. There are a variety of reasons for this, and I will address them later in this report. However, we do know that men’s ministry is alive and well in the synod with quite a few active groups. REMEMBER: if you are a men’s group in the synod, you are a part of Lutheran Men in Mission.

However, there are a lot of things happening in the churchwide organization.

Our long-standing Executive Director, Dug Haugen, has brought his illustrative career to an end and, after an extensive search, the board has hired John Sundquist to succeed him. John has a passion for men’s ministry. He has a strong background in evangelical ministry and development. Welcome John. We look forward to working with you.

On another front, we continue to be a leader in men’s ministry through our Project XII initiative to jointly develop resources. More as this develops.

As I said, there are a variety of reasons for decreased activity in the synod. The primary reason is your current leadership team is old, tired and frustrated. We have been working at this for quite a few years without seeing much happening. Surely there are men in the synod who believe men’s spirituality is important. Men are looked down on by many segments of society. That needs to change. You can be a part of that change. See me with your questions. Visit our website Lutheranmen.com.

Fred Bohls, president, Lutheran Men in Mission, Lower Susquehanna Synod