THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

United Church Center
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

June 6, 2020

Bishop James S. Dunlop
Presiding

Representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

THE REV. MARK OLSEN
Mission Funding Director, Fund for Leaders, Mission Advancement
The Assembly Planning Committee and the Synod Council of the Lower Susquehanna adopted the theme, “Encountering Jesus,” for the thirty-third annual Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A new format for the assembly was adopted for this year: two identical Days of Edification to be held on May 16, 2020, at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Neffsville (Lancaster) and May 31, 2020, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, York, with keynote speaker the Rev. James E. Hazelwood, bishop of the New England Synod; and a Day of Worship and Business to be held on Saturday, June 6, 2020, at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania. These plans were set aside as the novel coronavirus pandemic unfolded across the globe. Beginning in mid-March, Pennsylvania Governor Thomas Wolf executed stay-at-home orders for the commonwealth. The Days of Edification were canceled. As the impact of the virus and its mitigation measures became clearer, the Synod Council determined that a gathering of the size and physical proximity of the planned assembly would not be feasible in June. A bylaw stipulating the conducting of the annual Synod Assembly between May 15 and June 30 necessitated parliamentary measures to postpone the assembly. The Synod Council changed the location of the assembly to the corporate headquarters at 900 South Arlington Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and determined that the Synod Council would comprise the assembly to be convened on June 6, 2020, remotely by Zoom. Bishop James S. Dunlop would be present at the synod office to open the Synod Assembly.

ASSEMBLY APPOINTMENTS

The 2020 Assembly Planning Committee, a committee of the Synod Council, met three times throughout the year to plan for the 2020 Synod Assembly. Members of this committee were chair, Stella Ludwig; the Rev. Matthew B. Best, SC; the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, assembly manager; Catherine F. Deitrich, assembly registrar; the Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George; Daniel P. Picone, SC; the Rev. Edward J. Robbins; Charles R. Roberts, III, staff; and the Rev. Gwenn L. Trout; and officers Lucinda L. Bringman, and the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel.

Serving as members of the Nominating Committee for the 2020 Synod Assembly were chair, Kay A. Hinkle, SC; Bishop James S. Dunlop; secretary, the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel; Debra K. Barrett, SC; the Rev. Cindy A. Brommer; the Rev. David W. Clark; the Rev. Christopher A. Frye; the Rev. Molly K. Haggerty; the Rev. Beth Ann R. Hawk; the Rev. Robert B. Ierien; the Rev. Kathleen A. Kuehl; the Rev. Karen E. Larson; Sister Deborah A.S. McClellan; the Rev. Miriam L. Nicholson; the Rev. Jason P. Northridge; the Rev. Elizabeth Polanzke; the Rev. David J. Schreffler; Evan Williams; and staff, Debbie Clark.

Members of the Gift Discernment Committee, who interviewed candidates for synod vice president are chair, Kay A. Hinkle, SC; Bishop James S. Dunlop; the Rev. Eric N. Anderson; Debra K. Barrett, SC; the Rev. Douglas L. DeStephano; Holly Freas-Webster; Robert Walton; M. Jane Wigand; and the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel, secretary.

Our churchwide representative, assigned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, was the Rev. Mark Olsen, Mission Funding Director, Fund for Leaders, Mission Advancement.

FIRST ASSEMBLY SESSION
Saturday Morning, June 6, 2020

The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, called to order the thirty-third annual assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 6, 2020, at the United Church Center, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, remotely by Zoom. Twenty-five members of the Synod Council, program staff, and officers comprised the attendees. Bishop Dunlop began the assembly with the Order for the Opening of a Synod Assembly.

Bishop Dunlop greeted the members of the Synod Assembly and welcomed them to this thirty-third annual Synod Assembly, noting that this was a very different assembly than any other, with the novel coronavirus pandemic still making large in-person gatherings unwise. He shared a video which the churchwide organization of the ELCA prepared for this year’s synod assemblies, entitled “A Thriving Church”. It was filmed prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. In the video, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and others reminded us that in spite of the challenges of COVID-19, there are signs of thriving in our church. Thriving is remembering God’s faithfulness in history that propels us into the future. Bishop Dunlop noted that because of the creative technological adaptations to the COVID-19 crisis, more people than ever are tuning in to online worship, Bible study, and prayer. We are feeding people with the Word of God and with food. We are feeding people as we have been fed by Christ as we help our neighbors with jobs, basic needs, and education.
CERTIFICATION OF VOTING MEMBERS AND REPORT ON REGISTRATION

The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel, secretary of the synod, reported that 288 persons were registered as voting members of the 2020 Synod Assembly. Needed for a quorum were 144 voting members. Attending the Zoom assembly as voting members were 11 ministers of Word and Sacrament, of whom all were on the roster of active pastors; nine lay members of the Synod Council, and two lay officers, making a total of 22 voting members. Bishop Dunlop declared no quorum present.

Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president of the synod, moved to adjourn the assembly to the call of the chair, seconded by Meredith Askey. Daniel Picone inquired about a preliminary date for the assembly to be called back to order. Bishop Dunlop said that October 17, 2020, has been tentatively set aside, but the feasibility of holding a large-scale meeting on that date remains uncertain. If we cannot hold it then, it will be moved to the date of the 2021 assembly and the work of the 2020 assembly would be referred to the Synod Council. Daniel Picone expressed concern for the constitutionality of this action. Bishop Dunlop explained that if this motion is adopted, the Synod Council would be giving the bishop the authority to determine when the remainder of the assembly would be held. Vice President Bringman assured the Synod Council that the proper thirty-days’ notice would be given. If this assembly were adjourned to a specific date and time and meeting together were impossible, the Synod Council would have to repeat today’s procedure. Vice President Bringman went on to explain that we have met the constitutional requirements by convening this assembly today. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has legislation for non-profit corporations which provides for the continuance of board members in the event of an annual meeting being prevented, allowing the Synod Council to act on some of the matters that normally would have come to the Synod Assembly for action.

ADOPTED: That the 2020 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly be adjourned to the call of the chair.
SA20.06.01.

Bishop James S. Dunlop closed this session of the 2020 Synod Assembly with prayer.

On July 1, 2020, Bishop Dunlop called a special meeting of the Synod Council to confer regarding the feasibility of calling the Synod Assembly into session in the fall, in light of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. After considering the data and guidance from public health officials and the conversation with the Synod Council and staff, the bishop determined that it was not feasible or wise to hold the assembly in the fall and that he would not further call the 2020 Synod Assembly into session this year.

REPORT ON ATTendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordained voting members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lay voting members</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Voting Members</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ATTENDANCE</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approved by:

†James S. Dunlop, bishop
Beth A. Schlegel, secretary
BULLETIN OF REPORTS

Thirty-Third Annual Assembly
Lower Susquehanna Synod

June 6, 2020

United Church Center
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
REPORT OF THE BISHOP

They said to one another, "It is because we have no bread." And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" (Mark 8:16-21 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.

Since the Last Assembly
Our time since the last assembly is divided into two-time periods: the time before COVID-19 and the time after the onset of COVID-19. As I write this report we are now living a new reality of people who are living through this pandemic. Our lives have changed in a moment in time and yet our mission as a church remains the same. We proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in all we do, and we care for our neighbors. We express this in our vision that this synod is where the hungry are fed as we have been fed by Christ. Fed through the Word of God, meeting the hungers around us for food, for community, for a belonging and for a hunger for the Word of God. In this time of economic hardship and what we may perceive as scarcity, Jesus reminds us as he did the disciples that we live in abundance. We continue to be grateful for the abundance that God has given us that we may feed those who hunger.

Equipping Leaders
We continue to emphasize programs and ministries that strengthen the development of leaders across all age groups. Our resource center works to help curate resources for faith formation of every age. In addition, our camps and youth ministry programs such as Winterfest, A LiVE and Leadership Training Camp influence the lives of hundreds of our young people. We are also working with a large number of candidates for ordained ministry through our Candidacy Committee. Through our partnership with United Lutheran Seminary, we are developing leaders for the church. In addition to candidates from our synod, we have the opportunity to host students from around the country doing their field education in our synod. It is one of our ministries to help shape seminarians in our congregations as they prepare to lead the church.

We work to develop continuing education for our current rostered ministers and laity. Throughout the year there are opportunities for continuing education. We continue to work with our Episcopal siblings through the Stevenson School for Ministry. In this collaborative effort, Deacon Marsha Roscoe, the director of the collaborative mission center, is working with our neighboring synods and Episcopal church to strengthen our development of leaders. We completed this year a certificate program in missional preaching for our rostered ministers and laity. Those who participated had the opportunity for coaching with Paul Scott Wilson, a renowned homilectician from the University of Toronto; and with Tracy Radosevic, a renowned biblical storyteller.

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.

Principal in our work for the Office of the Bishop in leadership development is to facilitate the call process for our rostered ministers. We continue to work with our congregation call committees and rostered ministers throughout the church to find candidates that can serve in our congregations. We have completed 22 call processes since the last assembly. We have also had 14 of our rostered ministers retire since our last assembly. As we have entered into the COVID-19 time, most of the call processes have slowed considerably given the inability to hold meetings and interviews. Without the ability to conduct congregational meetings, many call votes have been suspended. We are hopeful that as the commonwealth begins to lessen restrictions these processes will resume accordingly.

Encouraging Cooperation
We work regularly with congregations to find ways for sharing of resources, whether that be ministry programs, staff, resources or financial resources. We have the great gift of proximity in this synod that allows for creative ways of sharing ministry and resources. As we have moved into this COVID-19 era we have increased cooperation and increased sharing of resources and in some cases worship experiences as we have moved to electronically mediated worship.

We continue to work with the synods around us and with our ecumenical partners in sharing ministry opportunities. We are currently working with the Allegheny and Upper Susquehanna Synods to write a grant from the Lilly Foundation for renewing congregations. The Lilly Foundation is looking for renewing ministries approaches that are working and is wanting to help expand these programs. We are requesting five years of funding to expand R3 across 100 congregations in our three synods.
During the COVID-19 crisis we have made funding available to congregations that are doing ministry with individuals caught in the crisis. We are granting monies to ministries that work with the people struggling with hunger, unemployment and homelessness. We have been blessed with generosity in the Always Being Made Campaign, in which our synod participated by establishing a Disaster Response Fund. It is through our cooperative ministry and sharing that we can respond to this disaster that has struck our synod and the world.

We continue our cooperation globally in our long-standing relationship with the Konde Diocese in Tanzania. They too are feeling the effects of the pandemic. We have provided $25,000 in support to the bishop of the Konde Diocese to help as they prepare for the impact of COVID-19 on their churches. The outbreak has been limited in that region of Tanzania, but they know that the virus is emerging in the country. We are also blessed to cooperate with David and Jennifer Hope-Tringali, who are working globally in Guatemala with the Tree4Hope mission. They have successfully begun a girls’ school, which they have had to close temporarily with the advent of COVID-19. Many congregations have been supporting their work there, and United Lutheran Seminary has been using Tree4Hope as an international learning site. We pray that this work may continue as the pandemic lessen.

Engaging in New Mission
Our R3 Renewal Process (reFORM + reNEW + reVISION), an 18-month coaching process engaging congregations with the energy, ideas, and tools they need to renew their mission to God’s people, is ongoing. We are now in the second round of congregations committed to this effort. Even in the time of COVID-19, the congregations are continuing to meet and share in cohort groups. The 23 congregations that completed the training are continuing their efforts to find new ways to proclaim the Gospel in a changing time. The work that these congregations have done to expand their mission and vision has carried into new creativity during the COVID-19 crisis. We will continue to coach congregations in ways to renew their ministry. Our hope is that with the Lilly grant we will be able to expand the renewal to neighboring synods. I had the opportunity to present our R3 Renewal Process at the Conference of Bishops. We have been approached by the churchwide organization to explore guiding them in developing innovative ways to renew ministry throughout the ELCA. Strengthening and renewing mission in the congregations is the most important work we do together as synod.

We continue to support new mission communities within our synod, particularly to underserved communities in our area. Our work with Word of Life Deaf, Peter’s Porch serving the economically challenged, Communities of Hope working with the those who have been estranged from the church, and ministry to those in the recovery community, are all ways that we are working to reach those who have felt at times left out of the church. We are also in partnership with congregations that are doing innovative outreach into their communities including The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Lancaster and Trinity Lutheran Church in Mechanicsburg. These are a few examples of how we are supporting ways to do new mission.

Administration
We continue to work to steward the gifts that are shared through congregation mission support. We have continued to reduce staff, control expenses and find additional sources of revenue to maintain our ministry. Mission support was $50,000 less than our budget but we were able to have a slight surplus as we closed out the fiscal year. We have seen a significant decrease in mission support during the first full month of COVID-19 closures. We know that the congregations are struggling as well. We have been blessed with a Paycheck Protection Program loan that has allowed us to keep the synod staff in place and to work from home. We are grateful to the congregations for their support of our mission.

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 have continued to streamline the operations. The financial staff of Denise Ferguson and Cathy Paul, guided by our treasurer Joe Stepansky, has done outstanding work to allow us to manage our resources closely. We received an unmodified opinion on the audit from our independent auditors again this year.

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 Charlie Roberts, Deborah Clark, the Assistants to the Bishop: Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson, Pastor Rob Blezard, and Pastor Beth Martini, and Director for Evangelical Mission Pastor Richard Jorgensen, 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 the retirement of Pastor Tom McKee. We are blessed that Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson was willing to accept a call to serve as assistant to the bishop. Also, Pastor McKee’s departure meant that we would have a new synod secretary. Pastor Beth Schlegel was elected at the 2019 Synod Assembly and has stepped into the role of secretary with skill and grace and is a blessing to our staff.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to Vice President Lucinda Bringman. In my first seven years as synod bishop, she has been a blessing to the synod and to my ministry. I could not have asked for a better partner in this ministry. We will elect a new vice president at the assembly and she will have a much-deserved rest. She will be missed deeply by all who have had the joy of working alongside her and especially by me. God’s peace be with you.

†The Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop
### HONOR ROLL - 2020
**Rostered Fifty Years or More**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Names</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>The Rev. Arthur L. Ruths</td>
</tr>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>The Rev. Howard W. Hinkeldey</td>
</tr>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>The Rev. Ronald F. Mease</td>
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### ANNIVERSARY OF ROSTERING – 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Names</th>
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**30 years**

- The Rev. Parris C. Beckhardt
- The Rev. Douglas E. Johnson
- The Rev. Melvin A. Kirk
- The Rev. Eugene H. Moore

**40 years**

- The Rev. Michael Edward Allwein
- The Rev. Scott K. Davis
- The Rev. John G. Largen
- The Rev. Mark W. Oldenburg
- The Rev. Alan R. Wilson

**35 years**

- The Rev. George M. Minick
- The Rev. Charles H. Oberkehr
- Deacon Henrietta K. Ranck
- The Rev. Beth A. Schlegel
- The Rev. Nancy L. Schwabe-Fry
- The Rev. Peter J. Schwabe-Fry
1990 – 30 years:
The Rev. Glenn A. Beard Jr.
The Rev. Carolyn S. DeStephano
The Rev. Catharine Senft Geib
Deacon R. Lynne Kiick
The Rev. Anne-Rose Reeves
The Rev. Edward J. Robbins

1995 – 25 years:
Deacon Judy K. Collins
The Rev. Lisa A. B. Hair
The Rev. Lisa M. Leber
The Rev. Timothy A. Mentzer
The Rev. George M. Schneider
The Rev. John G. Teitman

2000 – 20 years:
The Rev. Kathleen J. Baker
The Rev. Cynthia A. Chambers
The Rev. Thomas E. Darr
The Rev. Albert J. Domines Jr.
The Rev. Clifton D. Eshbach
The Rev. Keith Fair
The Rev. James E. Person

2005 – 15 years:
The Rev. Maren Alexis-Tomkiel
The Rev. James S. Dunlop
The Rev. Aaron M. Erdtle
The Rev. Lawrence E. Hawkins
The Rev. William C. Knotts
The Rev. Eric L. Petty
The Rev. David J. Schreffler
The Rev. Lois K. Van Orden

2010 – 10 years:
Deacon Ellen D. Doughty
The Rev. Michael Kenneth Fischer
The Rev. Traci B. Glover
Deacon Holly C. Hoffman M.D.
The Rev. Deborah A. Mahady
The Rev. Jane C. Nicholson
The Rev. Sarah E. Teichmann

2015 – 5 years:
The Rev. Cynthia K. Baxter
The Rev. Martha S. Boyd
The Rev. Godfred Effisah
The Rev. Benjamin S. Erzkus
The Rev. Courtney Ann Erzkus
The Rev. Andrew R. Geib
The Rev. Beth Ann R. Hawk
Deacon Marilyn E. Kautz
The Rev. Carl P. Rabbe

IN MEMORIAM

The Rev. Carl E. Bentz…………………………..Savannah, GA
   July 29, 2019

The Rev. Carl J. Frederick………………………….Lancaster, PA
   September 3, 2019

The Rev. Irvin E. Straw Jr…………………………Lititz, PA
   September 6, 2019

The Rev. Kenneth C. Senft…………………………Harrisburg, PA
   September 21, 2019

The Rev. Alfred A. Ambrose……………………..Mt. Dora, FL
   October 15, 2019

The Rev. Thomas E. Light Jr……………………..Lebanon, PA
   October 31, 2019

The Rev. Howard J. McCarney……………………Camp Hill, PA
   November 13, 2019

The Rev. Donald R. Pederson…………………………York, PA
   November 29, 2019

The Rev. Richard C. Jones…………………………Mechanicsburg, PA
   January 6, 2020

The Rev. Barbara J. Winey……………………..New Oxford, PA
   February 10, 2020

The Rev. George E. Buechner……………………Harrisburg, PA
   February 15, 2020

The Rev. Robert E. Custer…………………………Bedford, PA
   March 8, 2020

The Rev. Paul A. Jones…………………………….Sun City, FL
   April 24, 2020

The Rev. Richard B. Starr…………………………Webster, TX
   June 2, 2020

ROSTERED MINISTERS RETIRED

The Rev. Glenn D. Miller………………………….July 1, 2019
The Rev. Stephen W. Yambor………………September 1, 2019

The Rev. Hobart Charles Utter Jr………………July 1, 2019
The Rev. Linda. S. Trout…………………October 1, 2019

The Rev. Thomas E. McKee………………September 1, 2019
The Rev. Scott K. Davis………………December 31, 2019
The Rev. William C. Snyder ..................December 31, 2019
The Rev. Margareta M. Breden ..............January 1, 2020
The Rev. Kathy A. Swords .....................January 1, 2020
The Rev. Dennis L. Trout ......................January 31, 2020
Deacon George E. Bennett Jr ..................February 5, 2020
The Rev. Nancy R. Easton ......................April 1, 2020
The Rev. Anne-Rose Reeves ...................May 1, 2020

**ORDINATIONS**

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<th>NAME</th>
<th>CALL</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anderson, James Scott</td>
<td>St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Messiah College, Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Ordination June 7, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becklin, Marissa Kay</td>
<td>Faith United Evangelical Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Messiah College, Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Ordination June 7, 2019</td>
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<td>Eckman, Jay Warren</td>
<td>Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Messiah College, Grantham, PA</td>
<td>Ordination June 7, 2019</td>
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<td>Demmel, James Thomas</td>
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<td>Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Chapel Hill, NC</td>
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<td>Brody, Nancy Kathleen</td>
<td>Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Ordination January 26, 2020</td>
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<td>McClinton, Megan Reynolds</td>
<td>Mount Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, PA</td>
<td>Ordination January 26, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, Carla Christopher</td>
<td>The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd</td>
<td>Union Evangelical Lutheran Church, York, PA</td>
<td>Ordination February 23, 2020</td>
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**ROSTERED PERSONS TRANSFERRING TO THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD**

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TRANSFERRED FROM</th>
<th>DATE OF TRANSFER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vought, Kristin A.</td>
<td>Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod</td>
<td>May 30, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goad, Terrance W.</td>
<td>Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>June 20, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luscombe, Mark R.</td>
<td>Upstate New York Synod</td>
<td>August 11, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rusche, Arlyn W.</td>
<td>South Dakota Synod</td>
<td>September 23, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pederson, Donald R.</td>
<td>Florida-Bahamas Synod</td>
<td>October 7, 2019</td>
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Kirk, Melvin A.                  Delaware-Maryland Synod                  October 24, 2019
Backer, Rosemary Wheeler       Florida-Bahamas Synod                   November 25, 2019
Petty, Eric Lee                Northern Texas-Louisiana Synod             December 1, 2019
O’Bryan, Kevin W.              Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod           December 15, 2019
Kliner, Gerald R. Jr.          West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod        February 26, 2020
Vitalis Hoffman, Kathryn M.    Delaware-Maryland Synod                   March 2, 2020
Paradise, Scott J.             Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod            May 18, 2020

**ROSTERED PERSONS TRANSFERRING FROM THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD**

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Smith, B. Wesley III</td>
<td>Indiana-Kentucky Synod</td>
<td>June 17, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reis, Darcy Marie</td>
<td>Southeast Michigan Synod</td>
<td>September 16, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schroeder, Kathryn A.</td>
<td>North/West Lower Michigan Synod</td>
<td>October 21, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnich-Sadler, Karen K.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>October 24, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowden, Janice Marie</td>
<td>Virginia Synod</td>
<td>November 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sadler, Timothy W.</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>November 23, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costlow, Beth J.</td>
<td>South Carolina Synod</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costlow, Donald J.</td>
<td>South Carolina Synod</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowden, Robert W.</td>
<td>Virginia Synod</td>
<td>December 17, 2019</td>
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**ROSTER CHANGES**

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<td>Ambrose, Alfred A.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>October 15, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Eric N.</td>
<td>Halifax, Messiah and St. Peter</td>
<td>York Springs, Garden of Grace</td>
<td>February 24, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, James Scott</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Maytown, St. John</td>
<td>June 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Backer, Rosemary Wheeler</td>
<td>Florida-Bahamas Synod - retired</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>November 25, 2019</td>
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<td>Becklin, Marissa Kay</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Denver, Faith United</td>
<td>June 7, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennett, George E. Jr.</td>
<td>SpiritTrust Lutheran</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>February 5, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bentz, Carl E.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deceased</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blouch-Hanson, Dana J.</td>
<td>Shippensburg, Memorial</td>
<td>Assistant to the Bishop</td>
<td>September 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breden, Margareta M.</td>
<td>Seven Valleys, Friedensaal</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>January 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock, Marianne B.</td>
<td>Arendtsville, Lutheran Camping Corporation</td>
<td>ELCA Foundation</td>
<td>May 4, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brody, Nancy Kathleen</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Halifax, Messiah and St. Peter</td>
<td>January 26, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buechner, George E.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>February 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarke, Titus D.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Carlisle, St. Paul</td>
<td>August 25, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costlow, Beth J.</td>
<td>Columbia, St. John</td>
<td>South Carolina Synod</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costlow, Donald J.</td>
<td>Quarryville, Mount Eden</td>
<td>South Carolina Synod</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer, Robert E.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>March 8, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, Scott K.</td>
<td>Lititz, Brickerville United</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>December 31, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demmel, James T.</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Spring Grove, St. Paul</td>
<td>January 19, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton, Nancy R.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>April 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eckman, Jay W.</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Gettysburg, Christ</td>
<td>June 7, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erzkus, Benjamin S.</td>
<td>York, Zion</td>
<td>East Petersburg, Zion</td>
<td>September 8, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick, Carl J.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>September 3, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goad, Terrence W.</td>
<td>Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>June 20, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggerty, Molly K.</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Newville, Big Spring United</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hipkiss, Sigrid R.</td>
<td>Mechanicsburg, Trindle Spring</td>
<td>Thomasville, Paradise</td>
<td>October 22, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland, Katrina L.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>York, St. James</td>
<td>September 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position and Status</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hope-Tringali, David A.</td>
<td>Harrisburg Area Youth Initiative (HAYI), Director; The Tribe, Missioner</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope-Tringali, Jennifer A.</td>
<td>Director for Evangelical Mission for New Mission</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illick, Pamela M.</td>
<td>Rouzerville, Trinity (term)</td>
<td>Rouzerville, Trinity (term continuation)</td>
<td>June 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jetto, Kenneth R.</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>February 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, Paul A.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>April 24, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, Richard C.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>January 6, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirk, Melvin A.</td>
<td>Delaware-Maryland Synod - retired</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>October 24, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kliner, Gerald R. Jr.</td>
<td>West Virginia/Western Maryland Synod</td>
<td>Elizabethtown, Christ</td>
<td>February 26, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light, Thomas E. Jr.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>October 31, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowden, Janice Marie</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Virginia Synod</td>
<td>November 10, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowden, Robert W.</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>Virginia Synod - retired</td>
<td>December 17, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luscombe, Mark R.</td>
<td>Upstate New York Synod</td>
<td>Ephrata, Holy Trinity</td>
<td>August 11, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarney, Howard J.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>November 13, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy, Susan J.</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>March 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClinton, Megan Reynolds</td>
<td>Candidate approved for ordination</td>
<td>York, Mt. Zion</td>
<td>January 26, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKee, Thomas E.</td>
<td>Assistant to the Bishop/Synod Secretary</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>September 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, Glenn D.</td>
<td>Lancaster, St. John Episcopal</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnich, Christina H.</td>
<td>Jacobus, Salem (term)</td>
<td>Jacobus, Salem (regularized)</td>
<td>December 9, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnich-Sadler, Karen K.</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>October 24, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, Robert W.</td>
<td>Hanover, St. Matthew</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>February 17, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Synod</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Morton, Adam T.</td>
<td>Lancaster, Holy Trinity</td>
<td>On Leave From Call - graduate study</td>
<td>March 31, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Bryan, Kevin W.</td>
<td>Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>Elliottsburg, Mannsville</td>
<td>December 15, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradise, Scott J.</td>
<td>Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod</td>
<td>Newmanstown, Millcreek</td>
<td>May 18, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pederson, Donald R.</td>
<td>Florida-Bahamas Synod - retired</td>
<td>Lower Susquehanna Synod - retired</td>
<td>October 7, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pederson, Donald R.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>November 29, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty, Eric Lee</td>
<td>Northern Texas-Louisiana Synod</td>
<td>Elliottsburg, Messiah</td>
<td>December 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reeves, Anne-Rose</td>
<td>Enola, St. Paul</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reis, Darcy Marie</td>
<td>York, St. James</td>
<td>Southeast Michigan Synod</td>
<td>September 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimmer, Chad M.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Geneva, Switzerland, Lutheran World Federation</td>
<td>September 1, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusche, Arlyn W.</td>
<td>South Dakota Synod</td>
<td>Chambersburg, Trinity</td>
<td>September 23, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadler, Timothy W.</td>
<td>Lancaster, Hospice and Community Care</td>
<td>Upper Susquehanna Synod</td>
<td>November 23, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schroeder, Kathryn A.</td>
<td>Hanover, St. Matthew</td>
<td>North/West Lower Michigan Synod</td>
<td>October 21, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott, George D.</td>
<td>East Berlin, Trinity</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>December 28, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seitz-Brown, Timothy J.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Biglerville, Benders Evangelical and St. Paul</td>
<td>April 1, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senft, Kenneth C.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>September 21, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, B. Wesley III</td>
<td>Bendersville, Bethlehem, Christ (Aspers), St. James (Wenksville)</td>
<td>Indiana-Kentucky Synod</td>
<td>June 17, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snyder, William C.</td>
<td>Lititz, Luthercare</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>December 31, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Starr, Richard B.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>June 2, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stetler, Roy H. IV</td>
<td>Dillsburg, Barrens United; Dillsburg, St. John (Franklin); Franklintown, Emmanuel</td>
<td>York, Quickel</td>
<td>September 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strause, Kurt S.</td>
<td>Lancaster, Emmanuel</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>November 1, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Strause, Kurt S.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Reinholds, Swamp</td>
<td>February 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straw, Irvin E. Jr.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>September 6, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swords, Kathy A.</td>
<td>York, Shiloh</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>January 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout, Dennis L.</td>
<td>Reinholds, Swamp</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>January 31, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trout, Linda S.</td>
<td>On Leave From Call</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>October 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utter, Hobart Charles Jr.</td>
<td>Highspire, St. Peter</td>
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<td>July 1, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vitalis Hoffman, Kathryn M.</td>
<td>Delaware-Maryland Synod</td>
<td>Hanover, St. Matthew</td>
<td>March 2, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vought, Kristin A.</td>
<td>Metropolitan Washington D.C.</td>
<td>Gettysburg, Gettysburg Hospital Foundation</td>
<td>May 30, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner, Amy M.</td>
<td>Newville, Zion</td>
<td>Carlisle, Heartland Hospice</td>
<td>December 2, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagner, Amy M.</td>
<td>Carlisle, Heartland Hospice</td>
<td>Chambersburg, SpiriTrust Lutheran</td>
<td>March 4, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Carla Christopher</td>
<td>Seminarian</td>
<td>Lancaster, Good Shepherd</td>
<td>February 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winey, Barbara J.</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>February 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yambor, Stephen W.</td>
<td>York, Grace (Roundtown);</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>September 1, 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emigsville, St. Mark</td>
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**CONGREGATION CHANGES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dissolved/Removed/Consolidated/Disbanded/Transferred/Merger/Received</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barrens United Lutheran Church (#07597)</td>
<td>Dissolved/disbanded</td>
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<td>October 27, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dillsburg, Pennsylvania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace Lutheran Church (#01065)</td>
<td>Dissolved/disbanded</td>
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<td>December 31, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gettysburg, Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Lutheran Church (#01030)</td>
<td>Dissolved/disbanded</td>
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<td>January 19, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambersburg, Pennsylvania</td>
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2020 — ORDAINED FIFTY YEARS

The Reverend Harold S. Fox, son of the late Harold S. and Bertha M. Fox, was born on August 29, 1944, at Montclair, New Jersey. He was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, on June 14, 1970, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, while a member of Grace Lutheran Church, State College, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Fox graduated from State College High School, State College, Pennsylvania, in 1962; from Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1966; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a master of divinity degree, in 1970; and from the Group for Advancement of Family Systems, Hershey, Pennsylvania, in 1980.

Pastor Fox served as pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1970-1977; Trinity Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1978-1993; and Trinity Lutheran Church, Steelton, Pennsylvania, from 1993 until he retired in 2014. He is a member of Messiah Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He has been active for many years with synodical youth ministry.

Pastor Fox participated in the Durham Ecumenical Conference; and events on Prayer and Healing, Death and Dying, the Funeral Itself, Gestalt, and Family Therapy. In addition to parish ministry, he served as contract chaplain at the Harrisburg State Hospital for twenty-six years, until it closed. He has used music in his ministry at church and has also performed with guitar for grade school children through seniors. A weekly commitment for the past 35 years (still ongoing) has been to sing with students at St Stephen's Episcopal School. He still rides a bicycle daily and drives a Hot Rod. He reflects, ‘I recall with a big smile the year that our Bishop Edmiston observed at Synod Assembly: ’Approaching microphone 4 is the oldest teenager in our Synod’. To tell the truth, I have still not grown up.’


The Reverend Paul A. Haack, son of Chester and Eva Haack, was born on December 17, 1944, in Baltimore, Maryland, and was baptized on January 14, 1945. He was ordained by the Maryland Synod of the Lutheran Church in America on June 14, 1970, at his home congregation of Epiphany Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Maryland.

Pastor Haack graduated from Parkville High School, Parkville, Maryland, in 1962; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a bachelor of arts degree, in 1966; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a master of divinity degree, in 1970; and from Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland, with a master of science degree, in 1978.

Pastor Haack served as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Drake’s Mills, Pennsylvania, 1970-1972; pastor of Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Baltimore, Maryland, 1972-1976; pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Smallwood, Maryland, 1976-1983; in the Maryland Synod Office, Baltimore, Maryland, 1983-1985; pastor of Silver Run Lutheran Parish, Silver Run, Maryland, 1986-1989; and pastor of First Lutheran Church, New Oxford, Pennsylvania, 1989 until he retired in 2006. In retirement, he served as interim pastor for Grace Parish, then part of the Gettysburg Conference; as interim pastor for St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hametown, Pennsylvania; as interim pastor for Trinity Lutheran Church, Jefferson, Pennsylvania; and currently serves as the stated supply pastor for Zion Lutheran Church, Glen Rock, Pennsylvania. He is a member of St. Paul (York Street) Lutheran Church, Hanover, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Haack was a member of the Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, Rotary Club. He was Secretary of the Directing Committee of the Lutheran University Ministry of Baltimore. While serving as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Westminster, Maryland, he served as secretary of the Westminster District and chairman of the Westminster District Area Strategy Team. Pastor Haack served on the Maryland Synod LCA Executive Board and as Secretary of the Hanover Conference of the Lower Susquehanna Synod ELCA. He also served as an Internship and Field Work Supervisor for students from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. He was a member of the New Oxford Chamber of Commerce, Chairman of the New Oxford Salvation Army Service Unit, and Coordinator of the New Oxford Ministerium.

On August 18, 1968, in Baltimore, Maryland, he married Janet née Zirkler. Their union has been blessed with two sons: Jeremy Allan, 1971; and Aaron Christopher, 1974.
The Reverend Timothy L. Hoffman, son of James E. and Margaret Bamat Hoffman, was born on June 1, 1944, at Philipsburg, Pennsylvania, and was baptized on November 12, 1944. He was ordained on June 14, 1970, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, by the Central Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, while a member of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, Karthaus, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Hoffman graduated from Clearfield Area High School, Clearfield, Pennsylvania, in 1962; from Thiel College, Greenville, Pennsylvania, with a bachelor of arts degree in 1966; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with a master of divinity degree in 1970. He was ordained into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on June 14, 1970 in the Church of the Abiding Presence, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

Pastor Hoffman served as pastor of Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lewisberry, Pennsylvania, from 1970 until he retired in 2018. He is a member of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Hoffman was a member of the Hamilton Area Ministry led by Pastor Norm Thorsen and of the Healing Ministry Committee led by Pastor George Clark, who also baptized him in Karthaus. He is currently a member of Valley Grange, as well as the Nittany Antique Machinery Association and the American Truck Historical Society.

Pastor Hoffman has always enjoyed the outdoors, including hunting and gardening, and spends time cooking and roasting in large quantities. Over the years he has worked on and restored Jeeps, trucks, tractors and backhoes. His primary interests continue to be family and church.

On August 2, 1975, at Harrold Zion Lutheran Church in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, he married Gloria née Carlson. Their union was blessed with three children: Amy Regina Hughley, 1976; and twins Timothy Joel and James Victor, 1978. They are additionally blessed with seven grandchildren.

The Reverend Raymond A. Sistek, son of Alvin O. and Julia née Godor, was born on July 24, 1944, in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, and was baptized on August 27, 1944. He was ordained on June 7, 1970, at First Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by the Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, while a member of The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.


Pastor Sistek served as assistant pastor of Dr. Martin Luther Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, Cleveland (Brooklyn), Ohio, 1970-1973; pastor of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1973-1982; Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Franklin, Pennsylvania, 1982-1989; Benscreek Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hollsopple, Pennsylvania, 1990-2000; and Harmony Grove Lutheran Church in Willet, Creekside, Pennsylvania and Grove Chapel Lutheran Church, Indiana, Pennsylvania, 2000 until he retired in 2005. For more than three years, he served as shared time pastor with Benscreek and St. John Lutheran Church (Slovak Zion Synod), Johnstown, Pennsylvania. In retirement, he served as interim pastor for the Punxsutawney Lutheran Parish, Pennsylvania, and as supply worship leader. He is a member of Christ Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Sistek served on the Evangelism and the Communications Committees of the Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod, was a Franklin Rotary Club member, and president of the Venango County Mental Health-Mental Retardation Drug and Alcohol Board. He enjoys vegetable gardening as a relaxing pastime. He also does some Lightning Class sail boating as a crew member.


REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As I write this report in mid-April, this is clearly the strangest time any of us have ever experienced. Every “normal” activity outside our homes has been affected. Every event cancelled. Meetings happen in an online format or not at all. Probably one of the most
important changes for all of us is that we cannot go to our church building to join our beloved church family on Sunday to worship God. Everything seems to be in crisis mode, and no one can answer the question which we all have: when will it be over?

But even in the midst of continued “fasting” from Holy Communion, staying home and away from everyone as much as possible, worrying about and caring for those who are sick, we know that God is always faithful. God will not desert us or let us go – our names are written on the palms of God’s hands. Our responsibility is to trust God and carry out the mission to which we are together called. Walking together on the way, as synod, we feed the hungry as we have been fed by Christ.

In the midst of the virus quarantine, one of the areas where we have tried to maintain our mission is the feeding programs run by so many of our congregations. Recognizing that local congregation mission support would be decreased, we offered grants from our synod Disaster Response Fund, realizing that this quarantine is indeed a disaster. It has been recognized as such with our governor’s declaration of a state of emergency. An additional source of funding for congregations has been from our synod World Hunger Committee, which provides for grants to meet hunger needs to be requested from the money distributed annually from our Legacy (Endowment) Fund (a portion of which is designated for hunger initiatives). Finally, our synod applied for and received a grant from the ELCA to be used for congregations with increased need due to caring for those impacted by the new coronavirus. It is our hope that the funds from our synod Disaster Response Fund will be replenished by donations from members and congregations in the future. In these ways we helped to provide funding so that congregations could continue, and in many cases, increase their care of those who hunger, especially in these times when needs are greater due to decreased employment activity.

The primary ways in which we carry out the core mission of our synod, by equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new and renewing mission, remain our priorities. In these last three months, the manner in which we do these things has changed and will continue to evolve in new ways going forward, as our state begins moving to some forms of lessened restrictions; but the universal truth is that our core mission has not changed. We are still called to love God and serve our neighbor. At our synod level, we do this by supporting the vital work of the congregations. The ways in which we will do these things, the how and what, the moving forward have all changed and will continue to change. These are the paths we have not yet traveled and the work that will be for us, ventures of which we cannot see the ending. But in all, we trust our Lord Jesus and do our best to always point the way to Him.

Equipping Leaders

In recent years we have looked with wonder and questions at the ways our society is changing, and how our communities become new and different. We thought we should be figuring out how to support our church leaders through these alterations so that congregations could thrive, and leaders could grow and flourish. And now everything has changed in ways no one could have ever foreseen. Our congregations look to our leaders for guidance and hope as we move forward with living in the midst of a frightening sickness. We want to protect the vulnerable and hold up the weak. We want to support our healthcare leaders and those who govern as they do their best to respond. Through all of this, our pastors, deacons, and lay leaders strive to serve their faith communities. And they are tired! Becoming overnight digital televangelists is incredibly draining. Our leaders have been forced to learn new ways to lead our faith communities with no time for preparation or cautious study to determine what will work best. We have all been thrown into a situation where on one Friday in March, our bishop, our synod officers, and leadership staff felt we had to make a recommendation that congregations cease holding worship in person for the safety and wellbeing of all. You cannot imagine how difficult a decision that was and how it brought us the sorrow we all experienced when we could no longer gather together to worship God in our churches. Week after week, our pastors, deacons, musicians, and congregation leaders have worked diligently to figure out how to draw us together electronically while everyone remained safe at home. Plus, everything has to be considered to make certain that those without internet or electronic devices or ability to manage them are not left out. 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 people to make changes they need to make to follow Jesus where He calls them. Therefore, we work together to equip leaders for this time, for these communities and for what our congregations need most.

Our synod has done what we can to help pastors and deacons through this crisis. We have sponsored electronic conversations to look at ways of “doing” church via social media and telephone. We have held regular online conversations with our rostered ministers and our bishop so that we can hear what their needs are and try to provide support. Along with our bishop and the assistants to the bishop, I have been making phone calls to individual pastors simply to check in, to see how they are doing and find out if there is anything we can do at our synod level to assist and support them.

We will continue to do whatever we can to provide support for our ministers. We are beginning to investigate how we can put required continuing education programs online, such as racial justice training and boundary training. We are looking at ways to help worship leaders grow and improve electronic gathering of our faith communities. We know that it is not likely, nor even desirable for us to “go back to the way it was before” for calling God’s children to worship. Events should probably move to some sort of hybrid manner because alternative forms of gathering will continue. Even in the midst of what is happening, we hear stories of ways people have made connection with congregational worship through mechanisms they never have before. We will find new and different ways of equipping our leaders. Our R3 Renewal Process will continue, currently electronically, and perhaps in the future with some parts that are in person and others that are not. We will need to equip our leaders for digital online faith formation, worship, and evangelism because the need
for remote gathering is not going away. We are poised to adapt the R3 Renewal Process for this changing landscape and are currently in the process of applying for major grant funding for this work going forward.

Work around raising up leaders for our church has continued as best as we are able. 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 even though it, too, has been changed right now. We continue to support congregations that are experiencing vacancies and pastors, deacons and seminarians seeking calls. We are working on figuring out ways these processes can move forward while being true to our church’s policies and the laws of our state regarding meetings of official bodies such as congregations (and our synod).

As vice president of our synod, 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. As 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. Regarding the current restrictions, I have been in communication with the vice presidents of other synods as we all investigated ways to move forward within our various constitutional requirements. Some synods do not hold annual assemblies, choosing instead to meet every other year. Our governing documents require an annual meeting which has to take place between May 15 and June 30. This is a bylaw, so we could not, within our constitutional rules, simply cancel our assembly. In addition, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, within which we are incorporated, requires an annual meeting of the members, a requirement we meet via our annual Synod Assembly. We have sought legal guidance regarding these specifics. I proposed, and the Synod Council adopted a plan to meet the bylaw requirements and make a change to the date of our assembly within Robert’s Rules of Order. At this point, we hope to hold an assembly in October. But for now, we have no way to know what future months will bring. There is a parliamentary procedure by which we can “adjourn to the call of the chair” which would allow us to call an assembly meeting at a later date (a date which would be officially announced in advance as required by our constitution), even though it may not be until sometime in 2021. This certainly is not the way I would have hoped my last assembly as vice president would go, but none of us would choose all that has happened, and so we go forward, trusting in God.

Bishop Dunlop has continued to graciously include me in the regular conversations of our program staff, our assistants to the bishop, our director for evangelical mission, and our 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 and synod secretary join 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 in our synod office. Beginning on March 16, 2020, we have frequently met as often as four times per week, and I have found it to be a significant source of support for all of us who work regularly as part of our synod office. I was also honored to conduct Bishop Dunlop’s biennial evaluation, and I hope it was and will be useful to him in his work.

Encouraging Cooperation
The very nature of being a synod is that we work together. 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 the 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 the Synod Council, and the Synod Council is able to hear from the conferences in return. We also provide a 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. Since regular in-person meetings of the conferences have ended, many conferences are meeting via electronic means and a number of Synod Council members continue to participate. Twice (as of May 1) our bishop held meetings with our rostered ministers via Zoom in groupings of three to four conferences. These meetings have seen particularly good participation, with up to 55+ attending per call, and there is much sharing of information and advice. When someone suggests questions or ideas, we are often able to put together a topic-specific Zoom meeting for any who wishes to learn more (for example, “Tips and Tricks for Digital Worship,” and “Ways to Fund Church during the Quarantine”). We are planning to continue this practice, scheduling Zoom meetings in the near future about childcare centers and schools and information related to the loosening of stay-at-home mandates. All of these represent cooperation that is happening in new and exciting ways, and cooperation that we never planned, but which has resulted from the current situation!

One incredibly significant way that our synod as a whole is encouraging cooperation is with our R3 Renewal Process moving beyond our synod boundaries to include the Upper Susquehanna and Allegheny Synods, as well as the Episcopal Church in Central Pennsylvania. As this partnership expands its work, we expect increased opportunities for working together.

I attended the Churchwide Assembly last August in Milwaukee. This was the sixth assembly at which I served as a voting member, and it has been a blessing and a gift to be part of our wider church at these events. I have made so many friends among the vice presidents of the 65 synods, most synods designate their vice president as one of their voting members according to their constitution. We are invited to arrive a day early with the synod bishops and meet in conjunction with the bishops and the Church Council. In addition, we
meet separately before and during the assembly which allows vice presidents to cooperate to learn how others function and hopefully find better ways to do things. In addition, the vice presidents always share new ideas, knowledge, and suggestions for effective board functioning. I am continually impressed with this group of servants, all of whom spend untold hours serving this church as volunteers. This time is always helpful to me in my functioning as synod vice president. In the year of a Churchwide Assembly, the church covers the costs associated with the Vice Presidents Gathering, just as costs are covered for all voting members of the assembly. For the other regular annual Gatherings of the Vice Presidents, the churchwide organization covered all the costs of the meeting for the first several years I was in this role but switched in 2014 to requiring the synods to pay the cost of the travel in years when there is no assembly. There are many synods who are unable to cover this cost, so their vice presidents do not attend, and I have been so thankful in the past that our synod has paid for my travel, recognizing this as a way for lay leadership in our synod to be supported in cooperation with others. Unfortunately, the churchwide organization has announced that this year’s Vice Presidents Gathering in October has been cancelled.

**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. A 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 would it look like to decrease the number of synods in our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. 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 leaders 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. It has been exciting to serve with this committee and hear about these proposals. In our currently changed landscape, I have no doubt that great new opportunities and ideas will come to light that will allow us to serve in vastly different ways. Again, our synod will need to learn to create new ways to move forward. These new ways should motivate us to listen even more carefully for the voice of the Spirit directing us to support congregations in their vital ministry of making disciples for Jesus.

**Where do we go from here?**

The next steps belong, as always, to God. As vice president of our synod, I have seen 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 by 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 especially want to recognize and thank those members of the Synod Council who are completing their terms following this assembly: the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer (6 years), Virgil Gibson (5+ years), Jennifer Lau (3 years), the Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown (3 years), and Carlotta Strevig (2 years). Particular thanks to Virgil and Carlotta 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.

**With Overwhelming Gratitude to God**

It has been one of the most extraordinary blessings and my pleasure and honor to serve our synod as vice president. I love to end these reports with thanks to those who have taken part in the work of our synod. It is a joy to give thanks to God for each of them and to recall how we have worked together. At this end of nine years as the vice president of our synod and encompassing the years since the first time I was elected to the Synod Council in 2000, my list is long, and my heart is full. Through those years, I have been gifted to work with every bishop, secretary, treasurer, and vice president who has served our synod. Bishops Edmiston, Hendrix, Hoover and Dunlop; Secretaries Peterman (although I worked with her when she served as a consultant to the Synod Council, not when she was secretary), McKee, and Schlegel; Treasurers Herr, Seagrist and Stepansky; and Vice Presidents Appleby, Garber, and Price; each have taught me different lessons and models for service. I have worked with a number of assistants to the bishop, including Pastor Dave Fisher, Pastor Mel Dick, Pastor Judy McKee, Pastor Tom McKee, Pastor Virginia Cover, Pastor Richard Jorgenson, Pastor Rob Blezard, Pastor Sharron Blezard, Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali, Pastor Beth Martini, and Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson. They have all brought such varied talents to their work and were always open to teaching me new things and supporting me to serve as best I could. Charlie Roberts has also been a vital part of our synod staff through all those years and even though he often says he’s “the lay guy in the room,” his voice carries with it knowledge and power and such love for our church and its people. It is so wonderful to see all the gifts people bring to ministry in our synod. I have been blessed also to work with some exceptionally fine quiet servants on our synod staff, people like Pam Drenner, Barb Myers, Joanne Wilhelm, Brenda Rockwell, Cathy Dietrich, Linda Lubold, Carol Krouse, Marty Shifflett, Cathy Paul, and Denise Ferguson. Few people know how much work and mission is carried out by these ladies who are in the background every day, doing whatever is needed. I appreciate each of them so much.
Being part of the Office of the Bishop is being part of a family who loves each other fully and deeply. There is an extraordinary camaraderie among the family and lunchtime is the best part of the day when everyone who is in the office comes together, and the laughter just spills out of the room. I shall miss those times so much!

I have served with so many Synod Council members over these many years, too many to name (and once you start naming names, you always risk missing someone purely by mistake, so if I have missed someone above who should have been on this list, forgive my feeble brain which is trying to remember names and faces from 20 years’ worth of days and meetings). People have many different reasons why they are willing to be open to serving as part of the Synod Council, and at the end of the day, each has said “yes” to service and brought themselves to the task. Many have given much time and effort, and I thank all of them. In particular, I wish to thank Marcus Thomsen, who served for a number of years as vice chair while I was vice president and was of particular support and encouragement.

When you are in a position like the vice president, you always come in contact with some people who influence and bless you in a particular way. If you read the beginning of my annual report from last year, you would have read in depth of my gratitude for Pastor Thomas McKee and the years we worked together. Tom was such a gift to me, always willing to help and guide me. He is the finest example of a churchman that I know. Judy Garber mentored me through many years. She always answered my calls and my questions, spent time with me helping me understand the role of vice president, and came to my rescue more than once when I found myself in what felt like an overwhelming situation, especially one year in the middle of a Synod Assembly.

Regarding those with whom I have worked in more recent times, I would like to give thanks especially for my friend Debbie Clark, who serves as our bishop’s executive assistant and has listened to me, aided me and supported me in innumerable situations and efforts. She is so kind, unfailingly cheerful, incredibly efficient, willing to do whatever is needed, and is simply amazing at what she does. I can’t tell you how many times I have thought of something I should have done, and she had already taken care of the matter. What a gift she is to our Office of the Bishop! Marsha Roscoe also became a dear friend and guide in these years. She brings such a level of energy and sheer joy in serving Jesus, that she calls forth the best in a person. I give thanks to God for her wisdom and her willingness to serve as God calls her. I appreciate all the times that she has helped me understand mission, encouraged me to see the ways in which I could serve, and affirmed me. She has taken on tasks she may not have preferred to do but did because the church needs her. I pray every blessing on the important work she is doing now on behalf of our synod making disciples for Jesus. When I am gifted to work with these two women, we three make an excellent team!

Finally, I cannot end this report without expressing my gratitude to God for our bishop. I was privileged to be part of his election in 2013 and began meeting with him two days later. His heart for the church has been such a gift to me, as well as his vision, his leadership, and his willingness to risk for the sake of mission. The bond we have developed over these years has been the most incredible blessing, both a personal connection and a working relationship I never would have imagined we might forge. I will miss him and working with him more than he can know. I pray God’s guidance and wisdom for him as he continues this most important work, that he might lead as God calls him through the difficult days ahead, as he strives to help the church find her best way into God’s future.

I am overwhelmed with love for these people and for God’s church. These seem like difficult days, and in the midst of all, I give thanks for you, and I know that God’s hand is leading us, and God’s love is supporting us. And I pray that I may go out from this service as vice president with good courage. Amen.

Lucinda L. Bringman, vice president

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Psalm 96:1-2

This has been a year of significant transition for this synod and for me as the newly-elected secretary of this synod. The former secretary and assistant to the bishop, the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, retired after many years of faithful service. His position and its responsibilities were divided among the synod staff members, the executive assistant for the office of the bishop, Debbie Clark, and the elected secretary. It has been challenging for everyone to learn the ropes that Tom knew by heart. We have a patient and merciful God and synod. It is a blessing that our synod is led by a team that works well together.

As synod secretary, I have prepared calls of meetings, agendas, and minutes for the Synod Council and its Executive Committee. I have participated in staff meetings and retreats. I have served as staff support to the Nominating Committee, Assembly Planning Committee, Constitution Committee, and Gifts Discernment Committee. I have helped to prepare pre-assembly materials, the bulletin of reports, the notifications of proposed amendments to our governing documents, resolutions, and memorials, and the final minutes book; completed necessary correspondence, including letters of election, appointment, retirement and anniversary of ordination; reviewed numerous congregational governing documents and provided guidance for congregations that are updating their documents; assisted congregations in the process of closing; reported the official actions of this synod to the churchwide organization; maintained the policy manual, updated the index of actions, maintained the record of the corporate minutes; and have answered the numerous questions and requests that come to the secretary’s office. I have gathered and plan to inventory materials to be transferred to the regional archives at the United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg Campus.
In the wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic, some of this work was challenged and challenging. Zoom meetings increased and reliance on electronic means of communication was primary. As I write this, we are under stay-at-home orders.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to express my personal appreciation to: Tom McKee for continuing to share his knowledge and assistance; Debbie Clark for invaluable mentoring, Dana Blouch-Hanson, Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Marty Shifflett, and Cathy Deitrich for the valuable staff assistance they provide to me and my office; to Bishop Dunlop, officers Lucinda Bringman, Joe Stepansky, and all the members of this synod’s staff for their encouragement and support; and to you, the synod in assembly, for this opportunity to serve the Lord Jesus and His Church.

I give praise and glory to God for revealing love and grace to us in Jesus Christ and for giving us the promise of eternal life.

Beth A. Schlegel, synod secretary

SYNOD COUNCIL ACTIONS SINCE JUNE 1, 2019

Calls, Appointments, Elections

+ Elected to the Synod Council Executive Committee the Rev. Matthew B. Best, the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer, and Jennifer R. Lau
+ Elected as vice chair of Synod Council the Rev. Joel S.B. Folkemer
+ Called the Rev. James S. Dunlop to the office of bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod for a six-year term, effective September 1, 2019, and expiring August 31, 2025
+ Called the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson to serve as assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, effective September 1, 2019, and expiring February 28, 2026
+ Extended the call of the Rev. Robert C. Bleazard to serve as assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod until February 28, 2026
+ Extended the call of the Rev. Elizabeth G. Martini to serve as assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod until August 31, 2020
+ Extended the call of the Rev. Richard E.T. Jorgensen Jr. to serve as Director for Evangelical Mission of the Lower Susquehanna Synod until February 28, 2026
+ Extended the call of Deacon Marsha L. Roscoe to serve as Director for Mission Interpretation of the Lower Susquehanna Synod until February 28, 2026
+ Appointed Sister Davia Evans to the Compensation and Benefits Committee for a 1st three-year term expiring in 2022
+ Appointed to the Synod Worship Committee the Rev. Sean S. Titus for a 1st three-year term expiring in 2022
+ Appointed to the Assembly Planning Committee: Stella Ludwig, chair; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Beth Schlegel, synod secretary; Charlie Roberts, staff; the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, staff; assembly manager; the Rev. Becca Ajer Frantz; the Rev. Matthew Best, sc; the Rev. Elizabeth George; Daniel Picone, sc; the Rev. Edward J. Robbins; and the Rev. Gwenn Trout
+ Appointed to the Constitution Committee: Carlotta “Chucki” Strevig, chair; Jen Lau, sc; the Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton; Jered L. Hock; and Joanne Wilhelm
+ Appointed to the Finance and Budget Committee: Virgil Gibson, chair; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; Joseph M. Stepansky, synod treasurer; Meredith Killian Askey, sc; Dawn O. Frees; Joyce E. Frigm; Wayne R. Gongaware; the Rev. Gretchen Ierien, sc; Vicki Rutter; and William Shoemaker
+ Appointed to the Gifts Discernment Committee: Kay Hinkle, chair; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; the Rev. Beth Schlegel, synod secretary; the Rev. Eric Anderson; Debra Barrett, sc; the Rev. Douglas DeStephano; Holly Freas-Webster; Robert Walton; and Jane Wigand
+ Appointed to the Mission Committee: the Rev. Joel Folkemer, chair; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. Richard E. Jorgensen Jr., DEM; the Rev. Jack Horner, sc; Jennifer Lau, sc; the Rev. Jillian Riddle, sc; the Rev. Matthew Best, sc; the Rev. Kathleen J. Baker; and Holly Freas-Webster
+ Appointed to the Personnel Committee: Zach Weiss, chair; Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; Dallas Barclift, sc; the Rev. Martha Boyd; the Rev. Elizabeth D. George; Gary L. Laabs; Linda Long; the Rev. Timothy W. Sadler; and the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, sc
+ Appointed the following Synod Council liaisons to committees: Audit, Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president; Compensation and Benefits, Kay Hinkle sc; Criminal Justice System Ministries, Chucki Strevig, sc; Evangelism Mission Tables, Dallas Barclift, sc; Gift and Bequest Acceptance, Virgil Gibson, sc; Global Mission, Debra Barrett, sc; Konde Diocese,
the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, sc; Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund, Jennifer Lau, sc; Stewardship, Zach Weiss, sc; Synodical Worship, the Rev. Joel Folkemer, sc; Toward Racial Justice, the Rev. Gretchen Ierien, sc; United Campus Ministries Shippensburg/Millersville, Daniel Picone, sc; World Hunger, the Rev. Jillian Riddle, sc; Lutheran Camping Corporation, Meredith Killian Askey, sc; Region 8 Steering Committee, Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president

- Appointed the following Synod Council liaisons to conferences: Chambersburg, Chucki Strevig; Gettysburg, the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown; Hanover, Kay Hinkle; Harrisburg, Meredith Askey; Lancaster, Debra Barrett; Lebanon, the Rev. Jillian Riddle and the Rev. Gretchen Ierien; North Lancaster, Stella Ludwig; North York, Jen Lau; Perry, Zach Weiss; South York, Daniel Picone; Upper Dauphin, Dallas Barchlit; West Cumberland, Virgil Gibson; West Shore, the Rev. Matthew Best and the Rev. Jack Horner; and York, the Rev. Joel Folkemer

- Elected to the Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania Board of Directors: Daryl Ackerman for a first term, expiring 2022; the Rev. Brenda Kiser for a first term, expiring 2022; the Rev. Stephen Herr for a first term, expiring 2022; and Cornelia Taylor for a second term, expiring 2022

- Elected to the SpiriTrust Lutheran Board of Directors (contingent on the SpiriTrust Lutheran Board of Directors approving these motions when they meet on November 26, 2019): Robert Bowen, for a first three-year term, expiring December 31, 2022; Angela Thomas, for a first three-year term, expiring December 31, 2022; and the Rev. Mark Oldenburg, for a second three-year term, expiring December 31, 2022

- Called the Rev. Katrina Holland as Intentional Interim Pastor of St. James Lutheran Church, York, effective September 16, 2019, until September 15, 2020

- Called the Rev. Amy Wagner as Spiritual Care Coordinator for Heartland Hospice in Carlisle, effective December 2, 2019, until December 1, 2022

- Appointed to the Candidacy Committee the Rev. Caitlin M. Kurtz for a first five-year term, expiring 2025

- Appointed to the Synod Worship Committee the Rev. Carl P. Rabbe for a first three-year term, expiring 2023

- Elected to the SpiriTrust Lutheran Board of Directors Samm Smeltzer for a first three-year term, expiring December 31, 2022

- Called the Rev. Lois K. Van Orden as the intentional interim pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Hummelstown, effective November 1, 2017, until October 31, 2020

- Called the Rev. Kurt S. Strause as the intentional interim pastor of Swamp Lutheran Church, Reinholds, effective February 1, 2020, until January 3, 2021

- Called Deacon Jennifer Murphy as a Spiritual Counsellor for the Visiting Nurse Association of Hanover and Spring Grove, without conditions of term, effective December 5, 2019

- Called the Rev. Amy M. Wagner as Chaplain for SpiriTrust Lutheran for a three-year term, effective March 4, 2020, until March 4, 2023

- Appointed Jeff Fagan to the Audit Committee for a first three-year term, expiring 2023

- Appointed to the Candidacy Committee the Rev. Nancy Easton and the Rev. Keith Fair for first five-year terms, expiring 2025; and the Rev. Nicole Wachter to a second five-year term, expiring 2025

- Elected the Rev. Karen Larson to the Consultation Committee to an unexpired term expiring in 2020

- Called the Rev. Eric N. Anderson as the intentional interim pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, York Springs, (on behalf of Garden of Grace Community of Churches), effective February 24, 2020, until February 23, 2021

- Called the Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown as the intentional interim pastor of Benders Evangelical Lutheran Church (and by contract to St. Paul Lutheran Church), Biglerville, effective April 1, 2020, until March 31, 2023

**New Business**

- Authorized the following officers of the Lower Susquehanna Synod as signatories on all financial accounts of the Lower Susquehanna Synod: Bishop James S. Dunlop, Lucinda L. Bringman, the Rev. Beth A. Schlegel, and Joseph M. Stepansky; and for access to financial accounts only: Catherine L. Paul

- Adopted $62,000 per year as the starting base salary and housing allowance for the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson

- Approved that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson for the period beginning September 1, 2019, shall include an annual payment $21,000 to be designated as housing allowance within the meaning of that terms as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code

- Adopted $22,500 per year for fifteen hours of service weekly as the base salary and housing allowance for the Rev. Elizabeth G. Martini for the year, September 1, 2019, until August 31, 2020

- Granted on-leave-from-call status to Deacon David Hope-Tringali, effective July 1, 2019, until July 1, 2020; the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, effective July 1, 2019, until July 1, 2020; the Rev. Kurt S. Strause, effective November 1, 2019, until November 1, 2020

- Continued on-leave-from-call status for the Rev. Janice Marie Lowden, effective September 18, 2019, until September 18, 2020; and the Rev. Timothy J. Seitz-Brown, effective September 22, 2019, until September 22, 2020

- Rescinded on-leave-from-call status for the Rev. Michael K. Fischer, effective May 23, 2019 since he is continuing employment with Country Meadows, York
Approved the retirement requests of the Rev. Glenn D. Miller, effective July 1, 2019; the Rev. Thomas E. McKee, effective September 1, 2019; the Rev. Stephen W. Yambor, effective September 1, 2019; the Rev. Linda S. Trout, effective October 1, 2019; the Rev. William C. Snyder, effective December 31, 2019; and the Rev. Margareta M. Breden, effective January 1, 2020

Certified the minutes of the 2019 Synod Assembly as the official protocol of said assembly, to be deposited in the archives

Accepted the reports of the independent auditors for fiscal year 2018

Adopted a change to the wording of section D.6. of the 2020 Rostered Ministers Compensation and Benefits Manual so that it reads, “A specific Parental Leave Plan for rostered ministers should be carefully drafted. This plan should include eight weeks of parental leave with full salary, housing, and benefits, but not less than six weeks, to be taken within the first twelve months following the birth of a child or the placement of an adopted child. Any other specific conditions should be clearly defined in a written document.”

Continued the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Cynthia Baxter, effective February 8, 2020, until February 8, 2021

Approved the retirement requests of the Rev. Scott K. Davis, effective December 31, 2019; the Rev. Kathy A. Swords, effective January 1, 2020; and the Rev. Dennis L. Trout, effective January 31, 2020

Approved that the total compensation paid to the Rev. James S. Dunlop for the period beginning January 1, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $25,000 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Robert Blezard for the period beginning January 1, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $25,000 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson for the period beginning January 1, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $21,000 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term 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, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $19,000 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Elizabeth Martini for the period beginning January 1, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $0 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code

Approved the 2019 Bylaws of the Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania

Set the 2020 base salary and housing allowance for Bishop Dunlop at $101,178

Authorized for Level I executives a 2.2 percent increase in their base salaries and housing allowances, and that the Synod Council set their base salaries and housing allowances for 2020 at: the Rev. Robert Blezard, $67,050; the Rev. Dana J. Blouch-Hanson, $63,365; the Rev. Richard Jorgensen, $81,050; and the Rev. Elizabeth Martini, $23,000 (15 hours/ week)

Authorized a 2.2 percent increase in salaries across the board for all remaining staff in 2020

Approved that the Executive Committee appoint a pastor to serve on the Consultation Committee until the 2020 Synod Assembly

Set the dates for the 2020 Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod as follows: Business Session on Saturday, June 6, 2020 at Messiah College and Edification Days on Saturday, May 16, 2020, at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Neffsville (Lancaster) and Saturday, May 30, 2020, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in York

Adopted the revised Salary Development Worksheets for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and for Ministers of Word and Service

Enacted continuing resolution $10.01.01.r.A19. stating that for the purposes of the 2020 election, the Synod Council understands “clergy” to include ministers of Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service

Authorized the formation of a Task Force on Homelessness and Affordable Housing

Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. George B. Scott, effective December 28, 2019, until December 28, 2020

Continued the on-leave-from-call status of the Rev. Pamela Carnes, effective March 1, 2020, until March 1, 2021

Approved the requests for retirement of the Rev. Kenneth Jetto, effective February 1, 2020; Deacon George E. Bennett Jr., effective February 5, 2020; the Rev. Nancy R. Easton, effective April 1, 2020; and the Rev. Anne-Rose Reeves, effective May 1, 2020

Approved that the total compensation paid to the Rev. Jennifer H. Richards for the period beginning February 15, 2020, shall include an annual payment of $30,000 to be designated as a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Approved the Proposed Agenda for the 2020 Synod Assembly for recommendation to the 2020 Synod Assembly for adoption

Adopted the following registration rates for the 2020 Synod Assembly: $175 Early Bird Registration (2/16-3/17); $200 Registration (3/18-3/31); $250 Walk up Registration; $30 Retired Rostered Ministers

Adopted the following complimentary packages for attendance at the 2020 Synod Assembly to rostered ministers on leave from call, rostered ministers called by the Synod Council whose agency or institution does not fund their attendance at the Synod Assembly, seminarians under the care of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Candidacy Committee, lay synod officers, lay members of the Synod Council, members of the Assembly Planning Committee and members of the Worship at Assembly Committee who are not serving congregations or elected assembly voting members from their congregations, and synod staff, who register by March 17, 2020: $175.00
Acted to recommend to the Synod Assembly the adoption of the recommended amendments to the synod constitution and bylaws from the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

Acted to recommend to the Synod Assembly the adoption of continuing resolution S7.11.01.r.A20. The regular assembly of this synod shall be held annually between May 1 and June 30 at such place as the Synod Council shall designate.

Acted to recommend to the Synod Assembly the adoption of other suggested bylaw amendments from the Constitution Committee, excluding S10.01.01.

Directed the synod secretary to provide notice to the voting members of the 2020 Synod Assembly of the proposed amendments to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

Approved a 5% distribution from the Legacy Fund to be distributed according to the formula in the Legacy Fund policy

Approved a 5% distribution from the Legacy Fund to be distributed according to the formula in the Legacy Fund policy

Adopted a spending authorization for 2020 in the amount of $2,412,413.98

Adopted the proposed changes to the Personnel Policies of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

Changed article 6.70 of the Personnel Policies of the Lower Susquehanna Synod from “ordained employee” to “An employee who is a Minister of Word and Sacrament”

Acted to recommend to the 2020 Synod Assembly that the 2021 minimum base salary and housing allowance for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and no parsonage provided be set at $53,875 and that the 2021 minimum salary for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and with a parsonage provided be set at $37,480, representing a 3% increase over the 2020 minimum salaries

Acted to recommend to the 2020 Synod Assembly that the 2021 minimum base salary for Ministers of Word and Service with no years of experience be set at $48,530, a 5.5% increase over the 2020 minimum salary with the intent to achieve parity within six years

Approved a $5.00 increase to the supply rate for one service in 2021, making the 2021 supply rate for one service $180; approved an additional $50 for each additional Sunday morning service and an additional $70 for each additional service other than Sunday morning

Moved the designated Synod Program money in the amount of $2,226.97 from last year’s Legacy Fund distribution from the reserve account to the General Fund to offset the cost of the 2019 Healthy Leaders Retreat

Granted on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Robert W. Moore, effective February 17, 2020, until February 17, 2021

Granted on-leave-from-call for graduate study status to the Rev. Adam T. Morton, effective March 31, 2020 until March 31, 2021

Approved the request for retirement of the Rev. John G. Largen, effective June 30, 2020

Acted to recommend to the 2020 Synod Assembly the amendment of bylaw S10.01.01. to clarify the constituent membership of the Synod Council

Acted to recommend to the 2020 Synod Assembly the amendment of constitution provisions S9.05., S9.06., and S9.07. to conform to the ELCA Constitution for Synods

Acted to recommend to the 2020 Synod Assembly the amendment of bylaw S16.02.01. regarding indemnification

Amended continuing resolution S11.01.r.C16. to correct the description of ABX and to change the name of the Congregational Leadership Resource Team (CLRT) to Leadership Support Team (LST)

Postponed indefinitely the Edification Days scheduled for May 16, 2020, and May 30, 2020

Changed the location of the June 6, 2020, Synod Assembly from Messiah College to the corporate headquarters of the Lower Susquehanna Synod at 900 S. Arlington Ave., Ste. 220B, Harrisburg, PA 17109

Proposed to postpone the 2020 Synod Assembly by moving to adjourn following the determination of quorum at the June 6, 2020 Synod Assembly.

Archived the 2010 and 2014 stewardship strategies

Adopted continuing resolution S10.01.r.B20. that clarifies the start and conclusion of Synod Council terms

Accepted with regret the resignation of vice president Lucinda L. Bringman effective August 30, 2020, or the last day of the second month following the conclusion of the 2020 Synod Assembly, whichever is later

Recommended the nomination to the Synod Assembly of Jennifer Lau for the office of synod vice president for a term ending in 2024

**AMENDED PERSONNEL POLICY**

**Page 7 – COMPENSATION Section 6.40**

D) **Overtime rate**

Non-exempt employees shall be compensated for time worked in excess of the regularly established hours per week (35) as follows: 36 through 40 hours, regular hourly wage; 41 hours or more, one and one-half (1 ½) times the hourly wage rate.

E) **Rate Compensation**

The base hourly rate for salaried employees is computed by dividing the annual salary by 2080 hours (40 x 52).
**Page 8 – COMPENSATION Section 6.70**

*Housing Allowance*

An employee who is a Minister of Word and Sacrament may request that a portion of his/her annual salary be designated as housing allowance, in keeping with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

**Page 10 – WORKING HOURS AND HOLIDAYS Section 8.20**

*Work Week*

The work week extends from 12:01 a.m. on Saturday to 12:00 midnight on Friday.

**Page 11 – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS Section 9.20**

*Social Security*

The employer shall make contributions required of employers under the Social Security Act for its lay employees and Ministers of Word and Service. The policy of this synod in dealing with synod employees who are Ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be consistent with the policy enacted by the synod assembly for Ministers of Word and Sacrament.

**Page 12 – ABSENCE FROM WORK Section 10.10**

*General*

All leave must be approved by the personnel officer and reported through the HRdirect application by submitting a Time Off Request. Records shall be maintained under the direction of the personnel officer.

**Page 15 – ABSENCE FROM WORK Section 10.80**

*Parenting Leave*

Up to eight weeks of parental leave with full salary and benefits, but not less than six weeks, is available to a new mother (upon completion of medical leave) or father to be taken within the first twelve months following the birth of a child or the placement of an adopted child. As much advance notice as possible is expected.

*Adopted by the Synod Council*

February 15, 2020

SC20.02.17.

SC20.02.18.

**AMENDMENTS TO OUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS**

S11.01.r.C16. Consonant with the provisions of S11.01.15. these ministries may include:

1) **ABX (Alpha Beta Christos)**, which shall be a ministry of the bishop’s office of this synod in collaboration with the Region 8 Office of the ELCA to gather newly rostered leaders during the initial two three years of their first call for the purpose of support, collegiality, and disciplined reflection on ministry in accord with ELCA First Call Theological Education requirements. The bishop shall designate an assistant to the bishop to provide this ministry.

4) **The Congregational Leadership Resource Support Team (CLRST)**, which shall be composed of 8 to 12 persons, both ministers of Word and Sacrament and lay. A chairperson/convener shall be appointed by the bishop. This team shall work with congregations and leaders of the Lower Susquehanna Synod to achieve positive responses to change, anxiety, and conflict. Members of this team shall possess skills and willingness to assist congregations in healthy communication and leadership patterns, as well as addressing conflict management, mediation, and resolution.

*Adopted by the Synod Council*

April 18, 2020

SC20.04.24.

S10.01.r.B20. The term of office of Synod Council members shall begin at the close of the Synod Assembly at which they are elected and conclude at the close of the Synod Assembly held three years later or two years later in the case of a youth member. When a person is elected to fill an unexpired term on the Synod Council, the term shall begin upon election and conclude at the close of the Synod Assembly when the term would have ended had there been no vacancy.

*Adopted by the Synod Council*

April 18, 2020

SC20.04.31.

Beth A. Schlegel, synod secretary

May 1, 2020
THE REPORT OF THE NECROLOGIST – 2020

THE REV. CARL EDMUND BENTZ
Born August 14, 1934 – Died July 29, 2019
Age 84 years, 11 months, 15 days

THE REV. CARL EDMUND BENTZ, son of the late Lester Walker Bentz, Sr. and Mary Kathryn (Brown) Bentz, was born August 14, 1934, at York, Pennsylvania, and died July 29, 2019, at Savannah, Georgia.

He was baptized April 7, 1935, at Advent Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, where he was later confirmed.

He was graduated from William Penn High School, York, Pennsylvania in 1952; from Duke University, Durham, North Carolina in 1956 with a bachelor of arts degree; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1962 with a master of divinity degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1978 with a master of sacred theology degree. Before serving two years in the United States Army, he attended Dickinson School of Law, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.


In retirement, Pastor Bentz served as interim pastor in various settings, including Trinity, Seven Valleys, York County, Pennsylvania and Messiah Lutheran Church, Railroad, Pennsylvania. During retirement, he also served as supply pastor.

At various times during his active ministry and during retirement, Pastor Bentz served as dean of the North York District, Central Pennsylvania Synod; as emergency chaplain at Memorial Hospital, York, Pennsylvania; and as a member and leader of Lions Club International, Lutheran Men’s Club of York, Lutheran Ministers and Spouses Club, and New Hope Seniors group of Glen Rock, Pennsylvania.

On June 27, 1959, at First Centenary Methodist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, he was married to Isabel Fair (Hembree) Bentz, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with three children, all of whom survive him: Paul Joseph Bentz, Stephen Monroe Bentz and wife, Danielle Heaps Bentz, and Margaret Kathryn Staley. He is also survived by six grandchildren: Hannah and Abigail Bentz, Zoe and Ellie Bentz, and Joseph and Jessica Staley. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Lester Walker Bentz Jr. and a sister, Ethel Mae (Bentz) Judd.

His memorial service was held August 9, 2019, at Advent Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Mary Anne Kingsborough officiating. Burial was private at Greenmount Cemetery, York, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. CARL JAY FREDERICK
Born March 23, 1931 – Died September 3, 2019
Age 88 years, 5 months, 11 days

THE REV. CARL JAY FREDERICK, son of the late David LaMar Frederick and Gertrude Nelson Frederick, was born March 23, 1931, at Brunnerville, Lititz, Pennsylvania, and died September 3, 2019, at Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from Lititz High School, Lititz, Pennsylvania in 1949; from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1953 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1956 with a master of divinity degree.

Pastor Frederick was ordained by the Maryland Synod, United Lutheran Church in America, May 6, 1956, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lititz, Pennsylvania. He served as pastor, St. John’s Lutheran Church, Hagerstown, Maryland, 1956 – 1958; Trinity Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1958 – 1964; and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1964 – 2000, when he retired.

At various times during his active ministry, Pastor Frederick served as a member of the Executive Council of the Central Pennsylvania Synod, member of the Synodical Committee on Higher Education, secretary and dean of the Lancaster District, board member of...
Lutheran Social Services East Region, and chaplain to the McCaskey High School football team and a fire company. He took part in campus ministry at Millersville College and served as a PTA president.

In retirement, Pastor Frederick served as a member of the Redeemer Lutheran Church choir and occasional member of the Redeemer Brass Band, served as supply pastor and teacher, took part in Bible study and prayer group, provided parish visitation as requested, and was a member of various congregational committees, perhaps especially in the area of social ministry.

On May 30, 1954, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lititz, Pennsylvania, he was married to Kathleen Brubaker Hess Frederick, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with three children, all of whom survive him: Barbara Lou and husband, Dr. William Roberts, Carl Joseph and wife, Beverly, and Susan Jane and husband, Paul Roy. He is survived by nine grandchildren: Megan Roberts, William Roberts, Dr. David Roberts, Dr. Catherine Main, Carl Frederick, Paul Frederick, Aaron Frederick, Kelley Gockley, and Dr. Paula Roy. He is also survived by seven great-grandchildren: Kayla Gockley, Sophia Main, Henry Main, Eleanor Main, Carl Eduardo Frederick, Colin Antonio Frederick, and Hugh Roberts. He was predeceased by his sister Vera Shaub.

His memorial service was held September 14, 2019, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Dr. Daniel Yeiser officiating.

THE REV. IRVIN EDWARD “IRV” STRAW JR.
Born June 10, 1940 – Died September 6, 2019
Age 79 years, 2 months, 27 days

Pastor Straw was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, June 8, 1966, at Christ Chapel on the campus of Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of Advent Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania. He served as pastor, Dornsife Parish (Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Hunter Station, Lykens, Pennsylvania and St. Peter Lutheran Church, Red Cross, Pennsylvania) 1966 – 1972; Hametown – Loganville Pastoral Charge (Christ Lutheran Church, Loganville, Pennsylvania and St. Paul Lutheran Church, Hametown, Pennsylvania) 1972 – 1983; and Salem Lutheran Church of Kissel Hill, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania 1983 – 2000, when he retired.

In retirement, Pastor Straw served as interim pastor, Mount Eden Lutheran Church, Quarryville, Pennsylvania; Brickerville United Lutheran Church, Lititz, Pennsylvania; and St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lititz, Pennsylvania, where he also served as visitation pastor until his death.

At various times during his active ministry, Pastor Straw served as board member, Lutheran Social Services – South Region, secretary of the Lykens and South York Districts of the Central Pennsylvania Synod, dean of the South York District of the Central Pennsylvania Synod, and South York District leader of the “GO” Campaign and Strength for Mission. He also assisted with Lutheran Youth Encounter at Lutheran camps, served as chair of the Lititz CROP Committee, Boy Scout leader, fire-fighter in York and Lancaster counties, treasurer of the Lion’s Club and participant in the International Youth Program of Lion’s International, and was a member of the Kiwanis Club. He served on the Election Board, Brunnerville, Pennsylvania, as advisor to the Key Club, Line Mountain High School, and member of the Executive Committee, Pocono Lutheran Youth Congress.

During retirement and in addition to serving as interim pastor as indicated above, Pastor Straw served as supply pastor, member of the St. Paul, Lititz choir, confirmation class teacher, and participant in the Sr. Shepherd Ministry, the mission of which is to make wooden toys for children at LUTHERCARE, Hershey Children’s Hospital, and Warwick School District.

On January 14, 1967, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sand Hill, Hershey, Pennsylvania, Pastor Straw was married to Loris Jean Snyder Straw, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with three daughters, all of whom survive him: Michelle Ann, husband Tait Harbaugh, Christine Marie Golbourne, and Catherine Elizabeth Sload. He is also survived by three grandchildren: Brandon, Caitlin, and Tiffany, and by two great-grandchildren: Acacia and Qadira. A sister, Doris Romaine Straw-Maisack, survives him.
His memorial service was held September 15, 2019, at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lititz, where he was a member, with the Rev. Robert Myallis officiating. Burial was private in the Brickerville United Lutheran Church Memorial Garden.

**THE REV. DR. KENNETH CHARLES SENFT**  
*Born August 20, 1925 – Died September 21, 2019*  
*Age 94 years, 1 month, 1 day*

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Charles Senft, son of the late Harry Senft and Effie Krebs Senft, was born August 20, 1925, at Jefferson, Pennsylvania, and died September 21, 2019, at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

He was baptized October 8, 1925, at St. Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Stone Church, York County, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from high school in York County, Pennsylvania in 1942; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1946 with a bachelor of arts degree; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1952 with a master of divinity degree; and received a doctor of divinity degree from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1973. While a student at Gettysburg College, he served as chair, United Student Christian Council, member of the World Christian Youth Conference, and as student delegate to the opening of the Lutheran World Federation in Helsinki. While a seminary student, he served as director of resettlement of displaced persons under the Lutheran World Federation, Service to Refugees, and as student assistant, Keller Memorial Lutheran Church, Washington, D.C.

Pastor Senft was ordained by the Pacific Southwest Synod, United Lutheran Church in America, June 8, 1952, while he was a member of St. Jacob’s Lutheran Church, Stone Church, Brodbecks, Pennsylvania. He served as mission developer and then pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church, Redwood City, California, 1952 – 1963; Secretary of Church Vocations, Board of College Education and Church Vocations, Lutheran Church in America, 1964; pastor, Bethany Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Berkeley, California, 1965 – 1967; pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Pasadena, California, 1968 – 1970; Assistant Executive Secretary, Board of American Missions, Lutheran Church in America, Chicago, 1970 – 1972; Executive Director, Division for Mission in North America, Lutheran Church in America, New York, New York, 1973 – 1988; and president, Mission Resource Institute, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August to December 1988, when he retired.

In retirement, Pastor Senft served as supply pastor, continued his career-long commitment to and service with refugees, served part time at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Hanover, Pennsylvania, and at Christ Lutheran Church, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and received a “Walk in Faith” award from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.

At various times during his active ministry, Pastor Senft participated in ecumenical dialogues, served as a member of the board of the Council of Churches of California; member of the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches; member of the Executive Board, Pacific Southwest Synod, Lutheran Church in America; vice-president of the Pacific Southwest Synod, Lutheran Church in America; vice-president of the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary Board; and member of the board of directors, Lutheran Social Services of Northern California. He is the author of *God Lives in Word and World* and *New Life in the Parish*.

On October 21, 1949, at Insula, Berchtesgaden-Strub, Germany, he was married to Josephine Haugen Senft, who predeceased him. Their marriage was blessed with two daughters, who survive him: Elizabeth Clare Senft, and the Rev. Catharine Marie Senft Geib, husband Rev. Richard B. Geib. He is survived by five grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. He is predeceased by seven sisters and one brother.

His memorial service was held October 5, 2019, at Tree of Life Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Richard B. Geib and the Rev. Stephen Herr officiating. Burial was private, October 5, 2019, at St. Jacob’s, Stone Church, Cemetery, Glenville, Pennsylvania.

**THE REV. ALFRED ANTHONY AMBROSE**  
*Born September 14, 1942 – Died October 15, 2019*  
*Age 77 years, 1 month, 1 day*

The Rev. Alfred Anthony Ambrose, son of the late James Ambrose and Angeline Ambrose, was born September 14, 1942, at Altoona, Pennsylvania, and died October 15, 2019, at Mount Dora, Florida.

He was graduated from Altoona High School, Altoona, Pennsylvania in 1960; from Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania in 1964 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1967 with a master of divinity degree.

During his years of active ministry, Pastor Ambrose served as a member of the New England Synod’s Task Force on Aging and Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod’s Division of Church in Society. He was active in the Lutheran Deaf Ministry in Altoona and Milton, Pennsylvania and co-founder of the Milton-Lewisburg, Pennsylvania Meals on Wheels. In retirement, Pastor Ambrose served as interim pastor, Union Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, 2002 – 2003; and the Hellam Parish (St. James Lutheran Church, Hellam, Pennsylvania and Our Saviour Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, later the Hellam – East York Lutheran Parish), 2003 – 2008. At St. Philip Lutheran Church, Mount Dora, Florida, where he as a member, he was active in Stewardship Ministry, outreach ministry, and served as adult Bible Study leader and worship assistant. He also served as supply pastor.

On September 21, 1968, at Altoona, Pennsylvania, Pastor Ambrose was married to Janice Marie Hescox Ambrose, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with two children, who survive him: Bradley Scott Ambrose and Gwendolyn Leigh Ambrose. He is also survived by a brother-in-law, the Rev. Mitchell C. Hescox.

At the time of his death, Pastor Ambrose was a member of St. Philip Lutheran Church, Mount Dora, Florida. His memorial service was held November 1, 2019, at Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, Dover, Pennsylvania, with the Rev. Abby Leese and the Rev. Mitchell Hescox officiating. Interment was private.

THE REV. THOMAS EDWARD LIGHT JR.
Born August 27, 1947 – Died October 31, 2019
Age 72 years, 2 months, 4 days

THE REV. THOMAS EDWARD LIGHT JR., son of the late Thomas Edward Light Sr. and June L. Dundore Light, was born August 27, 1947, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and died October 31, 2019, at Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from Lebanon High School, Lebanon, Pennsylvania in 1965; from Millersville University, Millersville, Pennsylvania in 1969 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1973 with a master of divinity degree.

Pastor Light was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, June 20, 1973, at Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of St. James Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He served as pastor, Buckhorn Lutheran Parish, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, 1973 – 2011, when he semi-retired. He served as pastor on a part-time basis, Columbia Montour Lutheran Parish, successor to the Buckhorn Lutheran Parish, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, 2011 – 2013, when he fully retired. During his active ministry, Pastor Light served at various times as interim pastor, secretary of his conference, and member of Candidacy Committee, Church and Society Committee, and Nominating Committee. He also served as an intern supervisor. His service in the community included the Columbia County Board of Assistance and membership on the school board, Columbia County, Pennsylvania.

In retirement, Pastor Light served as interim pastor, Friedens Lutheran Church, Myerstown, Pennsylvania. He served as a member of the Congregation Council and choir, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, as well as supply pastor, Sunday Church School teacher, and exchange parent. He received the Glenn Heasley Award for ministry in Appalachia.

Pastor Light is survived by two sisters, Barbara J. Light and Linda M. Light, a brother, Stephen D. Light and wife Vickie, and a nephew, Michael Johnson.

His memorial service was held November 7, 2019, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Gretchen Ierien officiating. Inurnment was at the convenience of his family.
THE REV. DR. HOWARD JOHN McCARNEY
Born April 11, 1921 – Died November 13, 2019
Age 98 years, 7 months, 2 days

THE REV. DR. HOWARD JOHN McCARNEY, son of the late Rev. Guy Emory McCarney and Ethel Hamlen McCarney, was born April 11, 1921, at Sipesville, Pennsylvania, and died November 13, 2019, at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. 

He was baptized April 30, 1921. 

He was graduated from Conshohocken High School, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania in 1938; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1942 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1945 with a master of divinity degree. He received a doctor of divinity degree from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1963. 

Pastor McCarney was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, United Lutheran Church in America, May 6, 1945, at Memorial Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, while he was a member of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. 


From 1988 – 2010, he served as visitation pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, which congregation, in 2015, awarded him the title Pastor Emeritus.

A brief and incomplete listing of his service during his active ministry includes membership on the Hanover School Board, and membership on the executive boards of the Maryland Synod, the Central Pennsylvania Synod, the Lutheran Church in America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Gettysburg College and Susquehanna University, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, and the Pennsylvania Council of Churches. Bishop McCarney was a member of the Commission on a New Lutheran Church, leading to the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and co-chair, with Roman Catholic Bishop, Rev. Msgr. (then Cardinal) Keeler, of the Pennsylvania Conference on Inter-Church Cooperation.

Pastor McCarney was an initiator of the Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Appeal. In 1999, the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg awarded him the Distinguished Alumni Award for a Celebration of Lifetime Service. In 1988, the Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, awarded him the Community Service Award.

In retirement, Bishop McCarney served as chair of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Committee on Appeals, as supply pastor, as preacher at major events, as Bible Study leader, and as voting member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America churchwide assembly.

On April 7, 1945, at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, he was married to Ruth Naomi Sowers McCarney, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with three daughters: Kathryn Faith McCarney Foster, and Christine Ruth McCarney, who survive him; and Elizabeth “Libby” Jean McCarney, who predeceased him. He is survived by six grandchildren and by nine great-grandchildren. A sister, Miriam McCarney Ehrhart, predeceased him.

At the time of his death, Bishop McCarney was a member of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. His memorial service was held November 30, 2019, at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, with his pastor, the Rev. Virginia J. Cover officiating, assisted by the Rev. Bishop Guy Edmiston and the Rev. Bishop James Dunlop. Burial was private in Rolling Green Cemetery, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. DR. DONALD RAYMOND PEDERSON
Born August 30, 1936 – Died November 29, 2019
Age 83 years, 2 months, 30 days

THE REV. DR. DONALD RAYMOND PEDERSON, son of the late Hilda and Martin Pederson, was born August 30, 1936, at Westbrook, Minnesota, and died November 29, 2019, at York, Pennsylvania. 

He was graduated from Westbrook High School, Westbrook, Minnesota in 1954; from Mankato State College, Mankato, Minnesota in 1963 with a bachelor of science degree; from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota in 1966 with a master of divinity degree; and from Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa in 1980 with a doctor of ministry degree.


He served in the United States Air Force Reserves, retiring as Lieutenant Colonel. His writing includes materials prepared for the Alban Institute and Clergy Journal.

On August 25, 1962, he was married to Ann Marie Littlefield Pederson, who predeceased him. Their marriage was blessed with three children, all of whom survive him: Kristi Pederson, Mark Pederson and wife Katarina, and Nadine Pederson. He is survived by four grandchildren Andrew and Elena Pederson, and Sebastien and Gabriel Pederson and three siblings, Judy, Jerry, and LaDonna. In addition to his wife Ann, he is predeceased by four siblings, Lloyd, Anna, Harriet, and Alice.

His memorial service was held December 13, 2019, at Salem Lutheran Church, Jacobus, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Christina Minnich officiating. Interment took place December 16, 2019, in Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Annville, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. RICHARD CHARLES JONES
Born November 1, 1933 – Died January 6, 2020
Age 86 years, 2 months, 5 days


During his active ministry and among other areas of service in church and society, Pastor Jones engaged in deaf ministry, especially while serving St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, marched with Civil Rights leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Chicago, and supported the Boy Scout program.

In retirement, Pastor Jones served as supply preacher, part-time assistant pastor, Faith United Lutheran Parish, Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, and interim pastor, Flohr Lutheran Church, McKnightstown, Pennsylvania and Quickel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Zion’s View Pennsylvania.

On February 12, 1955, at Reedsville Evangelical Congregational Church, Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania, he was married to Mary Alice Reed Jones, who survives him. Their children survive him: David Richard and wife Pamela, Linda Marie and husband Carl Botti, Peter Reed and wife Maryclare, and Stephen Paul and wife Lisa. He is survived as well by seven grandchildren: David, Jazmine, Reed, Will, Tyler, Daniaka, and Sephora. He was predeceased by an infant brother.

His memorial service was held January 17, 2020, at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, where he was a member, with the Rev. Marleen Griffith-Stull officiating. Inurnment was in St. John’s Lutheran Cemetery, Pine Grove, Pennsylvania.
THE REV. BARBARA JANE WINEY
Born July 24, 1932 – Died February 10, 2020
Age 87 years, 6 months, 17 days


She was graduated from John Harris High School, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1950; from Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1954 with a bachelor of arts degree; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1958 with a master of arts in religion degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1976 with a master of divinity degree.

Prior to study at the seminary, she taught English at the junior high school level.

Pastor Winey was ordained by the Central Pennsylvania Synod, Lutheran Church in America, March 19, 1978, at Lakeside Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, while she was a member of Grace Lutheran Church, State College, Pennsylvania.

Pastor Winey was the 32nd woman ordained by the Lutheran Church in America.

After receiving the master of arts in religion degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, she served full-time as Christian Education Director, 1958 – 1978, Messiah Lutheran Church, South Williamsport, Pennsylvania; Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania; and Grace Lutheran Church, State College, Pennsylvania.


During her active ministry, Pastor Winey served, among other capacities, as a member of the Central Pennsylvania Synod Commission on Ministry and Professional Development Committee, member of the Altoona Co-Mission, and member of the bishop’s Listening Committee.

In retirement, in addition to the pastoral ministry noted above, Pastor Winey served as supply pastor and, in the congregation where she held membership, as a member of the congregation council, communion assistant, choir member, and member of the Evangelism and Stewardship Committee. She also participated in a pericope group.

Pastor Winey is survived by cousins and friends.

Her memorial service was held February 14, 2020, at St. Paul Lutheran Church, York Street, Hanover, Pennsylvania, where she was a member, with the Rev. E. Robert Burkhart officiating. Burial took place February 15, 2020, in Glendale Cemetery, Middleburg, Pennsylvania.

THE REV. GEORGE EDWARD BUECHNER
Born May 4, 1941 – Died February 15, 2020
Age 78 years, 9 months, 11 days

THE REV. GEORGE EDWARD BUECHNER, son of the late Jesse Buechner and Ellen Buechner, was born May 4, 1941, at Syracuse, New York, and died February 15, 2020, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

He was graduated from North High School, Syracuse, New York in 1959; from the University of Syracuse, Syracuse, New York in 1963 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1966 with a master of divinity degree.

1997. He then served as chaplain, Frey Village, Middletown, Pennsylvania, 1997 – 2007, when he retired. In retirement, he served as supply pastor.

During his active ministry, Pastor Buechner served as a member of the Central Pennsylvania Synod World Hunger Task Force, Committee on Reference and Counsel, Nominating Committee and Stewardship Committee. At one time, he served as secretary of the former Lancaster District and chair, Erie Mission Strategy. He served as a first responder, board member of the Crispus Attucks Center, member of the Advisory Committee to the Spanish-American Civic Association School of Business and Trade, member of the advisory group, Lancaster County Committee on Child Abuse, member of the Steering Committee for Moxham Children’s Ministry, prison volunteer, and administrator, Community Emergency Aid.

On June 16, 1962, at Zion Lutheran Church, Syracuse, New York, he was married to Carolyn J. Bobenhausen Buechner, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with two children both of whom survive him: David James and wife Kathrine, and Kathleen Marie and husband Ron Bell.

At the time of his death, Pastor Buechner was a member of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. As this necrology was prepared, his memorial service was pending.

THE REV. ROBERT “BOB” E. CUSTER
Born January 27, 1938 – Died March 8, 2020
Age 82 years, 1 month, 10 days

THE REV. ROBERT “BOB” E. CUSTER, son of the late Howard S. Custer and Bertha W. Nelson Custer, was born January 27, 1938, at Portage, Pennsylvania, and died March 8, 2020, at UPMC Western Maryland.

He was graduated from Portage High School, Portage, Pennsylvania in 1956; from Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1960 with a bachelor of arts degree; from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1963 with a master of divinity degree; and from Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania in 1987 with a master’s degree in community counseling.


During his active ministry, particularly at Berwick, Pastor Custer served with Community Churches United, the Mental Health Association Board, District Cabinet, UNICEF, and participated in Community Ministerial meetings and meetings of district Lutheran pastors. He was always active in youth ministry at congregational, district, and synodical levels and was the contact person for Central Pennsylvania Synod youth staffers. At one time, he served as local CROP Walk chair. He was a volunteer hospital chaplain and served as a marriage and family counselor.

In retirement, Pastor Custer served as interim pastor, Bindnagle Lutheran Church, Palmyra, Pennsylvania, and as supply pastor, Providence Lutheran Church, Bedford, Pennsylvania, where he was a member at the time of his death.

On October 5, 1963, at Bortz Lutheran Church, Bedford County, Pennsylvania, Pastor Custer was married to Judy Arlene Houseworth Custer, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with three children, all of whom survive him: Heidi Sue Custer and husband David Cook, Gretchen Naomi Custer, and Robert Sheridan Custer and wife Dawn. He is survived by six grandchildren: Caleb Carter, Theodore Cook, Naomi Cook, Silas Custer, Elijah Cook, and Levi Custer. A brother Donald and wife Kay survive him, as do nieces and nephews. Pastor Custer was pre-deceased by a brother Nelson Custer and by four sisters: Eileen Tranter, Geraldine Templeton, Lorraine Marks, and Edna Huff.

As this necrology was prepared, his memorial service was pending.

THE REV. PAUL A. JONES
Born October 3, 1943 – Died April 24, 2020
Age 76 years, 6 months, 21 days

THE REV. PAUL ANDREW JONES, son of the late John Paul Jones and Lorabelle Troxler Jones, was born October 3, 1943, at Syracuse, New York, and died April 24, 2020, in Florida.
He was graduated from Onondaga Valley Academy, Syracuse, New York in 1962; from Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky in 1966 with a bachelor of arts degree; and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1970 with a master of divinity degree.

Pastor Jones was ordained by the Upper New York Synod, Lutheran Church in America, June 8, 1970, at Syracuse, New York, while he was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Atonement, Syracuse, New York. He served as pastor, Christ Lutheran Church, Water Street, Pennsylvania, and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Petersburg, Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, 1970 – 1973; and St. Peter Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, 1973 – 2005, when he retired.

During his active ministry, Pastor Jones served as a member of the Lewistown District Cabinet, the Petersburg Borough Council, and fire hall chaplain. He organized camps at Selinsgrove State School and Hospital and served as a chaplain at the State Correctional Institution at Camp Hill. He was also active in hospital chaplaincy, Boy Scouts, and Upper Allen Township Parks and Recreation. He was a member of the West Shore Ecumenical Board and aided in the founding of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, by allowing them to hold services in St. Peter Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, until their church was built.

In retirement, he served as visitation pastor, Calvary Lutheran Church, Apollo Beach, Florida, his winter home. During other months, he assisted Pastor DeFrehn, West Shore Conference, Lower Susquehanna Synod, with preaching, teaching confirmation, and providing visitation.

On August 28, 1965, at Syracuse, New York, he was married to Cynthia Ann VanAtta, who survives him. Their marriage was blessed with two children, both of whom survive him: John Andrew and Lora Ann (Bueno). He is survived by four grandsons: Paul Michael Jones, Andrew Noah Jones, Senator Mickey Bueno, and Marcelino Jonesy Bueno; and one great-granddaughter: Birdie Lynn.

At the time of his death, Pastor Jones was a member of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. As this necrology was prepared, his memorial service was pending.

THE REV. RICHARD B. STARR
Born May 27, 1936 – Died June 2, 2020
Age 84 years, 6 days

THE REV. RICHARD B. STARR, son of the late William B. Starr and Ruth G. Starr, was born May 27, 1936, at Tappan, New York, and died June 2, 2020, in Texas.

He was graduated from Middle Township High School, Cape May Court House, New Jersey in 1954, from Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania in 1959 with a bachelor of arts degree, and from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1962 with a master of divinity degree.


During his active ministry, Pastor Starr served as vice-pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Trinity Road, York, Pennsylvania, St. Paul Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania, and Zion Lutheran Church, York, Pennsylvania.

His service in the church and community includes: chaplain, Gateway House of the Harrisburg State Hospital, president of the board of directors of the York County Food Bank, president of the York Township Lion’s Club, chaplain, Goodwill Fire Company #1, York Township, chaplain, York Township Police Department, program director and board member of the Mount Lebanon Camp Meeting Association, dean of the Lykens and York Districts, president, vice-president, and secretary of the Millersburg Ministerium, secretary of Troop 151, Boy Scouts of America, member of the synodical Worship and Evangelism committees, chair of the synodical Stewardship Committee, and two terms as a member of the Lutheran Church in America Stewardship Group.

In retirement, Pastor Starr served as supply pastor and as interim pastor, St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, North York, Pennsylvania, and Christ Lutheran Church (Starview), Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania.
On September 22, 1967, at Pemberton, New Jersey, Pastor Starr was married to Carol Jean Seeler, who predeceased him. Children survive him: Kathy Molinaro and husband Rich, Royal and wife Sandy, Ruth Morrison and husband Clay, Cindy Shomper and husband John, Bill Seeler and wife Linda, and J. Lee. Pastor Starr was preceded in death by son Christian.

He is survived by several grandchildren and by his siblings William Starr and wife Rosalie and Janet Carver.

At the time of his death, Pastor Starr was a member of Christ Lutheran Church (Starview), Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania. As this necrology was prepared, a private memorial service is intended autumn, 2020.

The Rev. Jeffrey C. Compton, synod necrologist

ELCA REGION 8 ARCHIVES
Hosted at 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. Currently, the archives are under the supervision of Evan E. Boyd, Library Director and Archivist of United Lutheran Seminary.

2019 was a year where the archives made significant progress on both processing collections and reorganizing the spaces to better suit our current needs and co-locate materials. Sheila Joy’s leadership was key in getting the backlog of unprocessed collections processed. Today, the Seminary Archives can report that nearly all collections have been processed.

Sadly, Sheila Joy, the Region 8 and ULS Seminary Assistant Archivist, resigned, effective April 1, 2020. She has taken a new position as the Associate Archivist/Special Collections Librarian for the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia. While the Region 8 Archives is losing an excellent staff member and leader, we are gaining a friend and ally with the Region 7 Archives located at United Lutheran Seminary’s Philadelphia campus. There are plans to fill Sheila’s position, however this has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Until Sheila’s role has been replaced, public research queries will not be filled and held for future research. Requests from Synod and Churchwide Offices will be completed.

COVID-19 Pandemic

United Lutheran Seminary and the Archives have been closed since March 19 in response to Governor Wolf’s Stay at Home Order. While Adams County has moved to the Yellow Phase, Libraries and Archives are considered Indoor Recreation Centers and we will remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future. Because of a desire to limit exposure, the ULS Library has determined that it is unlikely that in-person archives reference will be provided during the remainder of 2020. Until a new Assistant Archivist is in place, requests from the general public will generally be held until a future date when we are fully staffed.

Major Actions, 2019

- Received 72 research inquiries, up from 67 in 2018 and 56 in 2017
- Hosted 18 in-person research visits, up from 8 in 2018
- Received materials from Allegheny, Lower Susquehanna, and Upper Susquehanna Synods
- Continued processing collections as received
- Successfully completed an ELCA grant for digitizing the minutes of ELCA predecessor denominations up to 1917
- Purchased a digital microfilm reader for public use

Goals for 2020

- Hire a new Processing and Reference Archivist
- Continue to receive and process materials from synod offices
- Host church visits and visit churches in need of archives planning
- Collaborate with faculty on ways to utilize archival collections in the curriculum
- Update all finding aids to the collection to a new online catalog by Spring 2021
- Work with Adams County Historical Society with microfilm of registers of historic congregations
- Contact synod offices to consider funding structures for the Region 8 Archives and outreach

If you have questions, concerns, or are interested in volunteering the archives in any way, please contact Evan E Boyd via email at eboyd@uls.edu

Evan E Boyd, library director and archivist, United Lutheran Seminary
REPORT OF THE TREASURER

As I write this in late April, very little about the future (or even the present) seems clear, leading to some understandable frustration. The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown everything we know out of balance. However, there is one thing about which I am somewhat clear: the impact of some of the items you see here will almost certainly be different, perhaps substantially so by the time of the Synod Assembly.

Having said that, let’s get to what we DO know.

**Fiscal 2019 Results**
The synod achieved a fiscal 2019 operating fund surplus of $1,261. This was achieved despite a roughly $50,000 mission support reduction from 2018.

So what happened? Simple, the synod’s staff performed outstandingly in containing expenses. In the face of significant reduction in mission support, the staff worked cooperatively to eliminate unnecessary expenses and obtain additional revenue where possible. The result was a very small, yet gratifying, surplus.

![Operating Fund - Surplus/(Deficit)](chart1)

Here is a chart of this historic net asset value of our operating fund. Since we had a very small 2019 surplus, the net asset value did not increase very much. But it also did not decrease, so we have that going for us. We would like to reach $100,000 in operating fund net assets (last reached in 2015), but that may have to wait until future years given current world events.

![Operating Fund - Net Assets](chart2)
**Fiscal Year 2019 Mission Support**

2019 fiscal year mission support was $2,472,478 or about $50,000 less than the budgeted support of $2,550 million. The chart below shows 2019 mission support reduction as simply a continuation of a multi-year trend (2017 excepted).

![Congregational Mission Support Chart]

**Fiscal Year 2020 Mission Support**

During this challenging time, we are anticipating a financial “trickle up” issue. Congregations are not holding in-person services, so their giving will probably be below what is normally anticipated (and some of their members may be without jobs). As congregation revenue declines, that leaves less money to be sent to the synod to continue its mission. Likewise, as the synod receives less mission support, less money is available to be sent to ELCA churchwide organization.

Below is the fiscal year 2020 mission support forecast, almost certain to need revision. February through April results are now in.

![2020 Mission Support by Month]

April mission support came in at both 78% of forecast and 78% of April 2019 actual. This is a slightly better percentage than we anticipated, but still not a great result. A reasonable assumption is that we will need to reduce May through July forecast support by about 20%. That would translate to a 2020 forecast May-July mission support reduction of about $125,000. We cannot really project with any accuracy beyond that, but it’s increasingly possible that we may need to reduce the mission support forecast for months beyond July.
**Investments (Legacy Fund)**

Through April 30, our investments were valued at $2,208,511, a $173,401 (7.3%) decrease from the fiscal year 2019 year-end balance of $2,381,912. This is after withdrawing $125,801 for the annual Legacy Fund distribution and investment management fees but also after a deposit of $35,909 from the estate of Christine Mummert to be used for Christian Education. The chart below shows year-end balances for the past five years and the 2020 year to date balance.

![Legacy Fund Fiscal Year-End Balances](image)

Keep in mind that our Legacy Fund balance was as low as $1.837 million in mid-March 2020, so this is a very substantial recovery.

**Sales Tax Exemption**

Here is another COVID-19 impact. The Pennsylvania sales tax exemption renewal for the synod and 230 congregations under our umbrella was approved by the commonwealth in early January. Congregations were to have received new sales tax exemption certificates the week of March 15. But then Pennsylvania’s Department of Revenue closed for physical distancing. Fortunately, on March 26 we received an exemption extension letter to be presented along with an existing exemption certificate to continue a congregation’s sales tax exemption. We expect to receive new exemption certificates when the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue offices open again.

**Paycheck Protection Program**

On April 28 we were informed that our application for a forgivable loan of $234,127 from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) was approved. PPP is part of the CARES Act recently signed into law. The proceeds will be used for payroll, health and pension benefits, rent and utilities. As of this writing, the amount spent on those items within eight weeks of the loan initiation date will be forgiven by the Federal government. Any amounts not forgiven, for whatever reason, will incur a 1% interest rate. That is a rate which is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain anywhere else.

**Application for Line of Credit**

At the bishop’s direction, I contacted our financial institution, Members 1st Federal Credit Union, about obtaining a line of credit of $100,000 for the synod. The credit line would be used only if cash is temporarily running short. For example, we may know cash is coming at month-end, but we might have an immediate mid-month cash need.

**Audit**

The audit was conducted by RKL on March 12, 18, 19 and 31. Due to COVID-19, the March 18-19 portions were conducted remotely via email and uploading/downloading documents from the RKL server. It was an interesting process we had never before encountered but which appears to have been successful.

On April 2, we received a draft of the final audit report giving LSS financial reports a “clean” audit opinion. We need to review the report before submission to the Audit Committee. One item of note is that the synod spent 16.8% of total expenses on Management/Administrative and Fundraising. Anything under 25% is generally considered to be “efficient”. This is yet another testimony to the staff’s careful stewardship of funds.
Accounting system
In late March we could not access the MIP accounting system. The reason given by the vendor, NonProfit Technologies (NPT), is that they suffered a ransomware attack. This is where an outside party gains control of a system and demands payment, or ransom, to “give the system back”.

It took roughly three weeks before we could again access MIP. While communication from NPT began satisfactorily, it deteriorated to the point of us not knowing what was happening, no matter how many emails or direct phone calls we attempted.

As a result, I asked other synod treasurers what accounting systems they use. The overwhelming favorite was ACS, followed by Raiser’s Edge Donor Management Software and, of all things, Quickbooks. While we will contact other vendors to determine what their systems have to offer, we have not decided to actually change systems. And if we do decide to change systems, it will be a carefully planned process to ensure that our existing data remains intact. But rest assured nothing will happen next week, next month, or even in 2020.

Always Being Made New (ABMN)
ABMN was concluded in 2019. The remaining funds will be disbursed in 2020 on a “where needed most” basis.

Activities and Goals within the Treasurer’s Office
The following sections detail the current challenges and activities within the treasurer’s office.

Accounting simplification
This is still a goal we would like to achieve. A lot will be determined by any decision to change accounting systems. If we are going to a new system, we might as well clean up the chart of accounts.

Automation
We are still looking at email distribution of quarterly mission support reports. Bear with us as we navigate numerous other issues. But this is something we really want to accomplish.

Congregational Treasurer Remittance Reports
We eliminated the printing and mailing expense associated with the congregational treasurer remittance reports and went with online dissemination. I would like to thank the congregation treasurers for cooperating with this effort. It appears to have been a success, with minimal disruption.

Other Activities Within the Treasurer’s Office
- Monitored investment activity of the synod’s Legacy Fund.
- 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 is a true pleasure to work with them both.

Conclusion
We realize these are challenging times and will work together to navigate the synod’s activities through them. We are closely monitoring the synod’s financial status to ensure continued support for our mission.

We welcome questions relating to the synod’s finances. You can call Cathy Paul, Denise Ferguson or me at the synod office, or email me at jstepansky@lss-elca.org.

Joe 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, 2020 and 2019, 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, 2020 and 2019, 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.

RKL LLP

May 21, 2020
Wyomissing, Pennsylvania
ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE
The members of the Assembly Planning Committee are: Bishop James Dunlop; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; The Rev. Beth Schlegel, synod secretary; the Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson, synod staff/assembly manager; Stella Ludwig, synod council/chair; the Rev. Becca Ajer Frantz; the Rev. Matthew Best, synod council; The Rev. Elizabeth George; Daniel Picone, synod council; the Rev. Edward J. Robbins; the Rev. Gwenn Trout; Joyce Frigm; and Cathy Deitrich and Charlie Roberts, synod staff.

The Assembly Planning Committee, a constitutional 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 2019 on October 3 and November 20 and in 2020 on January 21 and March 17 with plans for additional meetings to prepare and complete assembly preparations.

The committee was given the task to plan two Edification Days and a Day of Worship and Business. The Synod Council approved the dates for the 2020 Synod Assembly of the Lower Susquehanna Synod as follows: Business Session on Saturday, June 6, 2020, at Messiah College, and Edification Days on Saturday, May 16, 2020, and Saturday, May 30, 2020. The dates were adopted at the November 16, 2019, Synod Council meeting.

The committee proceeded with plans as follows: Saturday morning business with 11:00 Worship Service of Holy Communion with the Rite of Ordination and Necrology. The business meeting will be completed in the afternoon. The Edification Days (the content will be the same both days) will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2020, at St. Peter (Neffsville), Lancaster, and Saturday, May 30, 2020, at St. Matthew, York. The keynote speaker for our Days of Edification will be the Rev. James Hazelwood, bishop of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Our other meetings included planning the agenda for the business day, rules of procedure, registration rates, and other essential parts that make our days together run smoothly.

My heartfelt thanks to the members of the Assembly Planning Committee for their dedicated work to plan this year’s assembly. Doing a new format for the assembly took a lot of discussions and planning. THANK YOU! A very special thanks to Dana, Lucinda, Cathy and Charlie who guided me through the planning and meetings. It is our wonderful synod staff that makes planning and running this event run smoothly. Thank you for all you do!

Stella Ludwig, chair

NOTA BENE: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Edification Days as described above were cancelled by the Synod Council.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE
Joy and jocularity come together when the Constitution Committee meets. Our purpose is to review governing documents for the Lower Susquehanna Synod and its agencies and congregations, to propose amendments, and to clarify any questions that may arise.

The primary document to be reviewed was The Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, which underwent many changes following last year's Churchwide Assembly. Not only did we propose to the Synod Council the recommended amendments from the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, but we also recommended additional changes to our governing documents to bring them into alignment. Many changes involved updates in semantics and syntax. A report from the Synod Council indicating its recommendations for these amendments will be included in this year's assembly packet.

Among the proposed amendments recommended by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly is the allowance of special circumstances whereby a bishop may be compensated as an employee or contractor when serving in another expression of this church at the approval of the Synod Council and the clarification of the terms for synod administration of a congregation.

In addition to our work on the synod governing documents:
- Bylaws for LutherCare were reviewed and amendments proposed for consideration.
- Bylaws of Greenstone Living were reviewed and returned with several proposed changes and accommodations.
- Bylaws for the LCC (Lutheran Camping Corporation) were reviewed.

The committee members are Jennifer Lau, the Rev. Jeffrey Compton, Jered Hock, Joanne Wilhelm, Chucki Strevig and Secretary Beth Schlegel.

Carlotta “Chucki” Strevig, chairperson

FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE
[constitution chapter S10.06.08.c]
This committee is composed of 9 members, 1 of whom shall be the treasurer and at least 3 of whom shall be Synod Council members. 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 year and, based on anticipated income, program requests, and adopted goals, develop a proposed budget for recommendation to Synod Council and Synod Assembly.

The committee typically meets three times between synod assemblies. 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. We receive electronic reports monthly from the treasurer and meet to discuss the status of our synod’s finances. At each meeting, we receive and review a current report of cash flow and statement of financial position from the treasurer, Joseph Stepansky.

During our first meeting after the Synod Assembly, we invite the synod’s investment advisor, Emerald Advisors, Inc., to present an update of the performance of the Vision for Mission Legacy Fund and to make recommendations regarding the current asset mix. The synod’s policy sets broad guidance to the advisor and we recommend context changes within that guidance. This year we asked for and received affirmation that the fund remains consistent with ELCA screens for responsible corporate investing.

At our next meeting, we review the operations to date and recommend a distribution rate from the Vision for Mission Legacy Fund. This year we recommended 5% because the fund had strong growth last year and we could make such a distribution without invading the ‘principal’ of the fund. The distribution supports synod ministries, based on a formula defined in the policy governing that fund. The Vision for Mission Legacy Fund supports the Konde Diocese, new worshipping communities, renewing congregations, and eliminating hunger, among other ministries.

Our final meeting each year is to receive the audit report and to consider the draft budget. The budget is developed with significant input from the bishop and staff and consideration for their recommendation to this committee. With changing conditions across the synod, it is difficult to project 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. In years where the trend in mission support is declining, we may recommend to the 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.

Heartfelt thank you to this year’s committee members: Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; Joseph Stepansky, synod treasurer; Virgil Gibson, SC, chair; Joyce Frigm, secretary; Meredith Askey, SC; Dawn Frees, Wayne Gongaware, Gretchen Ierien, SC; Vicki Rutter, and Bill Shoemaker.

Virgil L. Gibson, chair

**GIFTS DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE**

The task of the Gifts Discernment Committee is to identify individuals to be nominated for all open office positions. This year we needed to fill the nomination for vice president of the synod. It was the consensus of the committee to recommend Jennifer R. Lau for the position of vice president.

I would like to thank all those who serve as committee members: the Rev. Eric Anderson; Debra Barrett; the Rev. Douglas DeStephano; Bishop James Dunlop; Holly Freas-Webster, the Rev. Beth Schlegel, Robert Walton; M. Jane Wigand; and Deborah Clark, staff.

Kay Hinkle, chair

**SYNOD 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.

Prior to the 2019 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, the Mission Committee was tasked with duties to follow the plan laid out in the process to lift up possible nominees for 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.”

February of 2020, the Mission Committee gathered to begin reviewing and asking questions about how we are living into our 3 E’s, equipping leaders, encouraging cooperation and engaging in new mission. We began thinking of questions around a synod with less staff and less mission support income. We talked about future configuration of the synod, priorities of conferences, cohorts, and/or anchor congregations. We talked briefly about churchwide and regional based ministries and how shared staffing or structures may need to change as we look into the future. The goal throughout all this conversation, as we begin to explore these questions in 2020, is to never lose focus on God’s call to be the public church and share the Good news.

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; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; the Rev. James S. Dunlop, bishop; the Rev. Joel Folkemer, chair, Synod Council; the Rev. Jack Horner, Synod Council; the Rev. Richard Jorgensen, Director for Evangelical Mission; Jennifer Lau, Synod Council; the Rev. Jillian Riddle, Synod Council; Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Collaborative Mission Center Director; and Holly Freas-Webster.

The Rev. Joel Folkemer, chair

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Colossians 3:23 reads, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord…” The Personnel Committee of the Lower Susquehanna Synod serves to care for those who work with all their hearts in ministry through our synod office. The committee reviews salaries, position descriptions, personnel policies, and other pertinent documents to ensure the staff of our synod are best able to live as examples of God’s love in the realities of our world. The committee works with Synod Council and other related committees by receiving and proposing recommendations to that end. Those who have served on the Personnel Committee in the past year include: the Rev. Thomas McKee, personnel officer; Bishop James Dunlop, personnel officer; Lucinda Bringman, synod vice president; Dallas Barchlit Jr, SC; 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.

2019 saw a number of personnel changes for our synod staff, prompting the Personnel Committee to be active in its role. While Bishop Dunlop returned to serve another term, following the election at Synod Assembly, the Rev Sharron Blezard has stepped back to be on leave, the Rev Jennifer Hope-Tringali has moved to Guatemala to administer Hope Academy, the Rev Thomas McKee celebrated his retirement, and (in early 2020) Deacon Marsha Roscoe has moved to a part-time call as she takes on responsibility as Coordinator of the Collaborative Mission Center. Joining synod staff are the Rev Dana Blouch-Hanson and the Rev Elizabeth Martini.

Based on recommendations from the bishop and discussion, the Personnel Committee recommended the following salary and housing allowances for 2020 to Synod Council: Bishop Dunlop, $101,178; the Rev Robert Blezard, $67,050; the Rev Dana Blouch-Hanson, $63,365; the Rev Richard Jorgensen, $81,050; the Rev Elizabeth Martini, $23,000 (15 hrs/week). This represents a 2.2% increase from last year. Bishop Dunlop abstained from voting on his own salary. Also recommended was a 2.2% increase for all remaining staff. All salary recommendations were approved by Synod Council.

The committee also reviewed newly written and revised position descriptions that reflect the changes in responsibility under a different staff structure. The Personnel Policies were examined and discussed with some changes (mostly to better reflect current language and practices) being recommended to Synod Council for approval. Looking towards 2021, the committee recommends a 3% salary and benefits increase for synod staff to the Finance and Budget Committee.

The Personnel 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, from application to ordination, in order to become rostered leaders. Those leaders then in turn help equip others to work in this world doing God’s work to serve their neighbors.

The Candidacy Committee meets almost monthly both at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill and at United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg campus. Interviews are conducted at both sites while the 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 our process and interviews, we follow the ELCA Candidacy
Manual, as do all the other synods. The manual, all necessary candidacy forms and other candidacy resources are available on the ELCA website for view or download.

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 and to give an opportunity for candidates, future applicants and committee members to interact. This year the retreat was held at Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill. Bishop Dunlop led a presentation on the Future of the Christian Faith, Pastor Brian Biery led a presentation on Prayer and Spiritual Disciplines, Vice President Lucinda Bringman, Bishop Dunlop, and Pastor Sean Titus led a conversation on the Churchwide Assembly, and Bishop Dunlop led a question and answer time, always a favorite at the retreats.

Many thanks for all the dedicated pastors, deacons and other members of the baptized priesthood who make up this committee. As of March 1, 2020, the members of the Candidacy Committee continue to care for the following individuals. 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
- Rebekah Cochran
- Jessica Davis
- Michael Faust
- Angela Hammer
- Melissa Hoffman
- Michael Johnsen
- Jessica Lee
- Jennifer Morris
- Susan Mull
- Kurt Nielsen
- Elizabeth Peter
- Pal Puszta
- Emily Schreiber
- Susan Scott
- Keith Shively
- Troy Spencer
- Vanessa Storlie
- Rodney Warfield
- Carla Christopher Wilson

### Minister of Word and Service

- Stephen Boyhont
- Robert Kivlan
- Emily Orner
- Timothy Swartz
- Mary Louise Aims
- Margaret Folkemer
- Megan McClinton
- Mindy Shively

The following individuals have been given approval for assignment to the Roster of the ELCA:

**Minister of Word and Sacrament:** Thomas Busteed, Angela Hammer, Elizabeth Peter, Carla Christopher Wilson

**Minister of Word and Service:** Megan McClinton

Candidates removed or who withdrew from the candidacy process: Michael Borrell, Richard Cassem II, Anna Hatcher, Sharon Kaya, Geoffrey McCarthy, Gregory Neuhauser, Benjamin Olewiler, and Michael Zimmerman

### Statistical Summary of Action Taken by LSS Candidacy Committee March 2019 – February 2020

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Positive Entrance</th>
<th>Entrance Postponed</th>
<th>Entrance Denied</th>
<th>Positive Endorsement</th>
<th>Endorsement Postponed</th>
<th>Endorsement Withdrawal</th>
<th>Positive Approval</th>
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Jeffrey P. Weaver, chair

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE

One of this synod’s stated priorities is Equipping Leaders. The Compensation and Benefits Committee supports this priority by ensuring that rostered ministers have adequate compensation and benefits packages. Since the 2019 Synod Assembly the committee implemented new online tools to assist with calculating compensation and proposed a parental leave policy which was approved by the Synod Council.

The committee also reviewed data to inform minimum salary recommendations for 2021. Based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index, the cost of living increased by 2.3% in 2019. The Mercer Broad Salary Survey showed an average merit increase...
of 2.9% in 2019 and projects a 3% increase for 2020. Following this review, the committee submitted the following recommendations to the Synod Council and the Synod Assembly:

**Recommendation:** That the 2020 Synod Assembly set the 2021 minimum base salary and housing allowance for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and no parsonage provided at $53,875 and set the 2021 minimum salary for Ministers of Word and Sacrament with no years of experience and with a parsonage provided at $37,480, representing a 3% increase over the 2020 minimum salaries; and

**Recommendation:** That the 2020 Synod Assembly set the 2021 minimum base salary for Ministers of Word and Service with no years of experience at $48,530, a 5.5% increase over the 2020 minimum salary; and

**Recommendation:** That the Synod Council approve a $5.00 increase to the supply rate for one service in 2021, making the 2021 supply rate for one service $180; approve an additional $50 for each additional Sunday morning service and an additional $70 for each additional service other than Sunday morning.

**Note:** Following the decision by the 2019 Synod Assembly to narrow the gap between starting minimum salaries for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service, the Compensation and Benefits Committee intends to gradually equalize the starting salaries for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service within the next six years.

During the coming year the committee will explore models for providing a sabbatical leave and present one or more models to the Synod Council for inclusion in the Compensation and Benefits Manual.

Committee membership includes laity and rostered ministers who are gifted in the areas of human resources, economics and finances. Current members are: the Rev. Deborah Mahady, the Rev. Barbara Barry, the Rev. Thomas Bruner, Jr., Sister Davia Evans, the Rev. Stanley Reep, Bruce Senft, Kay Hinkle (Synod Council liaison), the Rev. Robert Blezard (staff liaison), Bishop James Dunlop, Debbie Clark (Executive Assistant for the Bishop’s Office) and the Rev. Doug Johnson.

The Rev. Doug Johnson, 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 leaders, 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 one of the meetings traditionally expanded to a retreat setting with worship and time 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 for receiving 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 past year these conversations have continued to focus on Bishop Dunlop’s concern for pro-actively addressing the general decline in participation, membership and congregational life throughout the churches, including many of our own congregations, lifting up resources, discussing strategies and sharing best practices. We heard presentations from Barb Debski of Portico, the Rev. Dr. Martin Zimmann from ULS, and Lucinda Bringman from Synod Council. We debriefed the process of preparing for a bishop’s election that was undertaken in 2018-2019, and most recently we considered the implications of the impending epidemic of COVID-19 for congregational and synodical life.

At last November’s meeting, the following officers were belatedly elected for a year’s term:

- Chair – the Rev. Dr. Stephen Verkouw
- Vice-Chair – the Rev. David Sensenig
- Member-at-large – the Rev. Lisa Leber
Secretary – the Rev. Jeffrey Compton, (retired) who has continued in this service to the Committee of Deans for many years. His enthusiasm for this task continues to be greatly appreciated!

I’m sure I speak also for the bishop and synod staff in thanking the deans for their collegial service and participation in these conversations and for their service in support of our conferences and congregations:

- Chambersburg Conference - the Rev. William Nienstedt
- Gettysburg Conference - the Rev. Michael Allwein
- Hanover Conference - the Rev. Bradley Dayett
- Harrisburg Conference - the Rev. Martha Boyd
- Lancaster Conference - the Rev. Dr. Stephen Verkouw
- North Lancaster Conference - the Rev. Karen Larson
- North York Conference - the Rev. Jason Northridge
- Perry Conference - the Rev. David Sensenig
- South York Conference - the Rev. Douglas DeStephano
- Upper Dauphin Conference - the Rev. Jonathan Jenkins
- West Cumberland Conference - the Rev. Lisa Leber
- West Shore Conference - the Rev. Alexander Martini
- York Conference - the Rev. Stanley Reep

We also thank those conference secretaries who occasionally attend these meetings in place of their absent dean and who join us for the annual Dean’s (and Secretaries) Retreat.

The deans are grateful for our bishop, the Rev. Jim Dunlop; all of the assistants to the bishop, especially the Rev. Rob Blezard who is always at our meetings; 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.

**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 2019-2020 were: Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president, Synod Council; the Rev. Shawn Berkebile; Tracey DePasquale; the Rev. Aaron M. Erdley; Deacon Michelle Huth; the Rev. Michael Martine; Andrea Oslikova; Joseph A. Ricci; the Rev. LaDonna E. Thomas.

**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, checking in with one another, discussing and discerning ministry moments, and lunch and conversation. During meetings this year, participants used some of the time to gather in small groups to discern an instance in which they experienced God in their midst. They then used a guided process for group discernment to reflect biblically upon the event. There are about 18 pastors and deacons this year.

A new, but in some ways old, element of the program this year is our relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania’s Vital and Effective Leadership Program (VELI). We Episcopalians and Lutherans shared our gatherings twice over the course of the year.

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 costs for ABX and the retreat are split equally between our synod and congregations.

**CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCE TEAM**

The Congregational Leadership Resource Team of the Lower Susquehanna Synod was formed in 2014 at the request of Bishop James Dunlop and approved by the Synod Council in 2015. The purpose of the team is to provide congregations and leaders of the Lower Susquehanna Synod the necessary resources and support to promote healthy responses to change, anxiety and/or conflict.
Conflict and anxiety occur naturally within the life cycle of congregations and other communities of faith. The Congregational Leadership Resource Team is equipped to provide training opportunities along with interpersonal and group facilitation to assist leaders to develop skills and knowledge for understanding the dynamics of change and how calm leadership can bring about transformation and ongoing support. Team members primarily rely on Bowen Systems Theory and Healthy Congregations as tools to further its work.

The team is comprised of both lay and rostered ministers from across the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

In November 2019, the Rev. Dr. Larry Foster presented a Church Leadership workshop on the application of Bowen Systems thinking in congregations and synodical agencies. The workshop was hosted by Advent Lutheran Church, York. Future seminars will be scheduled and offered to both lay and rostered ministers.

Team leaders are: Pastor Dan Biles, Pastor Glenn Ludwig, Pastor Caitlin Glass Kurtz, Pastor Bill Snyder, Ms. Lois Strause and Pastor Connie Mentzer. Staff liaison is Pastor Rob Blezard.

**DIRECTOR FOR EVANGELICAL MISSION**

*At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius. The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea; this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul. (Acts 11:27-30)*

A year ago, we never imagined how much our lives and our ministries would be challenged and changed by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. God has called us to adapt to a rapidly changing context for mission, and this has required us to learn new skills and new ways of proclaiming the Gospel, caring for one another and serving our neighbors. I am grateful for your faithfulness in this season as we continue to learn and serve together.

We have experienced some authentic grief over our inability to gather in person, and from our inability to share and receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. We have also had a collective grief over the loss of our way of life, and of so many things which we once took for granted. And that is compounded for many of us with our personal grief and worry about the shape of our future.

While this season has presented many challenges, it has also made space for God to work among us in new ways as we continue to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. I am especially grateful that we have been able to proclaim the Gospel to people who were not previously gathering with us on Sunday mornings, and many of our congregations are now reaching many more people than we ever had before. Chris Backert, the National Director of Fresh Expressions US, has even suggested that “on April 12, 2020 it is highly likely that more people heard the good news of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead than any other single day in the history of the world.”

In Acts 11:27-30, there is a short episode which is easily overlooked and often forgotten. Barnabas and Saul (who would later be known as Paul) were ministering with the new Gentile Christians in Antioch, when a prophet named Agabus predicted that there would be a severe famine throughout the Roman Empire, and the church responded by sending Barnabas and Saul back to Jerusalem to provide aid and support to their siblings in Christ who were in need. Out of that mission of mercy, Barnabas and Saul would also begin a missionary journey which would change the world. All of Paul’s missionary journeys were made in a time of famine and uncertainty, and God used both Paul and Barnabas to spread the Gospel even as they also faced the challenges of life in an age of uncertainty.

We should remember always that change is inevitable, but transformation is not. This current season will continue to change us, whether we want to be changed or not. Our “new normal” will not be the same as our “old normal.” And to meet the needs of our church, our communities and the world, we need to be open to God’s presence and power working among us in new ways, so that we may live faithfully into God’s call and God’s future.

In September 2019, our synod launched the second round of the R3 Renewal Process with 11 congregations participating. And amidst this current season of change, I believe R3 may be needed more than ever and our team is adapting our process to respond to this changing context. Together, with our consultant and presenter the Rev. Dr. Dave Daubert, we are changing and adapting this process to assist our participants to live faithfully into God’s call and to learn and practice new ways of serving together. I am also grateful as always for the shared leadership of Charlie Roberts and the administrative support of Cathy Dietrich which has helped us be flexible and nimble enough to change quickly in response to this season. I am also grateful as always for our coaches who have also remained faithfully engaged throughout this process. In this season, we are learning from one another, and we are learning together how we may continue to serve in new ways moving forward.

Our Readiness for Renewal Process also launched its second round in October 2019, and we have had a good beginning. The pandemic has forced us to postpone our April gathering until next fall, but we are committed to continuing to develop this process also in response to the changing needs of our leaders and our congregations.
I am also grateful that we have had over twenty rostered ministers and lay people complete our synod’s Certificate in Missional Preaching. I am especially grateful for our teachers, the Rev. Dr. Paul Scott Wilson and Dr. Tracy Radosevic, who provided faithful instruction and opportunities for our participants to learn and grow in their proclamation of the Gospel.

In terms of my ministry with the ELCA churchwide organization, I continue to serve on the ELCA Domestic Mission Unit’s Congregational Vitality Team, and Dave Daubert and I have now led two trainings to equip synodical teams to lead congregational renewal and trainings in their own synods. We will continue to provide this training, but for the foreseeable future, we will use Zoom and other resources, rather than gather in person.

I wish to acknowledge that by the time you read this report, we will no doubt have experienced further challenges and changes in our ministry, and I will continue to look for ways to adapt our work together, so that we may continue to grow into God’s call for us today and in the future.

As always, I believe that the ongoing renewal of the church is 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. T. Jorgensen Jr., director for evangelical mission

OFFICE FOR FAITH FORMATION AND YOUTH MINISTRY

“Throughout our research, we encountered hundreds of remarkable and diverse congregations who represent tens of thousands of young people. These teenagers and young adults consistently said they felt “known” at their church. They know no matter what happened, their church would feel like “home.””

from Growing Young: Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church

In the fall of 2019, the ELCA churchwide staff sponsored a “Growing Young” Conference, based on the research done by the Fuller Youth Institute at Fuller Theological Seminary, and compiled in the book “Growing Young: Six Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church,” published in 2016. Co-author Jake Mulder admitted at the conference that much of their research reinforced research done in the early 2000’s by Dr. Roland Martinson, from Luther Seminary, John Roberto (Roman Catholic) and others, compiled in “Exemplary Youth Ministry Study.”

It seems that across denominational and non-denominational lines and for at least two generations now the best research data reinforces what we know from anecdotal evidence as well, American churches are mostly aging and shrinking. Generation X, Millennials, and soon the iGen or the most recent generation of post-millennials, have left the church. But the research also shows it does not have to be this way. There are pockets of congregations in all socio-economic settings, of various sizes, rural, urban and suburban, and in various traditions, who continue to “grow young.”

In Lower Susquehanna Synod, our congregations like so many reflected in the various studies, are doing a number of things well related to faith formation with those in the first-third of life. The “Growing Young” Research for example, suggested there are six essential strategies that healthy congregations who are growing young exhibited:

1. Keychain Leadership (empowering young people to lead now)
2. Empathy Today (diving deep to celebrate dreams and grieve despairs of young people)
3. Jesus Message (living into this message in demonstrated actions and the spirit of our church)
4. Warm Relationships (a commitment to genuine welcome and a warm, expansive community)
5. Prioritize Young (allocate resources and energy to young people and families inside and outside)
6. Best Neighbors (integrated discipleship that allows us to be neighbors locally and globally)

Many congregations practice some of these strategies, but lack in others. That’s not uncommon. While some other congregations have chosen not to prioritize “growing young.” Researchers admit that those congregations who have prayerfully discerned a missional call to the aging for example, will not benefit from being “partially engaged” in growing young.

Our synod Office for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry continues to curate and make available resources designed to accompany congregations in all aspects of faith formation across all generations, through our Resource Center and Network. We continue to host events, and partner with other institutions, agencies and denominations to equip pastors and other congregational leaders in all aspects of ministry. Details of our events can be found at the synod website under the Faith Formation tab: https://www.lss-elca.org/faith-formation/
Whether the venue is a renewal event like R3, a Bishop’s Convocation, or an actual youth event, our office will continue to explore ways congregations can “grow young” in an effort to assist the church re-engage with these searching generations. In addition, we will continue to practice the essential strategies as we equip young leaders for a life of discipleship and service to our Lord, their churches, communities, and the world.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation and youth ministry

TRANSFORMING MINISTRY TEAM

I was called as the Director for Evangelical Mission for the Lower Susquehanna Synod in May 2012 and began my service in this position in August 2012. I realized from the beginning, that I would need a team to partner with me in leading this ministry. I began recruiting our synod’s “Transformational Ministry Team” as soon I as accepted this call, and we had a team in place the day I officially began my ministry. In the past year, we renamed our committee as the “Transforming Ministry Team,” because we believe that we are never done being transformed by God, but instead, we are always transforming to meet the changing needs and challenges for ministry today.

I am grateful for this team which serves as a ministry and mission lab, where we test out new workshops and develop new ideas for how we can serve the church together. This team is also a sounding board and support for my ministry, and they are gifted presenters and leaders in their own right.

I have sometimes said, “I don’t do anything, because together we do everything,” and that is as true today as it was eight years ago. We really do need one another as partners in the Gospel. And I am grateful for this team and their continued partnership and service.

The current members of this team include: Jennifer Lau, Deacon Marsha Roscoe, Pastor Newell Embley, Pastor Joel Folkemer, Pastor Dione Klepetka, Pastor Titus Clarke, Pastor Timothy Seitz-Brown, Pastor Mary Anne Kingsborough, Pastor Tina Minnich, Pastor Kathy Kuehl, Pastor Pam Illick, Pastor Carla Christopher Wilson, Pastor Katrina Holland, and Seminarian Jessica Davis. Once again, I would like to affirm how grateful I am for this team and their continued partnership in our synod’s ministry.

If you would like to learn more about this team and its ministry, or if you feel called to potentially serve with this team in the future, please contact me.

The Rev. Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr., director for evangelical mission

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The primary purpose of the Lower Susquehanna Synod Audit Committee is to assist the Synod Council in fulfilling its general oversight of this synod’s accounting and financial reporting, internal control systems, and financial statement audit functions. 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 be certified public accountants.

Audit for the Year ended January 31, 2019

The Audit Committee met with representatives of Reinsel Kuntz Lesher (RKL) on May 29, 2019, to review the Independent Auditor’s Report and related communications for the fiscal year ended January 31, 2019. The report included the 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 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 2019 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, Terry Snyder and Jeff Fagan. The committee is assisted by Lucinda L. Bringman, synod vice president (Synod Council liaison) and Joseph M. Stepansky, synod treasurer (consultant).

Edward J. Straley, chair

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Criminal Justice System Ministry (CJSM) Committee is dedicated to increasing awareness within the congregations of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of criminal justice issues and to advocating for criminal justice reform throughout Pennsylvania. 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 Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Our committee seeks to offer opportunities to congregations for Encountering Jesus in the lives of incarcerated individuals and their families. Several resources are provided on the synod’s website and we are encouraging and supporting legislation to support the re-entry of paroled and released individuals. Individuals who are released, paroled or have commuted sentences, need personal care and assistance in returning to their home communities. This committee encourages congregations to participate in welcoming these individuals into their congregations and communities.

The Criminal Justice System Ministry Committee is continuing to raise awareness of the enormous problem of mass incarceration in the United States through short educational videos that can be streamed from our page on the synod’s website. We will also provide speakers to congregations interested in learning more about this uniquely American issue. 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. Please feel free to contact our committee for further information.

We have been blessed by the inspiration and guidance of the late Pastor Sadie Pounder and we continually strive to fulfill her vision and mission addressing the needs of incarcerated people.

Hebrews 13:1-3 (NIV)
Let mutual love continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. 3 Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.
Debi Dandridge, chairperson

GIFT AND BEQUEST ACCEPTANCE COMMITTEE

The Gift and Bequest Acceptance Committee shall be composed of the bishop, the synod treasurer, one member of the Synod Council appointed by the vice president, and two members of the Finance and Budget Committee appointed by the chair of the Finance and Budget Committee. Development personnel employed or contracted by this synod shall be members of this committee. This committee shall, in accordance with the Gift and Bequest Policy of this synod, be responsible for reviewing all gifts and bequests made to this synod, screening gifts and bequests, seeking legal counsel as needed, accepting gifts and bequests, and making recommendations to the Synod Council on gift and bequest acceptance issues when appropriate. [S11.01.12]

Members of the committee: Bishop James Dunlop; Lucinda Bringman, vice president; Joseph Stepansky, treasurer; Virgil Gibson, Synod Council; Wayne Gongaware, Finance and Budget Committee; and Joyce Frigm, Finance and Budget Committee.

The committee met twice as follows:
October 3, 2019, to consider a bequest from the dissolution of Memorial Lutheran. The committee decided to recommend to Synod Council that the $9,975.74 bequest be designated to go to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund.

Our second meeting, January 30, 2020, considered a bequest of $35,909 designated for Christian Education. The committee recommended to Synod Council to take $1,800 now for Christian Education with the remaining $34,109 going to the Legacy Fund in a restricted category designated for Christian Education.

With grateful appreciation to all the members of this committee, especially to recorder Joyce Frigm.

Virgil Gibson, Finance and Budget Committee chair

GLOBAL MISSION COMMITTEE

No report submitted by May 1, 2020.

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

At the end of 2019, the Synod Council authorized the formation of a synod task force to focus on homelessness. The Rev. Matthew Best and the Rev. Jillian Riddle volunteered to work on this task force. Our first task was to reach out to some of the conferences in the synod to gather further support for the task force. We continue to reach out to our conferences to talk about homelessness and recruit clergy and lay people to the task force. It is our hope that we will be able to start doing the actual work of the task force starting this summer, since the need is very high. Some of our goals include:

• Creating and maintaining an up-to-date resource list for homeless assistance in our area.
• Educating leaders about homelessness in our area.
• Working with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) to find ways to advocate for system, legislative, and policy changes in an effort to reduce homelessness.
• Explore ways for congregations and conferences to join together in developing affordable housing options within our synod.

If you would like to join in the work that we are undertaking, please contact Rev. Best by email matthew@laceduplutheran.com or by phone 717-805-7598. Thank you.

The Rev. Matthew Best, chair

KONDE DIOCESE COMMITTEE

The mission of the Konde Diocese Committee is to assist congregations and the bishop to 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 companion congregations.

We offer you this report of the past year:
This was the second 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. We, as a companion, are developing a trusting and faith-centered relationship with the new bishop and his staff. Our work as companions continues to grow and deepen in the name of Jesus Christ.

Relationships were enhanced by the visit of five members of our synod during the month of July 2019. The group stayed at the Lower Susquehanna Synod house located at Manow Lutheran Junior Seminary. The members spent time learning of the operations and dynamics of the school and how our synod could continue to support secondary education in the diocese. The group also performed some maintenance to the house including painting and minor upgrades to the electricity and water utilities. They visited their companion congregations and the diocesan office and Matema Lutheran Retreat Center. Approximately 10 members from our synod will be visiting the diocese in July 2020 with the Reverend Cliff Eshbach.

The Medical Needs Task Force chaired by Pastor Cliff Eshbach continues to make major achievements. 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 as with third party organizations with an interest in health care, we were able to help the hospital secure: a new machine to sterilize medical instruments, which was purchased with gifts from our synod, and the installation of a second hydropower generator that provides increased, reliable electrical power. They have purchased the new washing machine which we promoted last year. They are waiting for it to be delivered. It is another step in the process to acquire the necessary items needed to improve health care in that rural region of the country.

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 helped to support the expansion of the Itete Hospital, especially their ability to provide health care to women, pregnant women, newborn and young children. The hospital has opened a new building to provide care to these groups, and cherishes its partnership with the Lower Susquehanna Synod and their international partners, who together 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.

Seminarian/Vicar Angela Hammer, chairperson

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD MISSION FUND COMMITTEE

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee (formerly the Bishop’s Congregational Mission Fund Committee) has been constituted to administer the LSS Mission Fund. This fund, established by the 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 LSS Mission Fund as of January 31, 2020, is $206,565. 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 $44,500 in an outstanding loan to Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, Lancaster.

For the 2019 Fiscal Year, which runs from February 2019 through January 2020, the fund received $67,727 in contributions.

During the FY 2019, the LSS Mission Fund distributed $43,500. The committee determined these distributions based on the ministry partner fund request applications that were received. The distributions were as follows:

- $1,000 to Christ, New Bloomfield, for a ministry called Young Voices, an afterschool program for elementary students
- $20,000 to the Sudanese Authorized Worshiping Community, to support the pastor’s salary
- $10,000 to St. Peter, Middletown, to support their afterschool program
- $10,000 to Union, York, to support their seminary intern
- $1,000 to St. Paul, Dillsburg, for work on their parsonage for its use by Family Promise
- $1,500 to St. Stephen, New Kingstown, for a podcast ministry

Grant applications received in 2019 and pledged to be distributed during 2020:

- $14,750 over the course of two years to Trinity, Mechanicsburg, for Stepping Out and Bridging the Gap, ministries aimed at serving the congregation’s immediate community and basic and spiritual needs (The fund committed $18,500 to Trinity in 2021)
- $4,000 to Salem, Ephrata, for Managing Motherhood, a ministry that distributes diapers and other essentials for mothers and children
- $850 to St. Peter, Mechanicsburg, for Wee Worship, a new worship service designed for small children and their adults
- $10,000 to St. Paul, Carlisle, for Cultural Competency and A Special Place, a program for neighborhood youth

The committee determined these distributions based on the ministry's immediate community and basic and spiritual needs. The committee met on April 11, 2019, October 10, 2019, and January 20, 2020.

In 2019, the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali standardized the grant application and made it available as a fillable form on our synod website. She advertised this option from the floor of the synod assembly.

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. Likewise, the committee is encouraging submission of thoughtful applications for fund monies for ministries that support the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries.

The Reverend Elizabeth Martini, administrator of LSS Mission Fund

TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

In 2019, responding to the call of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Lower Susquehanna Synod, and a spiritually discerned call toward facilitating authentically welcoming and invitational spaces that allow Lutheran theology and community to be experienced by all God’s people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture, the Racial Justice Committee reorganized as the “Toward Racial Justice Task Force”. We believe the promises found in Zechariah 9, that the oppressed will be set free and the children of God will be restored. We believe in the servant’s mission of Isaiah 49, that the scattered survivors of oppression, if seeking a haven, can be brought together by those who lift up a light of calling. We believe in the promise that Romans 4 affirms, that many diverse nations are to be gathered unto God through grace. In short, we do not believe that racism, fear, or division will have the final word in Christ’s church or in Lower Susquehanna Synod’s counties and communities.

The Toward Racial Justice Task Force exists to actively encourage, equip, and empower members of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA in and for the faith-based Gospel call to racial justice. Some of the tools we employ in service of this mission are designing and facilitating required six-hour anti-racism trainings for rostered ministers (which are also open to lay leaders and congregational teams), and providing requested pulpit supply, coaching, and small group facilitation for congregations. We also develop and support
opportunities for ongoing engagement and resource, including a resource page on our synod website and a Toward Racial Justice blog which highlights resources and offers entry points for thought and conversation. We also serve in partnership with other formative ministries of our Lower Susquehanna Synod to support culturally competent policies, procedures, and programs at a systemic and institutional level.

Membership includes: synod liaision, the Rev. Beth Martini; co-chairs, the Rev. Carla Christopher Wilson and the Rev. Tim Seitz-Brown; pastors Titus Clarke, Matt Lenahan, Denise Horn, Brian Biery, Jay Eckman; deacons Dottie Almoney and Megan McClinton; Bishop Penrose Hoover; and laypersons Stacy Schroeder, Gale DuPont, Moses Kavishe, and Alyson Thomas Yost.

In 2019, the Toward Racial Justice Task Force hosted two required synodical training days which served rostered ministers and guests from Upper Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, and Allegheny Synods. We launched the Toward Racial Justice blog featuring two to three articles a month by a host of writers from multiple cultures and perspectives and the Toward Racial Justice resource page on our synod website featuring both ELCA and secular resources. We partnered with our synod office to offer a comprehensive anti-racism training to all members of our synod staff. We partnered with the director for faith formation and youth ministry to offer racial justice workshops for both teens and youth leaders at the youth event, Winterfest. We partnered with the R3 initiative to offer cultural competency modules at R3 retreat days beginning in 2020. We partnered with Outdoor Ministries to develop training modules for camp counselors and staff beginning the summer of 2020. We partnered with the United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg to host a day of equipping around the racial and social justice actions of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. We partnered with LAMPa to share action alerts, supply narrative stories and photos for communications, and participate in vigils at the immigration detention center in Reading with the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and at awareness raising events at the State Capitol.

The Rev. Carla S. Christopher Wilson and the Rev. Tim Seitz-Brown, committee co-chairs

**STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION AND MISSION SUPPORT COMMITTEE**
The Stewardship and Education Mission Support Committee has been meeting and exploring ways to provide support and guidance to the stewardship and financial ministries of Lower Susquehanna Synod congregations and our synod office. The committee is endeavoring to look afresh upon fulfilling its mission in this new decade, which has brought with it new challenges and opportunities than the church has seen in the past. To formulate a path forward, the committee has been working with three initial questions:

- What are the stewardship education needs of congregations in our synod, and how can we best meet them?
- Why is mission support to the wider church dropping, and what can our synod do about it?
- What questions should we be asking that we aren’t asking?

These questions will help guide the committee to crafting a revised Stewardship Education and Mission Support Strategy for our synod. The most recent strategy documents had received the Synod Council’s approval in 2010 and 2013. The Synod Council officially “archived” those documents at its meeting of April 18, 2020. In drafting a new strategy, the committee hopes to retain the best from those strategies while adapting to the current needs and opportunities.

While working to revise a new strategy, the committee is continuing and, where possible, expanding current stewardship education to congregational leaders through our synod stewardship webpage as well as webinars and workshops across the synod.

Members of the Stewardship Education and Mission Support Committee are Ms. Linda Bennett, the Rev. Matthew Best, the Rev. Liz Polanzke, and the Rev. Kevin Stout. Serving as consultant is the Rev. Katie Brantner. Synod Council liaison is Mr. Zachary Weiss. Synod staff liaison is the Rev. Robert Blezard.

Zachary Weiss, Synod Council liaison, and the Rev. Robert Blezard, synod staff liaison

**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 the bishop and the synod in our corporate worship life. That includes worship for Synod Assembly, Vow Renewal, Ordinations/Consecrations, Synod Leadership Retreat, as well as other services at the request of the bishop’s office.

Current members of the committee include: Debra Reeder, Rev. Jillian Riddle, Steve Strauss, Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg, Rev. Kevin Stout, Dan Deitzel, Margaret Folkemer, Rev. Carl Rabbe, Rev. Dana Blouch-Hanson (synod staff), Rev. Joel Folkemer (Synod Council liaison), and the Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz.

Since the 2019 Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly, the committee has worked on a number of synod worship services:

- 2019 Bishop’s Convocation Worship: October 17th at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in York
- 2020 Healthy Leader’s Retreat: February 10th—11th (Evening Prayer and Closing Eucharist)
- Ordination: January 26th
2020 Renewal of Vows Service: April 7th at Christ Lutheran Church in Elizabethtown

Morning Prayer for Synod Assembly Edification Days: May 16th and 30th

2020 Synod Assembly worship with Holy Communion, Ordinations, and Necrology

We have also spent time this year reviewing, revising, and updating the planning documents for synod worship services to ensure that they are up-to-date, effective, and clear in their purpose.

I give thanks for the hard work of this group of people in crafting beautiful, meaningful, and spiritual worship experiences for our synod.

The Rev. Rebecca Ajer Frantz, chair

NOTA BENE: Other worship services were planned at the time this report was prepared and were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and recommendations to suspend public gatherings of people.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR RELIEF PROJECTS

The Lutheran World Relief (LWR) 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.” Its 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.” It is through this organization that 114 Lower Susquehanna Synod congregations along with 23 sister congregations outside of our synod continue their commitment and dedication to share Jesus’ love with individuals around the world who are suffering due to poverty, fleeing war-torn countries with only the clothing on their backs, or recovering from natural disasters.

Jesus’ love shines through not just with the phenomenal gift giving in our synod, but also through the following 14 Conference Coordinators who reach out and provide the needed information supporting the congregations in their conferences. This dedication was key in making the October 2019 Annual LWR Ingathering appeal successful. A big THANK YOU goes out to the following volunteers: Sandra Brandt, the Rev. Katie Brantner, Linda C. Brocious, the Rev. Cynthia Chambers, Susan Delong, Pamela Dobbs, Karen L. Fisher, Norma R. Good, Donna L. Greifzu, Elaine B. Hock, Sarah Krumbine, Susan Lyons, the Rev. Judith McKee, Kathleen Moe, Theda Raffauf, the Rev. Edgar C. Reed, Carolyn A. Reeder, Janet Schroeder, Pamela W. Wagner, and Linda Zilinski.

The 2019 Ingathering provided both material aid items made and collected by congregations, and money donated to ship these gifts to areas where they were most needed. The 2019 reports show these 137 congregations donated the following: Mission Quilts – 5,209; Personal Care Kits – 3,551; School Kits – 7,787; Fabric Kits – 100 Baby Care Kits – 136; Blankets – 245; Fleece Blankets – 301; Bars of soap – 4,833.

Additionally, congregations reported that they distributed 728 quilts and blankets locally.

Congregations in other synods and Lutheran church bodies also collected and transported items. In our synod, 33 congregations donated a total of $11,547.52 to the LWR Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund. Moreover, 12 more bricks were engraved in the Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza at LWR headquarters located in Baltimore, Maryland, as a result of contributions of at least $500 being sent through our synods’ office from July 2018 through June 2019.

We give thanks to God for the gifts we have been given and for moving us to share with our brothers and sisters. In faith we walk beside our neighbors around the world that all might know the love of God.

Looking Forward

This has been an exciting year due to the unification of LWR and IMA world health. Together they are pursuing new opportunities, implementing stronger programs and supporting deeper and more lasting results for the health and well-being of the individuals and communities we serve. Working jointly with IMA world health, medical needs are able to be addressed along with addressing basic living needs for those most needy in our world. Not only do they respond to emergency needs by distribution of food, water, tools, medicine, tarps, quilts, blankets, kits, and soap, they provide training in new farming methods, irrigations, food as well as supplying tools, seeds, trees, safe water, and food-producing animals.

In 2019 our synod congregations contributed $33,926.11 to the LWR General Fund that allows these development programs to happen.

Fair Trade sales programs assure that farmers and craftspeople receive wage for their products, enabling them to buy food for their families, educate their children, and have better housing and medical care.

As we look forward to 2020, Lutheran World Relief has decided to not accept fleece blankets or soap. Congregations are encouraged to donate extra soap and fleece blankets to local shelters or local needs. Soap will continue to be a part of the Personal Care Kits and Baby Kits.
Our focus this year is to encourage congregations to work in partnership with other congregations in our synod or around them to share the gift of giving to those around the world most in need. We plan to gather information on when, where, and the time congregations currently meet to make quilts or kits, then place this information on the synod’s and LWR’s websites so individuals who would like to participate will have the opportunity, along with providing information/stories on who received donations, the location, and the impact it had on those in need. Lastly, we will continue to place packet information on the synod website and include how to find supplies on LWR website. This will enable us to use funds most wisely.

Sue Gordon and the Rev. Martha S. Boyd, Lower Susquehanna Synod representatives for Lutheran World Relief

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 2019 include: Cheryl Burns, the Rev. Ronald Costen, the Rev. Godfred Effisah, Crystal Houser, Stephanie Johnson, Shirley McGowan, Fay Nichols, Andrea Oslikova, the Rev. Jillian Riddle (Synod Council liaison), the Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, Keith Shively, and the Rev. Maureen Seifried. Tracey DePasquale, LAMPa executive director, serves as consultant; and synod staff representative, the Rev. Beth Martini, advises the committee.

The committee continues to support hunger education and advocacy within the 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.

Each year the committee oversees the distribution of a portion of the Legacy Fund to benefit local hunger initiatives. In 2019, the committee distributed approximately $25,000 across nine ministries and projects working to fight hunger throughout the synod. Most of these projects requested funds during the 2018 grant cycle and were able to be delayed until 2019 due to their project timelines, which enabled us to fund more projects in 2018. A new request for proposals will be distributed in 2020.

The Lower Susquehanna Synod World Hunger Committee looks forward to continuing the important work of hunger education, financial support, and community outreach in 2020. If you are interested in assisting the committee with events, activities, grant management, or serving as a committee member, please contact Pastor Beth Martini or Cheryl Burns.

Cheryl Burns, chair

DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES & DIAKON CHILD, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

We express continuing appreciation for and celebrate our partnership with the Lower Susquehanna Synod and its congregations for their role in helping to make possible our now-more-than-150-year mission.

Through Many Hands, guided by One Heart, Diakon serves people in need of all ages, especially those with limited financial resources. In 2019, Diakon provided $18.8 million in benevolent care, including $4.4 million within the synod.

Frey Village and Cumberland Crossings continued to serve hundreds of people in an ever-changing health-care environment. Both senior living communities maintained a focus on short-term rehabilitation services but also renovated independent living accommodations to remain market leaders.

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 1,440 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 focused on child-specific recruitment for older youths in danger of aging out of the foster-care system without a permanent family. As one example of service, the two offices were responsible for provision of 27,124 days of foster care in 2019, compared to 26,463 care days in 2018. The offices served 153 children and youths, an increase from 137 the prior year.

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 2019, that work had an impact on the lives of more than 2,630 children and youths within the Lower Susquehanna Synod, as well as 2,551 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. Having served more than 1,100 people last year, 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 accountability-focused Bridge Program and York PREP programs.

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 synod.

Mark T. Pile, MSHA, MSW, president/CEO

ELCA FOUNDATION

About the ELCA Foundation

As our faith matures and deepens, so does the way we support God’s work in the world. The ELCA Foundation exists to sustain and grow our ministries by stewarding assets for all the related organizations of the ELCA.

Through our national network of 23 gift planners, the ELCA Foundation supports members of the ELCA in their call to live as faithful and generous people. Our gift planners work with congregational members to create life giving plans that ensure successful and lasting legacies are passed on to loved ones and treasured ministries. The Foundation also supports and strengthens ELCA congregations, synods and related entities with gift planning resources and investment management services.

Regional Gift Planners are available to help:

• Work with congregational leaders to identify important considerations, and execute an appropriate plan, to cultivate current and planned gifts
• Develop congregational gift acceptance policies to receive gifts well
• Meet with individual members to develop charitable gift giving plans
• Establish an investment account for endowments and other investable assets utilizing the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (Fund A)

In 2019, the ELCA Foundation network generated over $124.1 million in total gifts and investment assets. Of that, $91.3 million are future planned gift commitments with over $12m in future planned gifts directly benefitting individual ELCA Congregations. There were $6.9 million in current gifts, including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments, and $25.9 million new assets invested in Fund A. Thank you for the opportunity to work in your synod and trusting your endowment dollars to the ELCA Foundation.

In the Lower Susquehanna Synod:

• $8.4m invested in the Pooled Endowment Trust, Fund A.

Contact your NEW regional gift planner:
Sister Marianne Brock, marianne.brock@elca.org, 800-635-3522

The Rev. John Eggen, CFRE, director, gift planning

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, West Virginia-Western Maryland.

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 2019, at which newly elected bishops and vice presidents were welcomed. The committee reviewed our joint work and our shared finances. The accounts for Region 8 are managed at the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod office. Retired Bishop Ralph Jones attended the meeting as a representative of Bishop Michael Lozano, who was unable to attend, and to share the region’s budget and financial report for the previous year. The Steering Committee determines the amount of money to be contributed to our work by each synod annually, as well as setting a budget for 2020 for the
region. The committee elected John Auger, vice president of the Delaware-Maryland Synod to serve as chair of the committee. Lucinda Bringman, vice president of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, was thanked for serving as chair for six years.

Region 8 employed Nancy Gable in a part-time assistant status following the ELCA’s 2017 decision to no longer deploy regional coordinators. This arrangement ended, and the bishops decided to continue to make use of a regional assistant, primarily to plan the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) retreat held annually in November. This retreat welcomes all ministers for continuing education and support in the first three years following ordination. The Rev. Beth Martini now serves as assistant to the bishops of Region 8 in a very part-time manner. She will plan and make arrangements for the November FCTE event.

One of the ongoing efforts of our region is to continually consider the question “what can we do better if we do it together?” In addition to the Steering Committee meeting in September, the region bishops met together in February to further consider this question. They agreed to share information about training events on their individual synods as much as possible, so that ministers and lay leaders in all the synods have the opportunity to attend events across the region. Pastor Beth Martini will manage this.

Lucinda L. Bringman, chair, Region 8 Steering Committee

GETTYSBURG COLLEGE

The academic year 2019-2020 had been going well for the Center for Religious and Spiritual Life and the Chaplain’s Office, up until mid-March, when like most other colleges and universities, we closed our doors and sent the vast majority of our students home. It was a stressful time, and we have been working hard these past weeks to keep connected with our students and support their health and well-being. We don’t know what the fall will bring so we are planning for a variety of scenarios.

The center is fully staffed, with a Director of Catholic Campus Ministries, a Director of Hillel, and an advisor to our Muslim Student Association. All of the religious organizations on campus work well together and our Interfaith Student Club continues to expand its work and develop strong connections.

The center continues to see a great deal of student traffic; students 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.

I continue to provide invocations/benedictions for a variety of public events and really enjoy these opportunities. In addition, I am able to do devotions for the Board of Trustees three times a year, and that is also a great opportunity to build connections.

There are several programming highlights for this academic year:

1. **Breathe Gettysburg:** This programming continues to grow and has been very successful. Our classes include several kinds of meditation, yoga, Qi Gong, knitting, and reflective poetry study. It has been a platform from which we are partnering with different offices on campus for larger wellness offerings.

2. **Fall Choir Concert/Worship Service:** We started this collaboration in 2017 and it continues to be a fun program that the students and their families really enjoy.

3. **Interfaith Youth Core Campus Innovation Grant:** We just found out that we received one of a very few Campus Innovation Grants from IFYC for 2020-2021; we are in conversation with IFYC in case we need to run the first semester of the program virtually. We will use this grant to develop an Interfaith Leadership Certificate, a program we hope will be ongoing.

4. **Religions 101 Training:** We had hoped to be able to offer two versions of this program during “Stop Bias at the Burg” week—one that the students would lead for other students; and one for faculty and staff. These programs had to be cancelled because of COVID-19.

5. **Sunday Evening Worship:** We have a small group that meets every Sunday night for a worship/dinner/Bible study combination.

This year was the first year of a new president, Bob Iuliano. He has been warmly welcomed and we all appreciate the work he is doing, particularly with the serious challenges this semester has brought.

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, campus 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 LAMPs, Lutherans who are working to eradicate hunger are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth. This shared ministry has possibly never been so vital as now, in the face of the pandemic.
Since last year’s assembly, LAMPa celebrated 40 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, health care, human trafficking, election integrity, immigration, discrimination and hate crimes, criminal justice, environmental threats to health and safety, and an accurate Census. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to secure emergency food, shelter, access to medical care and other relief in response to COVID-19. We have shared vital information with synods and our network about opportunities to access grants, assist people in applying for benefits, and offer resources in the state’s emergency response. Though much of our work has unleashed assistance directly to those in need, some – in the form of meals or other aid – has gone to your ministries, enabling you to be the visible presence of Christ as you encounter Christ in your neighbor at your doorstep and in each other as you continue teaching, preaching, singing and praying together virtually.

Before the pandemic, LAMPa advocates helped secure election reforms that will enable Pennsylvanians to vote safely by mail and won changes to state anti-trafficking laws to deter traffickers and use increased fines to pay for services to help victims of child sex trafficking.

In its work of equipping disciples, growing leaders and supporting vital congregations, LAMPa staff taught at United Lutheran Seminary, addressed the synod’s day of equipping on actions of the Churchwide Assembly, and offered training for facilitating civil conversations, which was replicated for synod rostered ministers. This spring, though forced to cancel our annual in-person day of advocacy, LAMPa hosted a virtual hearing on the draft social message on Government and Civic Engagement: Discipleship in Democracy, as well as training in facilitating difficult conversations and continues to educate faithful advocates through our website, e-news and other resources. We are working with congregational leaders to prepare for God’s work. Our hands. Our voices. Sunday in September and look forward with hope that we might be able to work side by side on that day.

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

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

Tracey DePasquale, director

LUTHERAN CAMPING CORPORATION OF CENTRAL PA
Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, Wittel Farm

Campers, retreat guests, and others who visit Kirchenwald, Nawakwa, and Wittel Farm cannot help but revel in and know the great joy of Encountering Jesus at these wonderful outdoor ministries. The children, adults, and families attending summer camps and retreats experience God’s grace and Jesus’ love as they live together, worship, pray, play, and explore God’s creation. The intentional Christian community at Lutheran Camping Corporation (LCC) ministries encourages campers, retreat guests, and camp staff to be the authentic people God created and calls them to be. Christian fellowship in our unique outdoor, faith formation, spiritual renewal, discipleship, and Lutheran leadership development are paramount ministry priorities.

Ministry accomplishments in 2019:

- Supported confirmation ministry of nearly 40 congregations which brought 344 youth to confirmation camps.
- 715 youth attended summer camp at Kirchenwald and Nawakwa, 64% of whom came from 90 Lower Susquehanna Synod (LSS) congregations; 3% were from Lutheran churches in other synods, and 33% came from other denominations or had no church affiliation.
- Additionally, 349 children and adults attended family camps, 20 adults attended Elder Camp, 6 adults attended Bring Your Own Craft Camp, 1 congregational day camp was conducted.
- 43 youth attended Kirchenwald’s Diaconos servant ministry camps.
- 80 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.
- $31,785 in “Campership” assistance was provided to 91 children who would not have attended camp due to family financial hardship. $30,808 in registration discounts were claimed to help keep camp attendance affordable to families.
- In its fourth year, the Wittel Farm Growing Project engaged nearly 400 volunteers who planted, tended, harvested, and distributed nearly 16,000 pounds of vegetables to food insecure persons.
- 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 $155,000 without impacting the operating budget.

Facility improvements include a new roof on several buildings, painting multiple buildings inside and out, re-built Kirchenwald high ropes course, and many other smaller yet equally significant projects which keep the facilities safe and attractive.

The 2020 summer camp Bible study and Worship theme is “From Generation to Generation.” Campers will learn how God’s enduring love instilled in the promise to Abraham and Sarah continue through the Old Testament characters, to Jesus, to the early church, and on to US! God’s love endures forever. We look forward to sharing this exciting summer ministry theme and all the joyful, exhilarating, fun-filled programs and activities with our campers of all ages this summer.

As we move through 2020, 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

At Lutheran Campus Ministry, each evening worship service on Sundays and Thursdays begins with an opportunity for students to add their own prayer requests to the prayers that will be offered aloud in worship. While students often ask for prayers about exams and difficult classes, irritating roommates and hopes of getting a particular job, they also seek prayers for family members nearing death, distant natural disasters, complicated family situations, our nation’s political situation, mental health struggles, friends who have cancer or mental illness, the anniversary of a parent’s death, and other difficult and burdensome realities.

Students come to worship seeking to encounter Jesus, and they welcome the opportunity to ask for prayers. They do not seem to expect some magical intervention that puts everything right, yet they find reassurance in the tangible reminder that God is with them through the hard parts of their journey. A prayer offered on their behalf is in fact a powerful encounter with the God who is their source, their hope and their strength.

Worship Word and Sacrament is at the heart of Lutheran Campus Ministry and our presence in the university community. Students gather with the worshipping community at Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday mornings. Students also take part in the casual worship on Sunday evening shared by Lutheran Campus Ministry and Grace Lutheran. On Thursdays, Lutheran Campus Ministry offers Holden Evening Prayer with Communion 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 are invited to are invited to “Come as you are” and they encounter God, share prayer requests, learn and grow, and are strengthened for the challenges they will find as their journey of faith unfolds.

Community Life On a campus with 46,000 students, finding authentic community and life-giving connections is a challenge. When students gather each week for meals (dinner after worship Sunday and Thursday, lunch after worship Sunday) they share 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, 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 and Instagram, weekly listserv messages, and webpage. Graduate students face their own particular challenges, so they gather for potluck dinners and other time to relax and build connections.

Deepening Faith Opportunities for learning and growth are many and varied in a campus setting. With the help of grants for student organization-led projects in Fall 2019, we joined our ecumenical partners in hosting speakers from two podcasts that engage spiritual life from different perspectives. “Harry Potter and the Sacred Texts” invites listeners to find deeper meaning through the stories and characters of JK Rowling, and “The Liturgists” look at current topics through the lenses of art, science and faith. In late March 2020, we will host Nikole Hannah-Jones from the New York Times’ 1619 Project, exploring the wide-ranging impact slavery has on all aspects of our culture and society. Plans with Hillel are beginning for an Interfaith Seder in April where we can share traditions and experiences with our Jewish brothers and sisters. In partnership with Grace Lutheran Church, “QNA” monthly inter-generational discussions provide students an opportunity to explore a faith-related topic with community members. Topics have ranged from ELCA Social Statements to angels, from schism to Muslim and Christian beliefs.

Service-Learning Students are eager to live out their love of God and neighbor by responding to the needs around them. We joined our local conference “God’s Work. Our Hands. Day of Service” in September with an afternoon volunteering at The Oaks Retirement Community in Pleasant Gap. 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. Our connection with Penn State’s new Clothing Transit continues as students find time to help sort and label items between classes. Administered by the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, this resource
provides support and help for a truly marginalized population on campus. As part of a grant from the Interfaith Youth Corps, sophomore Eliza Mull helped arrange and facilitate interfaith conversation about Spring Celebrations and a service day at the Penn State Arboretum which brought together students of various faith traditions.

**Spring Break** Alternative spring break trips provide a welcome chance to discover the world away from campus. During Spring Break 2019, we traveled to the Arizona/Mexico border in partnership with three other campus ministries at Penn State to explore issues of migration, poverty, faith and ministry along the border, working with Frontera de Cristo. It was a powerful experience of boundaries, privilege, hospitality and welcome. Students talked with a variety of humanitarian and faith groups, migrants, and US Border Agents. They also remembered those who have died crossing the border with a prayer vigil near the border checkpoint and with a cross planting far in the desert. Students left with more questions than answers from this complex context, but with a deeper awareness of the struggles and beauty there at the border. In March 2020, again in partnership with three other campus ministries, alternative spring break will take students to rural Alabama to help in tornado recovery near Tuskegee and learn about the civil rights struggle through conversations with local historians and visiting important civil rights sites.

**Focus on Vocation** Through a Lilly Endowment funded project called discernPSU, Lutheran Campus Ministry works with Presbyterian Student 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 “Journey Inward” retreat was well-received and helped students discover how their identity shapes their faith life and their vocational journey. DiscernPSU was able to work with Schreyers Honors College SHO Time Mentors and Team Leaders this year, inviting them to remember and reflect on their own transition to college as they helped incoming students adjust to the start of their life on campus. Learn more about discernPSU at 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 various Student Affairs units help maintain our presence on campus and provide opportunities to truly be part of campus life. Ecumenical and interfaith connections keep our work grounded in the diverse and challenging context where our students live and study 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 reassured of God’s presence and forgiveness and reminded of God’s unconditional love and constant embrace. Visit our website: [www.lutheranpennstate.org](http://www.lutheranpennstate.org); Sign up to receive our e-newsletter for friends and alumni; Add a student to our weekly student listserve; Find us on Instagram: [LutheranPennState](https://www.instagram.com/LutheranPennState/); Like us on Facebook: [Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State](https://www.facebook.com/LutheranCampusMinistry/)

Deacon Alicia Anderson, campus minister

**LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE**

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:19

**Rich Legacy Shapes Current Work**

In 2019, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) marked its 80th year of welcome in the name of Christ. Luther speaks of the “left hand kingdom of God” as our involvement in God’s care for the world. The Board of LIRS affirmed its commitment to be on the front lines of public engagement with the world as it welcomed a new President and CEO, Krish O’Marra Vignarajah.

Through partnership with community based social services, LIRS resettled refugees; placed unaccompanied children and youth in foster care; arranged for asylum seekers in immigration detention to receive comfort from pen pals and visitors; assisted congregations and individuals to understand current immigration issues and discern ways to get involved.

Respite and Welcome Centers in Phoenix and Albuquerque received asylum seekers as they were released from detention visitation and provided one- or two-nights of shelter, food, clothing, and coordination of travel to their final destination.

“Hope for the Holidays” card campaign resulted in congregations and individuals submitting 14,000 cards and $30,000 for gifts for children spending the Christmas holidays in detention with their families.

On World Refugee Day, 10 Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy alums joined five ELCA synod bishops in making 40 visits to members of Congress to ask for higher refugee admissions and more funding to help refugees make a good start in the United States.
**Blessing of Partnership Empowers Us to Continue**

We are living through the largest refugee crisis the world has ever seen. Extreme weather, poverty and violence are pushing people in various parts of the world to leave their homes in search of food, safety, and welcome. In these challenging times, LIRS relies on congregations to support our work; and offers assistance as people of faith discern their call to welcome the stranger.

- Congregations prayed and preached and learned about migrants and refugees through the wealth of resources available on the LIRS Migrant and Refugee Sunday web page (https://www.lirs.org/migrant-refugee-sunday/).
- Lutherans called and wrote letters to Members of Congress urging higher refugee admissions and proper care for children at our southern border.
- Congregations proclaimed God’s presence to families and children held in immigration detention by sending Christmas cards and money for gifts through LIRS’ Hope for the Holidays campaign; and volunteered as pen pals or detention visitors.
- Lutherans wrestled with God’s call to welcome all as members of the household of God through “Entertaining Angels” training events, and discernment of their role in a sanctuary church body.
- Lutherans supported the work of LIRS with offerings and individual donations.

As members of the household of God, we encourage you to explore how you and your congregation will welcome the stranger in the coming year, and to contact LIRS for information and resources to assist you.

Sue Ellen Spotts, manager for Congregational Outreach

**LUTHERCARE**

LutherCare continues to celebrate its on-going partnership with the Lower Susquehanna Synod as we provide care and support throughout Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. Through our three senior living communities - Luther Acres, Spang Crest and St. John’s Herr Estate - and three early learning centers - in Marietta, Reamstown and Annville - we have been able to reflect the love of Christ with those we have the pleasure to serve.

LutherCare’s commitment to the health and well-being of our seniors flourished in 2019. Luther Acres and Spang Crest continue to be recognized as preferred providers of rehabilitative and restorative care by the Wellspring Health System, the Lancaster General Health/Penn Medicine Health System and the UPMC Pinnacle 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. Building renovations and upgrades continue throughout our healthcare centers at Luther Acres and Spang Crest and in personal care at St. John’s Herr Estate where new dining facilities and a secure memory support wing will be available!

Luther Acres was able to grow and expand in a new and exciting way – Luther Acres on Pin Oak Drive. It is an independent living project in a neighborhood setting near our campus in Lititz. This new twist on campus living enabled us to offer brand-new townhomes with the full benefit of the continuum of care provided at Luther Acres. St. John’s Herr Estate is in the planning stages for a new 14-cottage neighborhood. We are excited about these new and innovative residential offerings.

LutherCare for Kids continues to be a leader in providing quality care for children in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties! Whether in one of our three 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 also continues to celebrate 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 LSS LDR 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. Local disaster response efforts continued through 2019 in Lancaster, Lebanon and York Counties following summer floods of 2018. Our synod network coordinated volunteer support for local clean-up and rebuilding efforts, along with financial support to allow volunteers to work through the PA VALOR program. Our synod disaster response team completed three long-term recovery trips in New Jersey and Puerto Rico to provide much needed disaster relief. 2020 will bring three more service opportunities in West Virginia, New Jersey and Puerto Rico. At the end of this year a total of 25 trips will have been completed by this team. LutherCare is pleased to be an active partner in this very important ministry.

In 2019 we launched Greenstone Living which is a vehicle that was formed to enable LutherCare to realize its vision of growth through collaboration, affiliation, acquisition and management opportunities. As part of our strategic vision, Greenstone Living will enable like-minded partners to join together to meet the challenges and opportunities that the Senior Service industry faces. We will be able to diversify our revenue streams and reduce our dependence on healthcare reimbursement. Through Greenstone Living, partner
organizations will be able to maintain, as desired, their own identity and tradition while enjoying an expanded network of talent, geography and financial resources.

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. 2019 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 $9.3 million in benevolent care (direct benevolence and undercompensated care) and nearly $120,000 in childcare scholarships.

For more than 70 years Luthercare has been serving residents of Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. We look forward to all that the future will bring as we partner with the church in reflecting Christ’s love through service to others! Carl 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, affordable housing units and much more.

At year-end 2019, MIF had 898 loans outstanding, totaling $575.1 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 2019, MIF investment obligations totaled $493.4 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of $712.3 million and net assets of $211.9 million at year-end 2019, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 29.75 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, 2019):
• 12 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of $3,011,329
• $13,128,421 in Mission Investment Fund investments obligations

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
Looking Ahead. The Board of Directors made the determination to move ahead with a search for a new executive director. The Personnel Committee will be working to develop a job description and to conduct a search during 2020. Director of Finance and Facilities and Interim Executive Director Jan Gulick has announced that she plans to retire at the end of January 2021, and a search will also be taking place for this position later in 2020 to provide time for overlap/training before she retires. The board has also authorized new contracts for Gulick and for Rev. Sandra Strauss, Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach, and the Personnel Committee will be working to develop those contracts.

Conferences and Meetings. The council did not hold a single statewide conference in 2019 but conducted workshops around the issues of criminal justice reform, gun violence, and public education funding.

The council held a session in Lancaster in November 2019 called “Faithful Advocacy for Gun Violence Prevention: Principles and Practice,” following a similar but updated format to an initial session in 2018. The session focused on gun violence prevention legislation designed to remove guns from domestic abusers and others who could be a danger to themselves or others (Extreme Risk Protection Orders, already law in a number of other states) and universal background checks. More workshops are planned for 2020.
Work has also proceeded on solitary confinement, funded by a grant from the Van Ameringen Foundation. The first was held in Harrisburg in June with the Abolitionist Law Center to introduce the audience to solitary confinement, how it is used in Pennsylvania, why it needs to be reduced, and why it is an issue for the faith community (it is viewed as torture as defined by the United Nations). This session included stories from individuals who had experienced solitary confinement and their families. A second and somewhat different approach was employed with a selected group of advocates in November, involving experiential techniques from “Theater of the Oppressed” that involved the audience in activities to help them understand incarceration and solitary confinement. It also included information with statistics and how solitary is used, as well as stories of several reentrants who had experienced solitary. A number of sessions are planned already for 2020, and more are in the works.

A joint session with POWER in Harrisburg in May helped to introduce participants to equitable public education funding, educating them about existing gross inequities in funding from the state and how this fuels vastly different outcomes for students based on where they live. They also learned that this is a justice issue for people of faith. They were introduced to legislation that would work to ensure that all state-based education funding (not just a small portion, as it is now) will be run through the state’s education funding formula to ensure more equitable funding in the future.

Council staff led two interfaith vigils at the Berks County Residential Center, an immigrant family detention facility that the council and other coalition groups are seeking to have closed.

Finally, the council conducted a Healing Communities training in Pittsburgh in October for over 20 participants from the region. Healing Communities aims to train congregations to be welcoming and supportive of formerly incarcerated persons.

Support for Collaborative Efforts. The council has worked collaboratively with other organizations based on grant funding received.

- The Mennonite Central Committee’s 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. The MCC viewed their multi-year granting as an experiment in state-level advocacy and has said it is unlikely to renew the funding for another year. On the other hand, they are eager to continue in partnership, and have expressed willingness to provide support for joint programs in the areas of mutual interest to ensure that they are able to continue.

- 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.

These grants have been used to support part-time efforts by John-Michael Cotignola-Pickens, former Advocacy Programs Coordinator (now working for the MCC), and for nearly full-time efforts (since September) by Emily Schmid, and Episcopal Service Corps Fellow in Harrisburg through Sycamore House, a project of St. Stephen’s Cathedral in Harrisburg and associated with the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. Emily will be with the council through July 2020 and is eligible for renewal if desired.

- A third grant from the Van Ameringen Foundation, received in late 2018, is shared 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. Some of the work underway has already been described above. This grant is supporting the lion’s share of Emily’s work.

Other Activities

- The council offered official greetings to the Middle PA District of the Church of the Brethren.
- Both of the council’s websites, www.pachurches.org and www.pachurchesadvocacy.org, have continued to evolve.
- The Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach was named to the Governor’s Census 2020 Complete Count Commission.

COUNCIL MINISTRIES

Commission on Public Witness & Public Witness Ministry. The council’s advocacy efforts in 2019 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, primarily in coordination with the Abolitionist Law Center and other partners.
- Immigration, particularly around calling for the closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee families 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 joined with other faith partners to present a session on Civil Conversations in Harrisburg in May, modeled on the Civil Conversations Project related to Krista Tippett and On Being.

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
A Ministry of the ELCA

So You Can Embrace Every Day
We are a church that takes care of each other. Portico Benefit Services is proud to continue a 200+ year Lutheran legacy of caring for those who serve, from pastors and their families to staff at social ministry organizations. As the ELCA’s benefit ministry, seeing the diverse needs of our national church community drives us to innovate: to control health care costs and increase total well-being, to help plan members retire with confidence, to advocate on behalf of church organizations, and to serve more people well.

At Portico, we’re inspired daily by those who commit to a life of service, and we’re grateful to walk alongside our plan members — providing benefits designed to help you embrace every day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Benefits Making a Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>65% Members Preparing for the Future</strong>&lt;br&gt;by making their own pretax retirement contributions during 2019 in addition to the contributions from their sponsoring organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Pro-Church Bills</strong>&lt;br&gt;enacted into federal law in 2019 thanks to Portico working alongside other denominations to advocate for legislation favorable to church benefit plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>70% Members With Diabetes See Improvement</strong>&lt;br&gt;in their ability to manage their condition due to participation in our Livongo® Diabetes Management program.</td>
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*Data as of Dec. 31, 2019; sources available upon request.

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, president & CEO

SPIRITRUST LUTHERAN®

There is an old saying – many hands make for light work – that could not be truer than at Spirited Lutheran where more than 4,900 team members and volunteers labor to serve in Christ’s name. The year 2019 was an exciting, but challenging year for us. Our board and team members wrestled with the challenges of daily operations and new opportunities while skillfully and successfully overcoming several unexpected challenges.
In April, we dedicated the new skilled care and rehabilitation center at The Village at Luther Ridge in Chambersburg and, shortly thereafter, welcomed our first guest. When fully occupied, the new residence will have the capacity to provide care and comfort to 40 individuals. We are eternally grateful to everyone who made this project a success and are especially appreciative of the 160 donors who generously provided $1.5 million in support of the Completing Our Family of Services capital campaign.

Our Annual Cornerstone Dinner in April raised almost $200,000 to support our life enhancing services. This event increased the total raised to more than $2.7 million since the dinner’s inception in 2004. This outpouring of community support allowed SpiritTrust Lutheran to help more than 9,700 persons achieve a higher quality of life in 2019. Also noteworthy is that in 2019 our VITA program assisted nearly 7,700 clients in filing their tax returns, resulting in an estimated $8 million being returned to York County in federal and state tax refunds.

The year did not come without challenges. In mid-March, a retaining wall failed at The Village at Utz Terrace in Hanover. By the grace of God no one was injured, but we did have to evacuate 27 cottages. Our core value of service — committing ourselves to the total well-being of those who place their trust in us – was never more evident as team members throughout the agency lent their direct and indirect support to their colleagues at Utz Terrace. We are extremely thankful for this amazing demonstration of support, patience and compassion during this challenging time for our residents and team members.

We are equally thankful for your support of our mission in 2019 and the many gifts that we were able to share with those we serve as a result of your generosity. All we do is possible because of the dedication and commitment of more than 1,400 team members, 3,500 volunteers and 1,800 donors who choose to be a part of the SpiritTrust Lutheran family. Because of their collective support of our mission, SpiritTrust Lutheran was able to witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ in service to 19,305 clients, residents and participants.

For all of this and your partnership and prayers, we give thanks through the grace of God’s glory. May we all find the love of God in the work we do.

Robert Rundle, president & CEO

ST. BARNABAS CENTER FOR MINISTRY

In keeping with a 26-year tradition, St. Barnabas Center for Ministry held its summer camp at St. Paul Episcopal Church at 248 Seneca Street in Uptown Harrisburg, PA. Starting on June 17, 2019, under the leadership of returning summer camp director, Rodger Hines, the camp was in session for eight weeks Monday through Friday from 7:30 prebreakfast until 4:00 dismissal. Preregistration was about 100 with an average daily attendance of about 80 campers. Daily activities followed the previous year’s schedule with Bible study for all following breakfast. The Bible lessons follow the camp’s Seven Pillars of Character: Respect, Caring, Fairness, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Citizenship and Forgiveness. Local clergy are often invited to participate in the Bible lessons. The campers then are divided up into their age groups and do age appropriate outdoor or physical activities. Planning for the camp's closing ceremony begins early in the camp session as the campers write, practice and perform their group’s presentation. Other morning activities include Zumba, movies, math, science projects and learning activities. As in past years, the campers go swimming three afternoons a week.

Traditionally, St. Barnabas Center for Ministry has provided a free field trip every Wednesday of camp ending with a trip to Knoebels Amusement Park in Elysburg, Pennsylvania. Although admission is free as is parking and St. Barnabas brings food to feed the campers and staff, the trip is usually the most expensive trip of the year since St. Barnabas supplies every camper with a book of tickets for the rides. By supplying the tickets, it allows every camper to choose which rides they want to ride and plan their own day. This year Mr. Hines secured a very large grant of $10,000 from the Stabler Foundation specifically for field trips and transportation. He was able to add additional trips including a trip to Hershey Park. Some weeks had two field trips instead of the traditional one. The campers and parents were very excited about the new additions. In addition to running the camp and making sure things go smoothly all summer, Mr. Hines writes at least three grants to secure extra funding to cover the costs of the camp and keep the cost to campers affordable. Even with Mr. Hines efforts, St. Barnabas has applicants that cannot afford to send their children. St. Barnabas offers different levels of scholarships based on the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare guidelines.

The board set up committees to address three major issues identified in its strategic planning process. The board was able to add new board members to assist in areas that needed more expertise than presently exists on the board. New financial processes were put in place, but unfortunately for St. Barnabas, the Assistant Camp Director, Kathy O'Neal Sloan, left for a full-time position starting the second week of camp, leaving Mr. Hines to cover her duties. An existing counselor was appointed to the assistant position and Kathy was able to come every day after work to assist with dismissal and other duties such as tuition payments, so the transition would go smoothly. The board continues to work to strengthen policies and procedures but still found itself at camp’s end once again in a strained financial position due to the extra salaries.

Once again, the board and staff of St. Barnabas would like to thank the Lower Susquehanna Synod for its continued support of the program. We are especially grateful to have Pastor Tom McKee remain on the board in his retirement. He is an important part of the board and a true blessing.

Carol Witzeman, board chair
SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY
Life of the University
The 2019-2020 academic year marks the 162nd 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 third 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 Office of Religious and Spiritual Life help students grow spiritually as they grow intellectually.

Sunday worship services are held in Weber Chapel when classes are in session, welcoming students, faculty and staff as well as people from the surrounding community. The student deacon program allows select students to explore Christian service through formal servant-leadership roles.

Interfaith engagement is a strong commitment of ELCA institutions of higher education generally, and Susquehanna in particular. Twelve different religious student clubs and organizations attest to the vibrancy of religious life on campus. An interfaith dialogue in February 2020 brought together a panel of Lutheran, Catholic, Evangelical, Muslim and Jewish leaders for a panel discussion around the theme, “What does it mean to live a good life?”

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. The university is grateful for synod members Mr. Frank Leber ('64), Mr. James A. Dunlop ('01), and the Rev. Linda Shank for their service to the university’s Board of Trustees.

The Rev. Scott M. Kershner, university chaplain

UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT MILLERSVILLE
No report submitted by May 1, 2020.

UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY
Cora I. Grove Spiritual Center
Sometimes it is hard to find a community of folks you can trust and rely on to encourage you and value you. We who are a part of United Campus Ministry invite students to be a part of that kind of community with us.

United Campus Ministry welcomes all students to our ministry. We believe that Jesus loves you just the way you are. We reject the hate and division that has been spewed in the name of Jesus. We believe in faith, friendship, and living our Christianity with integrity in these tumultuous times. If you hope for a better world or have lost hope join us in a family of love and support!

Hard work, great fun, and spiritually challenging describe United Campus Ministry’s annual mission work trip over spring break. This March we traveled to the deep south to serve others in the name of Christ through the ministry of the MacDonell Children’s Services in Houma, Louisiana. Students worked doing painting and repair on the facilities. They sampled local culture by having Cajun food and visiting the Tabasco factory. We reflected daily on God’s word and lived in intentional Christian community as we served others. It is a life changing experience for our students who attended.

United Campus Ministry (UCM) is an ecumenical ministry sponsored by the ELCA, United Methodist, Presbyterian(USA), UCC, and Episcopal denominations. UCM offers opportunities for our students and larger community at Shippensburg University to grow in faith, fellowship, build community, and serve others. Our local sponsoring congregation is Memorial Lutheran Church in Shippensburg. We have two congregation members serving on our board.
We offer opportunities for spiritual growth and worship through study and retreats and special services. We also offer fellowship events such as game nights, progressive dinners, and bowling. We strengthen our faith through service with a Spring Break mission trip. The United Campus Ministry also supplies spiritual direction, counseling, and crisis resources to the campus community.

Our programming strives to develop our young adults into future leaders for the Body of Christ. We challenge, strengthen, and encourage our students to grow in their faith as they prepare themselves for their future vocations. We are blessed to represent Christ and the ELCA in this important ministry. Due to the pandemic and uncertainties for the fall, our programming and outreach is in flux. The campus minister is in contact with students via electronic communication.

**UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY**

_Every Student. Every Day._

In our third year of raising up leaders for the church and world, United Lutheran Seminary is building on our rich heritage while faithfully educating future church leaders. We are grateful for the wisdom and ministry that the former Interim President, Dr. Richard Green, brought to our school during the past year. We are blessed with over 350 students from over 28 denominations who learn and live on two campuses and all over the world. We celebrate the gifts of our faculty as they teach and converse with our students, equipping them for the work of ministry in a myriad of contexts. This spring, we conferred degrees on 70 students, of which 47 were Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership recipients. In addition, 14 students received certification from the Urban Theological Institute. Other degree programs included the Doctor of Ministry, Master in Public Leadership, and Master of Sacred Theology.

Our financial picture is hopeful. The ULS endowment is strong, thanks to the legacy gifts and contributions of saints past and present. Because of this, we are able to offer up to full tuition for all degree-seeking students. Our annual fund goals are aspirational, yet we are continuously amazed by the generosity and passion of seminary supporters.

Much of our annual operating fund comes through direct synodical support. In the last fiscal year, over $1.2 M was received from the fourteen synods of ELCA Regions 7 & 8. This is a significant portion of how we provide for every student, every day. Individual congregations have also made significant contributions. In the last fiscal year, 219 congregations gave a total of $147,305 in support of theological education. Funds went to our food pantries, libraries, worship facilities, and other areas to enhance the faith formation of all students.

This year, we want to continue lifting up and celebrating those congregations that are already contributing to the ULS scholarship and general fund on a regular basis and make a special invitation to your congregation to join in the ranks of those who support us through prayers and gifts. Through the _United Partner Initiative_, your congregation can journey with seminary students as they experience faith formation, learning, and finding their own unique way to answer God’s call for them in a broken world. Information about this new initiative is available at [www.uls.edu/UnitedPartners](http://www.uls.edu/UnitedPartners) or by speaking to the representative from ULS at the assembly.

**What do United Partners gain?**
- Invitations to an annual summit of partners with the President and Cabinet on either campus
- Periodic Zoom meetings to share information and ideas with the Director of Church Relations
- Discounts on overnights at campus facilities and lifelong learning opportunities
- Visits from guest preachers associated with United Lutheran Seminary (subject to availability)
- A partnership certificate, Advent Star, Lenten Devotionals, etc.

**What does ULS gain?**
- A better understanding of the congregations for whom we seek to provide rostered leadership
- A possible resource/think tank of people from different walks of life who have a passion for the church and its ministry in the world
- Monthly financial contributions from member congregations

**How do congregations determine their contribution?**
Partner monthly gifts are determined by the church’s weekly attendance. Thrivent members are also able to allocate their Thrivent Choice dollars for this program.
- 0 – 50: $25 - $50
- 50 – 100: $50 - $100
- 100 – 150: $75 - $150
- 150 – 200: $100 - $200
- 200 +: $200 - $500

I hope that as a representative from your congregation, you will prayerfully consider sharing this second mile giving information with your congregation council. Folks from the advancement team at ULS are available to Zoom conference with your congregation council,
and a YouTube video about the program is available from the web page. We already have over 70 congregations from all over ELCA Regions 7 & 8 that are actively partnering with us. A “United Partner Press Packet” is available by request. Please join us in the journey!

As we move into the next academic year, I am filled with a deep sense of humility and gratitude for the great cloud of witnesses who make Lutheran theological education possible here in the Northeastern United States. Thank you for your partnership and prayers.

The Rev. Dr. Angela Zimmann, interim president

**WARTBURG COLLEGE**

**Enrollment**

Fall 2019 enrollment was 1,505 students from a record 38 U.S. states and a record 59 countries. This number included 123 international students and 189 U.S. students of color. The top five majors are business administration, biology, elementary education, psychology, and music therapy.

**Academic Programs**

- Wartburg received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer its first complete online programs – an English as a Second Language (PK-12) endorsement for educators and a graduate certificate in leadership. Both are 12-month programs and will launch in Summer 2020; the leadership certificate requires two brief on-campus summer residencies at the start and end of the program.
- As the new Irving R. Burling Distinguished Professor in Leadership, Dr. Michael Gleason will guide the launch of the online graduate leadership certificate and oversee a new Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Leadership. Both programs leverage the popular leadership minor for undergraduates and promise to extend Wartburg’s reach to new audiences.
- Dr. Stephanie Toering-Peters was inducted into the new Dr. Richard L. and Sandra K. Wahl Professorship in Biology. Both Waverly natives, Richard ’74 is an internationally recognized physician scientist and Sandra is an accomplished math educator.
- The College continues raising funds to renovate Wartburg’s current strength and conditioning room to house the Department of Health and Human Performance and create new laboratory space for exercise science. A new Strength and Conditioning Center will better meet the needs of a growing intercollegiate athletics program and integrate with student-faculty research opportunities in exercise science.
- In October, the Board of Regents authorized a collaborative planning effort involving Regents, faculty, and staff to clarify a vision for the College and produce a three-year plan of action.

**Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry**

- On the occasion of the Warburg Chapel’s 25th anniversary, the College dedicated Lebenskreuz (Life Cross), a sculpture based on the wooden crosses handcrafted in Neuendettelsau, Germany, that depict the Seven Acts of Mercy found in Matthew 25. Other highlights of the Homecoming weekend included an open house, dinner, and worship service. More information can be found at [https://www.wartburg.edu/chapel-25/](https://www.wartburg.edu/chapel-25/).
- Adrian Miller, award-winning author and executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches, was the 2019 Graven Award recipient. The annual award for Christian vocation continues to highlight the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world.
- Rebecca Baird ’18 became the first four-year pastoral intern at an ELCA college when she assumed the role at Wartburg in August. Baird is working part-time (20-25 hours/week) while taking classes online through Wartburg Theological Seminary’s Collaborative Learning Program.
- The cooperative articulation agreement with Wartburg Seminary continues to mature. Nine students are currently at the College pursuing the joint B.A.-M.Div. Programs to prepare for ordained ministry. Two challenge grants from O. Jay and Pat Tomson will provide scholarship funds for these students. The program’s founding director, Halcyon Bjornstad, accepted a call to become a congregational pastor in December. Wartburg’s Dean of Spiritual Life Brian Beckstrom is leading efforts to ensure the program’s success.
- The Spiritual Life Guiding Team comprising faculty, staff, and students continues to work on initiatives that provide a theological center for ministry on campus while inviting those of different perspectives to be full participants in the religious life of the College. A new interfaith prayer space in the Chapel Commons allows students of different traditions a place for prayer and reflection. A Muslim Student Association has become a new Faith Expression Group.

**Recognition**

- Longtime Wartburg men’s basketball coach and professor emeritus Lewis “Buzz” Levick and Harold ’58 and Grace Jahn ’61 Kurtz, loyal alums and devout Lutherans, received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the College.
- New Regents include Barbara Gamez ’98, laboratory services and partnership development director for Mayo Clinic; Tammy Jackson ’83, director of the ELCA International Leaders Program, and Paul Mugan ’91, biology teacher at Waverly-Shell Rock High School and Alumni Board president-elect. Bishop Jim Arends stepped off the Board in October.
For the second year in a row, Wartburg was second in the 2019 Break Away National Alternative Break Survey. Nearly 10 percent of students participated in 13 trips helping with flood recovery, sustainability, homelessness, hunger, and several other social issues.

Campus Compact named Joshua Voigt '20 of Ezulwini, eSwatini, a Newman Civic Fellow for his contributions to community and civic engagement. Student Body President as a junior, Voigt worked to reduce summer housing rates for international students, organized campus Peace Dialogues, and championed an international flag display, among other diversity-related initiatives.

Sophomore Rachel Ndjuluwa and juniors Saffa Bockarie and Tyler Bitting each received $10,000 grants from the Davis Projects for Peace to construct a classroom in Namibia and improve access to clean water in Sierra Leone, respectively.

Eleven athletics teams qualified for their respective NCAA tournaments/championships. Seven student-athletes were named Conference MVPs in football, women’s cross country, women’s soccer, women’s basketball, softball, and wrestling. Matt Sacia won an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship, bringing the total to 42.

President Darrel Colson was named to the board of directors for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, serving on its taxation committee. He continues to serve on the board of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU) and on the Council of Independent College’s NetVUE Advisory Board.

We are blessed to work with gifted students who are committed to changing the world through leadership and service. Thank you for encouraging your students to join Wartburg’s rich tradition as they share their gifts to enrich our community of learning.

Darrel D. Colson, president

CHRIST LUTHERAN HEALTH MINISTRIES

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 Geisinger-Holy Spirit Hospital
+ 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 Church Council of Christ Lutheran Church, Harrisburg
+ Rev. Drew Stockstill, Executive Director
+ Holly Hoffman, MD, MAMS, ELCA Deacon and Medical Director

Accomplishments
+ There were 121 patient visits and 40 clinics held across the 13th year of operations
+ Since inception 13 years ago, 182 babies have been born at Geisinger-Holy Spirit Hospital from the clinic and 218 pregnancies have received care through the clinic.
+ The clinic was the first free-standing prenatal clinic in the United States 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 (primarily retired or insured by an institution and only covered there).

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 three days a month for urgent dental conditions requiring simple extractions and fillings.

Preventive
dental care was just added through partnership with HACC dental hygiene students. They have prioritized the prenatal clinic patients.

**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**

**Synod-Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC)**

According to its founding pastor, the Rev. Jennifer Hope-Tringali, Communities of Hope (COH) began in 2013 on the roof of her home in Guatemala. In 2016 Communities of Hope became a Synod-Authorized Worshiping Community (SAWC), and in June, Pastor Hope-Tringali was issued a letter of call. 501(C)3 Articles of Incorporation were issued in 2017, along with the bylaws in March 2017.

By 2019, several communities had been established including Creative Connections “Salon Church”; VFW “World Café” Church; Communities of Hope at Salem; The Tribe in Steelton, New Cumberland, and Harrisburg; ministry to at-risk youth in the Steelton-Highspire School District; and Parking Lot Church. Leaders included Carol Caring, Rose Tonkin, Melissa Speziale, Jim (and wife Karen) Withrow, and Deacon David Hope-Tringali. As the work increased, Kristen Mam was employed for administrative work.

By March 2019, Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali and her husband Deacon David answered a call to open Hope Academy in Guatemala, and so the process to find a new pastor for COH began. At the same time, Pastor Sharron Blezard agreed to leave her call to care for her health. As part of her call, Pastor Blezard served as the interim pastor for a congregation in renewal, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in New Cumberland. While there, she began a new ministry called Welcome Table. Welcome Table is a dinner church for people in recovery (AA, NA, etc.).

After a process of meetings among synod staff, the pastors and leaders of COH, and St. Paul’s, the Lower Susquehanna Synod Council issued a call to me to serve as pastor to COH and to share my time/life with St. Paul’s. I began my work in May 2019. A board of directors had been established: president, Carol Caring; vice president, Brian Atkinson; secretary, Jim Withrow; treasurer, Keith Shively; Joleen Leisure; Kristen Mam; and Mindy Shively. However, by the time of transition to a new pastor, some of the leaders had moved into new areas of ministry and the board had disengaged its work with COH. Establishing a functioning board is a priority for us.

Ministries are constantly in flux and challenged, especially now with COVID-19. Some may not survive the separation of social distancing and sheltering at home, which is true of many things right now. Finding ways to be connected while apart is a priority for us.

Communities of Hope has (as its core value) created places where people can come and find a safe space to encounter Jesus. At the beginning of every gathering an apology is shared, and everyone is invited to enter into a sacred time. One of those who participated in the early stages of COH shared that it was after hearing this apology spoken over and over again that she was able to heal. She bore witness to the power of this ministry at the joint conference gathering of clergy (Harrisburg and West Shore) with Bishop Dunlop in February 2020. She is an artist, and she superimposed the words of the apology onto a photo that she had taken and gave a copy of it to every pastor in attendance that morning. **Please see the apology at the end of this report.**

Another one of our leaders gave testimony at that gathering of clergy of going regularly to her local VFW and gathering people from the bar to attend a time of Bible study and worship. On my first encounter with this worshiping group, this leader stood before her people and said that she had a gift for one of them who had been asking where she could get one of the Bibles that they were studying. Both faces beaming, the group applauded as she received her very own copy from our leader. Encountering Jesus is an essential part of Communities of Hope. As a result of her identity being formed through her work in COH, this leader has also been discerning a call into ordained ministry.

It is critical that our church continue to work with Communities of Hope and other newly forming ministries. This is a growing edge for our life in Christ as church. It is most definitely a place where people who may never darken the door of our Sunday morning worship services will encounter Jesus. Recently, the Recovery Church at St. Paul’s agreed to identify itself with COH. There may be other ministries that you know about that would like to connect with this SAWC. We gather as leaders for worship, mutual support, and then we go out refreshed and ready to meet people where they are. COH is an exciting vibrant ministry. I encourage you to visit and bring a friend or church leader with you.

Before I close with the apology, I would like to thank our bishop and his staff, especially Pastor Richard Jorgensen who has taken such good care of us/me. I would also like to thank all the pastors who have actively worked with our leaders and encouraged COH to keep going! There would be too many individuals, and I’d be afraid that I’d miss someone, to name all who have worked alongside of us,
and I thank you too for cheering us on and offering a comforting ear when difficulties arose. And thank you to the Synod Council for this call! We are both taking leaps of faith here.

The Apology: May I offer an apology on behalf of the church for the ways the church may have ignored you, judged you, and rejected you, for any pain, hurt, division, or betrayal the church may have caused. I am sorry. Nothing can undo the wrong you have endured. I hope for you deep inner healing and peace.

The Welcome: No matter where you are in the journey, if you feel young or old, if you are married, single or divorced, if you are happy, sad, or anxious, if you struggle with your identity, if you are rich or poor, sick or well, you are welcome here. You will be embraced for who you are and right where you are on the journey. If you believe in God all of the time, some of the time or not at all, you are welcome. Come with your pains and sorrows. Come with your fear and brokenness. Come with a mind that is open and a heart that is ready to give. Receive love and compassion. You are welcome in this community.

The Rev. Jennifer Hanus Richards, pastor

HARRISBURG AREA YOUTH INITIATIVE (HAYI)
A Lower Susquehanna Synod Partnership Ministry

The Harrisburg Area Youth Initiative (HAYI) emerged out of a desire to offer spiritual and faith formative conversations to youth from a number of Harrisburg Conference congregations and to engage them in service-learning experiences within the city that might expose those same young people to shared opportunities for living out their faith. In late-2016, a group of six congregations from the Harrisburg Conference began to pool their resources, in an effort to gather their youth for shared faith formation and community building.

Our synod Office for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry acted in an advisory role, assisting the congregations as they discerned vision and direction. At the conclusion of the 2016-2017 school year, in consultation with our office, and working cooperatively with their peer congregations, a more intentional partnership was formed. 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 young leaders, encouraging cooperation, and engaging in new mission, our synod Director for Evangelical Mission working alongside our synod Director for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, proposed that our synod office invest mission dollars into this emerging ministry to further support the financial investment being made by the partner congregations. Synod Council approved a three-year missional partnership and the new position description in May 2018, with the synod extending the call to the new director. The first HAYI director was a rostered deacon.

At the end of the first year of the partnership in May 2019, the HAYI director resigned to pursue a ministry opportunity abroad, and the position was reimaged. It was determined that a full-time called position was not what was needed. Instead, pastors from the partner congregations, working cooperatively with our office, began a process of identifying and hiring a part-time lay youth director. As a result, the portion of the annual salary supported by the synod mission fund was reduced for the final two years of the partnership.

Zach Hartman, a college student at Messiah College and a member of Tree of Life Lutheran Church, was identified and hired as the new HAYI director. He began his employment in October 2019 and has been contracted to fill the remainder of the initial three-year term, scheduled to end in June 2021.

HAYI youth meet for faith formation and service two to three times a month. 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. Zach brought a new level of communication to the role, more intentional relationship building between himself, the youth and their families, and a desire to connect HAYI youth to their peers from other congregations, and at annual conference and synod youth events.

Members of Messiah Lutheran in Harrisburg, one of the member congregations, began meeting with Zach and our office in February 2020, exploring opportunities to reach into their neighborhood and minister with local children who have been a part of their annual VBS.

Like so many of our existing ministries, this conversation and the initiative itself have been impacted by the COVID-19 interruption to our ministry rhythms. At the time of this writing, the HAYI ministry partnership is poised to continue positive growth.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation and youth ministry

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 has been helping the hungry and unemployed for 76 years. The work continues because of the “Passing on the Gift” commitment, whereby 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 Norma Good, Kathleen and Ron Kerr, Mark and Hazel Nestleroth, and Vinton Smith.

In 2019, educational and fundraising activities were held by many congregations. Contributions of $8,905.78 were sent to Heifer through our synod treasurer’s office. There are other congregations who send donations directly to Heifer in Little Rock, Arkansas, but they are not included in this figure, as we have no way of knowing which congregations gave and the amount of these contributions. There were 11 congregations that gave through the synod and many of them gave during several months of the year. These 11 congregations are as follows: St. Luke, Felton (New Bridgeville); Muddy Creek, Denver; Trinity, Mount Joy; Evangelical, Waynesboro; Redeemer, Lancaster; Holy Trinity, Lebanon; St. John, New Freedom; Mt. Zion, Boiling Springs; Trinity, New Holland; Lower Bermudian, East Berlin; St. Peter, Middletown.

For assistance in planning programs for your congregation and for supplies and displays, you may contact Norma Good at (717) 869-6527 or Mark or Hazel Nestleroth at (717) 664-6296. These local committee members will be happy to help you.

Norma R. Good, synod contact for Heifer International

LIVING WATER DENTAL HEALTH MINISTRY
https://www.facebook.com/LivingWaterDentalHealthMinistry/
A ministry of Carlisle Area Religious Council, Carlisle

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 the Carlisle Area Religious Council, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. No fees are charged, and the providers involved are not reimbursed for their time and services. This clinic exists to serve the needs of migrant workers in Adams County and to care for others of low income who would otherwise lack access to dental services. Patients are eligible for the clinic if:

a) they currently reside in Adams, Franklin or Cumberland counties (Franklin was added in 2014 because of the need in Haitian migrant camps there and the lack of other services)
b) they have no dental insurance
c) their income is 200% or less of the 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 received grant funding from Wheat Ridge and the Lutheran Deaconesses of the ELCA.
• The clinic has provided comprehensive dental care, with 170 patient visits over the past year (as of February 2020) and 1,545 patient visits across almost eight years of operation. Sixty-two patients received cleanings, 59 had restorative work and 50 had extractions.
• The clinic has provided free dentures to eight patients over the past year and 33 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. Community volunteers also consistently have started showing up!
• The clinic provides user-friendly scheduling and communications by providing 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 Lower Susquehanna Synod, 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

Mission
Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants. SIH offers
hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in maritime ports on the Eastern Seaboard
and in an 84-room Guesthouse in New York City.

Thanks to the support of friends like you, we broke all records in 2019!

Most seafarers come from low wage countries including China, the Philippines, Indonesia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. They
make huge sacrifices often leading lonely and dangerous lives at sea, months on end. Injury, kidnapping, and even death are relatively
frequent occurrences.

To brighten their holidays, a record 2,601 Christmas-at-Sea satchels were donated by congregations, businesses senior groups and
knitters. Our six port chaplains literally had their hands full carrying them to the crew members on container ships and tankers.
A record 905 Christmas-At-Sea satchels were donated by members of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Bishop Barbara J. Collins helped
put them into the two vans (with benches removed) needed to bring them to the ports.

In the ports of Baltimore, Connecticut, Philadelphia, and New York & New Jersey, the SIH port chaplains boarded 1,894 ships to bring
seafarers connectivity and counsel and to transport those that were allowed to enter the US to the mall or medical facilities, serving a
record total of 31,286 mariners. This work was largely supported by attendees of the Setting the Course Banquet, which helped raise
a record of $230,000 from representatives of the shipping industry and unions.

Global displacement reached a record high of 68.5 million people by the end of 2017, according to the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Approximately 25.4 million of these individuals were formally designated as refugees, 40
million were internally displaced persons, and 3.1 million were asylum seekers.

About 50 SIH volunteers visited some 20 asylum seekers at the Elizabeth Detention Center, where conditions are prison-like. They
brought them hope and the prospect of avoiding homelessness or exploitation once released and granted the legal right to stay in the
U.S. For these asylum we increased the number of rooms reserved for them from four to six. That means SIH lost the income that
supports our mission for those two extra rooms. However, contributors helped us make up for that. In addition to generous individuals
the Advent Mission Fund, Hyde & Watson Foundation, and Metro New York Synod, helped SIH support the work with immigrants.

As a result we served a record number of 36 asylees in 2019 (up from 28 the year before) in addition to 68 human trafficking, domestic
violence and local disaster survivors. Twenty asylees and asylum-seeking guests were men and 10 were women. They came from
Dominican Republic (1), Ethiopia (1), Jamaica (1), Nepal (1), Philippines (1), Russia (1), Venezuela (1), Mexico (4), Nigeria (4) Uganda
(4), Honduras (5), and unknown or not identified (12).

I don’t want to sound like a broken record – pun intended – but YOU helped us achieve so much in 2019. Please accept our heartfelt
appreciation on behalf of the record 38,225 people (including youth and community groups) we were able to assist together with you.

2019 Program Impact
38,225 immigrants, seafarers, and community members directly
benefited from SIH services (up from 33,985)

2,601 seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea
satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared
by volunteers (up from 1,853)

36 asylees found their first home in the US in our guesthouse,
staying a total of 1,651 nights (up from 28 asylees and 1,182
ights)

31,286 total of seafarers who were either visited or transported
from 1,894 ships (up from 25,183 and 1,793 vessels)

451 youth, church and community gatherings accommodated
serving about 6,765 people (up from 432 and about 6,480 people)

68 survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking and local
disasters were accommodated (up from 57)

45 guest rooms renovated
50 volunteer visitors brought hope to 26 asylum seekers, who were locked up in detention centers

3 advocacy events hosted to draw attention to the plight of asylum seekers

2019 Financial Report
In 2019, SIH allocated $162,610 to accommodate asylees as well as domestic violence and human trafficking survivors and provided a room subsidy of $128,100 to seafarers. The operating expenses exceeded revenues $28,975 because of unexpectedly lower guesthouse occupancy. Program services accounted for 84% percent of expenses with only 16% spent on support services and fundraising. Net Assets increased from $5,374,369 in 2018 to $6,150,830 in 2019.

The figures below reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change once audited. You may request the audited 2019 financial statements by email (henryk@sihnyc.org), call (212) 677-4800 ext. 1203, or mail your request.

Marsh Luther Drege, pastor and executive director

TECH4TANZANIA
An outreach ministry of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Enola, Pennsylvania
We are sad to report that in 2019 we officially stopped trying to send ocean going shipping containers of educational, medical and technological equipment and supplies to support Lutherans in ministry in Tanzania. It was a difficult decision because the need is still clear and the desire for partnership is still strong. However, the political climate in Tanzania and business climate in the United States have combined in a “perfect storm” that brought such efforts on our part to a standstill. Inspections and import charges in Tanzania have slowed us down and cost more than we can raise in donations. Many of our sources in hospitals, schools and medical supply houses have changed or curtailed their donation and relief efforts for tax, reorganization or perceived liability issues.

These changes were not a surprise to us. We have been working on relationships here and in Tanzania to enhance life in smaller and more direct ways. We have been raising funds to support identified Tanzanian Lutheran leaders. Deacon April Trout of the Saint Paul Area Synod has helped connect us to some of her synod’s people traveling to Tanzania in a “pony express” style of delivery system for laptop computers and personal notes of support and encouragement. We are thankful to still be “Developing partnerships for life!”

Education Support
1. Celebrated the graduation of Eliezer Mwankenja from Messiah College with a degree in Computer Information Services and brought his parents here for several weeks to enjoy their son, meet some synod leaders and bring news of ministries in Tanzania.
2. Provided financial support for:
   - Ebita Mwankenja’s sister to study nursing
   - Pastor Kumbuka Mwasanguti’s daughter to start college
   - Naomi Mwamasangula preparing for ordination from the Lake Tanganyika Diocese
   - 23 pastors and evangelists in the Lake Tanganyika Diocese
Equipment Support

- Dr. Gwamaka Mwankenja and his work as Director of Christian Education and Biblical Studies, Konde Diocese
- Naomi Mwamasangula in her studies at Iringa University
- Deacon April Trout
- Choir directors - referenced by Deacon Trout
- Financial adviser/Treasurer - referenced by Deacon Trout

In 2020 we will continue financial aid for Lutheran leaders in the Lake Tanganyika Diocese and find ways to send laptop computers and other small equipment and supplies as requested. Thank you for your prayers, words of encouragement and financial support. Together we thank and praise God for such opportunities to live in God’s mission and serve through our ministries.

Randy Barr, president, T4T

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD LUTHERAN YOUTH ORGANIZATION

Our synod Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) Leadership Team has been on an intentional sabbath since the 2018-2019 school year. No officers were identified or elected in 2019.

Since the merger of the position of synod Director for Children, Youth & Family with the position of synod Director for Faith Formation and Resources in 2018, creating the position of synod Director for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, there were responsibilities within each role that had to be re-examined. Direct oversight and mentoring of the LYO Leadership Team was one responsibility that needed to be reimagined.

This is not to suggest that growing, equipping and shepherding young leaders through the ministry of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) has not continued. It does continue, with our director working cooperatively with members of our synod’s Youth Ministry Vision Team, alongside leaders of our Leadership Training Camp staff. However, the intentional election of an LYO Leadership Team, remains suspended for the short-term.

The ministry that has continued, which remains specifically designed to foster the growth of young leaders and aligns well with our synod’s missional goal of equipping leaders for service in Christ’s name, is our annual Leadership Training Camp (LT Camp). It was one of the best attended camps we have had in the past thirty years. Since all Lutheran youth qualify as members of LYO, our LYO remains strong behind the leadership of our LT Camp Alumni.

We came up with a plan to continue engaging with our LT Camp Alumni in a series of opportunities that combined leadership development with intentional practice:

1. A number of them served as cabin counselors for their peers at LT Camp 2019 and assisted our staff in all aspects of event management from meal prep, to small group leadership, worship leadership, community-building, and more.
2. Some served as volunteers at our annual ALiVE Event in September 2019. In their role, they served alongside adult Small Group Leaders helping to lead small group discussions and implementing the event curriculum. They served as song leaders for large group and campfires and helped lead games and activities during free-time.
3. At Winterfest 2019, the annual senior-high youth event, held at the Spooky Nook complex in December, LT Camp Alumni were invited to meet with camp staff to continue their leadership development with peers.
4. In the wake of the COVID-19 restrictions this spring, the LT Staff team are envisioning digital opportunities for gathering LT Camp Alumni online in virtual community for networking and ongoing edification and training. (We had hoped to sponsor a weekend retreat which is unlikely to occur this spring due to the pandemic)

We continue to look for ways to name and celebrate the gifts of our young leaders in their first-third of life and identify significant roles of leadership to help put those gifts into practice (Called “Key-Chain Leadership” by the Growing Young Initiative). We further encourage our young leaders to discern a call to vocations both inside and outside the church, allowing them to live in ways that reflect their call to a life of discipleship. At the heart of the organization continues to be a commitment to engage and equip young leaders for service to their Lord Jesus, to God’s church, to their congregations, communities, families, and to the world.

Charlie Roberts, director for faith formation and youth ministry

WOMEN OF THE ELCA – LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

“As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, society and the world.”
February 21-23, 2020 was our Conference of Presidents. Our theme was “The Power of Community.” It was a time to listen and learn. Most of us were able to room with the president of our sister synod. We were able to communicate and form friendships that we will reaffirm at our triennial convention this summer. We had workshops on community organizing, our triennial convention, and a presentation from those of us who participated in AMMPARO and the Border Servant Corps trip to El Paso, the Border Wall in Anapra, Chihuahua Mexico, and Las Cruces. We also celebrated BOLD Women’s Sunday.

Saturday, May 11, 2019 was our Day of Renewal at St. Bartholomew United Church (ELCA), Hanover. The Reverend Angela Zimmann from United Lutheran Seminary spoke about the hospitality she experienced during her time in Jerusalem. Our special offering went to the “Annual Fund” at the seminary. We are excited to have her return as our 2020 Camp Hebron Retreat Leader. This year’s Day of Renewal will be Saturday May 16, 2020 at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Harrisburg. Norma Good will speak about her work with Lutheran World Relief, “Where God Leads Us.” Our offering will be for Christ Lutheran Church Health Ministries.

Our 30th Annual Camp Hebron Retreat was held November 1-3, 2019. Pastor Denise Horn’s theme was “Women of Faith, Their Story and Ours.” We learned of biblical women and shared personal stories of faith. The offering for Manow Lutheran Secondary School in Tanzania will cover a one-year full scholarship.

Our 32nd Annual Convention was held August 16-17, 2019. It was a first with St. Paul Lutheran and Brickerville United Lutheran of Lititz working together. Butterflies were everywhere. Our theme was “Lead Me Where My Trust is Without Borders.” The two highlights of the convention were the bishop’s dialog on “The Future of the Church” and our worship service.

Our 33rd Annual Convention this year will be held at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Berrysburg, on Saturday August 15, 2020. Our theme is “Praising God with Music.”


We continue to AdvoCaTe - ACT - on sex trafficking issues. We were pleased when the “Buyer Beware” bill passed. This addressed the customer. WELCA also has joined the World Council of Churches in their global ecumenical campaign, THURSDAYS IN BLACK. It is about solidarity, resistance, and resilience “toward a world without rape and violence.”

Lois Ann Griffiths, president, Lower Susquehanna Synod Women’s Organization

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION OF THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

In December 2019, the leadership roles of the synod unit of Lutheran Men in Mission were vacated due to health issues of a member and the death of the Treasurer, Ken Kahler.

Be encouraged as you continue in your calling with your local ministry for men and anyone who is in need. We are called through our baptism (Isaiah 43:1), equipped through Bible study (John 8:31), and sent (Matthew 28:19-20) into our daily living experiences.

Please use the additional resources provided by Lutheran Men In Mission, www.lutheranmeninmission.org - John Sundquist, Executive Director, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631; phone 773.380.2566; email john@lutheranmeninmission.org.

May God our Father, the endless source of all grace, mercy, peace, truth, and love continue to be your Guide through Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Bill Schirmer, secretary