

# U S S A R K

News of God's People in Action



July/Aug  
2019

God's work. Our hands. + Upper Susquehanna Synod + Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Lutherans Gather to Unite, Serve, and Support

Gathering under the theme, "On the Way Together: United, Serving, Supporting," the Upper Susquehanna Synod gathered in assembly at Susquehanna University on June 14 and 15, 2019. The highlights included conversations with geographic conferences, talking about how to implement the synod's new mission strategy. The assembly heard from ecumenical partners and passed a memorial regarding engagement in the Holy Land. Members also enjoyed learning more about congregational vitality from the representative from the ELCA and elected a new vice president.

Bishop Barbara J. Collins led the proceedings. During her annual report, Collins talked about enjoying seeing the work of the congregations of the synod, particularly when they meet the needs of others. She particularly noted the response of St. Peter's, Kreamer, and Pastor Vickie Brown, as they dealt with the closure of Wood-Mode, which is near that congregation.



The assembly began with worship and the installation of the Camp Mount Luther Summer Staff. Greetings were brought from ecumenical representatives from the Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic partnership, including Rev. Darlis Swan of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA; Bishop Audrey Scanlan of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania; Rev. James Leese, ecumenical officer of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg; and Monsignor Vincent Grimalia, the ecumenical officer from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton. Also, giving greetings were Rev. Steve Cureton, Executive Presbyter of the Northumberland Presbytery; Rev. Katie Hopper, Moderator of the Huntingdon Presbytery; and Bishop Jeremiah Park of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church.

### **Actions of the 2019 Assembly**

- *Approved 20 amendments to the constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions, mostly for clarification purposes.*
- *Passed the 2020 Budget, balanced at \$859,090. Also adopted the Salary, Housing, and Health Benefit Guidelines for ordained ministers and those on the lay roster.*
- *Passed a memorial to the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage ELCA members, congregations, synods, and the churchwide office including the Office of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to expand our relationships and dialogue with nonchurch groups and individuals in the Holy Land. The memorial aims to help undo any boundaries of strangeness or suspicion between us while at the same time continuing affirmation of our unique relationship with and accompaniment of Palestinian Christians and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.*

## More from Assembly

Greetings were extended from Dr. Jonathan Green, Susquehanna University's president. About 241 lay persons and clergy who are members of congregations of the synod attended plenary sessions, workshops, conversations, and worship during the two-day event. During both days, workshops were held over the lunch period and provided information that attendees could use in their congregations, including interfaith dialogues, mission support, disaster relief, advocacy, and congregational vitality.



The ELCA Churchwide Representative was The Rev. Ruben Duran, who serves as the Director for Congregational Vitality. He is pictured above with Pastor Lisa Barnes. He shared video greetings on behalf of ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. He also talked about how God is at work through the church in communities all across the country and shared ways the synod is connected to the wider church. Duran also did workshops each day on congregational vitality.

Reports were also given by Chad Hershberger, Camp Mount Luther Executive Director; Rev. Dr. Gil Waldkoenig of United Lutheran Seminary; Rev. Jill Young and Mara Wilcox, representing campus ministry. Pastor Craig Miller, assistant to Bishop Collins and Director for Evangelical Mission, spoke to the assembly as well, on mission in the synod. Rev. Marsh Drege of Seafarers International House gave an update on their ministry and reported that the synod collects more than a fourth of the total "Christmas at Sea" satchels each year.

Friday evening at the Synod Assembly featured a banquet with recognition of congregations celebrating significant anniversaries. The following five congregations were recognized: Good Shepherd, Berwick (50 years); St. Luke, Sunbury (125 years); Trinity, Oak Grove (150 years); St. Paul, Milroy and St. John's, Siglerville (200 years)

## Dean Installed



On Friday afternoon, Rev. Carla Volland was installed as dean of the Juniata Valley Conference. Outgoing dean, Rev. James Park Bricker, was recognized.



Pastors with significant ordination anniversaries were honored as well: Rev. Timothy Bingman, Rev. Robert Driesen, Rev. James Fladland, (40 years); Rev. Theodore Cockley, Rev. Frederick Faust, and Rev. Thomas Livernois (45 years); Rev. Kenneth Louder, Rev. Gary Owens, and Rev. A. Donald Main (50 years); Rev. Frederick Bigelow (55 years); and Rev. Bernard Engelhardt (65 years). A luncheon in their honor was held in May at Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village where this picture was taken and the honorees shared stories of their ministry.

## Report of Elections Committee

Elected to a four-year term as synod vice president was Holly Fry, a member of Washingtonville Lutheran Church.



Elected to three-year terms on Synod Council were Terry Gardner, Stephen Rodgers, Rev. Rick White, Audrey Brosius, and Deacon Shelby Wyland. Elected to a two-year term on Synod Council was Wendelin Davis. Elected to be the Young Adult Synod Council Representative was Jonathan Moser.

Elected to the Consultation Committee were Rev. Lisa Schuster and Rev. David Byerly. Elected to the Committee on Discipline were Rev. Matthew Schuster, Linda Everitt, and Rev. Sarah Hershberger.



## Conversations about Plan

The second day of the Synod Assembly featured conversations in geographic conferences, discussing the three focus areas of the synod's new mission strategy. Participants talked about how they work together to implement the strategy and what resources they might need. The voting members talked about these three areas: Church/Unity, Support/Presence, and Discipleship/Leadership.

## Up and Down the Valleys

In June, **Rev. James Park Bricker** was the recipient of the Cloud of Witness Award from Camp Mount Luther. Presented at the third annual Circle of Faith Giving Club dinner, the award recognizes someone who has dedicated their time, talent, and treasure to the camp. Later that evening, a worship service officially opened the 2019 summer camping season.

**Clergy Notes:** David Lowell Chilton was called on June 9 to serve **Messiah, New Berlin**. He was ordained on June 30 in Seattle, WA. **Faith, Lewisburg**, and **St. Paul's, Erdley's** both accepted a contract for Kate Drefke to serve under a synod council call as a Redevelopment Pastor. She was ordained on July 5 in Peshtigo WI. Lowell and Kate are a clergy couple and will begin their calls mid-July. On June 11, Rev. Tormod Svensson began serving **The Table, Bloomsburg**, a new start worshipping community of our synod, as their Mission Developer. **David Kingsborough** has resigned as pastor of Good Shepherd, Berwick. He and his clergy wife are moving to Nebraska.



During a service of Holy Eucharist on Saturday afternoon of assembly, Rev. Ray Jones was remembered posthumously for his service. Those attending the ELCA Churchwide Assembly were blessed and sent to do their work later this summer. An in-gathering offering was received for Campus Ministries and the Bishop's Discretionary Fund totaling \$1381.50.

**USS ARK** is a publication of the Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. Permission is granted for congregations to reproduce this newsletter. Send mission stories and ministry ideas by the first of the month to Chad Hershberger, Director of Communications, at [news@uss-elca.org](mailto:news@uss-elca.org).



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**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

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## Upper Susquehanna Synod Events

### Strategic Plan Work Continues

Bishop Collins and Synod Council thank all for participating in our day of discussion focused on our synod strategy. By sharing your thoughts in your conference gathering space and on the sheets provided you have offered ideas and aspirations that we will share with the implementation team to guide their work. As stated at the assembly, our synod strategy will work best when our congregations and conferences see and act their part in making it a success. Witnessing the energy and engagement amongst you as you discussed Unity, Support and Service, made us believe that this strategy truly reflects God's desire for our synod. We encourage you to remain engaged with your conference and the plans that have already begun to take shape. And we also encourage you to share your energy with your congregations in order to bring many into the work of our church united in support for one another and service in the world. Please continue to share your thoughts and ideas in your congregations, your conference, and with our synod leaders. Together we will share in God's mission for our church in our Upper Susquehanna Synod.

### Youth Minister Job Posting

St. James Lutheran Church in Gettysburg, is seeking a full-time Youth Minister to partner with the congregation to nurture its children and youth of the church, help them to create a deeper relationship with Christ, an understanding of living out their Baptism, invigorating their relationship with the Christian community and continuing their commitment to serving others. The ideal candidate is a driven but highly relational leader with the pastoral gifts of shepherding, teaching, and counsel. They will be good at recruiting, caring for, and developing a diverse set of volunteers capable of handling the complex combination of tactical detail and people skills that youth ministry requires.

### Summer is Underway at Mount Luther

Camp Mount Luther is in full swing with their summer programs! There is still time to register. Some highlights of programs in late July and August include:

- Classic Juniors and Intermediates for campers who want to experience the best Mount Luther has to offer.
- Intermediate Ten Day for middle schoolers who want to stay longer!
- SURE for campers who want to Survive Using the Resources of the Environment.
- High Adventure, featuring some climbing and bouldering and a high ropes course.
- Mini-Base Camps, a half week camps for our youngest campers.
- Intern for our senior high campers who want to learn what it's like to be on staff.
- Tour de Crème, a bike trip taking rides to local ice cream establishments.
- Buffalo Gap Adventure, a small hiking trip to the state forest near camp.

For more information, visit the camp website at [www.campmountluther.org](http://www.campmountluther.org) or call 570-922-1587. Stay connected to camp this summer and find out what is happening during our various programs, visit Facebook ([www.facebook.com/mountluther](https://www.facebook.com/mountluther)), Twitter (@mtluther) and our blog ([www.campmountluther.wordpress.com](http://www.campmountluther.wordpress.com)). We try to update these daily but please realize that our staff is quite busy and if updates are not posted, it's because the campers and staff are so busy that they can't get an update posted. And, don't forget, our daily First Light devotions will continue to be posted each weekday. Check them at [www.cmlfaithformation.weebly.com](http://www.cmlfaithformation.weebly.com).

### Volunteers Needed for CML Fundraiser in September

Camp Mount Luther is once again participating in a local festival to help raise funds for their campership fund. The camp will staff a booth at the Selinsgrove Market Street Festival on Saturday, September 28, 2019. Their booth will feature the sale of homemade whoopie pies. Volunteers are needed to make these sweet treats, as well as to staff the booth on the day of the festival. If you are interested in donating whoopie pies (of any flavor) or helping to sell them that day, contact Sarah Hershberger at 570-966-9674 or Chad Hershberger at 570-922-1587.

### **Lutheran Marriage Encounter Fall Weekends**

Don't miss your opportunity to enrich your marital relationship at one of these lovely locations. Remember that because Lutheran Marriage Encounter is celebrating 50 years of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, they are offering 50 percent off on all registration fees for 2019, so the registration fee is \$50 instead of \$100. Whether your marriage is practically perfect or if you have some struggles, couples overwhelmingly report that the weekend is the best thing they have ever done for their relationship!

Fall Weekends are scheduled for October 11-13, 2019, at Hyatt Place in Cranberry / Pittsburgh, PA and November 1-3, 2019, at Hampton Inn Berkshires in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Please go to the website: [www.GodLovesMarriage.org](http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org) to see the cost for the Weekend of your choice. Two nights lodging, five meals for each of you, and all supplies are included. Financial assistance is available for those in need. Fill out and submit the form, and complete your registration with a credit card, or you may choose the option to mail a check. For questions, please contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or [fjschamber@comcast.net](mailto:fjschamber@comcast.net).

### **August 12-14, 2019: Misconduct Training**

The following is a link to information on a valuable and timely training opportunity for rostered ministers: "Misconduct in Congregations: Moving from Hurt to Wholeness," August 12-14, 2019, Stow (Akron), Ohio. For event information, flyer links, and the online registration form link: <https://conta.cc/2K3iobE>. Workshop presenters include Barbara Keller, therapist and ELCA consultant for the prevention of misconduct; Beth Marie Halvorsen, intentional interim pastor and National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors faculty member; and Marcus Lohrmann, interim pastor, Memorial Lutheran Church, Toledo, OH, former interim bishop, Florida-Bahamas Synod (2017), retired after 18 years as bishop of the Northwestern Ohio Synod.

### **August 31, 2019: Dandelion Trail Run at CML**

Camp Mount Luther will be holding a 5- and 10- kilometer trail run race at the camp on Saturday, August 31, 2019. This is an entry-level trail race on Mount Luther grounds with proceeds going to the camp. The start time for the race is 9:00 a.m. Runners decide on race day if they want to do a 5k or 10K (a double loop of the 5K) run. The 10k distance is included in the Rocksylvania 10k race series. More details on that are available at <http://midpenntailblazers.com/links.html>. Race day registration is \$30. Pre-register by August 28 and pay only \$25. Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on race day. Spectators are welcome as well. A kid's fun run will also be held with two age categories: six and under and 7-10. Special awards will be presented to every participant in the fun run. Again this year, a one-mile fun walk on a dirt road will be held with the same registration fees and amenities applying (or you may just walk without receiving amenities for \$10). Awards will be given for overall male and female race time, three awards for each age group and an overall master's for male and female in both the 5K and the 10K. The awards ceremony will be immediately following the race. Shower facilities are available after the race. All miles for the course will be marked and there is one water stop on the course. Timing will be electronically done. To register, visit <http://midpenntailblazers.com/trail-race-events/dandelion-run/dandelion-run.html>. The Dandelion Run, begun in 2002, is organized by Joel and Shelley Heasley of Middleburg. It was named in honor and memory of Rev. Glenn E. Heasley, Jr., former Assistant to the Bishop of the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Glenn's favorite "flower" was the dandelion. Heasley's widow, Shirley, is also involved in the planning of the race.

### **September 8, 2019: "God's work. Our hand." Day of Service**

Save the date! "God's work. Our hands." Sunday will be Sunday, September 8, 2019. This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.



You work every day to make your community a better place. Let us continue doing this work together in 2018! Access resources to guide your congregation's planning, promotion and more at <https://www.elca.org/dayofservice>.

### **October 20-26, 2019: Mission Trip**

Upper Susquehanna Synod and the Northumberland Presytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA) are sponsoring another mission/work trip to hurricane ravaged areas of North Carolina. The trip will be October 20-26, 2019, and the cost will be \$100 plus transportation. All levels of experience are needed. For More Information, contact: Doug Orbaker at 570-768-6436 or [dougorbaker@yahoo.com](mailto:dougorbaker@yahoo.com). For a flyer about this event, visit <https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/poster-to-send-out.pdf>

### **November 2, 2019: Fall Women's Retreat**

All local women are invited to be participants at the Fall Women's Retreat sponsored by Camp Mount Luther and the Upper Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization. The day-long retreat will feature a presentation led by Rev. Sarah Hershberger titled, "We All Are One in Mission." The retreat will take place at the camp on Saturday, November 2, 2019. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The day will begin with refreshments. The cost of \$20.00 per person includes coffee and tea, snacks, lunch, and the program. You are encouraged to bring a friend! Registration deadline is October 25. To register, contact Mount Luther, 355 Mt. Luther Lane, Mifflinburg, PA 17844. Checks should be made payable to Camp Mount Luther. If you have questions, call the camp at (570) 922-1587 or e-mail [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org). To view a flyer/registration form, click here: <https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2019-Womens-Retreat-Flyer.pdf>.

### **November 20-21, 2019: ESC Generosity Next**

"Spiritual Generosity: Offering Vitality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" will be held in November. Some of the questions that will be addressed include:

- What changes have you noticed in your offerings?
- How is the role of offering evolving in worship?
- What new practices can bring vitality to your offerings?

The Ecumenical Stewardship Center (ESC) sponsors this conference in Atlanta, GA, on November 20-21, 2019. In an effort to reach a broader audience this fall, a new format for this conference is being introduced –engagement via live streaming at multiple host site locations. ***Does your church have the ability to serve as a live streaming host site? Contact Craig Miller for more information or to indicate your ability to host.***

Basic Format: A two-day event with Day 1 being presentations onsite in Atlanta by four speakers, followed by the use of guided questions and open conversation. Presentations will be live streamed to offsite locations. Each offsite location will have their own conversations in context. Questions from these conversations can be submitted for discussion with each presenter on Day 2 as part of deeper reflection and discussion time. The presentations on Day 1 would be live streamed starting at 9:15 a.m. EDT. Day 1 will conclude by 4:30 p.m. EDT and Day 2 by 12:30 p.m. EDT.

The synod will identify facilitators for the events. Host sites will need to arrange internet connection and projection audio & video for both days, as well as lunch on Day 1 (Day 2 lunch optional).