

# PARTNER MINISTRY REPORTS

## Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM)

### 2021 Message to the Allegheny Synod, ELCA

Greetings and blessings to each of you from the leadership of ALSM!

Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM) is the only regional faith-based not-for-profit organization offering services that span the generations. ALSM has been responding to the needs of our communities for more than 70 years.

At the heart of our mission is the ability to provide benevolent care for those whose resources have been depleted through unexpected changes in circumstances as a resident. Each year, approximately 672 people who reside in ALSM's senior living communities are provided these funds--totaling more than \$2 million--in order to be able to live as independently as possible. We are grateful that no one has been asked to leave a community because of a lack of funds.

ALSM is able to fulfill its mission and touch the lives of more than 3,000 people because of the partnership we share in this ministry with each of you. As ALSM serves individuals throughout an eight-county area, you may know someone who has received our services or lives in one of our senior communities. I would like to share an example of how ALSM touches the lives of people.

### Marilyn's Story

Marilyn Wheeler, a retired school nurse, moved to The Oaks at Pleasant Gap a decade ago from Sayre, PA, to be closer to family. Being new to the area, she quickly decided to appoint herself an Oaks ambassador and create a welcoming committee. Marilyn hosted tea parties to greet new residents who moved to her floor of the Court apartments. She invited all of the residents on the third-floor so that everyone had an opportunity to get to know one another.

She spent her time actively engaged in The Oaks community. Marilyn walked almost daily, participated in outings, had a personal garden area on campus, baked

Christmas cookies to share with residents and team members, and served on the food council. She was

very talented at counted cross stitch. Each year, she made and donated pieces to raise funds for the Centre County Auxiliary of ALSM's annual fashion show. In celebration of her 90th birthday, Marilyn bought herself a gift to share with all of her neighbors: a new bench for the walking path at The Oaks. Her hope was others would sit and enjoy the beauty of their community.

Although Marilyn had some minor health problems, they were managed well. She was able to remain active in her apartment until early 2020. At that time, Marilyn moved into personal care at Schreffler Manor. Eventually, Marilyn's health worsened. Hospice services were added to fulfill her wish to remain at The Oaks, the home she loved until her passing.

### A Letter from Marilyn's son, Dr. Leigh Wheeler

*Many of you know me from over 35 years as a Family Physician in State College. For over ten years, my mother lived at The Oaks at Pleasant Gap. I got to know virtually all the staff. Many times folks would ask me what I thought of The Oaks. My reply was always the same: "My own mother lives there."*

*You get a sense of the calm environment when you drive in, which is in a beautiful pastoral setting. The team takes great pride in the community, both inside and out. The nursing staff is very kind and considerate, and everyone is respectfully and genuinely greeted by name.*

*The dining team goes out of their way to work with each resident. They customize as many things as possible while maintaining the bounds of nutritious meals. They also know each resident as a person, an attribute shared throughout the community.*



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*Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM) takes its spiritual responsibilities to heart and provides an onsite pastor. The Oaks is strongly led, by Administrator Nichole Walker, and her example flows into every department. Life enrichment bends over backward to bring a bright light to each resident in so many ways. All of this is genuine and witnessed first-hand by myself over the past ten years.*

*Wrapping this together with the thousands of small details each day to keep everyone safe during this pandemic; is what leads me to write this letter.*

*This testimonial is unsolicited and unpaid. You know me; I wouldn't put this into writing if it was not true. So, if you or a loved one is looking into independent residential care, or is possibly in need of personal care services, contact Nichole Walker and her staff re: The Oaks at Pleasant Gap. I give them my highest recommendation.*

*Respectfully,*

*Leigh D. Wheeler, M.D.*

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We are truly blessed to be able to serve the needs of people throughout our region with the following **programs and services:**

- **Senior Communities** (The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg, The Lutheran Home at Johnstown and The Oaks at Pleasant Gap)
- **Rental assistance senior housing** (Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike and Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap)
- **Community Services** (ALSM at Home and Senior Daily Living Centers)
- **Children's Services** (Head Start, Early Head Start, Family Center, Growing Years Early Learning Centers, Kid Stop before-and-after programs and PRE-K Counts programs)

The year 2020 was difficult for all of us. It created not only emotional stress for everyone, but financial stress as well. In addition to the benevolent care need, the cost of personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep our residents, clients and staff safe far exceeded \$100,000 in unbudgeted funds. We thank you and the members of your congregations for your prayerful and financial support.

A few highlights from our programs and services (over the past two years) include:

## **Senior Living Communities**

- Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries senior living communities continue to take every precaution to keep everyone safe and follow public health recommendations to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.
- We began a new chapter in our fight against COVID-19 as vaccinations have been, and continue to be, administered on the campuses of The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg and Johnstown and The Oaks at Pleasant Gap.
- Visitation on the campuses has resumed with protocols in place and following the guidance issued by our licensing and regulatory bodies. Visits are scheduled in advance.

If you would like to schedule a visit, please contact:

- Jennifer Helsley – The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg, 814.696.4527
- Suzy Albaugh – The Lutheran Home at Johnstown, 814.255.6844
- Mariya Anosova – The Oaks at Pleasant Gap, 814.359.2782

## **Blairmont Commons, Hickory Commons and The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg**

- Blairmont and Hickory Commons cottages offer residents a stress-free lifestyle. Exterior and interior maintenance are included in the cost, allowing residents the time to enjoy their favorite activities. The cottages are energy efficient and handicapped accessible so that residents may "age in place" in this secure neighborhood setting. These independent living residences attract individuals age 55 and over. The waiting list for these cottages continues to grow.
- The bright and spacious apartments at Hillcrest are perched atop the famous "Double Dips" in historic Hollidaysburg, overlooking ALSM's Hickory Commons campus. Small pets are welcome. Meals plans are available with dining room and to-go options.
- The Lutheran Home continues to focus on individuals who are in need of short-term rehab.

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Many times, persons who have suffered a stroke or are recovering from a broken limb or limb replacement surgery may benefit from therapy services in a nursing home setting. In addition, long-term care residents are also accepted.

- Short term respite stays are available. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own health care needs, go on vacation or attend a family celebration such as a wedding or graduation.
- For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Robin Stern at 814.696.4527.

### **The Lutheran Home at Johnstown**

- Renovations to the campus were completed. The enhancements focused on creating all private personal care accommodations. The one and two-bedroom independent living apartments are bright and spacious with beautiful views of Westmont. Personal care accommodations are available. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Brenda Blough at 814.255.6844.
- Short-term respite stays are available. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own health care needs, go on vacation or attend a family celebration such as a wedding or graduation.

### **The Oaks at Pleasant Gap**

- The Oaks at Pleasant Gap campus continues to serve the needs of those who desire personal care services as well as independent living. For those seniors who meet income guidelines, there is also a 14-unit apartment building, Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap. There is now a waiting list but applications are being accepted. For information on Lutheran Commons, call Sally Lenz at 814.696.4500 or 800.400.2285.
- Additional independent living cottages are under construction. Reservations are now being accepted for new cottage homes. For information or to schedule a tour of The Oaks, call Nichole Walker at 814.359.2782.
- Short term respite stays are available. Respite stays allow family caregivers to take a break from caregiving, tend to their own health care needs, go on vacation or attend a family celebration such as a wedding or graduation.

## **Community Services**

- Services of ALSM at Home include personal care, cleaning, meal preparation, assistance with the activities of daily living (such as bathing, dressing and medication reminders) and companionship. Often, members of our staff team provide respite care for persons who live with their families.
- Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries now offers services that we provide on our senior living campuses to individuals who live in their own homes in the community. ALSM at Home in Blair County has expanded services to now provide exterior maintenance. Exterior maintenance includes spring and fall yard clean-up, summer mowing and winter snow removal services. For more information or to schedule services call 814.696.4570.
- The Senior Daily Living Centers are designed to feel like home, stimulate cognitive functioning and aid in maintaining physical well-being to help allow loved ones to live in their home, for as long as possible. There are centers located in Altoona and Somerset. Openings are available at the Senior Daily Living. Please call Sally Lenz for the Altoona center at 814.946.4693 and Wendy Shaulis at 814.445.8506 for the Somerset center for more information.

## **Children's Services**

- Growing Years Early Learning Center and Kid Stop managers completed educational courses through the Keystone STARs program for continuous quality improvement. The centers have a rating of 3 STAR out of 4 STAR or higher. Those centers include Bedford and Johnstown Kid Stops and Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown. PRE-K Counts is offered through Growing Years in Bedford and Johnstown.
- Head Start continued partnerships with the Intermediate Units 08 and 11 to provide inclusive preschool programming to children in Bedford and Fulton counties.
- Head Start continued collaborations with the Tussey Mountain, Chestnut Ridge, Northern Bedford and Southern Fulton school districts for preschool programming.
- The Family Center of Bedford County serves families through home visits, monthly playgroups, fathers' groups and special events.

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In addition to these program highlights, ALSM's annual golf outing raised more than \$40,000 in 2019 and 2020 for benevolent care. We invite you to join us at this year's outing, scheduled for Monday, July 26 at Scotch Valley Country Club. For more information, please contact the Advancement Office at 814.696.4516.

At our annual dinner in 2019, we honored the following persons who are important to the partnership with ALSM:

- Dr. Luke Rhoads Award – Mr. Dave Cobaugh, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Mundys Corner
- Helping Hands Award – The Rev. John and Charlotte Rimert, The Oaks at Pleasant Gap

We also honored The Reverend Ed Harshberger with The Rev. Dr. Walden M. Holl Award for his ongoing support and commitment to social ministry.

We appreciate your prayerful support and **thank you** for your partnership in our mission of serving people with love, compassion and mercy in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

For more details on ALSM programs, I invite you to visit our website at [www.alsm.org](http://www.alsm.org). For a copy of ALSM's Annual Report, please call 814.696.4516 or send an email to [development@alsm.org](mailto:development@alsm.org).

In His service,



Patricia W. Savage, President/CEO  
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*"To serve people through a ministry of love, compassion, and mercy in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ."*

## Allegheny Synodical Women's Organization 2020 Report

We have all had a very challenging year. Hopefully, have made those challenges into opportunities. We have been able to adjust to the use of technology for worship services and meetings, among other ways to communicate as congregations. The congregational units have been creative in continuing to complete quilts and kits of all sorts through this time of social restrictions. As with the whole church, the Women of the ELCA purpose statement mirrors what the church is all about – “God’s Work, Our Hands”.

*(“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, the society, and the world.”)*

With all the churches and congregational units having had to quarantine due to the 2020 pandemic, the ASWO had to postpone the Thirty-Second Annual Convention. The Board will be meeting sometime in May, 2021 to discuss rescheduling the convention for either September or October, 2021. We will have to re-vamp the format and agenda that had been planned and hope to have the convention issue of the Courier mailed by July to congregational units and/or churches.

### **The report of the LWR collection for the Allegheny Synod is as follows:**

We were able to sponsor the annual Lutheran World Relief collection for the Allegheny Synod in November,

2020. Even though the numbers of items made and collected were greatly reduced, there was still an awesome amount of items sent to the warehouse.

**118 Blankets**

**1218 Quilts**

**529 Personal Care Kits**

**506 School Kits**

**10 Fabric Kits**

**190 Health Care Kits**

**20 Baby sweaters and caps**

**Note:** Women of the ELCA update: The Women of the ELCA will be meeting virtually for the Eleventh Triennial Convention August 3–5, 2021. Information is published on the Women of the ELCA website as to the agenda, speakers and how women will be able to participate. We will have 3 Voting Members from the ASWO participating.

The ASWO Board and congregational units thank Bishop Rhyne, the Synod Council, Clergy and congregations for their support of the ASWO/Women of the ELCA.

Submitted by,

Carol McClure  
President of the ASWO

## Breezewood Trucker and Traveler The Year In Review 2020

Greetings and grace to all in the Allegheny Synod! We appreciate your partnership in this marketplace outreach. The Breezewood Trucker and Traveler Ministry is blessed to record the following:

(2017)	(2018)	(2019)	(2020)
1011	1168	1043	331
1424	1429	1213	397
598	764	743	477
93	82	69	48
115	143	132	91
255	261	273	184
1258	1041	1231	1041
54	85	108	199
26	36	37	44
101	145	164	48
26	23	45	55
97	271	117	131
255	195	202	82
155	285	210	105
11	14	9	1
26	32	22	14
97	93	89	22
2047	2177	2130	1803
1964	1830	2323	1379

### Member: Spiritual Care Association (Professional).

### Student Chaplains: Four Wesley Theological Seminary students completed 10 day "Immersion."

A prayer card from a 22 year old professional driver from Florida, slipped under the ministry office door: "I believe God has abandoned me and is refusing to listen to me. This generation of people my age has become corrupt and blinded by worldly things and I'm trying very hard to keep my faith in God. Why God, did you put me through many trials and tribulations in life? What is my

purpose in being here? Why am I not being listened to? Why did you stay silent during my darkest times of my life? I just want God to answer me and to get answers." The angst in this earnest prayer request captures a global shaking of foundations in 2020 fueled by fear, a virus, political unrest, and hopelessness. Jesus responds: But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in

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my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid (John 14: 26-27). A young trucker's heart in search of answers hears words of promise and assurance from Jesus: his love and the Father's love will not abandon. We thank God for His faithfulness, especially so in a year filled with so many unsettled souls and COVID trauma. As a highway workplace chaplaincy, we are blessed to share Good News exposing the darkness of fear, doubt, and deceit. God has revealed His providence and power in many ways this year in Breezewood; we give thanks for safety on the road, health, and the resurrection of some shuttered local business locations which have reopened under new ownership.

We continue to coordinate for food, fuel, care packages, transportation, and emergency lodging responding to the pandemic economic fallout. In a chaotic year, we are thankful for ELCA congregations, and very dedicated/creative management members including David Wright (St. Peter's and Messiah), and Judith Simonson (Mt. Zion, Breezewood)!

**(JESUS SAYS) I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU AS ORPHANS, I WILL COME TO YOU.**

Breezewood Trucker and Traveler Ministry  
P.O. Box 286, Breezewood, PA 15533  
(814) 977-6964

# ELCA Region 8 Archives Annual Report

## FY2019

### Submitted June 1, 2020

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](mailto:eboyd@uls.edu).



## Lutheran Campus Ministry/ Lutheran Student Community at Penn State

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

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

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

### Spring Semester 2020

Spring Semester 2020 at Penn State began fully in person and ended fully online. The first half of the semester was fairly typical. Students gathered for weekly worship Thursdays on campus and Sundays at Grace Lutheran Church. Meals after worship provided the opportunity to share the joys and burdens of the week, talk about issues on campus and in the broader world, and build connections. Students participated in a 24-hour retreat with discernPSU to reflect on their own story and how it shapes their calling. Brian Patchcoski, Director of

Penn State's Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, spoke about his sense of vocation and call for the series "Why I Do What I Do." Plans were in place for Nikole Hannah-Jones from the *New York Times* 1619 Project to meet with student leaders and present campus-wide Keynote in late March, after spring break. A small group travelled to rural Alabama for Spring Break, despite word of a new and concerning virus spreading globally. They rebuilt homes damaged in a tornado and explored a variety of sites in the Civil Rights Struggle. The week was a powerful experience for everyone on this ecumenical trip. Local historians helped interpret the story at various sites in Atlanta, GA, Tuskegee, Montgomery, rural Macon County, and rural Lee County Alabama.

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

### Virtual Summer 2020

Lutheran Campus Ministry continued a variety of virtual programs through the summer months, connecting with students and recent graduates. Students faced complicated school and job situations due to Covid-19. Online gatherings to check-in, worship and pray together, and discuss books and topics were helpful touchstones. Topics included Bible study on the Acts of the Apostles, exploring Lutheran theology and history in "Confirmation 2.0," and Summer Book Club on *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. Evening Prayer online continued through the spring and into the summer months providing continuity and helpful grounding in worship.

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## Returning to Campus & Ministry in the Context of Covid-19

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

This year students are able to gather for worship at the Spiritual Center while they are masked and stay socially distanced. Using live piano accompaniment and vocals recorded by members of the Lutheran Student Community, we worship six feet apart, facing forward instead of each other, listening rather than singing. Students still read passages from scripture and there is still reflection together and proclamation. Prayer concerns are still gathered and prayed together. Fall Semester, students were permitted to take Grab n' Go meals or share them together outside and/or socially distanced. Though things look quite different, somehow the Spirit helps to create a holy time. God is still there, in the midst of the community, within the community.

University restrictions require that other Lutheran Campus Ministry programs and events are held online or outdoors. Weekly, there is Night Prayer on Sundays with Taize-style music and prayer, Pop-Up Office Hours or Walking Office Hours outside. Monthly programs include "Questions Not Answers" with Grace Lutheran Church, and "Antiracism Discussion" with ecumenical friends. Nikole Hannah-Jones will be rescheduled for and in-person visit for Fall 2021.

## Pastoral Care

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

## Sustainability and Board Redevelopment

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

## Looking Ahead

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

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## In These Challenging Times

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

## Connections

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

Deacon Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister

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**

Like us on facebook: **Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State**

# Mission Investment Fund



**Mission Investment Fund**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## Partnering in faith

**The Mission Investment Fund**, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals.

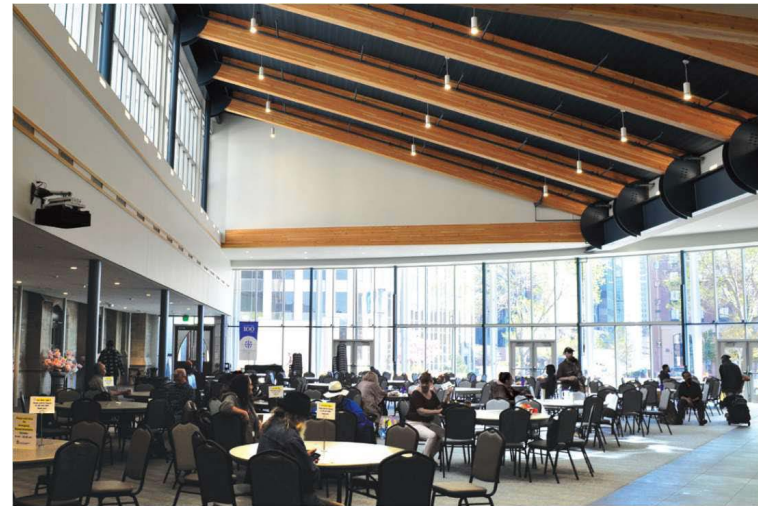
MIF provides a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and ministries.

**The result? Impact investments**, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

**During the year-long pandemic**, MIF provided assistance to investors who needed immediate access to their funds and to borrowers who needed flexibility with their loan payments. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as Paycheck Protection Program loans for congregations and ministries to keep employees on the payroll and continue operations.

**Our capabilities and capacity have never been stronger.** At year-end 2020, MIF had 883 loans outstanding, totaling \$596.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$543.1 million. With total assets of \$773.8 million and net assets of \$218.2 million at year-end 2020, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.20 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

**Our steadfast support** continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you care for a world in need. We are honored and humbled to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.



**For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, [mif.elca.org](http://mif.elca.org).**

## **MIF at work in the Allegheny Synod (as of December 31, 2020):**

- 1 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$72,122
- \$2,326,283 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

## **MIF Representative:**

The Rev. Kent Peterson  
Regional Manager  
Tel: (276) 698-7970  
email: [kent.peterson@elca.org](mailto:kent.peterson@elca.org)

Mission Investment Fund  
8765 West Higgins Road  
Chicago, Illinois 60631  
Tel: 877-886-3522  
Web: [mif.elca.org](http://mif.elca.org)



# Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

## Now what?

Last year about this time, “Now what?” was a common refrain in many of our lives. As the pandemic altered our plans, Sequanota’s Board of Directors made the difficult decision to not offer our summer camp season in 2020. Instead the camp was opened to families and friend groups to swim at the pool, hike the property and rent a cabin for a camping experience. Sequanota continued to live our mission by providing a sacred place where people were able to connect to Christ, creation and community. With four hundred acres, this beautiful setting provided ample space for people to remain physically distanced while enjoying the natural world with loved ones.

Sequanota had its challenges during this pandemic experiencing a loss of connection with our regular guests and campers, a reduction of staff employment hours, and the facilities resting dormant. However, throughout this crazy year we have experienced God’s presence in amazing ways.

- Life though stressful, moved at a slower pace, reminding the staff that God has created us to live rather than get lost in our busy schedules.
- Donors, volunteers and raving fans of Sequanota made generous gifts of time, talents and treasure to build momentum for the summer of 2021. Because of these generous gifts we are offering almost \$30,000 in summer camp scholarships this year!
- God has placed us into families, neighborhoods, and communities because they make us stronger. The pandemic required these connections to become more flexible. This distance has inspired Sequanota to focus on our strengths to be a place where community is nurtured and we seek to welcome even more to camp.

The Sequanota Board and staff are focused on creating experiences in this space where community, belonging, and discipleship are nurtured for the mission to love the world.

As a new year began, the same question (Now what?) continued to form our daily “to do” lists. What guidelines must Sequanota meet as we follow the CDC, PA Department of Health and the American Camp Association recommendations to offer camp this summer? Sequanota is offering one week of on-site Day Camp, two weeks of Family Camp and three weeks of youth Residential Camp. We hope providing an opportunity for guests and campers to connect will inspire God’s people to grow in faith and love together. As the Board of Directors and staff plan for the future, we will again ask the question – “Now what?” but instead of saying it with a sigh, or annoyance, I believe it has a level of hope. What does God have in store for Sequanota and our partners as we look to the future of the church in these Allegheny hills and valleys? As the pandemic wanes, Sequanota’s team is committed to offering a facility and experiences that inspire our guests. We believe that our culture needs an alternative to itself; a place where connecting to God is at its center, a place where being together means more than just belonging. It’s about doing something together that makes belonging matter. God is up to something in our world and Sequanota is committed to working with our Lutheran congregations to find out what that is. We look forward to serving with you as together we answer “*Now what?*”

