

PARTNER MINISTRY REPORTS



Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM)

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 continues to respond to the needs of our communities and has done so for over 70 years. In 2018, ALSM provided just under \$3 million in benevolent care to those persons who have outlived their funds. ALSM was 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 a story with you about how ALSM touches the lives of people.

Bob's Story: *(testimonial shared by his daughters Roz, Jan and Karen):*

Bob moved to The Oaks campus into a cottage in late 2017. He came to The Oaks because some friends he and his wife had, lived at The Oaks and enjoyed it very much, and since Bob's wife passed away from cancer, he had been very lonely at home. Bob has three daughters, none of which live nearby and they all thought it would be a great idea to check The Oaks to see what it was like.

Soon after Bob toured he started the process to become a resident, and once everything fell into place, Bob eagerly moved into his new home. He immediately felt 'right at home' and enjoyed the various events offered, especially the Wednesday evening 'sit outs' and the Thursday morning men's coffee group. Bob's daughters visited and would enjoy short stays here with him regularly. They too quickly became part of 'The Oaks family' and everyone knew them just as they knew Bob.

Although Bob had struggled with health problems, all of them were managed quite well until an unexpected set back had him in the hospital in early 2019. Sadly, Bob was never quite able to recover and passed away in February. Bob's daughters were intrigued with the possibility of holding a service at The Oaks, since he had made so many great friends during his time here. They held an intimate service for immediate friends and family. Several staff team members of The Oaks were present that day, including every member of The Oaks maintenance team.

A Testimonial from Bob's daughters Roz, Jan and Karen

"Dear Sweet Nichole and your wonderful staff... We don't even know where to begin to thank you for the awesome help we received from our friends at The Oaks. Chef Ernie and his staff did an amazing job for our memorial luncheon. The maintenance department set up the community room perfectly and they stayed with us through the entire service to help in any way needed. You were so gracious. The community room made for a wonderful event to honor our Dad. It made a difficult day much easier for all that attended.

We are so thankful we found this amazing "campus" and that dad had a lovely year here making new friends and enjoying the activities offered. We appreciate you all!!!"

Roz, Jan and Karen

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)

continued

- **Community Services** (ALSM at Home, Counseling, Senior Daily Living Centers and Wheels Away)
- **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)

A few highlights from our programs and services during 2018 include:

Blairmont Commons, Hickory Commons and The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg

- Community programs and events to create memories and fellowship: Safe Trick-or-Treat, Vacation Bible School and the traditions of the Gingerbread Village at Christmas and the Easter egg hunt were enjoyed by residents, families and our neighbors in the community. A special thanks to Zion Lutheran Church in Hollidaysburg for partnering with The Lutheran Home on the Easter egg hunt and Vacation Bible School.
- The cottage expansion project at Blairmont Commons was completed. These cottages are energy efficient and handicapped accessible so that our residents may "age in place" in this secure neighborhood setting. These independent living residences continue to attract individuals age 55 and over. Individuals continue to join the waiting list.
- The Hillcrest apartments offer one and two bedroom accommodations. Kitchen and bathroom upgrades continue.
- The Lutheran Home continues to focus on persons who are in need of short-term rehab. Many times, persons who have suffered a stroke or need rehab 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.
- The staff team touched the lives of more than 352 people. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Rachel Wachter 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 independent

living apartments that were added to the campus as part of the renovation are fully occupied. Personal care accommodations are available. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Brenda Blough at 814.255.6844.

- Traditions such as the Christmas Open House, Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and Family Day were enjoyed by residents, families, and the community.
- Upgrades continued throughout the campus with generous assistance from the Cambria County Auxiliary. The auxiliary continues to hold annual events including autumn boutique and a spring luncheon.
- 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.
- During 2018, more than 260 lives were touched.

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) for which 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.
- An additional cul-de-sac of independent living cottages is being added to the community. 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.
- The Centre County Auxiliary's annual Fashion Show raises funds for benevolent care. The Auxiliary generously donates funds to enrich the lives of residents at The Oaks.
- 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 staff team touched the lives of more than 190 people.

Community Services

- Services of ALSM at Home include personal care, cleaning, meal preparation, assistance with the activities of daily living (such as bathing,

continued

dressing, medication reminders to name a few) and companionship. Often, members of our staff team provide respite care for persons who reside with their families.

- The Senior Daily Living Centers are designed to feel like home, stimulate cognitive functioning and aid in maintaining physical well-being to help keep loved ones home for as long as possible. There are centers located in Altoona and Somerset. Openings are available at the Senior Daily Living. Please call Sondra Stacey for the Altoona center at 814.946.4693 and Wendy Shaulis at 814.445.8506 for the Somerset center for more information.
- ALSM at Home provided more than 56,703 hours of service and the Senior Daily Living Centers provided more than 7,432 days of service. Through Community Services, ALSM touched the lives of more than 446 people.

Children's Services

- Growing Years Early Learning Center and Kid Stop managers completed educational courses through the Keystone STARS program for continuing quality improvement. The five centers are rated a 3 STAR rating out of 4 STAR. Those centers include Bedford and Johnstown Kid Stops and Growing Years in Bedford, Dubois and Johnstown. The Growing Years and Kid Stop Programs serve more than 250 children each month. 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. There are more than 199 preschoolers enrolled in the ALSM Head Start program and 99 in the Early Head Start program. There are 30 students enrolled in the Head Start PRE-K Counts class in Bedford. More than 266 families received Head Start services.
- The Family Center of Bedford County served 60 families and touched the lives of 160 children. In addition to home visits, monthly playgroups and fathers' groups are held as well as other special events.

In addition to these program highlights, ALSM's 2018 annual golf outing raised more than \$38,000 for benevolent care. We invite you to join us at this year's outing, scheduled for Monday, July 29 at Scotch Valley Country Club. For more information, please contact the Advancement Office at 696.4516.

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

- Dr. Luke Rhoads Award – Mr. Mondon Smith, Trinity Lutheran Church, Altoona
- Helping Hands Award – Mr. George Penrod, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Windber
- Youth Service Award – Ms. Carrie & Ms. Meghan Frederick, Zion Lutheran Church, Hollidaysburg

The 2019 Annual Dinner is scheduled for October 17 at the American Legion Social Hall in Hollidaysburg. We hope you will join us for this event to honor those who serve ALSM and to raise funds for benevolent care.

We also honored The Reverends Will and Elisa Osman with The Rev. Dr. Walden M. Holl Award for their ongoing support and commitment to social ministry.

ALSM experienced a productive year in 2018 because of the time, talent and treasure of our staff team members, our volunteers, congregations, auxiliaries, board members, donors, and community partners who enable us to touch the lives of more than 3,000 families every year. We sincerely **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 display at Synod Assembly. For a copy of ALSM's Annual Report, please call 814.696.4516 or send an email to development@alsm.org. For more information about ALSM at any time, please visit our website at www.alsm.org.

In His service,



Patricia W. Savage, President/CEO
www.alsm.org • 814.696.4500 • 800.400.2285

Allegheny Synodical Women's Organization

The Allegheny Synodical Women's Organization meets in Convention on April 6 at Zion-Hollidaysburg. The convention theme is "Open the Door to Hope." We will be electing a Secretary and Treasurer plus 3 Board Members and 2 Triennial Voting Members for the 11th Triennial Convention in Phoenix, AZ in July of 2010. Information will be available by September, 2019 for registration for the Triennial Gathering which follows the convention.

Since the ASWO chose this year's theme, I have thought about what it means to me to open that "door to hope" as it relates to the women's organization.

The Women of the ELCA Executive Board and the staff are looking through that door as they think and ask why the organization is important to us. They question that if the organization went away tomorrow, would we miss it and would it matter and why?

They also ask if we could make changes in our constitutions to encourage more participation in the organization, what would they be? The ASWO Board was asked to discuss these and other related issues, so they would be a part of the Region Caucus discussions at the Conference of Presidents in February.

Recommendations from these caucus meetings will be considered at the next Board meeting of the Churchwide Board.

The ASWO Board asks each woman in active and inactive units the same things. We are now down to 26 active Congregational Units, which is a similar story in many of the synodical units. So, we can decide to continue as we are or we can "open the door of hope," become empowered by the Holy Spirit, and commit ourselves to seek new ways to encourage more participation in our congregational units and the synodical unit.

As a first step to seeking new ways, the ASWO is planning a day of renewal in the fall of this year. It will be related to the things mentioned above, some basic refresher of leadership information and a chance to share hopes and dreams of the women's organization.

We are just now in the first phase of what will be included. The place, date and time will be announced through the post-convention newsletter in July.

Blessings,
Carol McClure, President of the ASWO

ASWO – 2018 LWR Yearly Collection Totals

Blankets.....	498
Soap (bars).....	2044
Quilts	1196
School kits	751
Personal Care kits.....	1022
Baby Care kits	17
Fabric kits	19

This information was reported from around 25 congregations.

Other ministries supported

Operation S.O.S.
Operation Christmas Child
Local food pantries
Meals on Wheels
Rocky Boy Indian Reservation Mission, Montana
Allegheny Lutheran Homes & other local rest homes
Veterans Home in Hollidaysburg
Samaritan's Purse
Local Hospitals and Local Bloodmobiles

With so many donations of time and resources by churches, details are too numerous to list everything.

Table submitted by Casey Colledge 3/30/19

Breezewood Trucker and Traveler The Year In Review 2018

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:

2015	2016	2017	2018
1033	865	1011 . . .	1168 trucker contacts.
1258	1132	1424 . . .	1429 traveler contacts.
663	670	598	764 employee/staff contacts.
69	72	93	82 spiritual/emotional assistance for truckers.
91	91	115	143 spiritual/emotional assistance for employee/staff.
237	281	255	261 pastoral care calls in the community.
947	412	1258	1041 food resource provided.
108	74	54	85 nights of lodging provided.
44	46	26	36 persons assisted with gasoline.
71	76	101	145 persons provided with transportation(including bus).
58	54	26	23 travel bags, showers, gift cards, cash, or clothing.
69	51	97	271 traveler's "Zip Lock" care packages given.
205	240	255	195 Bibles or New Testaments given.
126	185	155	285 families/individuals served through Christmas food drive.
12	10	11	14 local church sponsored holiday hospitality tables.
23	26	26	32 ministry presentations/preaching
92	95	97	93 Bible studies/ prayer service/ worship offered.
2149	2107	2047	2177 professional staff hours worked.
1930	1411	1964	1830 hours served by volunteers.

Member: National Institute of Business and Industrial Chaplaincy.

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

continued

Building and nurturing “connections” and relationships is an important task in any human endeavor, and especially so in the work environment of the highway. Solitude can be a gift in a frenetically paced world for a trucker or a traveler, but heart to heart connections with others cannot be replaced. Healthy communications and human interactions at a travel plaza build and nurture “connection” and relationships. Loneliness can be brutal, and damages emotional well-being. We need time to ourselves after a busy day or week (such as Jesus did when he ventured to the mountainside to spend time with his Father in Matthew 14), but our spiritual, emotional, and mental functions need community and the connections which the body of Christ can offer. The ministries of hospitality in Breezewood are a work of “attraction” and invitation to a fellowship banquet with the King, whether through weekly Bible studies, work place prayers, offering food, care packages, lodging, hospitality tables, or responding to the myriad of travel or work dilemmas that present themselves in this setting. Building community is an intentional choice and

a considerable challenge in today’s technological and uncertain times. We give thanks for our friends on the road, and the staff that serve them in Breezewood. This ministry has been invited to be present and active with in the business locations of a trucker’s town; we don’t take that for granted.

Thank you to each partner church, business, organization, and individual who supports and encourages the ministry in Breezewood. A special thank you to Management Committee members David Wright (St. Clairsville, Pennknoll), Judy Simonson (Mt. Zion, Breezewood), and Finance Committee: Vera Wilt (Mt. Zion, Breezewood). Thank you!

MAKING HEART TO HEART CONNECTIONS IN JESUS.

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

ELCA Candidacy — Regions 7 & 8

CALLED TO LEAD

Called to Lead is the title of a new discernment guide regarding ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Baptism includes a call from God to share the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world, and some baptized people discern a call from God to the particular ministries of pastors and deacons in the church. *Called to Lead* is intended to help people figure out whether God is calling them to become pastors or deacons.

Trying to figure that out involves paying attention to the suggestions, encouragements and nudges we might receive from the people around us. Has anyone ever suggested that you might become a pastor or a deacon? Has anyone ever encouraged you to consider that possibility? Has anyone ever nudged you to take some steps in that direction? Perhaps the suggestions, encouragements and nudges have occurred as internal stirrings, leading you to wonder about becoming a pastor or deacon or to imagine yourself serving in those particular ministry roles. In any case, *Called to Lead* can help you to decide whether and how to act upon those suggestions, encouragements and nudges.

Called to Lead can also help you to give other people the suggestions, encouragements and nudges they

might need to figure out whether God is calling them to become pastors or deacons. Do you know anyone you believe would serve well as a pastor or a deacon? Do you know anyone you perceive to be well suited to those particular ministry roles? If so, *Called to Lead* is a resource you can recommend to that person.

Called to Lead is available on the ELCA website as a downloadable resource. Click “Resources” on the ELCA homepage, then click “Candidacy” on the menu of photo icons. A Spanish translation of *Called to Lead* will soon be available as well.

I am pleased to recommend *Called to Lead* to your use in discernment, as I am pleased also to work with your synod’s candidacy leaders and candidacy committees in our churchwide work of guiding the people God has called to become pastors and deacons in the ELCA.

Paul Baglyos
ELCA Candidacy and Leadership Manager
for Regions 7 & 8

ELCA Region 8 Archives Annual Report 2018

April 18, 2019

The ELCA Region 8 Archives are managed by the A. R. Wentz Branch of the United Lutheran Seminary Library, providing archival services for the eastern portion of Region 8. Sheila Joy, Archivist and Cataloger for ULS and Region 8, continues to manage the day to day operations of the Region 8 Archives. Evan Boyd, Library Director and Archivist of United Lutheran Seminary, supervises her work and sets archives policy.

2018 was a year of processing collections and assisting researchers via telephone, email, and walk-in. Goals for the Region 8 Archives this year included meeting with synod representatives, continuing to research and process materials from synod offices, and creating volunteer opportunities.

The Library hired its first student assistants and offered a paid summer internship. Students spent most of their time processing collections while our intern, Ms. Anne-Louise Monn, spent her internship processing six congregations, wrote for the **Branches United blog**, and reached out to synod offices to update contacts and strengthen communication with the synods.

Ms. Joy's time is still split between three major areas of work: the Region 8 Archives, the Seminary Archives, and cataloging materials for the Wentz Library. Although the workload is heavy, Ms. Joy continues to find ways to manage her time between the three areas, making processing of Region 8 collections a top priority over the summer. Having a student worker and summer intern helped to complete these projects in an efficient manner. The archives continue to actively seek student workers, interns, and volunteers to assist in its processing work.

Mr. Boyd and Ms. Joy submitted a proposal for the ELCA Regional Archives Grant to digitize and make available online the minutes of the General Synod and the General Council. The grant was approved in February 2019 and the grant period will be March 1, 2019-February 28, 2020. The archives is very excited to receive this grant of \$2,907.60.

The library and archives continue to be an evolving organism and space continues to be an area of concern. Mr. Boyd and Ms. Joy have begun implementing a space reorganization to better utilize our building. Currently, around 170 active congregations have material in our archives, but we no longer accept materials for active congregations. We will continue to urge active congregations to manage their own archives, rather than have us care for them.

Major Actions, 2018

- Received 67 research inquiries, up from 56 the previous
- Hosted 8 in-person research visits
- Received materials from Allegheny and Upper Susquehanna Synods
- Processed 12 collections from Lower Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, Metro DC, and Upper Susquehanna that have long waited to be processed
- Successfully submitted an ELCA grant proposal for digitization

Goals for 2019-2020

- Meet with Synod representatives
- Continue to receive and process materials from synod offices
- Host church visits in collaboration with Advancement office
- Collaborate with Seminary professors and outside universities

It continues to be a pleasure to serve the needs of Region 8 synods.

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

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania



In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good.

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, the ELCA Domestic Mission unit, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans who are working to eradicate hunger are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

In 2018, LAMPa celebrated 39 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, human trafficking, immigration, school funding inequity, racism and environmental threats to health and safety. Thanks be to God for the support of our Allegheny Synod Policy Council representatives, the Rev. William Osman, and the Rev. Scott Schul, whose term expired in 2018.

Our work in 2018 was guided by both the LAMPa issue agenda adopted by our policy council in December 2017 as well as the principles of ELCA World Hunger to be transformative, holistic and integrated with attention to fostering vital congregations and equipping leaders.

Equipping disciples, growing leaders, supporting vital congregations

We began 2018 by accompanying and supporting Pennsylvania hunger leaders in learning and legislative visits during the ELCA World Hunger Gathering in Washington, D.C. In May, Lutheran Day in the Capitol saw us celebrate what God is doing through advocates in each synod as well as to equip advocates for justice-seeking on issues from hunger to clean water and to put that into practice in legislative visits in the state Capitol. As keynote, Nobel-Prize-winning geophysicist Dr. Richard Alley inspired, informed and encouraged advocates to address climate change. LAMPa staff took that message to the National Youth Gathering, connecting with youth to share ways they could care for our common home when they returned to Pennsylvania.

LAMPa staff helped organize and engage Lutherans in a statewide EnergyStar tour to help congregations understand government resources and research available to reduce their contributions to climate change as well as save money. We also joined other faith-based organizations to host a webinar on community solar programs, laying the groundwork for related legislation introduced in early 2019. LAMPa staff worked with individuals and congregations who were led by their ministry of service into advocacy and by sharing grant opportunities with those engaged in related ministry. LAMPa also invited and supported advocates and those with lived experiences of hunger, poverty, and violence in testifying, making legislative visits, speaking at press conferences, or leading letter-writing campaigns

Progress on LAMPa's Issue Agenda

The 2018 session saw success on several items on LAMPa's issue agenda.

Hunger – Maintained funding for the State Food Purchase Program and the Pa. Agriculture Surplus System, the state's major anti-hunger programs.

Clean Slate – The legislature passed and the governor signed clean slate legislation that seals the records of those with nonviolent misdemeanor convictions after an individual has remained crime-free for 10 years and would also seal non-conviction records as a matter of course. This is now being held up as a model for criminal justice reform in other states.

Firearms and Domestic Violence – The legislature passed and the governor signed legislation that would require those involved in domestic violence to turn over firearms to police within 24 hours. The previous legislation allowed firearms to be turned over to friends and family members within 60 days.

Safe Harbor – The legislature passed and the governor signed legislation that would divert child sex-trafficking victims away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate services.

Protecting the Social Safety Net – LAMPa advocates helped defeat legislation that would have created barriers to food aid by mandating burdensome work requirements, even in areas with high unemployment.

Payday lending – Payday lending legislation was introduced, but quick and firm response by advocates kept it from getting anywhere.

Creation Care – An outpouring from advocates helped defeat a last-minute attempt to pass legislation shared at Lutheran Day that would have rolled back environmental regulation of the oil and gas industry to standards of 30 years ago.

The passion of our advocates is recognized. We are the only organization in Pennsylvania that garners signatures for hunger funding and policy in every legislative district in the state. We have been invited to participate in the Governor's Food Policy Council. Our work on Safe Harbor has led to an invitation to work on further legislation to end human trafficking.

We look forward to strengthening ecumenical and interfaith work in 2019, building on the foundation

that has been laid in recent years and in response to the glaring need to heal division and promote unity in such a time as this when our differences have been fed by fear and turned into paralysis at one extreme and violence at the other. We lean into that work with the theme of "Set a Welcome Table," and a day of ecumenical and interfaith fellowship, service, learning and preparation for advocacy in May.

Connecting Service to Advocacy: In 2018, LAMPa resourced congregations participating in the Churchwide Day of Service, garnering more than 1,000 letters to lawmakers on a variety of topics. LAMPa will again share service-and-advocacy projects for Sept. 8. We would be glad to help your congregation plan to make that day one of "God's work. Our hands. Our voices."

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

Tracey DePasquale
LAMPa Director

Lutheran Campus Ministry – Lutheran Student Community at Penn State

Meals together are an important part of the life of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Around the table you'll find students who study education, engineering, political science, languages, and many more. Among them are young people who grew up in Lutheran congregations as near as Hershey and Sunbury or far as North Dakota and Washington. There are students from other faith traditions, and some who've never been involved in a church before. With Lutheran Campus Ministry, they all find welcome at the table. They share a nourishing meal in an accepting group of peers, and enjoy the opportunity to step back from the demands of campus life. This is a community without requirements, without grades or judgement, where the invitation to "Come as you are" is sincere and grounded in the love and grace of God.

Worship

At the heart of Lutheran Campus Ministry and our outreach to the university community is Word and Sacrament. Students gather with the worshipping community at Grace Lutheran on Sunday mornings. Students also take part in the casual worship Sunday evening shared by Lutheran Campus Ministry and Grace Lutheran. On Thursdays, Lutheran Campus Ministry offers Holden Evening Prayer on campus in at the midst of religious diversity at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. Each worship option brings a different flavor and style, and has the familiar rhythms of liturgy with Gospel-centered preaching, relevant prayer, and weekly communion. Students encounter God, share prayer requests, learn and grow, and are strengthened for the challenges they will encounter as their journey of faith unfolds.

Community Life

On a campus with 46,000 students, finding authentic community and life-giving connections is challenging. When students gather each week meals (dinner after worship Sunday and Thursday, lunch after worship Sunday) they share so much more than a meal. Together, they live what it means to be people of God, celebrating one another's joys and bearing one another's burdens. Special events like picnics, turkey-dinner potluck, Christmas celebration, and retreats gather students to relax and enjoy time together. Social media

connects students to Lutheran Campus Ministry and each other through our Facebook page, weekly listserve messages, and webpage.

Deepening Faith

Opportunities for learning and growth are many and varied in a campus setting. In September 2019 we hosted author and speaker Nadia Bolz-Weber (with the help of some University funding and other Protestant campus ministries). She shared from her writings, and engaged student leaders, the general public, and faith leaders, in meaningful conversation of faith and real life. In October 2019 we joined with ecumenical partners and the Penn State LGBTQA Student Resource Center to host Mikah Meyer to hear about his world-record breaking travels and so much more. His story of feeling unseen by his faith community, then embraced by Christians across the nation is powerful and hope-filled. Due to weather, a January visit from Austin Channing Brown, author of *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness*, was rescheduled for late March. Her visit has prompted book discussions and a variety of partnerships around faith and race. Weekly Bible Study explored the book of Romans, and a newly-formed book group has been discussing books by Rachel Held Evans and Nadia Bolz-Weber. Last spring's Interfaith Seder was a delightful opportunity to truly share traditions and experiences with our Jewish brothers and sisters, and plans are underway for another this April with Hillel.

Service-Learning

Students are eager to live out their love of God and neighbor by responding to the needs around them. We joined "God's Work. Our Hands. Day of Service" in September with an afternoon volunteering in a local coat closet for international students in need. We volunteered with *We Are Family* on a weekend retreat at the Steinbruck Center in Washington, DC, exploring issues of race and poverty. Partnering with the Muslim Student Association, students continue to help with "Free Pizza Friday," handing out pizza on campus to create connections and good-will. Our ministry continues as part of the "Green Team" washing dishes after community meals on Sundays and Thursdays,

continued

as well as washing mugs from Grace Lutheran's Sunday coffee hour each week, eliminating the use of disposable items. We joined Penn State Hillel's "Challah for Hunger" for an interfaith bake, learning how to braid dough and baking bread to raise funds for hunger programs. Through a grant from the Knutson Endowment, Lutheran Campus Ministry supports Penn State's new Clothing Transit. In cooperation with the LGBTQA Center and others, this resource provides support and help for a truly marginalized population on campus. At the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, senior Music Education student, Maggie VanBrakle, joined campus minister, Alicia Anderson, as part of the LCM Builds team that helped youth gathering participants learn about Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran Campus Ministry while building the walls of two houses for families affected by Hurricane Harvey.

Spring Break

Alternative spring break trips provide a welcome chance to discover the world away from campus. Spring Break 2018 we traveled to with Lutheran Campus Ministry groups from Tuscon, AZ and Raleigh, NC to Luther sites in Germany. The opportunity to explore how Luther's work has shaped religious thought and life in Germany, in the rest of the world, and our own lives, was a marvelous experience. Highlights included time in Eisleben, visiting the Wartburg Castle, and two days in Wittenberg. This year our alternative spring break trip will take us to the Arizona/Mexico border in partnership with three other campus ministries at Penn State. We will explore issues of migration, poverty, faith, and ministry along the border, working with Frontera de Cristo.

Focus on Vocation

Through a Lilly Endowment funded project called discernPSU, Lutheran Campus Ministry is working with Westminster Presbyterian Fellowship, inviting the wider campus to explore how our beliefs and values shape our work, activities and relationships. Speakers, quotes, interviews, lunch conversations, and retreats provide students and those who work with them opportunities to explore their sense of vocation in the broadest possible sense. This year's "Discerning Our Stories" retreat was well-received and helped students connect the stories of their lives with the stories of God's people from scripture. Learn more about discernPSU at sites.psu.edu/discern.

Connections

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

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

Sincerely,

Deacon Alicia Anderson, Campus Minister

Visit our website: www.lutheranpennstate.org

Sign up to receive our e-newsletter for friends and alumni
<http://lutheranpennstate.us10.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=051e3a0ce53d6bc3c0397261a&id=c73b6d40d3>

Add a student to our weekly student listserve
<http://lutheranpennstate.us10.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=051e3a0ce53d6bc3c0397261a&id=453c7a31f0>

Like us on facebook: Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State



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

Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is the lending ministry of the ELCA. MIF makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects. With MIF loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

MIF loans expand the capacity for ministry. MIF loans help create expanded worship spaces, updated space for education and youth ministry, new kitchens for community meals and soup kitchens, affordable housing units for the community and much more.

At year-end 2018, MIF had 917 loans outstanding, totaling \$556.6 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2018, MIF investments totaled \$499.1 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$705.4 million and net assets of \$200.8 million at year-

end 2018, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds. For more information, visit mif.elca.org.

MIF loans and investments in the Allegheny Synod (as of December 31, 2018):

- 2 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$200,274
- \$2,636,143 in Mission Investment Fund investments

MIF Representative:

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

Mission Investment Fund
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631
Tel: 877-886-3522
Web: mif.elca.org



Pennsylvania Council of Churches 2018

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is church bodies and agencies representing Anabaptist, Episcopal, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and Protestant communions in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania working together for Christian unity for the sake of the world. [John 17:23]

Important Accomplishments

Future Planning Work. The Future Task Group completed its work in 2018. The group recommended changes in the composition of the Council's Board of Directors to reduce the size of the Board by having a single member representing each member denomination in order to improve efficiency—a model much like the National Council of Churches. The Board voted to make this change in October 2018, effective for meetings beginning in 2019. The group also recommended the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee to lay the foundation for the Council's future, with consideration to be given to members with the skills needed to address many of the Council's perceived needs, which might include persons with gifts and experience, such as: similar work working with and coaching other religious organizations; fundraising/development; communications; and legal, among others. The Board will name this group at its first 2019 meeting, with work to be completed by the end of 2020.

Conferences and Meetings. The Council did not hold a single statewide conference in 2018, but conducted workshops around the issues of criminal justice reform and gun violence.

Continuing from 2017, the Council held an event in Lancaster in April 2018 called "Faithful Advocacy for Criminal Justice Reform: Principles and Practice." This session was designed to educate participants about the criminal justice system/mass incarceration at the federal and state levels, "Clean Slate" legislation (designed to remove a barrier for formerly incarcerated persons for qualified offenses at the state level), and how to advocate effectively for this legislation. Participants were asked/encouraged to participate in advocacy visits with their Pennsylvania representatives with support from the Council's Public Witness program. This effort was supported in part by funds from the Mennonite Central Committee. The Clean

Slate legislation passed in May 2018, supported by these significant efforts by the faith community.

The Council held another session in Pittsburgh in August 2018 called "Faithful Advocacy for Gun Violence Prevention: Principles and Practice." This session followed the same format of the Clean Slate sessions, but focused on gun violence prevention legislation designed to remove guns from domestic abusers and others who could be a danger to themselves or others. Legislation aimed at domestic abusers passed in October 2018, and like Clean Slate, was supported by significant efforts by the faith community. More workshops are planned for 2019.

The Council also presented to various congregations seeking to learn more about the Berks County Residential Center, used to detain immigrant families, often for long periods of time. It also presented two sessions on climate change using slides and information provided by the Climate Leadership Program attended by the Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach in 2017.

Finally, the Council conducted a Healing Communities training in Bethlehem in June for over 20 participants from the Lehigh Valley. Healing Communities aims to train congregations to be welcoming and supportive of formerly incarcerated persons.

2018 was a year of gearing up for additional "School-to-Prison Pipeline" sessions around the state, using a trauma-informed lens to help participants understand the role of funding to ensure that all students have the resources they need to overcome barriers to learning, including poverty, race, disabilities, and language, among other things. The newer sessions will focus more on how racism plays a role in the distribution of school funding by the state in Pennsylvania. Given the high correlation between students facing traumatic conditions without sufficient support and those who end up in prison, these sessions will continue to make the case for a fair school funding formula and adequate funding in order to bridge the gap. These sessions are being supported by funds from the William Penn Foundation through a collaborative grant from POWER in Philadelphia (a PICO organizing group).

Support for Collaborative Efforts. The Council has received support from several different sources aimed at

supporting collaborative efforts involving the Council and other denominations and coalitions.

- The Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) East Coast Office has again reauthorized a \$10,000 grant to support advocacy in areas that are particularly important to Anabaptist traditions: criminal justice reform, immigration, gun violence, and education. The grant runs through March 2020. It is the Council's hope that this funding will continue to be renewed. There has been a continuing focus on building a Healing Communities network in PA, and on calling for closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee families far in excess of the time they should be held. Additional efforts in 2018 included the "Faithful Advocacy" events described above, continuing to build networks among stakeholders active in work around immigration/immigration reform, conversations with groups involved with reducing gun violence, including Heeding God's Call and CeaseFirePA.
- A grant of \$16,000 from the William Penn Foundation (through POWER; \$8,000/year for 2 years—an increase from the previous grant amount) continues to support the Council's efforts to reform school funding in PA. The funds have been used to do basic education on equity and adequacy of public school funding in PA, and to support the "school to prison pipeline" sessions described above.

These grants have continued to support part-time efforts by an Advocacy Programs Coordinator, John-Michael Cotignola-Pickens.

During the summer of 2018, the Council was invited to apply for a substantial grant from the Van Ameringen Foundation, in conjunction with the Abolitionist Law Center, to do work in the area of criminal justice reform, particularly with regard to the use of solitary confinement and treatment of incarcerated persons with mental health conditions. While not as much as was hoped, the Foundation awarded a three-year grant to be divided between the two organizations: \$75,000 in Year 1, \$100,000 in Year 2, and \$125,000 in Year 3. Work will begin in 2019.

Other Activities

- The Board of Directors adopted one resolution on gun violence reduction in October 2018.
- The Council:
 - Issued a public statement: *A Statement on Separation of Families at the Border* (June 19, 2018); and
 - Offered official greetings to: (1) the Western PA Conference of the United Methodist Church; and (2) Church Women United.
- Both of the Council's websites, www.pachurches.org and www.pachurchesadvocacy.org, have continued to evolve.

- The Director of Advocacy and Ecumenical Outreach participated in an editorial board meeting with the Harrisburg Patriot News with Bishop Audrey Scanlan of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania to discuss media coverage of the faith community and interfaith relations.

Council Ministries

Commission on Public Witness & Public Witness

Ministry. The Council's advocacy efforts in 2018 focused on the following areas:

- Advocacy for a Pennsylvania budget with sufficient revenues that addresses the concerns of people of faith.
- Human needs/poverty-related work.
- Efforts to raise the minimum wage, primarily in coordination with the Raise the Wage PA Coalition.
- Public education funding, primarily in coordination with POWER.
- Criminal justice reform.
- Immigration, particularly around calling for the closure of the Berks County Family Detention Center that is holding refugee women and children for long periods of time, and for ending the separation of families at the border.
- Environment, primarily climate change and protecting water resources, in coordination with several organizations.

The Commission continues to work on efforts aimed at improving the lives of people on the margins, and addressing problems with our political system.

Commission on Unity & Relationships. The Council, working with Lancaster Theological Seminary intern Teman Cooke, worked on refining an approach for conducting "difficult" conversations within and between congregations. These are conversations designed to bring people with widely disparate beliefs/opinions together to hear each other's stories and discuss their differences in a safe environment. One session was held in December 2018 at Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster, and others are being planned for 2019.

Commission on Common Ministries. The Council has continued to provide support to its Trucker/Traveler Ministry, Campground Ministries, and Farmworker Ministries. Work continues on building a Healing Communities network in Pennsylvania.

Looking to the Future

Council staff continue to discuss activities and areas where the Council might engage to be of service to our members, the wider faith community.

Benefits in Action

Walking Our Promise to Support Those Who Serve

Yes, things have changed in the church, especially in the last decade. But like Martin Luther's description of faith — "a living, busy, active, mighty thing" — Portico Benefit Services is constantly evolving, finding more efficient ways to help clergy and employees steward their gifts for the sake of the world.

As the ELCA's benefit ministry, we're called to live out a 200+ year legacy of service to clergy and employees. Our talented staff leverage Portico's long-term experience, industry partnerships, and innovation-embracing culture to deliver benefits that can help people live well throughout their service and into retirement.



The Rev. Jeff Thiemann
President & CEO

Blessings on your ministry. It's a privilege to serve you.

By the Numbers — Helping People Live With More Confidence

640 Members Retired in 2018, and we celebrated with every one!	8,943 Pounds Lost so far by ELCA-Primary members enrolled in our new Omada health improvement program.	621 Employees Joined when four new Lutheran social ministry organizations decided to offer Portico benefits to their staff last year.
23 Companies Screened from ELCA social purpose funds for holding reserves of oil shale and tar sands.	\$1M Debt Paid Off by plan members working with LSS Financial Counseling, as of year-end 2018.	4.5% Baseline Rate Increase for employer health contributions in 2019 — on average, the lowest increase in 5 years.
\$94 Less Per Month paid in premiums by most ELCA Medicare-Primary retired members in 2019 thanks to our switch to Humana.	2,500 Worries Released by ELCA Youth Gathering attendees at Portico's unbinding prayer station.	6,080 Learning Hours invested by members in Portico's financial education seminars, webinars, and videos last year.



Sequanota Lutheran Conference Center & Camp

SEQUANOTA

2019

summer camp

TRANSFORMED COMMUNITY
God's Agent of C.H.A.N.G.E.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

Register Online
www.sequanota.com

★ 2019 SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULE ★

DATE	ELEMENTARY	JR. HIGH	SR. HIGH	SPECIALITY
Week 1: June 16 – 21		Confirmation Camp	Lifeguarding	
Week 2: June 23 – 28	Cabin Camp Robots & Rockets	Cabin Camp Robots & Rockets Outdoor Adventure		
Week 3: June 30 – July 5 (July 4 th FUN)	Cabin Camp 1/2 Week Camp Survivor Skills Mini Plus 1	Cabin Camp Survivor Skills		Bethesda
Week 4: July 7 – 12 (Guitar, Dance, Fishing, Archery)	Cabin Camp	Cabin Camp	Cabin Camp SaLT	
Week 5: July 14 – 19	Sequanota Days		SaLT	Family Camp Grandparents
Week 6: July 21 – 26			ROAM	
Week 7: July 28 – Aug 2		Trek PA		
Week 8: August 4 – 9 (Theme Week)	Cabin Camp 1/2 Week Camp	Cabin Camp		

Register Online!
www.sequanota.com

Susquehanna University

Life of the University

The 2018-2019 academic year marks the 161st for Susquehanna University. The University continues to serve a religiously diverse student body, about 8% of whom self-identify as Lutheran and who hail from 35 states and 22 countries. Dr. Jonathan Green, Susquehanna's 15th president, is completing his second year of service.

Campus Religious Activities

Religious Life continues to help members of the academic community integrate faith, life, and learning. Many religious life organizations and various ministries and programs offered by the Chaplain's Office help students grow spiritually as they grow intellectually.

Sunday worship services are held in Weber Chapel when classes are in session. The student deacon program allows select students to explore Christian service through formal servant-leadership roles.

In January, for the third year Chaplain Scott Kershner co-directed (with Rabbi Nina Mandel, an adjunct professor at Susquehanna) and interfaith student travel seminar to the Holy Land called GO Jerusalem: Interfaith Encounters. The program studies the ways in which the three Abrahamic faiths regard Jerusalem as a holy city and work together to seek peace, justice, and mutual understanding.

Susquehanna received a grant from Interfaith Youth Core to host a regional interfaith leadership gathering in

February, which brought together students and educators from 7 colleges and universities around Central PA for a day of leadership development around issues of religious pluralism and civic life.

Interfaith engagement is a strong commitment of ELCA institutions of higher education generally, and Susquehanna in particular. Ours is a religiously diverse campus, a reality which we embrace not in spite of but because of our Lutheran tradition, which teaches that the other is to be welcomed as Christ and that education serves the common good.

In our world where religious conflicts are routinely in the headlines, the work of building bridges of understanding and cooperation across lines of religious and philosophical difference is an essential civic and spiritual task. Such work has been an important part of religious life at Susquehanna in the past year.

In Conclusion

Susquehanna University deeply appreciates the ongoing support and encouragement that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Allegheny Synod give to its efforts to be a strong and successful college of the Church.

The Rev. Scott M. Kershner, Chaplain to the University

United Lutheran Seminary Gettysburg + Philadelphia

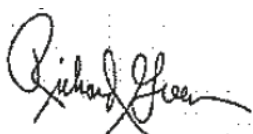
Our diversity task force, in conjunction with the diversity committee of the Board of Directors, has undertaken a nine month process to craft a Welcome and Equity Statement. We are committed to building a house where restorative justice, equity, and full inclusion at God's banquet table are afforded to all members of the seminary community. You can read the full statement here: www.uls.edu/about/welcome-equity/.

We cannot continue without your support, of course. We ask that you prayerfully consider three ways to help us:

- Recognize those individuals within your synod who have gifts for ministry and encourage them to answer God's call to rostered leadership in the ELCA.
- Make a personal contribution to ULS on a monthly basis. If you are already doing this, consider increasing your monthly gift to the seminary by ten percent (www.uls.edu/giving).
- Encourage your synod council to increase synodical giving by three percent of your current level over a three year period (an incremental increase with each passing year).

In return, we will strive to raise up new leaders for the congregations within your synod, doing our utmost to prepare them for the challenges of today's church with the added benefit of little or no graduate school debt. ***We are grateful for you, your ministry, and the support by which we continue to thrive.***

By God's Grace,



Dr. Richard Green
Interim President

United Lutheran Seminary is a community committed to changing the world through the transformative grace of God, inclusive hospitality, and radical welcome. We commit ourselves to making this seminary open, welcoming, accepting, and affirming to all of God's children.

In our second year of being United Lutheran Seminary, we are pleased to report that we have 167 students seeking to serve in the ministry of Word and Sacrament and Word and Service, which is a ten percent increase from two years ago.

With your synodical support, a secure foundation exists on which to "build a house" that provides for the faculty, staff and facilities, but most importantly provides full tuition to all our ELCA students seeking rostered positions within the church. This year, *less than one in four students applied for loans* due in large part to your synod's faithful giving. Our students will be graduating with less debt, which means your congregations in need of a servant leader will have more options for a call. We could not be here without your synod's amazing grace.

*Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard and loved
and treasured, taught and claimed as words
within the Word. Built of tears and cries
and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of
grace. Let this house proclaim from floor to
rafter: All are welcome! All are welcome!
All are welcome in this place!*

—MARTY HAUGEN

continued

In our second year as United, we lay claim to the lyrics of Marty Haugen—building a house (on two campuses!) where all are named, their songs and visions heard. We seek to love and treasure our students, to teach them and claim them as words within the Word. Through *Unifying*, *Learning*, and *Serving*, we model for our students a vision of the church—not perfect by any means, but striving to live into the grace that frees us all and echoes across the needs of this turbulent time and space. While we have students from over twenty-five denominations and welcome the nuanced discussions that result in our classrooms about theology, culture, and witness, our historical ties to the earliest expressions of Lutheranism in America continues to guide us into a rich and meaningful expression of our denominational heritage and theology of grace.

*Our goal is
to provide full tuition
to ELCA students
for the sake of
your
synodical ministries.*
