

Reports of Agencies



BEAR CREEK CAMP

Explore, celebrate & grow in God's creation!

Greetings from Bear Creek Camp the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry for the Northeast and Southeast Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA.

The summer of 2014 was a great one at Bear Creek Camp!

- For the first time since 2004-2005 our summer camp attendance increased in back to back summers. 2014 saw an increase of 14% over the previous summer and we are up 28% since 2013.
- 35 Summer staff members did an excellent job of showing and sharing the Gospel through activities, Bible studies, games, team building moments and having fun!
- Campers, parents and chaplains were very encouraging of the current program that is in place at BCC.
 - o Among the comments we received:
 - *We were amazed when she shared many verses out of her Bible that were favorites. It's been tough for us to get her interested in reading the Word so we were really shocked to see her interest grow. **Camper Parent***
 - *Faith and song are central for the campers. The daily theme and verse are well done, and help the campers know and think about that biblical center. As a parent, a pastor of the church, and a regular volunteer chaplain, I am so pleased and excited about Bear Creek Camp and the future I see before us. - **Chaplain***
 - *It's like a vacation except one hundred times better. - **Camper***
 - *I had so much fun here. I met new friends, learned about God and had a LOT of fun. - **Camper***
- Our Church Day Camp program continues to grow as we will serve 11 churches this summer with our “on the road” day camp program.

Thank you Northeast and Southeast PA Synods and congregations for your ongoing support of the ministry at Bear Creek Camp. We are grateful to work in partnership with each of you and to be an extension of your ministries at our location near Wilkes-Barre. The enthusiasm for the ministry of Bear Creek Camp is spreading we are very excited about the months and years to come.

Our associate director, Pete Smith, and I have been very busy visiting congregations to promote BCC and our summer programs. If you are interested in a visit, please contact us after our summer season ends and we will be happy to find a date that works.

Please continue to pray for Bear Creek Camp this summer as we have a great time exploring, celebrating and growing in God's creation.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Scharnhorst
Executive Director

Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania Report to the 2015 Synod Assemblies

The Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania exists to conserve and promote the historical legacy of Lutheran congregations and institutions in the geographic areas that comprise the territory of the Northeastern and Southeastern Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA. A total volunteer organization, the society is managed by a board and officers from the constituent synods as well as ecumenical and full-communion partners. Our interest has recently been broadened to include all congregations with Lutheran heritage, including the "Old Swedes" congregations around Philadelphia, union congregations throughout the region and congregations which are part of other Lutheran expressions.

The society conducts educational pilgrimages, publishes items of historical interest and conducts special projects. It also recognizes congregations with significant anniversaries. In August 2013 the society conducted a pilgrimage to St. Luke, Ferndale for its 250th anniversary, In October 2013 we visited Historic Trinity, Reading to honor 262 years of ministry. In October 2014 we conducted a pilgrimage to St. John, Spinnerstown and Trinity Great Swamp UCC to celebrate their 280th anniversaries. On May 2, 2015 we will visit St. John, Easton founded in 1740.

As an ongoing project we are cataloging and restoring the Ross Poster Collection of photographs of Lutheran congregations in the Eastern USA and Canada. These photographs have been on display in past synod assemblies and are an irreplaceable photo resource. They are in critical need of repair. The society also publishes an occasional journal called the "Periodical". We are planning a newsletter to deal with current topics and historical events. We still have supplies of the *Guidebook of Colonial Lutheran Churches and Sites* and are considering plans for a follow-up volume of congregations organized after the Revolutionary War. We are funded through membership fees, contributions and grants.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Board and Officers of the Society and to Past President, Pastor Herbert Michel, who needed to step down for health reasons. I am particularly grateful to Phyllis Boyer, Pastors George Spieker, Virginia Biniek, George Kinney, Harry Heffelfinger and to Joshua Fink for the work they have done on behalf of the society. I also express my thanks to retiring Board members Richard Buckmaster and Mary Crusius, and welcome new Board member, Roy Diefenderfer. I would invite you to share in the mission and vision of the society by becoming a member or by serving on the Board; several vacancies exist.

We have inherited an enormous historical legacy in Eastern Pennsylvania which has molded our congregations and our identity to the present day.
We all share in a common story.

The Rev. Richard B. Baumann
President

**LUTHERAN HOME AT GERMANTOWN FOUNDATION
SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT, 2015**

Lutheran Home at Germantown Foundation receives, holds, and invests all endowment and similar funds of the corporation and raises, holds, and invests contributions for the support of social ministry organizations affiliated with the Church with particular reference to Silver Springs – Martin Luther School, recognizing the common heritage and historical ties between the corporation and Silver Springs – Martin Luther School.

The Foundation's continuing interest and investment in helping to meet the compelling needs of children who have faced steep challenges and pain, and so early in their lives, is the focus of its attention and the heartbeat of its mission.

Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D., President/CEO

LUTHERAN ARCHIVES CENTER AT PHILADELPHIA (LACAP)

Letter from the President to Synod Assemblies

Earlier in 2014 there was a news story about twin girls from South Korea who were separated at birth twenty-five years ago, and who amazingly discovered one another through YouTube. One of the twins was raised in the United States, and the other was raised in France, but through a chance experience, the two have reunited after a quarter century apart. One twin saw the other in a YouTube video, and thought that the two looked very much alike. As they began communicating with one another, they realized the similarity of their stories. DNA testing confirmed that they are indeed twins, and now they are catching up on their twenty-five years apart. I am a twin myself. As with most twins, my twin brother and I have a lot in communion. Even though we live in different states and have different vocations, we look alike, we sound alike, and we have many similar interests. Stories such as the one above are fascinating as they remind us that even though twins can be separated by the miles, often their similarities will manifest themselves, and finding one another can become a passion.

While the Ministeriums of Pennsylvania and New York were not twin Synodical structures (the Pennsylvania Ministerium was organized in 1748 and the New York Ministerium was organized in 1786), nonetheless, they are related in many ways (through the preparatory work by Henry Muhlenberg's son Frederick, who served for a time in New York City, and John Kunze, who served in both Philadelphia and New York, and whose work in the Pennsylvania Ministerium influenced his work in organizing the New York Ministerium). The archives of the two eighteenth-century Lutheran Ministeriums were maintained as separate collections, even after the organization of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia in 1979 brought the archives of the other Synods of the Northeast Region (New England, Upstate New York, New Jersey,

Southeastern Pennsylvania, and Northeastern Pennsylvania, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia) under one roof. Nonetheless, like those twin sisters separated at birth, our ecclesiological DNA is the same, and over the years there had been a passionate longing to bring together the archives of the two oldest Lutheran Ministeriums in the United States.

Now, thanks be to God, as was reported in the Advent 2013 issue of the *Archives Advocate*, the archives of both eighteenth-century Ministeriums are housed together! We are happy to report to the Synod Assemblies of the Northeast Region that the archives of all the geographic Synods of Region Seven are housed together at the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia. In 2013, upon the recommendation of the Metro NY Bishop, Archivist, Archives Committee, and Synod Council, the Metropolitan New York Synod has agreed to come on board as an Affiliated Synod of LACAP. The Metro Synod Archivist, John Daggan, is now an Affiliated Director of LACAP, and Metro NY Archives Board member Jack Martz is now a Non-Affiliated Director as well. This bringing together of sister archives is a major development within Northeast Lutheranism that we can all celebrate.

If you would like to see our new accessions, or research anything related to the collections of the Lutheran Archives Center, or if you would just like to come by and look at the treasures of Northeastern Lutheranism housed at your Regional Archives, please stop by for a visit. We thank you for our continued partnership as well as for your prayers and contributions.

In Christ,
The Rev. Dr. J. Francis Watson
President, LACAP Board of Directors



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

About The Mission Investment Fund

The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest **loans** to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries for capital projects.

Established congregations use MIF loans to renovate, expand or relocate. New-start congregations rely on MIF loans to buy land and construct their first church buildings. ELCA-related ministries use MIF loans for a variety of capital projects.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a variety of **investments** for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. MIF investments offer adjustable- or fixed-rate terms and earn interest at competitive rates.

The Mission Investment Fund is **financially strong and stable**, with a record of steady, controlled growth:

- With total assets of \$661 million and net assets of \$192 million at year-end 2014, MIF achieved a capital ratio of 29 percent, maintaining MIF's position in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.
- At year-end 2014, loans for capital projects for more than 780 ELCA congregations and ministries totaled \$461 million. MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$464 million.

Investments and Loans in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod

As of December 31, 2014:

- 20 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of **\$18,563,202** are at work throughout the synod.
- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund by 199 individuals, 84 congregations, 12 ministries and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod totaled **\$12,542,545**.

MIF representative for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod:

Gerry Lauro, *Regional Manager*: Tel. (312) 805-6502; email: gerry.lauro@elca.org

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Region 7 Report to 2015 Synod Assemblies

The ELCA constitution provides for nine geographic regions for the purpose of administration and shared ministry. Each of the regions is staffed by one full time coordinator, who is Churchwide staff; some regions may have additional staff as the work varies somewhat, depending on the synods of the region. Region 7 is comprised of these six geographic synods: New Jersey, New England, Metro New York, Upstate New York, Northeastern Pennsylvania and Southeastern Pennsylvania. In addition, the only non-geographic synod of the church body, the Slovak Zion Synod is assigned as a partner in Region 7. Another key institutional partner is the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

In all regions, the coordinator is the churchwide resource person for the candidacy committees and process of that region, as well as coordinating first call assignment. In Region 7 the coordinator also directs the first call theological event called the Leadership Guild. Regional coordinators also assist the bishops and their staff as well as key synod leaders in a variety of ways. We sometimes refer to ourselves as “air traffic control” or “connective tissue.”

Region 7 welcomed two new key partners this year with the election of John Macholz as bishop of the Upstate NY Synod and David Lose as the new president of LTSP. New partners bring new energies and vision to any group and the whole of our region will benefit as they share their gifts.

This summer will mark my 10th year as Region 7 coordinator, and I continue to be invigorated, inspired and challenged by this call. Mostly I am honored and deeply grateful to serve the people of the ELCA in this area.

Submitted by:
The Rev. Peggy M. Wuertele