

## SECTION G – REPORTS OF AGENCIES

1. Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania
  2. Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia
  3. Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania
  4. Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia
  5. Portico (Addendum 1)
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### LAMPa (LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA)

#### *LAMPa Report to Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod*

***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. This shared ministry has possibly never been so vital as now, in the face of the pandemic and deepening societal unrest.

Since last year’s assembly, LAMPa celebrated 40 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, health care, human trafficking, election integrity, immigration, discrimination and hate crimes, criminal justice, environmental threats to health and safety, and an accurate Census. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to secure emergency food, shelter, access to medical care and other relief in response to COVID-19. We have shared vital information with synods and our network about opportunities to access grants, assist people in applying for benefits and to offer resources in the state’s emergency response. Though much of our work has unleashed assistance directly to those in need, some – in the form of meals or other aid – has gone to your ministries, enabling you to be the visible presence of Christ as you encounter Christ in your neighbor at your doorstep and in each other as you continue teaching, preaching, singing and praying together virtually.

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

In its work of equipping disciples, growing leaders and supporting vital congregations, LAMPa staff taught at United Lutheran Seminary, addressed the synod’s day of equipping on actions of the Churchwide Assembly, and offered training for facilitating civil conversations, which was

replicated for synod rostered leaders. This spring, though forced to cancel our annual in-person day of advocacy, LAMPa hosted a virtual hearing on the draft social statement on Government and Civic Engagement: Discipleship in Democracy, as well as training in facilitating difficult conversations and continues to educate faithful advocates through our website, e-news and other resources. We are working with congregational leaders to prepare for God's work. Our hands. Our voices. Sunday in September and look forward with hope that we might be able to work side by side on that day.

We give thanks to God for you and for the support of our Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Policy Council representatives, the Rev. Lydia Posselt and Ms. Diane Casey.

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

Tracey DePasquale

LAMPa Director

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## **LUTHERAN ARCHIVES CENTER AT PHILADELPHIA**

### **2020 President's Letter to Synod Assemblies**

Greetings to your Synod Assembly from the staff and the board of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia! We at the Archives Center continue to do what we were chartered to do in 1979, when the Synods of the northeast region of the then Lutheran Church in America organized to work together to preserve the archival heritage of the Lutheran Church. The roots of the Lutheran Archives Center go back much further, to 1792, when the Ministerium of Pennsylvania officially recognized the archives as an integral part of that church body.

We continue to be grateful for the work of our new Executive Director, Lisa Minardi, who is steering the archives into the future, as well as our other staff and volunteers who help to process the archival materials that come to us from closed congregations and from other agencies and ministries within our region. Our Board is made up of Affiliated Directors (Synod Archivists, appointed by Synod Bishops or by boards of Affiliated Organizations such as the Augustana Institute), and Non-Affiliated Directors (who have experience and interest in archival matters and who are elected by the Affiliated Directors). We are grateful to all of our board members who generously give of their time and talent to serve the mission of the Archives Center.

The Archives continues to expand its collection each year, and to help us with the processing of this new material we are hiring a new assistant archivist this year, Sheila Joy, who comes to us from the region eight archives.

The Archives Center is funded through contributions from our constituent Synods, fees from closed congregations, bequests, endowment income, and from donations from individuals and congregations.

You can learn more about the work of the Lutheran Archives Center from your Synod Archivist at your Synod Assembly, by reading our periodical, *The Archives Advocate*, or by checking out our website -- <https://www.lacphila.org/>.

We wish you a blessed Synod Assembly, and we invite your prayers, your visits, and your continued support!



The Rev. J. Francis Watson, PhD  
President of the Board, Lutheran Archives Center

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## THE LUTHERAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

### President's Report to Synod Assembly 2020

**Where is your treasure?** Each congregation has a treasure, sometimes it is buried but quite often it is right out where everyone can see it. It may be an historic building, famous person in the cemetery, an artifact, stained glass windows, a classic organ, artwork, a legend, a story or a mural by a famous local artist. Each is a memorial and testimony to a vital ministry in that place. Each year the LHSEPA sponsors pilgrimages and visits to Lutheran congregations and historic sites.

Several important things happened this past year. First, we were able to arrange two pilgrimages. On September 21, 2019 we visited St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Sellersville to celebrate their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to view a historic handwritten document and an Anniversary Quilt highlighting the ministries of the congregation. On November 16, 2019 we visited Immanuel Lutheran in Norwood to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of murals painted by Philadelphia artist Miriam Tindall Smith. Several of our board members were also able to visit the congregation's official anniversary service in October. I was able to visit two colonial era congregations with Lutheran connections in Lehigh County, celebrating anniversaries of over 250 and 275 years respectively: Christ, Lowhill (now UCC) and Egypt Community Church. Both congregations are in our guidebook but no longer have Lutheran congregations.

Second, we launched a website and it is becoming very sophisticated. Along with the website came a newsletter. We continue to publish the “Periodical “, our long-established journal. We presented the Congregational History Award to St. Michael’s, Sellersville for their ministry quilt. Thanks to those who made these things happen. We continue to work on restoring the “Ross Church Photo Collection” poster panels. Some preliminary work on a second volume of the Guidebook is being done for congregations established after 1775 to about 1860.

We attended synod assemblies and have been quite successful in getting congregations interested in hosting pilgrimages. Hopefully we will have at least two pilgrimages next year. We are a membership and totally volunteer organization. All the society’s work is done by the members of our board; many are here today. Our membership is small but respectable, but our members are aging. We are rebuilding our board as we have lost two members this past year. Several vacancies still exist. If you are interested please consider becoming a member, joining the board or participating in our other projects or activities. We are solely supported by membership dues and private contributions. I thank all of you for your interest in the society, and for the opportunity to serve you as president. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Richard B. Baumann

President

Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania

Annual Meeting

November 16, 2019

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Norwood, PA

### Agenda

Opening

Call to Order

Minutes

Treasurer’s Report

President’s Report

Membership

Periodical/Publications

Website/Projects

Election of Officers

Election of Board Members

Future Plans

Other Business

Good of the Society

Adjournment

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### **THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS COUNCIL OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA**

The Religious Leaders Council of Greater Philadelphia was founded in March 2006, aiming to build relationships of mutual support, offer a moral and spiritual voice in the region, and identify issues of concern for dialogue and action. Our Synod, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, was a founding member of the Religious Leaders Council. Currently, the Religious Leaders Council consists of more than 33 member communities, representing more than two million people of diverse faith traditions from across the greater Philadelphia region. The Council is co-convened by Archbishop Nelson Perez, Rabbi David Straus, Imam Anwar Muhaimin, and Bishop Daniel Gutierrez.

The signature initiative of the Religious Leaders Council is the *Zones of Peace*. *Zones of Peace* is a region-wide interfaith movement of churches, synagogues, mosques, schools, and community-based organizations working to address the root causes of violence and make us safer in the communities where we live, work, and place. *Zones of Peace* recognizes organizations that are pioneering creative responses to violence and elevates their leadership. Anyone can nominate an organization as a *Zones of Peace* online at <https://www.interfaithphiladelphia.org/nominate>.

Between March 2019 and March 2020, The Religious Leaders Council met three times together. In April 2019, the Council was hosted by Archbishop Charles Chaput at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center. The topic of conversation was “Interfaith Understanding & How it Affects My Community’s Worship” facilitated by Dr. Ellen Charry, Professor of Theology Emerita at Princeton Theological Seminary. Their next meeting was in November 2019 at Congregation Mikveh Israel, and Rabbi Albert Gabbai hosted us. During this meeting, the conversation focused on the opioid epidemic and specifically safe injection sites. The Council also had the opportunity to meet Reverend Washington-Leapheart, Director for Faith-Based and Interfaith Affairs. The most recent gathering was in February 2020. It was hosted by Reverend Luis Cortes, Jr., who is the Founder, President, and CEO of Esperanza, the premiere Hispanic faith-based Evangelical network in the United States.

Looking ahead, The Religious Leaders Council and Interfaith Center are excited to further the work of the Inter-Seminary Initiative. The Inter-Seminary Initiative helps to educate and encourage future leaders to develop the skills to build collaborative relationships, bridge differences, and work for the common good through retreats, presentations, site visits, and other creative programming to create opportunities for interfaith learning among students, faculty, and administrators.

To learn more about The Religious Leaders Council visit <https://www.interfaithphiladelphia.org/council>. I am grateful that our Synod prioritizes our inter-faith and ecumenical relationships as we continue to strive towards becoming a beloved community!

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Fritz Fowler  
SEPA Synod Representative

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## **PORTICO**

**See Section H, Addendum 1**