

## SECTION G – REPORTS OF AGENCIES

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### BEAR CREEK CAMP



Greetings from Bear Creek Camp, the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry for the Southeastern and Northeastern Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA. Thank you Southeastern PA Synod 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.



In 2023, the Bear Creek Camp Board of Directors engaged in a process of strategic planning to listen to our community and discern ways we can continue to strengthen our organization to serve faithfully for generations to come. The outcomes of that process included a refresh of our mission, vision, and core values and identifying five key ministry result areas: intentional inclusive practices, facilities, fundraising & marketing, programming & creation care, and strengthening resource relationships. Ahead of us lies the work of prioritizing resources to accomplish goals within each of these areas. Exciting progress has already been made in adopting a welcome statement, engaging in intentional fundraising work, adding to our nature-based programming for Summer 2024, and moving forward with facilities projects including expansions to our high ropes course, enhancements at our lake, and an exploration of increased sustainability in year-round staff housing.

The Bear Creek Camp experience focuses on the value of small group programming, empowering our young adult summer staff as facilitators and mentors, and intentionally welcoming and affirming all as we do the important work of building positive community at camp and equipping our campers to do likewise when they return to their homes. This past summer, we welcomed 795 youth and family campers with over 30% of those campers experiencing camp for the first time. We continue to serve our local community through our Nature Day Camp with 211 participants throughout the summer. 41 young adult leaders followed the call to serve as camp staff and experienced creating intentional Christian community.



Throughout the year, we host groups and events including youth and confirmation retreats, men's and women's retreats, work groups, school field trips, family reunions, and more. With over 2600 individuals attending events and retreats outside of our summer camp programs, the amount of lives that are positively impacted through Bear Creek Camp is overwhelming!

Your financial and prayerful support of Bear Creek Camp as a synod and as individual congregations is vital to our success. Your investment is just that – an investment. Research shows that youth who attend camp, experience measurable change in their commitment to personal faith, their desire to participate in faith practices in their home, and their sense that being a part of a faith community like a church is important to their life. We are building up young people and leaders to be active members of our synod's congregations to strengthen the church and the world. Thank you for joining us in this mission.





In 2024, we celebrate 50 summers at Bear Creek Camp and look forward to honoring our past, making an impact in the present, and building together for our future. Please continue to pray for Bear Creek Camp as together we invite all people to explore, celebrate, and grow in relationship with God, nature, and community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Collin Grooms - Executive Director  
[www.bearcreekcamp.org](http://www.bearcreekcamp.org)

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**LAMPA**  
**(LUTHERAN ADVOCACY MINISTRY IN PENNSYLVANIA)**

*Church Together in Pennsylvania for the Sake of the World God Loves*

***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, ELCA Service and Justice, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans called to be part of God's healing and reconciling mission in the world 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 2024, LAMPa celebrates 45 years of advocacy ministry with gratitude for a legacy of community building and justice seeking while looking forward in hope for a more just world. Last year, our work supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, health care, civic engagement, housing and homelessness, care for creation, criminal justice reform, civil rights and safe communities. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to increase anti-hunger funding that supports the purchase of food in many of our community and congregational pantries and incentivizes innovation in delivery of nutritious food to our state's seniors. Years of Lutheran engagement on child nutrition helped make permanent universal free school breakfast

to give all students a healthy start to their day. In addition, our advocacy helped advance legislation to expand programs to alleviate the housing crisis and prevent homelessness, offer relief from burdensome medical debt, prevent and redress hate crimes, reduce gun-related violence and trauma, and stop discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations.

In the past year, LAMPa was pleased to welcome the Rev. Erin Jones as our communications and advocacy engagement manager and Quentin Bernhard as our 2023-24 Hunger Advocacy Fellow, which enabled us to launch four statewide service and justice networks to deepen the connection among ministries in every synod. LAMPa continues to educate faithful advocates through our new website and e-news and connects them to the public witness of the wider church. We look forward to growing opportunities to support congregations adding advocacy to their service on “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday. I continue to serve in consultation to the ELCA task force developing the social statement on Civic Life and Faith, and urge all to devote time to the newly released draft and to offer feedback.

I give thanks to God for you and for the support of our Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Policy Council representatives, Mr. Carl Hylton and Mr. Bruce McCullough.

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

Tracey DePasquale, *Director*

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**LUTHERAN ARCHIVES CENTER AT PHILADELPHIA**

**See Section G, Addendum 1**

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**MISSION INVESTMENT FUND**

**Section G, Addendum 2**

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**PORTICO**

**See Section G, Addendum 3**

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## THRIVENT



Helping churches, members and communities in Southeastern Pennsylvania **Thrive with Purpose!** We thrive when we make the most of all God has given us. Thrivent is committed to helping those we serve – individuals, churches, nonprofits, small businesses – make informed financial decisions based on Christian values. We believe money is a tool, not a goal. We are honored to offer churches unique resources to help you manage ongoing operations as you carry out your mission and strengthen our communities.

We are excited to report:

- Thrivent directed **\$319,611** in **Choice Dollars** to more than 480 churches and nonprofits in the five-county Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod district in 2023 – a 21% increase in Choice Dollar direction. Since the program’s inception, nearly **\$5 Million** in charitable grants have been directed in the district.
- **Thrivent Action Teams** continue to support church missions and outreach by engaging congregation members in service, educational and fundraising volunteer projects. In 2023, **6,884** Thrivent Action Teams were lead in our Mid-Atlantic Region raising nearly \$7.6 million and totaling 649,373 volunteer hours. Thrivent contributed more than **\$1.7 million in project expense funding**. *More than 70% of our Thrivent Action Teams are associated with a church partner!*
- **Money Canvas** provides *free* 1:1 online coaching to help individuals build healthier budgeting, saving, and spending habits. There is no judgment, no sales, and no requirement to be a Thrivent client. Sessions are available in both English and Spanish. Money Canvas is a wonderful complement to church marriage ministries, widow/divorce groups, young families, and stewardship growth. Learn more here: [Money Canvas](#)
- **Financial education workshops and webinars** help strengthen congregations through *values-based* teaching on topics ranging from budgeting and goal setting to more advanced topics such as college saving, retirement planning, legacy, and *charitable giving strategies*. Workshops and webinars are available at *no cost* to congregations. Contact your local Thrivent advisor to schedule a workshop.
- Thrivent’s **Christian Leader** lunchtime webinar series provides inspiration and education for church leaders with an emphasis on strengthening stewardship and generosity. For a complete listing of upcoming events, visit [Thrivent Good Steward](#). No products sold at these events.

- Our **Thrivent Member Network Mid-Atlantic** provides additional opportunities for fellowship, inspiration, education, and generosity. We are excited to provide in-person events again, along with webinars to suit every interest and schedule. Consider hosting a viewing party at your church to encourage fellowship! Visit [Thrivent.com/Mid-Atlantic](https://www.thrivent.com/Mid-Atlantic) for the current event listing. No products sold.
- Thrivent has been named one of the **World's Most Ethical Companies** by Ethisphere for **13** years in a row! We are proud of our 120+-year history of strength and stability, and we're committed to continuing to provide practical **financial guidance**, investments, insurance, banking, church financing, endowments, and charitable giving solutions in support of all our Christian members.

For more information, visit: <https://www.thrivent.com/> or contact:

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**See Thrivent Resources & Canvas in Section G, Addendum 4, 5, & 6**