



# Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

2016 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly

### CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM

Candidate for the position of:

\*Candidate's name:   
*(Title, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name)*

Home Phone:  Work Phone:

Cell Phone:  Email:

Congregational Membership:   
*Name*

*City, ST*

Occupational History:

Pastor Our Redeemer

Pastor St. Mark Chicago, Ill.

Coalition Director BlackHawk Lutheran Ministry, Waterloo, IA

Pastor St. John Oakland, Ca.

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

presiding minister reformation service 1998

multi-cultural commission conference rep.

S.F./Oakland east bay coalition executive board

national vice president of ABL (predecessor African Descent organization; LCA

Participation at Congregational level:

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Community Involvement:

Chaplain Urban league Blind Center

urban league senior luncheon program

Wendell Phillips high school chaplain, Chicago

Demographic Information *(Please check all that apply):*

☒ Male ☐ Female

☒ Rostered ☐ Lay

☒ African-American/Black

☐ Asian/Pacific Islander

☐ Arab/Middle Eastern

☐ White/Caucasian

☐ Latino

☐ American Indian/Alaska Native

☐ Person with a primary language other than English

Digital photo attached\*? ☐ Yes ☒ No

**Send to the Rev. Albert Triolo, Nominations Committee Chair, at [atriolo@stmarks-elca.org](mailto:atriolo@stmarks-elca.org).**

**Form is due by April 15, 2016.**

\*Candidates should **send a photo digitally** with this form. Photos will be used to introduce the candidates to Voting Members of the 2016 Synod Assembly.

*If elected, your first Synod Council meeting will take place in July 2016.*

**THANK YOU.**



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2014 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly

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Congregational Membership:   
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Occupational History:

Interim CEO, **Lutheran Social Services**, Columbus Ohio ( 2010 – 11)

Management Consultant , **JF Lehman**, Boonton, NJ ( 2009 – 10)

**Ashland Hercules Water Technologies** ( 1979 – 2009)

- VP AWT GM Drew Marine ( 2008 -9)
- VP AWT Business Model Redesign/Implementation ( 2006-8)
- VP AWT Marketing & Business Development (1999-2006)

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Trustee **Gettysburg Seminary** Endowment Foundation ( 2012 – present)

Participation at Congregational level:

**Shepherd of the Hills** , Congregation Council; Worship Assistant; Usher; Greeter, etc.

**Trinity Lutheran Church, Dover, NJ** Congregation Council; Building Committee; Worship Assistant; Sunday School Teacher; Usher, etc.

**Messiah Lutheran Church**, Oakland, NJ, Congregation Council; Worship Assistant; Sunday School Teacher; Usher, etc.

Community Involvement:

Board Chair **Lutheran Social Services, NCA** (2012 – present)

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Horse Leader **Sprout Therapeutic Riding Academy** (2012 – present)

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Trustee, Exec. Com. Member, **Lutheran Social Services CO** ( 20008 -11)

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Occupational History:

Retired senior diplomat from the Zimbabwe Foreign Service 1981-2010; served Deputy  
Chief of Mission in Beijing, New York (United Nations), Moscow and Berlin; currently  
Adjunct Professor (online) at Mercy College, NY and Thomas Edison State University,  
NJ teaching global politics/international relations since January 2012.

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Represented St Stephen at Synod and The Journey meetings.

Participation at Congregational level:

Church Council Member at American Church in Berlin (ELCA) 2007-2008

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Church Council Member at St Stephens (twice); currently Vice President of Council

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Editor of Cross Currents, St Stephen's monthly newsletter

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Member of Call Committee

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Community Involvement:

Member of Alliance for Peacebuilding

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Member of the Zimbabwe Diaspora Network North America

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*Name*

*City, ST*

Occupational History:

Administrative Assistant, DOD, Fort Myer, VA December 2015-present

Financial Assistance Coordinator, Shively Area Ministries, Louisville KY 2013-2015

Director of Christian Ed. and Youth Ministry, St. John Lutheran, Louisville Jan-May 2014

Client Service Coordinator, East Louisville Community Ministry, Nov 2012-April 2013

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Lay Voting Member, 2011 South Carolina Synod Assembly

South Central Conference Indiana-Kentucky Synod, Youth Coordinator January 2015-

July 2015

Participation at Congregational level:

Youth Ministry Chair Church Council, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Nov. 2015-present

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Anti-Racism Committee Member, Good Shepherd Lutheran

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Served on Church Council at previous congregation, First Lutheran Church, Louisville, KY

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Community Involvement:

Previously, volunteered at Lutheran Social Services in Falls Church working in the

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Central American Minors program. Also volunteered at ALIVE food pantry in

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Alexandria, VA.

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Occupational History:

Teacher - Mathematics and Computer Science

Parish Pastor - In Pittsburgh (8 years) and in McLean (4 years)

Assistant to the Bishop (in between Parish ministry) (9 years)

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Previous Call - Candidacy Committee, Global Mission, and Disaster Response

Current Call - Gettysburg Seminary Board Member, First Call Theological Education

mentor, participated in year-long Huddle conversation (based on 3DM) and currently participating in Leadership Development workshops hosted by the synod

Participation at Congregational level:

Pastoral responsibilities that emphasize development of ministries with youth and young adults, ~~working on more hands-on opportunities to serve in the community, and starting small group faith conversations to deepen our understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Christ and to share that good news with others~~

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Community Involvement:

Tyson's Interfaith Partnership (part of an inter-faith group formed to be a witness in the Tyson's community), ~~Safe Community Coalition (where faith leaders partner with school administrators and local police to make a positive impact on the youth in our community)~~

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Occupational History:

Legislative Assistant, United States Senate, 2010-2016

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

I have participated in Synod events, such as Together in Mission and fellowship gatherings for young adults. Also, I was part of the leadership team for a prayer retreat for young adults in 2014.

Participation at Congregational level:

A lifelong Lutheran, I have been a member of Luther Place Memorial Church since 2012. Since then I have been involved in the 20s/30s ministry and I have served on the Church Council since 2013. As a council member, I have chaired the church's personnel committee and have been involved in several hiring processes, including the selection of our minister of music in 2014. Since June 2015 I have served as President of the congregation. In this role I facilitated our congregation's discernment over consolidating Sunday morning worship services, the preparation of our 2016 budget, and the consideration of a new child protection policy.

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Community Involvement:

I was a board member for the Senate's LGBT staff association from 2011 to 2014, chairing the board from 2012-2014. I also participated in the Shalem Institute's Personal Spiritual Deepening Program in 2014.

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Occupational History:

Executive Director, Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, Chantilly, VA, 2016-present;  
 Director for Evangelical Mission, ELCA Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, GA, 2012-2016;  
 Director for Social Outreach, Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, PA, 2007-2010;  
 Director for Education, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Perkasie, PA, 2005-2007; Office  
 Manager, Lutheran Campus Ministry Advancement, St. Paul, MN, 2003-2004;  
 Missionary, ELCA Global Mission, Ngaoundere, Cameroon, 2000-2002

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

ELCA/Synod Staff, Southeastern Synod, 2012-2016; Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod  
 Candidacy Committee, 2009-2012; ELCA Church Council Task Force on the Word and  
 Service Rosters, 2012-2016; ELCA Diaconal Ministry Community Leadership Team,  
 2009-2015; ELCA New Starts Development Team, 2012-2016; ELCA Homeless Ministry  
 Network, 2013-2015; Churchwide Assembly voting member, 2011; Synodical and  
 Churchwide Global Mission delegations, including: Tanzania, Guatemala, Colombia, and  
 Costa Rica.

Participation at Congregational level:

Charter member, Messiah Lutheran Church, Madison, AL; Member, weekly devotional writer, and supply preacher at Lutheran Church of the Messiah, Decatur, GA; Current (new) member at Christ Lutheran Church, Washington, DC; Much of my recent work as DEM in Southeastern Synod kept me away from my home congregation but meant I was in a different congregation every week, preaching, leading Bible Study, teaching, doing missional planning, or other activities. I'm looking forward to being more involved in my local congregation in Washington, DC.

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Community Involvement:

Executive Director, Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, Chantilly, VA; Board member and volunteer, Tabor Youth Development Center, Philadelphia, PA, 2010-2012; Board member and volunteer, Manna on Main Street, Lansdale, PA, 2008-2011; Board member and volunteer, On Eagle's Wings, Edmonton, Canada, 2012-present

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### CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM

Candidate for the position of: **Synodical Women of the ELCA Representative**

\*Candidate's name: **Cheryl L. Dwyer**  
*(Title, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name)*

Home Phone: **XXX-XXX-XXXX** Work Phone: **n/a**

Cell Phone: **XXX-XXX-XXXX** Email: **xxx@xxx.com**

Congregational Membership: **St. Mark's Lutheran Church**  
*Name*

**Springfield, VA**  
*City, ST*

Occupational History:

Retired as Lead Technical Writer for small software company; previously worked as tech writer supervisor, tech writer, tech editor, office manager, proposal writer, configuration management technician, commercial bank teller, currency exchange cashier, high school/middle school Math teacher, Math tutor, and English tutor

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Synod: Current SWO President, former SWO Treasurer, former Editor SWO Newsletter "The Joyful News" (2009-2016), former SWO Board member, current webmaster of SWO website

Churchwide: Participated in group discussion with WELCA Executive Director Linda Bushkofsky on her visit to this area "Grassroots Women of the ELCA groups" March 2009; attended Triennial Gathering 2014 in Charlotte, NC

Participation at Congregational level:

St. Mark's WELCA: Newsletter editor for "News & Views" (10 years); Vice President (8 years), board member, circle leader, and circle recorder; delegate to SWO convention (2011); helped host 2010 WELCA Spring Convention  
Congregation: Active member Publicity Committee and co-webmaster of church website; creator of brochures, bookmarks, and postcards as needed for church activities; weekly electronic "Messenger" fill-in creator/sender; served as Sunday School superintendent and teacher, VBS organizer and teacher, and Nominating Committee member for Congregational Council

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Community Involvement:

Participate in ECHO food drives and in county Hypothermia Week each year at St. Mark's; served as Treasurer of Newington Woods HOA; served as treasurer of state-wide Virginia Youth Soccer Association; managed kids' traveling soccer teams; served as Cub Scout Den Mother; volunteered for public school projects as time allowed; as a Navy wife, served USS Forrestal (CV-59) as ombudsman to Officer's Wives' Club and volunteered over 1000 hours for Navy Relief Society as layette chairman and interviewer

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Occupational History:

Work at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia with their BASE (Before and After School Enrichment) programs from February 2016 through present. Taking on a vocational internship at Trinity Lutheran Seminary this July 2016. Full-time high school student.

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Youth Representative for St. Stephen Lutheran Church of Longwood, Florida at the Florida-Bahamas Synod conference; experienced the call process for pastors (family member)

Participation at Congregational level:

Student leader in St. Stephen Lutheran Church's youth leadership core and helped lead the Mission Trip summer of 2015. Active participant in Lord of Life Youth as a student and leader. Lectors in worship and regularly runs sound board at both campuses. Serves communion in worship as well. Volunteer with music/drama camps, VBS, etc.

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Community Involvement:

An Eagle Scout as of Ma 2015, active in community through Boy Scouts and through National Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honors Society. Babysit for local families. Active participation in high school band (do outreach and concerts through band). Have completed over 150 service hours since beginning high school through the present.

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Occupational History:

Ordained in 1988, i served two parishes in rural Wisconsin before specializing in interim ministry. Trained by the Interim Ministry Network, I have served as an associate pastor, solo pastor, and head of staff in Wisconsin, Alabama, and Tennessee. I even served a UCC church as its interim pastor. I accepted a position as the resident chaplain of a retirement community when I needed a break from the frequent relocations necessitated by my interim assignments.,

Participation at Synod or Churchwide level:

Over the years, I have served in a variety of ways, including but not limited to member of synod council, delegate to churchwide assembly, synod stewardship visitor, Human Family Relations Board (focus on domestic violence, First Call retreat chaplain and instructor, First Call mentor, treasurer of planning committee for the synodical celebration of the 25th anniversary of women's ordination, planning committee for rostered leaders retreat, conference dean. I also did special training through teh ELCA on working with congregations recovering from the sexual misconduct of clergy and was the chair of a synodical board that dealt with such issues.

Participation at Congregational level:

As an interim pastor I have helped congregations resolve a variety of issues such as "worship wars," staff conflicts, building projects, financial misconduct, and sexual misconduct by clergy (with adults and with youth)).

My favorite ministry is teaching adult Bible studies and book discussion groups. My favorite biblical books are the gospel of Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelation of John. I earned my D. Min. from the ACTS ecumenical program in Chicago in the area of preaching. My professional paper was entitled "Angel Awareness: Speaking to, with, and for the Angel of the Church."

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Community Involvement:

I have generally inherited the community projects that the former pastor was involved with, and so have done many different things. i am proudest of two .ministries i chose for myself. One was serving on the board of an interfaith organization that advocated for and provided many social services in the Memphis area. The other is participating on the committee that drafted the Madison Affirmation for an ecumenical ~~clergy group. A call to the churches to repent of ways we had created or encouraged prejudice and~~ violence against LGBTQ persons, the Affirmation was printed in the Madison, WI newspaper as the state was debating same-gender marriages in the late 1990s. Our group also organized a citywide 10-week Bible study for pastors on all sides of the issue, taught by clergy representing pro and con positions.

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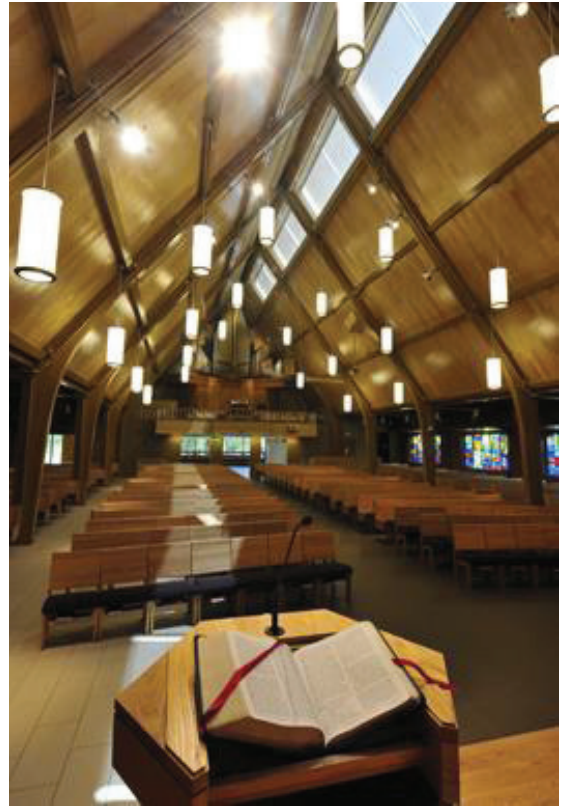


The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a financial ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, makes low-interest loans to established ELCA congregations, new-start congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building projects.

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.

At year-end 2015, MIF had 830 loans outstanding, totaling \$492 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio 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.



At year-end 2015, MIF investments by congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries totaled \$464 million. The Mission Investment Fund is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of \$663 million and net assets of \$194 million at year-end 2015, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 29 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

### **MIF Investments and Loans in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod**

#### **As of December 31, 2015:**

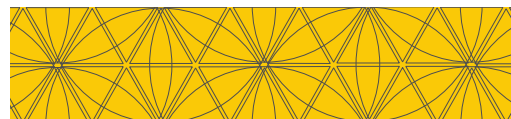
- 15 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of \$9,437,023, are at work throughout the synod.
- Investments in the Mission Investment Fund by 163 individuals, 41 congregations, 5 ministries and the synod totaled \$8,484,682.

#### **MIF representative**

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



Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA



Spring 2016

Dear Partners in Ministry,

It's an interesting — and challenging — time to be the church. Ministry leaders are learning to navigate the changing culture by holding on to the best of the past while finding ways to be creative, nimble, and resilient. This is just as true for Portico.

As we navigate the changing landscape, we are guided by two core values: stewardship and collaboration. For us, that means caring wisely for all we are entrusted to manage — time, money, our employees, and the well-being of those we serve — so leaders can access important benefits and resources, today and in retirement. Here are a few ways we're putting those values into practice:

**We spend and invest with care.** In these times of rising health care costs and tight church budgets, we work hard to follow a lean, carefully managed spending plan with a goal of keeping costs low. As 2015 investment markets dramatically rose and fell, our active investment management strategy and strategic asset allocations helped improve retirement fund returns in an otherwise disappointing year.

**We seek opportunities to provide the best health care value.** The past two years brought, in some instances, double-digit percentage increases for those employers sponsoring members in the ELCA Health Plan. Although this was in line with nationwide averages, we realize for congregations this is an unsustainable trend. We are committed to keeping administrative expenses below 12% of our health care budget, and are aggressively working with our vendor partners to find new savings opportunities.

**We tap technology to reach our leaders more efficiently.** By converting our popular pre-retirement seminar into a series of three webinars, we were able to complement the rich educational experience of our in-person seminars with the convenience and cost-effectiveness of online learning. We are also developing new webinars designed to help younger leaders establish a strong financial foundation.

**We've raised the bar on top-notch customer service.** Our members receive more than just a friendly voice when they call Portico's Customer Care Center. As a BenchmarkPortal-certified 2015 "Center of Excellence," we were recognized as one of the top call centers in the nation in both cost- and quality-related metrics.

**We invest in our leaders.** Because the future health of our church depends on the health of its leaders, we are leading the ELCA in calling for a wellness reformation — a renewed commitment to well-being that comes from healthy lifestyle choices, reduced health risks, and lower health care costs — for members, congregations, and the ELCA Health Plan. We are encouraging our congregations and church organizations to put the 'we' in wellness by joining in conversation with their pastors and professional staff about creating a culture that supports healthy lifestyles.

Portico is committed to providing a cost-effective, comprehensive benefit program that helps our church's leaders stay nimble, resilient, and confident in these interesting, challenging times.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffrey Thiemann".

The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thiemann  
President and CEO



## 2015-2016 REPORT TO THE SYNOD COUNCIL METROPOLITAN DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

### PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THE METRO DC SWO

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

### THE METRO DC SWO MINISTRY MARCH 2015 THROUGH APRIL 2016

**Annual Convention.** The Annual Spring Convention of the Synodical Women of the ELCA was held at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, Maryland with the theme “I was a stranger . . .” This is the second consecutive year in Maryland, and we were pleased to welcome seven new and four under age 40 in the total of 70 participants.

A worship service, with Pastor Connie A. Miller presiding, included a theme-based homily by Pastor Elizabeth Platz, and the Saint Luke Celebration Bell Choir provided lovely music. Offerings were divided between Women of the ELCA, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, and Lutheran Immigration and Social Services. In-kind gifts of care packages and gift cards were received for Artemis House and NOVA HTI's (Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Initiative's) Polaris Project, both local organizations offering shelter and/or assistance to human trafficking victims.

The one-hour plenary session, “Immigration and Refugee Crisis: Lutherans in Action,” provided participants with information on the process for the United States to accept immigrants and the subsequent resettlement process once immigrants have been vetted and approved for entry. The session provided information to assist participants filter some of the misinformation that is so widely spread by unreliable sources. Joanne Kelsey, Assistant Director for Advocacy at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, and Aerlande Wontamo, Sr. Resettlement Manager with Lutheran Social Services, led the discussion. The Q&A session brought many questions and answers, but also highlighted the need to continue to pursue this subject during the year and into the future.

Workshops included a follow-up session on the main Immigration and Refugee theme with “How to Help your Congregation Sponsor a Refugee Family,” led by Katie Miller-Holland from LSS. In addition, the Church-wide rep, Karen Voris from Alaska, presented a Bible study on “Radical Hospitality;” Maddie Tallman provided a presentation “A Year of Accompaniment in Argentina;” and Bonnie Elizabeth Kendrick

guided the women through a program of chair yoga exercises. Evaluations indicated the participants found the total program informative and interesting.

The business meeting for voting members included the normal reporting and budget approval. Elections were held for both the Synodical Women's Executive Board and voting members to the 10<sup>th</sup> Triennial Convention to be held in July 13-16, 2017 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. You will find a list of current Executive Board members included at the end of this report as well as the voting members for the Triennial Convention.

Exhibits included ELCA World Hunger Appeal, with Dorothy Sorrell; Fair Trade Winds with Paul Culler; Gifts of Hope, with Carolyn Sowinski; Lutheran Social Services with Kiersten Rossetto-Nassar; *LaSagrada Familia*, with representatives of Saint Luke; "Our Body, A Gift from God," with Saint Luke representatives; SWO Human Trafficking Task Force, with Wilma Dublin, VP of the Metro DC SWO; and Women of the ELCA, with Cheryl Dwyer.

During lunch, Kyle Warfield, a student at Gettysburg seminary, presented a video on *La Sagrada Familia* that he prepared as part of a senior project/thesis. This is now available for the SWO to use in furthering our efforts in support of *La Sagrada Familia*.

**Human Trafficking.** Following the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Triennial Convention mandate, the Executive Board established a committee to develop a program to educate units on this issue. Wilma Dublin, Vice President of SWO, was appointed to the position of chair, and with the help of Barbara O'Keefe, Suzana Chowdhury, and Marva Benn, sought out information and materials to develop a SWO program to share with our units. Several churches have asked for programs for their full congregation, and Wilma, as well as Gail Hambelton from the Global Peace Foundation, has conducted seminars between their early and late services. This is an ongoing program, available to any congregation and/or the women's group, within our Synod. We encourage all congregations to participate in a briefing or seminar to inform and bring understanding of the issue, recognize a person or persons who might be victims of trafficking, and be familiar with the hot lines and places to refer victims to receive assistance. We can only help stop this horrible abuse of women and children if we are willing to be informed and to act when necessary.

**Communication.** The website and Facebook page continue to be active with the promotion of SWO events, messages of interest to the units, WELCA information, and blogs.

*The Joyful News* was published in August, December, and March, informing units about current events within the SWO, resources available, happenings around the Synod, and promoting the fundraiser for the year. The e-mail distribution project for *The Joyful News* has been successful, saving the organization a considerable amount in postage and paper. A paper copy is sent to those units not wishing to receive the digital version. ***If your church office or WELCA/SWO contact is not receiving The Joyful News, please advise us.***

**A successful 2015 giving project for the SWO.** On a Sunday afternoon in November, five Executive Board Members were invited to participate in a gathering with the participants of the University of Maryland Lutheran Campus Ministry in College Park. A lovely dinner was sponsored by a church of one of the students, a meeting was held, and a worship service was planned and led by several students. During the gathering we were able to present to Pastor Ray Ranker a check in the amount of \$5,500, to be used for programs and events by the LCMs in the Metro DC Synod. We spent a wonderful evening in conversation with about 30 very interesting and energetic young men and women following their faith. Thank you all for your support of this program; I am certain you would be very happy to see that your stewardship of our young adults is well placed.

**Growing the SWO.** Efforts to expand the number of active units in the SWO continued this year. With Human Trafficking and now our Immigration and Refugee issue, there is much to talk about, much to consider, and much to share with one another.

The Synodical Women's Organization offers opportunities for our Synod churches to have a conversation about the value of the SWO. There is a clear need to work together and together we can do much to help others in our community, in our Synod, in our nation and, yes, the world. WELCA is an organization of women in ministry, committed to making a difference in our world. If your church does not have an active membership with SWO, please consider a commit to join with us in making a difference.



### **In Memory of Barbara O'Keefe**

**In November, 2015, we lost a very dear friend and colleague. Many of you knew Barbara and her work in Global Mission; others knew of her work and dedication to the Synodical Women's Organization. She was at times a very quiet worker – knitting prayer shawls, assisting a friend who was sick, bringing a kind word to a person in need. She was at times a noisy worker – making her points, sharing opinions, leading committees and task forces, being President of the SWO. And whatever she did, it was with grace and humility. We greatly miss Barbara's presence as we do our work, and we are grateful for the gifts she brought to us. I am certain she has found her mission, work, and peace in her heavenly home.**

**METROPOLITAN DC SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION**  
**CURRENT OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**  
**April, 2015 – April, 2016**

**OFFICERS:**

President – Cheryl Dwyer (St. Mark's, Springfield)  
Vice President – Wilma Dublin (Holy Trinity, Falls Church)  
Secretary – Fran Eck (St. Mark's, Springfield)  
Acting Treasurer – Karen Ager (Peace Lutheran, Alexandria)

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Board Member – Sue Cottrol (Good Shepherd, Alexandria)  
Board Member – Marcia Ihnen, (Holy Trinity, Falls Church)  
Board Member – Karen Evans, (Saint Luke, Silver Spring)  
Board Member – Bonnie Priebe, (First Trinity, Washington, DC)  
Acting Board Member – Sheena Foster, (Luther Place, Washington, DC)

**2017 Triennial Convention Voting Members**

Laura Hamke (New Jerusalem, Lovettsville)  
Marcia Ihnen (Holy Trinity, Falls Church)

## 2015 Report of Region 8 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to Synod Assemblies

According to the ELCA Constitution, the region's primary mission is to connect, resource, support and network those serving in leadership in our synods and congregations. The following examples represent aspects of that work of the Region 8:

*Candidacy and Assignment of First Call Candidates* is, perhaps, the primary area of responsibility in my portfolio.

- In many respects I serve as adjunct staff to each Region 8 synod; in addition to my service at every synod's candidacy committee meeting, I am the 'go to' person for all things candidacy. This work regularly includes arranging Theological Review Panels and Competency Assessment Panels (as well as the follow-up report writing) and responding to the particular questions that often stymie synod staff people.
- Each year we hold at least one Region-wide candidacy gathering for each synod's candidacy staff and committee chair person; also invited are any number of colleagues in ministry from across the region (e.g., Directors for Evangelical Mission). Throughout 2015 we reviewed DRAFT Candidacy Manual material and utilized the skills of several Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (LTSG) colleagues to discuss the implications for the candidacy due to the changes in the LTSG Masters of Divinity degree options, the development of a partnered Distributive Learning program between Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia/LTSG, the piloting of electronic student portfolios, and ongoing work in the development of a competency based MDiv program.

*First Call Theological Education* is a natural extension of candidacy's preparation of rostered leaders and first call assignment's work to match candidates' gifts with congregations' missional needs.

- Region 8 partners find continuing value in cooperative efforts in some key aspects of the First Call Theological Education (FCTE) program. Primarily this means the planning and implementing of a Region 8 FCTE Annual Conference; the office works with a Region-wide advisory council in planning.
- Due to the changes in both theological education and candidacy, Region 8 partners took the opportunity to review and restructure our approach to the annual FCTE Conference; that structure debuted in the November 2014 Conference. The program components were identified by the Region's bishops and the structure developed as a result of the collaboration between the bishops and the FCTE advisory council. Due to the success of the new structure in 2014, for the November 2015 conference we implemented the full structure of this plan (which includes three learning tracks, with nine segments).
- In addition to the conference, each synod also provides more contextual opportunities.

*Support of newly called synod staff* is yet another aspect of my service.

- Bishop Riegel began service on September 1, 2015, in the WV/WMD Synod and I spend time assisting with his orientation for service and supporting the work of the Synod's emerging staff.

*Global Gathering efforts* is yet another facet of my service in Region 8.

- We Are Church Together – Region 8 Networks for Mission Gathering is scheduled for October 6-8, 2016; this effort (in collaboration with Chicago-based staff) brings together six churchwide networks (Global Mission/Companion Synods, Mission Interpreters, Synod/Congregation Communicators, World Hunger/Malaria, Disaster Response, and Stewardship) and two Region-based networks (youth/young adults and green initiatives).

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Gable, Diaconal Minister, D. Ed. (Penn State)

Coordinator for Missional Leadership - Region 8

**REPORT ON THE ELCA MALARIA CAMPAIGN**  
**from Dorothy J. Sorrell, Metro D.C. Synod Malaria Campaign Coordinator**

The ELCA four year Malaria Campaign ended in December 2015 and, as you probably heard, we exceeded the \$15 million ELCA goal. Total giving to the Campaign exceeded \$15,359,000.

I was extremely happy when, after I met with our Synod Council a few years ago, the Council agreed to participate in the Malaria Campaign. A Synod goal was set of \$250,000 and participation by 100% of our congregations. Our Synod has contributed more than \$383,700 and about 80% of our congregations participated in that giving. Of the 65 synods in the ELCA, the Metro DC Synod ranked number six in total giving. In terms of giving per member, the Metro DC Synod ranked number two - \$12.53 per member. When I think of the lives saved by this generous giving, I am overwhelmed and grateful.

The work of the Malaria Campaign will continue through the ELCA World Hunger program. This is a good fit, as people who are malnourished are obviously more susceptible to illnesses of all kinds, and their recovery from these illnesses sometimes less certain.

During 2016, World Hunger will be the emphasis of "Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA". It is my hope that each of you, individually and in your congregation, will consider being part of the ELCA World Hunger Campaign. One in five children in the world goes to bed hungry. Let's change that.

## Gettysburg Seminary's Report to Synod Assemblies 2016

**A NEW SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY:** Responding to the call of the churchwide network of theological education, Gettysburg Seminary concluded that “business as usual” could and would not continue much longer in governance and structure of stand-alone seminaries. In January, the boards of Gettysburg and Philadelphia seminaries declared intention to form a new school of theology, deployed across the two campuses. Following the decision, a Steering Cte and eight work groups have formed to plan and propose design, structure, budget and timelines for support the final decisions by the schools to move forward toward a 2017 start. Watch for up to date report at your synod assembly about the project to create the first mainstream new school of theology in more than a half century, the newest school with the deepest roots, and a more sustainable form for theological education.

**UNPRECEDENTED STUDENT SUPPORT—TUITION FREE:** In keeping with the spirit of the new school project, both Gettysburg and Philadelphia seminaries announced in February a full tuition offer to seminarians beginning fall 2016. This offer utilizes restricted scholarship funds drawn from the endowment, made available by lower enrollments and in faith that over time, increased support will sustain this unprecedented offer.

***God's Call; Your Path: MDivForward* Launched:** Continuing to keep the Gettysburg offer of theological education and leadership formation on the cutting edge among seminaries, the faculty launched a new Master of Divinity curriculum with multiple tracks, which beginning later in 2016 will include a “distributed learning” (with more online courses) option.

**Public Witness as Confederate Flag Banned:** As many in our nation reexamined the display of symbols associated with the slavery-demanding Confederacy, we banned the historic battle flag from “living history” summer encampments on our campus, incurring the ire of many on social media sites who deemed the move anti-historical. Most who responded applauded our seizing an opportunity for bold public witness to the Seminary's commitments and values.

**Faith & Science (AAAS Science & Faith Grants):** Led by Professors Mark Oldenburg and Leonard Hummel, the Seminary was one of only ten schools in the U.S. and Canada to receive a \$250,000 grant from the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. Efforts to equip students and church leaders for stronger engagement with questions of faith and science include the upcoming 2016 Spring Academy, and greater emphases in courses throughout the curriculum.



***Gettysburg: Quest for Meaning* Offers Unique Perspectives:** In still another scholarly endeavor, the Seminary Ridge Press published an anthology of theological and pastoral articles related in various ways to the great Civil War battle and the ongoing challenges of realizing Abraham Lincoln's vision of “increased devotion to a more humane, equitable, and just society.” Available through the Seminary bookstore: 717.338.3005.

### Other highlights of the year include:

- 50<sup>th</sup> Playing of the Lutherbowl flag football tournament;
- Expansion of The Weekend, a discernment event in spring and now fall as well;
- Recognition of Dean Largen's book “Finding God” by Pacific Coast Theological Society;
- Welcomed Vincent Evener to the faculty in Reformation History;
- Pamela and Michael Cooper-White's “Exploring Practices” cited among year's best by Christian Century.

Gettysburg Seminary gains its bold vision and courage from the support it receives from the Synods of Region 8 in the ELCA. Every gift, every student, every prayer and every encouraging word counts in the sustaining of graduate theological education. Thank you from us all!

Michael L. Cooper-White, President &  
Dr. James Lakso, Chair of the Board

## Report of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries To the Synods of Regions 7, 8 and 9 Spring, 2016

In 1995 the three East Coast ELCA seminaries (LTSG, LTSP, and LTSS) joined in the establishment of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries (ECLS). Since that time, ECLS has fostered strong collaboration between the three eastern schools and other partners, enhancing our common task of theological education for a broad spectrum of students and lifelong learners. In these challenging times when all seminaries seek new approaches to forming leaders for the Church, we are increasingly engaged with the other ELCA seminaries, our regional synods and additional partners in the search for financial sustainability and programmatic flexibility.

A separately incorporated entity, the Cluster is governed by a Board of Directors made up of board chairs and other officers from each of the three schools. One of the three seminary presidents serves in rotation as Cluster executive director. This position is currently filled by Provost Clay Schmit of LTSS. (Since the merger of LTSS with Lenoir-Rhyne University in 2012, the head of LTSS has served under the title of seminary provost.) ECLS continues on with only modest core funding from the seminaries. One of the key partnerships that has made the work of the Cluster flourish has been the reception of over \$6 million in grants from foundations to support common projects and subsidize seminary budgets.

### Current Collaborative Programs

- The Cluster's *One Library Under Three Roofs* links the collections at Gettysburg, Philadelphia and Columbia, providing students, faculty and other borrowers with access to a vast array of books, periodicals and e-resources.
- Through the Cluster-sponsored *Project Connect*, hundreds of young persons have been invited to "consider their callings" over the past half-dozen years. While funding from the Lilly Endowment has now been fully expended, Admissions staffs at the three schools continue aspects fostered by Project Connect. The Cluster is working with a grant researcher who will help to identify potential partners for future work.
- The *Abundant Life Grant* was received this past year from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Totaling \$750,000, this grant enables each school to engage in research on the subject of seminarian indebtedness and explore means by which to reduce graduate debt.

Moving beyond the collaboration between LTSP and LTSG in past years, these two members of the Eastern Cluster have committed to the development of a new partnership which would join the two schools as one institution with two campuses. This new venture will come into effect in 2017. The boards, faculties, and administrations are currently engaged in designing the shape of this new school, making hard decisions about governance, faculty size and make-up, and curricula.

**Future Cluster Directions:** Given the merger of LTSS with Lenoir-Rhyne University, and in light of the new venture between LTSG and LTSP, the board of the Eastern Cluster will now begin to consider the best way for the strong collaborative work of the Cluster to continue under the new configuration of schools. Alongside the work that the Cluster schools are doing together, there is a renewed commitment by all eight ELCA seminaries to find ways to work effectively together. This has been prompted by the work of the ELCA's Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) which has encouraged the broad cooperation of the ELCA's theological network. One of the principle results of this work has been a proposal by which the eight schools can collaborate and share resources across a digital learning exchange platform. A successful venture of this kind would benefit all synods and the entire ELCA by making theological education more accessible to leaders of many kinds. This initiative is in the early stages of development.

**With Appreciation:** The Cluster is grateful for support to theological education and our seminaries from our partner synods and churchwide organization.

The Rev. Dr. Bill Trexler, Cluster Board Chair  
The Rev. Dr. Clay Schmit, Cluster Executive Director



## Religious and Spiritual Life

300 North Washington Street  
 Christ Chapel  
 Campus Box 427  
 Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 17325 -1400

717.337.6280  
 717.337.8453 fax  
[www.gettysburg.edu](http://www.gettysburg.edu)

### Gettysburg College Report to Synod Assemblies March 16, 2016

Blessed be God at all times, now, always, and forever!  
 Grace, mercy and peace to you.

Last year I wrote to you (the supporting synods associated with Gettysburg College) regarding our shared commitment to “education and the spiritual formation of maturing young adults.” At that time mention was made of the continuing need to “foster habits of mind and heart that assist in making this world better and more just.” Toward that end, the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life assists the Gettysburg College community in exercising and contemplating life with God.

In recent years this work has become more and more difficult as fewer and fewer young people arrive at colleges and universities with a depth of spiritual formation. Each passing decade since the 1970’s has seen the number of students sharing Lutheran tradition and backgrounds shrink while the general climate for religious life in America sadly dawdles suffering threat from political extremism, segregation and bias, and life challenges in the modern world.

In an effort to address these concerns and build communities of faith and justice in an increasingly secularized environment we have given more attention in recent years to promoting Ecumenical and Interfaith dialogue, understanding and engagement. By using dialogues, focused small group discussion, lectures and the limited degree of diversity found to exist within this community we have tried to foster a climate of understanding that moves beyond tolerance to respect and appreciation. This work has been done – notwithstanding the need for students to increase knowledge of their own faith traditions and backgrounds – in an atmosphere where faith and life intersections are infrequently addressed and/or acknowledged.

As Chaplain of the College the work I engage in relates primarily to religious and spiritual apprehensions of reality. A chaplain functions primarily as a priest and pastor beyond the parameters of the usual ecclesial environment. In higher education, chaplains help members of the communities they serve to discover what their real and true religious convictions are. We do this by engaging in sacramental and ritual practices, through pastoral conversation and counsel, spiritual direction and prayer, through religious education and preaching. Our work while focused on students is not limited to students. We serve the whole of campus life – faculty, staff, parents of students, alumni of the institution and the community at large.

Hopefully, I also model for our students how a mature human being is able to more fully integrate the symbolic world of meaning known through prayer and spiritual practices with intellectual thought. Ours is a tradition that came into being within the context of a university, a center of learning. Martin Luther as a professor of Hebrew Scripture strove to interpret the Word of God in a manner that was faithful and intellectually responsible. His witness inspires the witness I share.

We live in a world where there is also great spiritual hunger, yet many feel burdened by life’s urgent demands for time and attention. In such a world, practices that feed hungry souls are rarely understood. We share with the synods of the ELCA a commitment to helping maturing young adults integrate faith and learning.

We hope that as you share with us in this our common mission you will encourage the young people in your congregations and communities to consider Gettysburg College! We'd love to welcome them to what may become for them their home away from home.

Blessings and peace!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph A. Donnell, II". The script is cursive and fluid, with the "II" at the end being clearly written.

The Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Donnell II  
Chaplain of the College  
Gettysburg College  
Gettysburg, PA 17325  
phone: 717-337-6280  
[donnell@gettysburg.edu](mailto:donnell@gettysburg.edu)

## NATIONAL LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES & SERVICES

### 2015 REPORT

Serving seniors since 1890, National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) continues to write the chapters that will prepare the organization for another 125 years. While seniors' needs will continue to change, one thing remains constant—our unchanging values.

The Village at Rockville (TVAR): In 2015, the community celebrated the completion of a four-and-a-half year renovation project. The Library, Hair Salon, Assisted Living Dining Room, Art Room, and Gift Shop opened in brand new, beautiful spaces. The Assisted Living Memory Support neighborhood opened in August. In celebration of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, events throughout the summer were crowned with a grand celebration in September. The Cherish campaign was also completed this year and is helping to firmly establish new memory care and support programs—new initiatives for TVAR. It also reflects the strong commitment to benevolent care. Approximately \$5.9 million in benevolent care was provided to residents no longer able to afford the cost of services. By growing the benevolent care endowment, Cherish will empower us to continue to provide needed assistance for the next 125 years.

The Village at Orchard Ridge (TVOR): The community was a lively place of growth, transformation, and coming into its own in 2015. By February, the Assisted Living Memory Care reached its capacity of serving 18 residents. In July, with the addition of six more cottages in Phase II Construction, the total cottage count reached 69. Not only was there growth of residents, the campus expansion project which kicked off in 2014, includes new spaces. The expansion includes the addition of 80 independent living apartments, a 15,000 square foot wellness center with an indoor pool, a 150-seat dining addition, and an additional 10 skilled nursing suites in Orchard Woods Health Center. Completion of Phase II is expected in early 2017. With much growth, TVOR also experienced transformation in leadership, bringing Melissa Fortner on board as the new Executive Director mid-year. Furthermore, \$346,316 in benevolent care was provided residents no longer able to afford the cost of services.

The Legacy at North Augusta (TLNA): The community experienced a year of growth and change in 2015. In partnership with Mary Baldwin College, the community hosted an intern from the Health Care Administration program. Although her initial path was public health, she decided that she would pursue Administration in long-term care after her experience at TLNA. Later in November, the residents, family members and staff celebrated NLCS' 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In 2015, \$113,867 in benevolent care was provided to residents no longer able to afford the cost of services. Furthermore, the possibility of adding Memory Support services has been an ongoing discussion.

myPotential at Home: 2015 marked the first fiscal operational year for myPotential at Home and brought tremendous growth. They expanded beyond the walls of sister organization The Village at Orchard Ridge by meeting the home care needs of clients living in the greater Winchester and Frederick county areas. 11% of all myPotential at Home clients live in Winchester. In October, Personal Assistants began offering chauffeuring services to escort clients to and from doctors' appointments as well as to social activities such as group exercise class and even family reunions. In total, Personal Assistants put in over 400 hours behind the wheel. In June, they also hired a Marketing and Community Outreach Liaison. Through marketing and advertising, and involvement in local community outreach events, their client census continues to rise.

National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS): In 2015, NLCS celebrated its legacy of caring for seniors for 125 years. In May, NLCS threw a gala at the original site of The National Lutheran Home in Washington,

D.C. Staff, board members, and instrumental persons throughout the history of the organization enjoyed an elegant evening honoring NLCS' heritage. The Community Impact Grant program continued to grow as NLCS awarded \$221,250 to 21 social ministry organizations serving seniors. Throughout the year, the continued partnership and management agent agreement with Fellowship Square Foundation generated improved operational practices and overall quality assurance. The Village at Crystal Spring in Annapolis, Md., continues to make progress and we are hopeful of receiving approvals by the summer of 2016. For more updates and information, visit [www.nationallutheran.org](http://www.nationallutheran.org)



# Lutheran Volunteer Corps

BUILDING COMMUNITY, WORKING FOR JUSTICE, LIVING SIMPLY AND SUSTAINABLY

8.2.5

Dear friends,

Last year LVC, and its many service corps colleagues, experienced a drop in Volunteer participation in our programs, mostly as a result of the improving economy. Fortunately, one of the benefits of living sustainably as an organization, and going through an inclusive strategic planning process, is that our team banded together to make adjustments to remain present in all of our LVC cities while still leaning into our new direction.

One aspect of the new direction includes deepening our partnerships with Lutheran churches that are leaning into LVC's core practices of simple and sustainable living, intentional community, and serving for justice. We are excited that while accommodating lower Volunteer numbers, we have also become partners with three Milwaukee churches that are engaged in food justice efforts. This fall we will establish an LVC Food Justice House and program in the Milwaukee community.

We are also re-committing to living a Lutheran theology that celebrates the fact that God's servants come from many faith traditions. We believe that we are more effective in creating peace with justice when we live and serve together as one body, and let our own community be transformed through this process.

Alumna Sarah Cledwyn has helped LVC and its Volunteers lean into this belief by implementing the "Journeys Conversations" as the central component of LVC's spirituality program. Each participant is encouraged to share their story about what calls them to serve and places the emphasis on curiosity and gaining shared meaning amongst participants. Nurturing this culture of mutuality is what invites amazing non-Christian Volunteers to serve with LVC. Their presence enriches and changes us in wonderful ways.

LVC is excited for the road ahead. We aim to deepen our relationships with our community, commit to our own transformation in order to evolve into a more diverse community, and expand our ideas about faithfully uniting people to live and serve in intentional community.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts!

In service,

Sam Collins

President, Lutheran Volunteer Corps

Baltimore, MD • Berkeley, CA • Chicago, IL • Milwaukee, WI • Minneapolis, MN • Oakland, CA  
Omaha, NE • San Francisco, CA • Seattle, WA • St. Paul, MN • Tacoma, WA • Washington, DC • Wilmington, DE

**National Office** 1226 Vermont Ave NW, Washington, DC 20005 • 202.387.3222 • [lutheranvolunteercorps.org](http://lutheranvolunteercorps.org)

## Bulletin of Reports: Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp and Retreat Center, Jefferson MD

The theme of the summer was “We are called...” 2 Timothy 1:9 says “So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time”. Campers and staff explored what it meant to be called into community, prayer, service, forgiveness, and love. They were challenged to take that servant attitude out into the world and make a difference in their homes, congregations, and schools.

This past year has been one of great reward as well as great challenge. The work of Mar-Lu-Ridge goes on each day in a variety of ways, many of which are never seen by the majority of our guests and campers. There is a community of people who are dedicated to preserving the history of this camp and working to ensure our presence for generations to come. On days when it is difficult to manage increasing costs and aging facilities, my mind is drawn to summer days, and the amazing community of campers and staff who fill the mountain with the joy of the Lord. I received a letter from a camper parent, and the words reminded me once again, that what we do here is important.

**“I asked her why (she loves camp) and she told me about all the friends she makes, the activities she does, but here’s the kicker. She said camp is the one place where at all times its 100% ok to talk about how much you love Jesus. She feels that camp is a place where she can show her faith in the company of others who are showing theirs and be loved and accepted. So I wanted to pass that on to you as an affirmation of the extremely important work that you do every summer. The faith formation of so many youth, along with connecting kids to God’s creation and our call to serve is just awesome. Thank you for all that you do and God’s continued blessings on your ministry!”**

During the month of February, we celebrated I Love Camp month. Photos and testimonies poured in from people who have been changed by their time at Mar-Lu-Ridge. Oftentimes, God is at work in ways we know nothing about – God is changing lives in this community, and those people take that joy and love out into the world. Our campers had the opportunity to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Together, we learned about brothers and sisters in need around the world, and poured our love and prayers into every quilt. Our Nature director spent hours leading campers and staff in simple lessons about our beautiful creation, and offered concrete steps for continuing this stewardship at home. Karl and I began to develop an Environmental Education program, which we hope will provide overnight and day retreat opportunities for school children throughout the year.

One of the highlights of my year was the opportunity to attend the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries conference in November. Camp directors and staff from Lutheran camps all across the U.S. gathered at Lutheridge, in western NC, for 5 days of continuing education workshops, small group discussion, worship and relationship building. The people I met are doing amazing things at their camp and retreat centers, and I was affirmed as I shared news of our programming and work with groups such as Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Lutheran Social Services, and a variety of outside camps who utilize our facility. I made many new friends and further developed my network of support – people who understand the unique issues we deal with on a daily basis and are quick to offer advice or prayers. I am very grateful to the Board of Directors for supporting me in this endeavor and hope to participate yearly.

It all comes down to community. Whether the people are right here in the form of my full-time staff, with us seasonally like our summer staff, volunteering time on the grounds or in the office, sharing news of the ministry in their congregations, hosting Mobile Mar Lu’s, or financially supporting our work, we are blessed beyond measure to be **community**.

In peace,  
Sarah Lefler, Executive Director



WOW! What a year 2015 turned out to be at Caroline Furnace. Executive Director Reuben Todd marked his second anniversary at CFLC on February 1, 2016. He continues to be the catalyst for improvements and ministry growth. Have you traveled to camp lately or spent time at our retreat facility at Buttonwood Lodge on the Signal Knob Farm?

The road into camp has enjoyed a considerable upgrade and has been re-graded, the Farm House at camp has gotten a facelift, Buttonwood Lodge has had an interior make-over, newer vehicles provide reliable transportation, failing equipment in the kitchen has been replaced with new equipment and - best of all: Reuben hired the best food service manager/host/chef on the East Coast! Campers, parents, and volunteer workers rave about the great quality of food provided by Chef Aaron Adams, our newest member on staff.

This June Caroline Furnace celebrates 59 years of outdoor ministry amidst God's creation along Passage Creek in Fort Valley. The late Rev. Moyer's dream continues to thrive as the camper and facility rental numbers have improved over the last two years and we look forward to another banner year in 2016. Most importantly, the quality of the camp programs and immersion in the outdoor experience has inspired two more Caroline Furnace alumni to follow their call into Seminary. We give glory to God that Caroline Furnace has developed and nurtured thousands of Christian leaders in our society amidst an ever-changing world and technology saturation in our lives. We encourage everyone to come and see the unique power of God's love, opened hearts, and joyful culture celebrated here on a daily basis. All are welcome.

For 2016, we're excited about renewed facilities, thanks to record volunteer attendance at work weekends and other service events to care for our property. We lift up the amazing staff and volunteers who care for our guests, work with our campers, and share their faith. We are buoyed by the stories shared by retreat groups of how their time at Caroline Furnace has enriched and impacted their lives for the better. The enthusiasm of our campers is contagious as we watch them grow in their relationship with Jesus and experience our intentional Christian community.

As we continue to reach out, seeking others in our community we may serve, we are blessed by each opportunity that not only comes our way but that we create in order to share this unique ministry with others. All of us at Caroline Furnace give thanks for the partnerships with each of the Synods and ask for your continued blessing and support for this important and relevant mission; ***"To provide unforgettable faith, education, and renewal experiences in God's creation for all God's people."*** We hope you will visit us at [CarolineFurnace.org](http://CarolineFurnace.org) and learn more. There is a place for you at Caroline Furnace! Join us!