

NWPA Synod Newsletter

November/December 2019

Many Thanks and Blessings to NWPA Synod

On Sept. 7, 2019, Chris Curran, vice president of the NWPA Synod, and Beth Orris, a member of our German team, represented our synod at the installation of the Rev. Friedrich Kramer, as our companion synod's bishop of the Evangelischen Kirche in Mitteldeutschland (the Evangelical Church of Central Germany or EKM).

Via trains, planes, and automobiles we first ventured to Erfurt, Germany, where we spent the night in the Evangelisches Augustinerkloster, the updated cloister where Martin Luther studied. Rev. Charlotte Weber, ecumenical officer of the EKM, hosted us providing an impressive tour of local village churches and the town of Erfurt.

The installation was held in Magdeburg, Germany in the cathedral, the Dom St. Mauritius und Katharina. It was quite the massive celebration! Many ecumenical and international guests from England, Sweden, Poland, Finland, Denmark, Tanzania, the Czech Republic, and the USA were honored and part of the installation service which was broadcast live on national German television. Chris shared a brief scripture reading as part of the sharing of the peace, and also served as a communion assistant, and may we add, without incident! The music was spectacular including a brass orchestra, rock combo, the massive cathedral organ and the cathedral choir. Bishop Kramer delivered a poignant and powerful sermon. Immediately following the service, a wonderful reception was held in the cathedral courtyard for all to enjoy food, drink, and fellowship, as well as sharing congratulatory wishes with the new bishop. In the evening a special dinner was held with Bishop Kramer, the international guests, and distinguished members of the EKM, where Beth offered greetings on behalf of our synod.

We want to thank bishop Lozano, bishop emeritus Jones, and the NWPA synod for the opportunity to represent our synod and attend this most prestigious event. It truly was the trip of a lifetime and a dubious honor we will never forget. Again, vielen dank und segen an die NWPA-Synode!

Your sisters in Christ,

Chris and Beth





Calendar

November

- 2- LWL- Preaching the Holidays with Rev. Fraser
- 3- Daylight savings time ends
- 5-7- FCTE Waynesboro
- 9- WELCA Meeting
- 14- Rostered Leaders Day of Learning with Rev. Bond
- 16- Committee on Church Vocations
- 28-29- Thanksgiving- OFFICE CLOSED

December

- 21- First Day of Winter
- 24-January 1- Office Closed

2020 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

June 11-13

Thiel College

This is the last in the series of articles on zero waste. Did you make at least one change this year? We hope you learned to look at your garbage in a different way!

NOVEMBER: COMMUNITY ACTION

- Who is your community?
- Start a zero-waste group
- Host a zero-waste event

Webster defines **community** as ‘people with common interests living in a particular area’. The congregations in the NWPA Synod of the ELCA are a community. The Green Team did a recycling survey at the synod assembly in June and we definitely have common interests. Those who responded were overwhelmingly in favor of recycling as much as possible. Most are also experiencing decreased availability of recycling sites or curbside pick-up with less kinds of materials being recycled. Watch for more details from this survey in future articles.

The Green Team is the zero-waste champion for the Synod. We hope to work within the synod by contacting legislators, township and city leaders as well as trash haulers to effect change. We encourage the congregations within the synod to look at their energy use and recycling practices. We hope each congregation will encourage their members to do the same in their lives at home and at their workplace. Do you have ways your congregation is doing these things? Have you done an energy audit? How are you each personally making a difference each and every day?

Our everyday choices and actions demonstrate our “Faith in Action”. We are stewards of God’s Creation. We must make a difference if we hope to slow the changing climate. Let’s get this **Green Community in NWPA** moving in our actions and advocacy work toward zero -waste!

DECEMBER: ZERO WASTE HOLIDAYS

- The “no wasteful gifts, please” talk
- Wrap sustainably
- Make zero waste resolutions

As we face the upcoming holidays some of us are excited and others are overwhelmed. All that shopping, baking, wrapping, eating, cooking, planning, traveling.... STOP! THINK! Are you being earth friendly is all this holiday busyness? Do you even think about **zero waste** as you purchase and wrap gifts? As Americans we are encouraged to be big time consumers during the holidays. We are bombarded with advertising telling us we **MUST** have this and we **MUST** do that. Do we really? Can you thrift shop for any of your gifts? Can you simplify your gift giving? Do you need to buy items that are packaged in a ton of plastic? Do you purchase on-line and receive large boxes with small items inside? Do you recycle all those boxes? Think of all the airplane and truck fuel expended to get those to you. Could you shop local small business? Do we need to give ten gifts to children when one or two will do? Could you wrap gifts in newspaper or paper bags and decorate them a little. Kids would love that! They can help. Get those crayons and markers out. Wouldn’t the people you give to love that instead of the expensive gift paper that is thrown away? (Oh yeah, then recycle that plain gift wrap in the compost!) Check out the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog. I’ll take a hive of bees given to a family in need. We hope you STOP and THINK about your **holiday waste creation**. Can you do better?

If you would like to be on the **NWPA Synod’s Green Team’s** email list or would like more information about the Green Team, contact Dennis Groce (d_mgroce@labs.net) with your name and email address.

Martin Luther, “God is wholly present in all creation, in every corner, behind you and before you”

Churchwide youth delegate perspective

The Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee this summer was an eye opening experience I will never forget. The Robert's Rule of Order instructions on the process of voting and making motions was something I prepared for, but not to this degree. Some youth would say that the plenary sessions were too long and difficult to pay attention to. I will admit, spending three to four hours in one seat being attentive to a lot of talking was a big task, but nothing the members of our synod or I couldn't handle, especially with free coffee. I had so much appreciation for the formal-ness of this assembly. Although we had a great time eating out and exploring the city a bit, it was serious business, and we as a national assembly had a lot of work to accomplish.

I met many new and friendly open- minded individuals willing to chat about a variety of topics including the church now, the future of the church, school, and hobbies. Through Christ this assembly brought close to a thousand people together for a great purpose, and it allowed me to look at the world, the ELCA across America, and our own synod in a way I've never seen before. One phrase that was reiterated throughout was "we are church, we are church together, we are church for the sake of the world". It was amazing to be reminded of that everyday. A mission statement, lead by the Holy Spirit, teaching us we are put here on earth to be the hands and feet of Christ. All are welcome to the table. Simply, unbelievable!

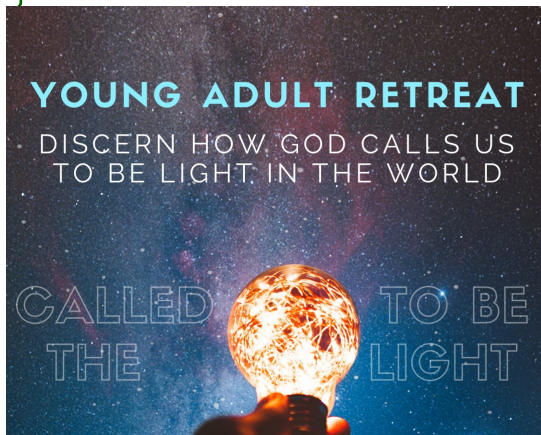
One of the most exhilarating parts of this experience were the worship services. We had services in more languages and styles than I've ever been exposed to. The diversity of cultures displayed in each service was fantastic and introduced me to global worship unlike NWPA . The music was so uplifting and gave me goosebumps every service. I've never heard so many people sing in one place before, and it blew me away. Yes, I now believe my elders when they say Lutheran's can sing better than most denominations.

As a youth, it was rejuvenating to be an important part of our church society for an entire week, and helped mold me for the future. The wonderful experiences and people speak volumes. My only drawback to the trip was sitting in Chicago traffic, and not getting to stop at Cabela's with Bishop Jones. Overall, this trip was absolutely fantastic, eye opening, life changing, and means more to me than I can express in words. I want to thank our bishops and this synod for allowing me to attend and be a part of such an amazing gathering. We Are Church, We Are Church Together, We Are Church for the Sake of the World!

Christ's peace and blessings,

*Brady Thatcher -
Grace Franklin*





Young Adult Retreat

What are you being called to? This Epiphany-inspired retreat will explore light in many forms around the city and provide meaningful moments for prayer, worship, & discernment.

For young adults (18-25) throughout western Pa. Highlights include: Phipps Conservatory, Holiday Market, Downtown Creche, Pitt Nationality Rooms, & Light Photo Hunt.

For more Information Contact:

Rev. Tedd Cogar

tcogar@iup.edu

*Sunday January 5 – Tuesday January 7th,
2020*

*\$100 Per Person (includes meals and lodging)
RSVP By Dec 19 at www.swpasynod.org/light*

Mission Support

Mission Support Intent forms will be sent out before the end of 2019. Please return them to the Synod Office no later than March 1st 2020.

Form A & C

Forms A & C will be sent out from CHICAGO, after January 1, 2020. These will either be via email or hard copy, please make sure to fill these in their entirety. If you need assistance please call the Synod Office.

Remittance Sheets

The Synod Office will send out remittance sheet packets by the end of 2019. Your congregation should have a January 2020 sheet from the previous years packet. Please keep in mind the Synods Fiscal year ends January 31, 2020. If your concerned about meeting your Mission Support percentage for 2019, please remit payment no later than January 31, 2019 contact Ron King, Synod Office Treasurer if you need assistance.



Wrestling with Jakob

? What is Your Why? ?

What is your why? This is fast becoming my favorite question to ask of congregations. Why are you here? While it is a simple question it gets to the heart of so much of what we do and how we think about ourselves as church.

- **Why** are you here?
- Why are **you** here?
- Why are you **here**?

Why are you here? This question raises for us questions of theology and mission. Whose work are we called to do here? What is the nature of that work? How is this different than other organizations' work? What is the motivation behind the work that we do? What is the vision of the congregation? What is the reason for this congregation existing?

Why are **you** here? *This question can and should be answered either as individual or congregation.* What brought you to this place? What keeps you here? Why are you not somewhere else? What are the non-negotiables for you remaining? What circumstances would cause you to leave/disappear? As a congregation, what sets you apart from other churches and organizations?

Why are you **here**? What is important about your context? How does your context shape your ministry and mission? Why in this place (context) and not another? What about this congregation makes it critical to this context? How do you serve the context in a particular way?

Three questions, but O what conversations they can open up! See where they take you.



Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Erie

Bach Cantata Vespers

The Luther Memorial Bach Cantata Vespers series invites you to attend at the next Luther Memorial Bach Cantata Vespers which will be presented on Sunday, November 10 at 4:00pm and will feature a comforting and confident cantata #99 based on one of our solid, but less-often sung hymns – "What God Ordains Is Always Good" (LBW 446). Please consider attending this worship event to continue our connection to our Lutheran identity! Be moved to be here by the Holy Spirit.

Blue Christmas Service

The holiday season can be a difficult time, grieving the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness, loss of a job, to name a few. Please join us on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 6 pm for a time of comfort, warmth, and love at Luther Memorial Church, 225 West Tenth Street, Erie. A reception will follow (optional to attend). The church is handicap accessible, and has a well-lit parking lot/security. The new entrance to

New Life Lutheran Church, Marion Center

Love Your Neighbor Shirts and Hoodies!

Check out this brand-new original design we are making available this fall! In one dramatic but simple logo, you can remind yourself and everybody around you what it's all about: the call to love your neighbor. We've never needed a reminder like that so much as we do today! Well, you can not only wear this call to love neighbors, but you can help put it into action, too, because all proceeds from these shirts, available with black logo on light blue, red, or light green colored shirts, are being given to help homeless families through Indiana County Family Promise. Get them in short or long sleeve, in larger sizes as well, or in hooded pullovers. Order by Nov. 24 to get your request included! You can use the order form here and use the mailing address on the form, along with payment, to place your orders!



*Order form attached

Installation of Bishop Michael L Lozano

Dreaming of his cookie table



More photos will be available on our website!



Prayers



A nod to Military Chaplaincy



Senator Scott Hutchison was one of
over 300 in attendance



All Region 8 Bishops , and Bishop Rowe
blessed the Installation.



This is how we escort Bishop Eaton in
the NWPA Synod. Shiny Red Pick up
truck with Bishop Emeritus Ralph Jones.

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Northwestern PA Synod. ELCA

www.nwpaelca.org



As hard as it is to imagine, the Holiday Season is practically here. So that means prepping for a New Year here at the Synod Office. There will be changes made here at the Synod Office, so be patient if you don't get answers as quickly as you normally would.

Scarlett was OBSESSED with her costume for Halloween. She was Winifred Sanderson from Hocus Pocus and was adored every where she went. My nieces were the other two sisters from Hocus Pocus.

My family has had many trials and tribulations this past year, and no end in sight. Just when you think you are getting ahead, your boiler blows up, and your roof starts to leak. But it will all turn out in the end. We hope your holidays are full of warmth, family, faith, and food.

Happy Thanksgiving and
Merry Christmas.

Ellen and Family!



Local Happenings

LIGHT-UP NIGHT
November 28, 2019
Franklin, PA

Shadrack's Christmas Wonderland

Open every evening from November 15, 2019 to January 5, 2020.

M-F: 6 - 10PM

Sat-Sunday: 6-10PM or Later

Including Holidays, even in the rain!

BIG BUTLER FAIRGROUNDS - 1127 NEW CASTLE RD, PROSPECT
PA 16052



New for Fall 2019: Love Your Neighbor Shirts and Hoodies!

Check out this brand-new original design we are making available this fall! In one dramatic but simple logo, you can remind yourself and everybody around you what it's all about: the call to **love your neighbor**. We've never needed a reminder like that so much as we do today! Well, you can not only *wear* this call to love neighbors, but you can help *put it into action*, too, because all proceeds from these shirts, available with black logo on **light blue, red, or light green** colored shirts, are being given to help homeless families through *Indiana County Family Promise*. Get them in **short** or **long** sleeve, in **larger sizes** as well, or in **hooded pullovers**. Order by Nov. 24 to get your request included!



Send your order form to:

Love Your Neighbor Shirt Orders

c/o Hope Lutheran Church

35 Ridge Avenue, Homer City, PA 15748

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Short-Sleeve T-Shirts (\$9.00 each; 2X-\$11.00; 3X-\$12.00)

Red: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Blue: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Green: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Short-Sleeve T-Shirts, Youth Sizes (\$8.00 each)

Red: ____ Youth S ____ Youth M ____ Youth L

Lt. Blue: ____ Youth S ____ Youth M ____ Youth L

Lt. Green: ____ Youth S ____ Youth M ____ Youth L

Long-Sleeve T-Shirts (\$14.00 each; 2X-\$16.00; 3X-\$17.00)

Red: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Blue: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Green: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Hooded Pullover (\$20.00; 2X and 3X \$25.00 each)

Red: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Blue: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Lt. Green: ____ Adult S ____ Adult M ____ Adult L ____ Adult XL ____ Adult 2X ____ Adult 3X

Total Number of Items Ordered: _____ (checks payable to New Life-Hope Shared Ministry)

Total Price: _____

NWPA Synod -- Authorized Lay Worship Leaders -- November 2019

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Updated 10/31/19