

SYNOD NEWS

The Spirit of Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

February 2012



Be Who You Are! See What You Have! DO WHAT MATTERS!

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod staff is discovering where God is on the move!

The synod staff is committed to doing what matters in their work.

At least once a month now, staff meetings begin with an hour of Bible study for the entire staff. Using a method similar to the traditional approach called *lectio divina*, staff members take turns reading the lesson aloud. After a period of silent reflection, everyone is invited to share what they hear God saying to them in this passage.



Presently we are working our way through the book of Acts. Participants in the November *Do What Matters* workshops were given a congregational toolkit to help them look at who they are, what they have, and how they can do what matters. One section of the toolkit is a guide for reading the Book of Acts together.



Reflecting on how the first Christians became the church is helping us to understand what it means to be the church today.

It's a big time commitment for busy people, but if we don't have time to read the Bible together, something is wrong.

You and your congregation can strengthen your focus on doing what matters by watching the synod website for more resources and ways to be involved with this emphasis.



NOTE: If your congregation did not receive a copy of the congregational toolkit or you want a copy for yourself, click the link on the synod website, www.godslove.org, to download a copy.



Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Supporting Leaders for the Church



Leadership matters in a church that is sent to make a difference in the world. Our leaders are called to serve, to inspire, and to proclaim the gospel. Well-prepared leaders are vital to the future of the ELCA.

The ELCA Fund for Leaders provides support to all qualified students preparing for ordained or rostered lay ministry through one of the eight ELCA seminaries. Since 2000, the Fund for Leaders has awarded approximately 700 full and partial tuition scholarships totaling over \$5.9 million in tuition assistance. The offering from the synodical All Saints Day service went to this fund.



One of this year's recipients is Samantha Wertz, a member of Trinity, Pottsville, and a student at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C.

Samantha is shown here with Bishop Zeiser.

You can help shape the leadership of this church by making a contribution to the Fund for Leaders. It's also a great way to honor a pastor who has been important in your life. For information on donating to this fund, go to <https://community.elca.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=389>.



Family Faith Challenge

Take part in the monthly family faith challenges developed by the synod's Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry Team!

Family faith challenge guidelines for the year include worshipping God together once a week, gathering together around a table six times a week, placing an empty chair at the table to represent God's presence; making sure each person has his/her time to speak without interruption, and reading from an age-appropriate Bible.

Here are February's challenges under the theme, *Love*. We challenge you to notice how God's love is being shared in the world around you.



Week one: Make and distribute Valentine cards to a neighbor in need, the shut-ins at your congregation, college students or someone who needs to hear a loving word.

Week two: Donate a food that you love to your local food bank.

Week three: Gather around the table, light a candle, tell each member of your family what you love about them.

Week four: Read 1 Corinthians 13 and talk about love. What words in the Bible passage are meaningful to you?

For more information on the family faith challenges, click the link on the synod home page at www.godslove.org.



Celebrating Our Faith through the Arts: Psalms



April 28, 2012

The Lutheran Center; 9:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

Sponsored by the synod's Faith Formation Resource Team, the purpose of the event is to bring together 7th graders through adults to explore a variety of ways to express our faith through the arts.

We will be focusing on—

- ✓ visual arts
- ✓ music
- ✓ liturgical dance
- ✓ drama
- ✓ creative writing

Watch for more information!

Farm Family Appreciation Celebration

Saturday, March 17, 2012



Celebrate the annual farm family appreciation celebration with friends and families across the synod.

For more information or to register, call 610-378-1327 and ask for Donna or go to www.godslove.org/calendar.

Kindness and Compassion



NEPS WELCA Spiritual Growth Retreat
March 17, 2012 (snow date, March 24)
 Nativity Lutheran Church, Allentown
Guest: Bruce Becker, author of *Kindness and Compassion*, the story of the Nickel Mine tragedy.
 For more information and to register, see the December *Flame* at www.godslove.org.

Leaning, Lifting, Leading

Lutheran Youth Fellowship Assembly

June 22-24, Muhlenberg College, Allentown PA



2012 Synod Assembly

June 15-16, Sovereign Center, Reading PA

