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WE News of the LSS: September 16, 2025

1 message

Lower Susquehanna Synod <mroscoe@lss-elca.org>

Tue, Sep 16, 2025 at 5:07 PM

Reply-To: mroscoe@lss-elca.org

To: zionlutheranudh@gmail.com

WE ARE
Synod



THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD | September 16, 2025



Lower Susquehanna Synod Photo Of The Week
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Working for Peace in a Time of Violence

In July, the LSS Office of the Bishop released a pastoral letter with resources for worship, prayer, and conversation about gun violence. Since then, new acts of violence have affected our communities, reminding us of the urgent call to be peacemakers. The 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly has also adopted *Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All*, a new social statement that equips us for faithful engagement in public life.

As the International Day of Peace approaches on September 21, and as we remember the faithful witness of Dag Hammarskjöld, we invite congregations to pray for peace and engage with these resources.

[Read More & Access Resources Here](#)



LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD
THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH. THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU HERE.

Your prayers and presence are
requested for the installation of

The Reverend Stephen R. Herr
Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

OCTOBER

25

2025

2:00 p.m.

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH
30 WEST CHESTNUT ST., HANOVER, PA 17331



Installation of Bishop Stephen R. Herr

Saturday, October 25, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Join us in celebrating the installation of the Rev. Stephen R. Herr as Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. This joyful worship service is a time for the whole church to worship God, celebrate our unity in Christ, and pray for our synod and Bishop Herr as we begin our ministry together.

ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry will preach and preside. A reception will follow the service. All are welcome to attend as we share in fellowship and celebration. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation will be provided for this worship service.

[Learn More.](#)

Rostered ministers are invited to vest. Color of the day is red. Vested leaders will process and have designated seating. Please arrive by 1:00 p.m. A greeter will meet you as you enter the building. Please let them know you will be processing, and you will be directed to your dressing area. If you plan to vest and process, please RSVP by October 6. An RSVP is only needed if you intend to join the procession. [RSVP here.](#)

[Information about parking and the livestream can be found here.](#)

Questions? Please contact our synod office at 717-652-1852.



Prepare for Portico Annual Enrollment!

Portico Benefit Services is offering additional webinars to help plan members and sponsoring organizations prepare for annual enrollment in October.

- Annual enrollment for sponsoring organizations is October 1-14, 2025.
- Annual enrollment for plan members begins in waves on October 20, 2025.

All members and sponsoring organizations will be sent emails about their enrollment windows at the address that Portico has on file for them.

Webinar for Plan Members: Monday, September 22 at 2:00 p.m. ET

If you are sponsored in the Portico Benefit plan, this webinar will review the selections you have for benefits in 2026, explain Portico's four new ELCA-Primary Health Plan options, and provide helpful information for enrollment.

[Register here if you plan to attend.](#) After you register you will receive the ZOOM link.

Webinar for Congregations/Sponsoring Organizations: Monday, September 22 at 6:30 p.m. ET

If you sponsor members in the Portico Benefit plan, this webinar is for you. We will discuss employer benefit selections, the health plan options for ELCA-Primary Health Plan members in 2026, and review the annual enrollment process.

[Register here if you plan to attend.](#) After you register you will receive the ZOOM link.

Both webinars will be led by Pastor Cathy Schibler and Pastor Tara Lynn, who serve as Regional Reps for Portico.



Voices of Advent: The Bible's Insights for a Season of Hope

by Matthew L. Skinner

Resource of the Month
Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Center



Resource of the Month
Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Center

If you haven't already done so, it's time to plan for Advent!

Voices of Advent: The Bible's Insights for a Season of Hope
by **Matthew L. Skinner** (Abingdon Press, 2025)

In this four session DVD study, Skinner leads participants through biblical texts and explores how they shape our lives and Christmas celebrations. Listen as Jesus promises to return to us in the future, to John the Baptist as he prepares the way for the Messiah, to the faithful people and poets who anticipate the magnificence of Jesus's birth, and to the angels and visionaries who praise God when Christmas dawns. Through Skinner's scriptural insights and digging deeper into the Bible's various perspectives that shape our preparations for Christmas, you'll hear the theme of hope.

To borrow this and other resources, please contact Marty Shifflett at mshifflett@lss-elca.org or call 717-652-1852 x115.



Welcoming Our Konde Companions

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Join us at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, [25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York](#), as we joyfully welcome our friends from the Konde Diocese: Bishop Geoffrey Mwakhaba, the Rev. Neema Mwakhaba, Dr. Lee Mwakalinga, and the Rev. Emmanuel Mchomvu. This special afternoon includes:

- 3:00 p.m. – Coffee, dessert, and conversation with our guests
- 4:00 p.m. – Reaffirmation of the LSS–Konde Covenant with Bishop Geoffrey Mwakhaba and Bishop Stephen Herr
- 4:30 p.m. – Vespers

Come celebrate the partnership we share with our companions in Christ and be inspired by this time of fellowship, worship, and renewal of commitment.

ULS Kindling Faith Learning Never Ends

Thriving Ministries: Congregational Vitality Training



United Lutheran Seminary
Kindling Faith
Learning Never Ends

Thriving Ministries

ULS Kindling Faith Congregational Vitality Training

Is your congregation ready for a joyful jump start into 2026 and beyond? The ELCA's New Ministry Development & Evangelism Team, Directors for Evangelical Mission, and ELCA Coaching, in partnership with Kindling Faith, invite you to join a powerful equipping opportunity designed to help congregations thrive in spirit, community, and action. This experience focuses on best practices for deepening faith lives, cultivating invested and engaged communities, and connecting meaningfully with your neighborhood. Participants will receive practical stewardship and communication strategies, along with other tools and techniques for "how to be church" in today's world. Whether you are a rostered minister, youth leader, council member, or team/committee leader, this event will inspire and equip you for faithful, innovative ministry. All sessions are Thursdays online with alternate sessions available Saturdays. Dates are: Oct. 9 (Oct. 11), Nov. 13 (Nov. 15), Jan. 8 (Jan. 10), Feb. 12 (Feb. 14), April 9 (April 11), May 14 (May 16), & July 9 (July 11).

[Learn More & Register.](#)

Living Lutheran

Living Lutheran: Embracing a Trailblazing Spirit

Get to know Bishop Stephen R. Herr

In August, the *Living Lutheran* published an interview with then Bishop-elect Herr, recorded shortly before he officially assumed the Office of the Bishop on September 1. [Read the article here.](#)

God's work. Our hands.



September 7, 2025

Tell Your Story!

Tell us Your God's Work. Our Hands. Stories

We want to hear your story from God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday 2025! Share how your congregation lived out its mission and where you saw God at work. Stories will be featured on our website and in WE News to inspire others across our synod.

[Learn More & Submit.](#)

Updates Across The Synod

New Employment Listings

New employment listings are now available on our website. Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, is seeking an administrative assistant. Christ Lutheran Church, Elizabethtown, is seeking a youth coordinator, and Trinity Lutheran Church, Lemoyne, is searching for a director of music/organist.

To learn more about these employment opportunities and others from around our synod, or to submit a job posting, visit the [LSS Employment Listings page](#).

Installation of Rev. David Hoth

The installation of the Rev. David Hoth as pastor of St. James Lutheran Church, West York, will be Sunday, September 21 2025, at 2:30 p.m. The Rev. Andrew Berdahl, dean of the York Conference, will preside; the Rev. Carla Christopher will preach. Clergy are invited to vest. Light refreshments will follow in the church basement. St. James Lutheran Church is located at [25 N. Adams St., York](#). An accessible entrance is located off the parking lot east of the church.



We Pray Together

We are a synod that prays together and for one another. Be sure to visit our website prayer page each week.

[Prayer Lists.](#)

In Memoriam: The Rev. Robert Frank “Bob” Matthias

We give thanks for the life and ministry of the Rev. Robert Frank “Bob” Matthias, who died on September 10, 2025. Pastor Matthias served as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, from 1987–1995. He transferred to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in September 2021. A Celebration of Life will be held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Wallingford, PA, on September 27, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

[Read Obituary.](#)

EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, & UPDATES FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Organ Dedication Concert

Sunday, September 21, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church, [44 West Main Street, Shiremanstown, PA](#)

Renowned Organist Rudy Lucente will perform on St. John's new Allen RLX-90 Organ with Wicks/Hagerstown Organ Pipework. This concert is FREE and open to the public.

Party With A Purpose 2025

Fundraiser for Camp Kirchenwald

Join the Lutheran Campring Corporation on Saturday, September 27, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. for Party with a Purpose, their annual Oktoberfest-style fundraiser held at Camp Kirchenwald in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. This lively evening brings together friends, family, and supporters for great food, music, and community, all while helping sustain and grow camping ministry.

Enjoy a mouthwatering pork BBQ dinner, delicious homemade desserts, and the warm atmosphere of an Oktoberfest celebration. Tap your feet to live music, connect with fellow supporters, and take part in an exciting silent and live auction. Your participation directly supports the mission and programs of Kirchenwald (Lutheran Camping Corporation of Central Pennsylvania).

[Learn More & Register.](#)

Weave Together Retreat

October 4, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Bergstrasse Evangelical Lutheran Church and Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kissel Hill are excited to announce a one day collaboration/retreat entitled "Weave Together." The retreat will be held on Saturday, October 4, from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., in Salem Lutheran Church, [26 Owl Hill Road, Lititz](#). Through worship, prayer, reflection, and working together, the retreat will explore the connections we have with each other as well as throughout the greater community. 12"x12" crocheted and knitted squares (any stitch, any color, using worsted weight (4) washable and dryable yarn) can be used to make the squares ahead of time or throughout the retreat. Supplies will be available to piece the squares into blankets which will be shared with places helping the unhoused among us. For more information, please contact Pr. Traci Glover (717) 979-8521 or pastortri1016@gmail.com.

Live Music: The Autumn Project

St. Luke Lutheran Church, [1432 Heidelberg Ave., Schaefferstown](#), is hosting a night of FREE music for junior and senior high school students in the Lebanon and North Lancaster Conferences on Sunday, October 12. The Autumn Project will be performing in the St. Luke chapel at 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. A freewill offering will support St. Luke's community free meal ministry.

Lutheran World Relief Ingathering 2025

Information regarding the LWR 2025 Ingathering, including collection locations and updates in the depository in New Windsor, Maryland, can be found [here](#).

Fall Fest & Cornhole Tournament

November 1, 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran, Penryn, will be hosting their annual fall fest / cornhole tournament on Saturday, November 1, at The Backyard at St. Paul Penryn, 1258 Newport Rd., Manheim. The event begins at 3:00 p.m. \$30/team to register for cornhole. Food truck, beer by donation, homemade soup sale, tractor rides, pumpkin carving, Halloween costume contest for kids, trick or treating. Proceeds benefit the Penryn Food Pantry.

Nicaea Revisited: A Day of Learning and Dialogue

Save the Date: November 5, 2025

Explore the Nicene Creed, its history and significance for ministry and mission today on Wednesday, November 5, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the Diocese of Harrisburg, [4800 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg](#). This ecumenical journey of learning and equipping for ministry is sponsored by the Lower Susquehanna Synod and our LARC siblings in Christ (Lutherans, Episcopalians and Roman Catholics). Registration details will be available soon. Please contact the Office of the Bishop with questions.

2025 ELCA Evangelism Network Gatherings

Save the Date!

The ELCA Evangelism Network welcomes all to gather on the 4th Monday of each month at 3:00 p.m. ET. New participants are always welcome!

September 22: "Strengthening Evangelism with Discipleship" led by Deacon Jason Fisher, Director for Evangelical Mission in the Central Southern Illinois Synod.

October 27: "Oh, the Places You Will Go! Implications of the Great Commission" led by Rev. Jake Jacobson, Director for Evangelical Mission in the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod and author of "Rockin' the Front Porch: Sharing the Faith in the New Normal."

November 17: "The Invitational Christian: A Second Lens" led by Rev. Dave Daubert, DMin, PhD, Director of Day 8 Strategies and author of "The Invitational Christian."

[Learn more about the ELCA Evangelism Network and sign up for remainders and links for these events.](#)

Youth Musicians Invited to Lutheran Summer Music 2026

Enrollment is now open for Lutheran Summer Music (LSM) 2026 at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota! LSM is a faith-based residential music academy for high school students who come together to immerse themselves in musical excellence and build a supportive and fun community. Musical experiences include large ensembles (band, choir, orchestra), chamber music, private lessons, and electives like handbells, jazz, musical theatre, composition, conducting, church music, and more.

Priority enrollment deadline: December 1, 2025

Standard enrollment deadline: March 1, 2026

[Learn More.](#)

WE ARE SYNOD, the e-newsletter of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, connects and shares news and events highlighting the mission and ministry of congregations, our synod, and the ELCA. If you have an idea or a story to share, a prayer concern, or an event or job posting you'd like to advertise on our website, please submit using the our [Community Submissions Form](#).

NEW! We plan to feature photos from a variety of photographers, congregations, and ministries for the **LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD PHOTO OF THE WEEK**. Have a photo to submit? Submissions (1200 X 400) can be uploaded to our [Community Submissions Form](#). By submitting a photo, you are giving the Lower Susquehanna Synod permission to use that photo in promotional materials.

For more detailed information about what's happening around our synod, [VISIT LSS-ELCA.ORG](#).

CONNECT WITH US



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SUSQUEHANNA
SYNOD** THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH.
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