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WE News of the LSS: December 18, 2025

1 message

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Thu, Dec 18, 2025 at 12:40 PM

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WE ARE
Synod



THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD | December 18, 2025



Lower Susquehanna Synod Photo Of The Week
© Kellen Michalowski, Photographer

[Synod Staff and guests joined Messiah, Harrisburg, for their weekly Wednesday Service | December 3, 2025]



Have you ever heard a whisper?

Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry | Christmas 2025

In his Christmas message to the church, Bishop Curry delivers a children's sermon, describing the night when Jesus was born. "One silent night, far away in a town called Bethlehem, the stars twinkled brighter than ever. And the angels were there too. It was as if the whole sky was whispering: 'Something wonderful is happening.'"

Curry emphasizes that "whispers make us stop, listen and pay attention" and reminds us that, this Christmas, we should listen closely because "the heavens are still whispering: *'Jesus is here. God loves you. Share that love with the world.'*"



Merry Christmas from the Officers and Staff of the Lower Susquehanna Synod

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."
- Matthew 1:23

This Christmas, we give thanks for the many ways the incarnation of the Son of God is lived and shared across our synod. Emmanuel, God with us, continues to be made visible in and through your ministries. Thank you for the ways you are serving Christ and neighbor, and for holding our synod in prayer as we move into this holy season and into a new year. We look forward with hope to the new possibilities God is calling us toward, and we offer our deep gratitude for your ministry. We pray that you, your family and friends, and those you serve have a blessed and joyous Christmas!

Holiday Office Closures

Please note our synod office will be closed to observe the holidays beginning Monday, December 22, through Friday, January 2. Our office will reopen on Monday, January 5. Staff will be working remotely or using vacation time, and a staff member will remain on call. In case of an emergency, please contact our office at (717) 652-1852. In addition, a staff member will be in the office each morning to receive year-end financial contributions. Thank you for gifts, prayers, and ministries that support the mission of the Lower Susquehanna Synod to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all.



Giving Thanks for Faithful Service

As part of chapel worship on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, we gave thanks to God as we shared farewell and blessings with Marty Shifflett, Administrative Assistant, Resource Center, and Cathy Paul, Secretary, Treasurer's Office, upon their retirement. Together, they bring a combined 38 years of faithful service which has shaped and supported our ministries in countless ways. We give thanks to God for Marty and Cathy and wish them abundant joy, rest, and blessing in this new season of retirement.



Homeless Memorial Blanket Initiative

Livestream Interviews | December 21

On Sunday, December 21, 2025, Pastor Matthew Best and Deacon Marsha Roscoe will host a series of livestream interviews in support of the Homeless Memorial Blanket Initiative taking place this year in Denver, Colorado. **We invite you to join us online beginning at 3:00 p.m. ET on the Lower Susquehanna Synod YouTube channel.** Bishop Herr will be live at 3:30 p.m., followed by interviews with Amy Foerster, CEO of LHM Foundation and member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Camp Hill, and Dr. Michael VanScoy, who leads UPMC's Street Medicine Team in Harrisburg.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who created memorial blankets. These blankets are now on their way to Denver for this Sunday's national observance, carrying with them prayers, remembrance, and care for neighbors who too often go unseen.

[Learn More.](#)



Hope is on the Horizon LHM's Transitional Housing Vision

LHM SOCIAL SERVICES FOUNDATION

A Place Where Hope Takes Root

The Story of LHM's Transitional Housing Vision
by Deacon Marsha Roscoe

When you first step onto the grounds of the LHM Social Services Foundation's soon-to-open transitional housing community, the vision becomes immediately clear: this is a place where hope is being built. Living into their program name, Horizons, an increasing network of staff, volunteers, partners, and community members offering their gifts to light the way to housing security in central Pennsylvania by preparing a 50+ room community to house individuals and families and to nurture stability, dignity, and belonging.

[Learn More.](#)



The Just Love Story Bible

Jacqui Lewis
and Shannon Daley-Harris, authors
& Cheryl "Ras" Tuesday, illustrator

Resource of the Month
Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Center



Resource of the Month

Lower Susquehanna Synod Resource Center

The Just Love Story Bible (Beaming Books, 2025)

Jacqui Lewis and Shannon Daley-Harris, authors

Cheryl "Ras" Tuesday, illustrator

A bold and inspiring new storybook Bible for children and their families invites readers to open their imaginations, take hold of their belovedness, and understand that all people on earth deserve to be loved and to have dignity, equality, and justice. Beautifully illustrated with striking scenes and depicting biblical characters in various shades of brown, this storybook Bible includes:

- Twenty-six Bible stories from the Old Testament and twenty-six from the New Testament.
- Cultural, religious, and historical context to help kids learn about the experiences of people in ancient times.
- Exploration of genre and biblical storytelling styles in words kids can understand.

Call the synod office at (717) 652-1852 to reserve this resource.



Prayers for Winterfest 2026

Join us in prayer as 250+ high schoolers, young adults, advisors, and staff prepare to come together for *Winterfest 2026: Better Together*. Gathering at the Wyndham Resort in Lancaster from January 2-4, 2026, those at Winterfest will learn about the value and power of community, participate in a food packing event with the goal of providing 30,000+ meals to our neighbors dealing with food insecurity, and spend the weekend embodying the grace and love of Christ Jesus.

Follow along with Winterfest on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Contact Director of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry [Charlie Roberts](#) to learn more about youth ministry in our synod, or [visit us online](#).



In The News

Members of St. James Lutheran Church, Gettysburg, embraced the spirit of generosity this holiday season, contributing \$200,000 to local organizations serving neighbors in need.

[Read More.](#)



Updates From Across the Synod

Update to the Installation of the Rev. Lisa Hair

The Rev. Lisa Hair will be installed as pastor for St. John's Lutheran Church, [11 North Queen Street, Maytown](#), on Sunday, January 4, 2026, at **3:00 p.m.** (*not 2:00 p.m. as previously advertised*). All are invited to attend. Clergy are invited to vest. The color of the day is white.

Save the Date: Congregation Leaders Workshop

Saturday, March 14 | 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

An event to resource and train congregation council members, officers, and leaders. Look for registration information and final details in early January.

New Employment Listings

New employment listings are now available on our website!

- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Newport, is looking for an organist.
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, is searching for an administrative assistant.

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](#).

Community Submissions

Looking for a way to share your event with the synod? Does your organization have an employment listing to post? Do you have resources to share with other ministries? Is there something you think would be a good fit to share in WE News? Visit our [Community Submissions](#) page, where you can submit postings for all this and more! Submit an event to the [community calendar](#), share [employment listings](#) and [community sharing posts](#), submit a photo of the week to be featured in WE News, and even send in items for WE News!

[Learn More.](#)



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.](#)

EVENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, & UPDATES FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Welcome 2026 With Christ Lutheran, Elizabethtown

[125 East High Street, Elizabethtown, PA 17022](#)

Come to receive and share the light of Christ in Elizabethtown at the 12th annual New Year's Eve community-wide celebration on Wednesday, December 31, from 4 to 7 p.m. "Welcome 2026", sponsored by Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, offers a free evening of family fun and kids activities that culminates with the raising of a large star and a spectacular fireworks show! The event includes a performance by local musician Corty Byron, children's crafts, bingo, balloon twisting, and visiting with

Susquehanna Service Dogs. Also offered are free hot dogs, soup, S'mores, popcorn, and hot chocolate.

A chicken barbecue meal will be available for \$15 to help offset the cost of the fireworks. The meal consists of half a chicken, baked potato, applesauce, roll with butter and water. Tickets for the meal are available in the church office Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Some tickets will be available on New Year's Eve.

The event will take place in various locations that include the church parking lot and surrounding buildings. Food service will end at 6:30 p.m. The raising of the star and the fireworks show will begin at 7 p.m.

[Learn More.](#)

Accompaniment: A Model for Congregational Mission Alongside Individuals with Disabilities

ULS Special Lecture

United Lutheran Seminary invites you to join them on January 12, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. in the Brossman Learning Center or online for a special lecture by the Rev. Twila Schock.

In "Accompaniment: A Model for Congregational Mission Alongside Individuals with Disabilities," Pastor Twila will explore how faith communities can accompany people with disabilities in ways that honor dignity, foster belonging, and strengthen congregational life. Drawing on her extensive experience in church relations, global service, and disability inclusion through Mosaic, she will offer both theological grounding and practical insights for communities seeking to build more welcoming and supportive relationships. This event is free of charge.

[Register.](#)

Prophets, Saints and Kings

Resisting Christian Nationalism and Building the Beloved Community with King and Bonhoeffer

On Saturday, January 17, 2026, join LAMPa, ULS Kindling Faith, and Gettysburg College Department of Public Policy for a day with internationally renowned Bonhoeffer scholars, Dr. Stephen Haynes and Dr. Reggie Williams. On MLK weekend, learn about the intersecting legacies and lessons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King, Jr., while deepening your understanding of how people of faith can confront and resist the growing forces of authoritarianism and Christian nationalism in our own time.

[Register for in-person attendance here.](#)

[Register for the livestream here.](#)

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



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

Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA | 1959 Market Street | Camp Hill, PA 17011 US

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