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**WE News of the LSS: June 25, 2025**

1 message

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Wed, Jun 25, 2025 at 3:22 PM

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WE ARE  
*Synod*



THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD | June 25, 2025



Lower Susquehanna Synod Photo Of The Week  
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## Call For the Body of Christ to Affirm Every Body

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

In her Pride Month message, Bishop Eaton urges us to affirm every person, every body and join together as one in the body of Christ. "Our unity doesn't come from all being the same. It comes from being joined in Christ, who gathers every member, every body, into one."

**Register Today for ALIVE 2025**

There's nothing quite like a weekend of authentic community with Christian friends in the fall at Camp Nawakwa. Join us for ALIVE, our event for middle school youth and advisors, scheduled for September 26-28, 2025, at Camp Nawakwa. Youth who are entering grades 6-8 are eligible to attend with their congregation advisors. It's a great way to begin the new school year immersed in a loving community of Lutheran peers and leaders.

**Registration has opened!** Please consider publicizing to your Confirmation families now!

Our theme, 'Better Together,' dives into our Lutheran understanding of being part of a larger community of Christ. Drawing upon some of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s understanding of the beloved community and the value of every human being, we will explore how being united to Christ and others deepens and enriches our lives. Fun, fellowship, campfires, faith formation and inspired worship all highlight this annual fall event. We hope you will make it part of your youth group year!

[Learn More & Register.](#)



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

## New Leadership in the ELCA

We give thanks for the Spirit's guidance and invite your prayers for those newly called and elected to serve as bishops in the ELCA. As pastors called to guide and empower God's people, we pray that they may lead with wisdom, serve with joy, and reflect Christ's love in all they do.

[Learn More About Newly Elected Bishops.](#)





## Collaboration in Outdoor Ministry

### Confirmation Camps in the Lower Susquehanna Synod

Collaboration is how we continue adapting and thriving in a changing, post-pandemic world. For more than 30+ years, around 40 congregations in our synod have been collaborating around faith formation through two camps: All Saints Confirmation Camp and Harrisburg Area Confirmation Camp. Both camps were born out of a shared desire to provide meaningful, Spirit-filled formation for youth through immersive community of learning around themes like baptism, prayer, love and hate, the sacraments, the movement of the Holy Spirit, and more.

Each June, congregations gather at Camp Nawakwa for a week of learning, worship, play, and service rooted in Christ's love and grace. Youth returning year after year tell us it's because of the deep sense of belonging and love they experience in Christian community. From hiking and swimming to worship and shared meals, the week fosters lasting relationships with Christ, their adult mentors, and one another. The curriculum at both camps is designed to build on the catechism instruction youth receive in their home congregations. It's the Spirit-filled community, the shared worship, meaningful conversations, and lived experience of grace, that truly shapes the week. This is where youth most often tell us they encounter Jesus and deepen their relationships with Christ, their adult advisors, and each other.

Congregations interested in joining either camp are welcome to contact the camp directors, Pastor Shawn Berkebile (All Saints CC) at [atownpastor@comcast.net](mailto:atownpastor@comcast.net), or Pastor Aaron Erdley (Harrisburg Area CC) at [pastoraaron@trindlespringlutheran.org](mailto:pastoraaron@trindlespringlutheran.org). No matter which conference you call home, these camps open their doors to all synod congregations; feel free to join, whatever your zip code. You can explore photos, videos, and resources for each camp on our website as well.

[Learn More.](#)

**A BBQ SEND-OFF  
FOR BISHOP  
DUNLOP**

Saturday, August 23, 2025  
Camp Nawakwa

**Registration Open Now!**

The graphic features a large wooden cross against a blue sky. Overlaid on the cross are four diamond-shaped photos: top-left shows a man and a woman; top-right is a close-up of Bishop Dunlop smiling; bottom-left shows a group of people sitting outdoors; bottom-right shows a man and a woman smiling together.

## Join Us for a Retirement BBQ

Saturday, August 23, 2025 at Camp Nawakwa

We want to make sure you mark your calendars for a special event in celebration of Bishop Dunlop's ministry. **You are invited to a Retirement BBQ on Saturday, August 23, 2025, at Camp Nawakwa, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** It will be a joyful gathering with laughter, stories, good food, and shared gratitude for Bishop Dunlop's faithful service.

[Learn More & Register.](#)

## July 2025 Disability Pride Month Resources Available



**Disability Pride Month Resource Blog**



July is Disability Pride Month and can be an important time to examine an important aspect of hospitality, welcome, and inclusion in our congregations and activities or programs. The ELCA has numerous resources and supports (including special grants open until July 31st) for congregations to learn and discern, listen and hold conversations.

[Learn More.](#)



## Updates Across The Synod

### Year of Prayer Resources

July Year of Prayer resources are available now! Weekly prayer petitions, hymn selections, and other resources have been created to unite us within our local settings. While we have included ideas for using these resources, please feel free to adapt these resources in whatever way best suits your congregation. We hope our year of prayer meaningfully guides us into the next chapter of our ministry together.

### [Lower Susquehanna Synod Year of Prayer Resources.](#)

### New Employment Listings

- Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Harrisburg, is seeking an administrative assistant.
- Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, York Springs, is searching for a music director.
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Hanover, is looking for a Maintenance Technician.
- St. Stephen's Episcopal School, Harrisburg, one of our ecumenical partners, is searching for a godly play instructor.

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](#).

### Synod Office Closures

Please note that our synod office will be closed on Fridays throughout the summer months, including the upcoming July 4th holiday. During this season, our support staff will utilize their well-deserved vacation time. We appreciate your patience and understanding, and we pray your summer is filled with rest and renewal.



### June 28 Worship with Rite of Ordination

David Henry Hoth will be ordained into the Office of Word and Sacrament Ministry during a Service of Holy Communion with the Rite of Ordination on Saturday, June 28, at 2:00 p.m. in the Church of the Abiding Presence on the United Lutheran Seminary Gettysburg Campus, [61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325](#). Rostered Ministers are invited to vest and process. The color for the day is red. A reception in the refectory will follow the service. David Hoth has been called to serve as pastor of St. James Lutheran Church in West York. If you are unable to attend, your prayers are requested for this ordinand.



## 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

## LAMPa Action Alert

### Fund Chip-Enabled EBT Cards to Protect Against SNAP Theft

EBT Skimming is the electronic theft of funds using illegal devices on Point of Sale (POS) machines that collect SNAP cardholders' information to make unauthorized purchases. Skimmers target consumers who use SNAP to purchase food because EBT cards are not chip-enabled, making it easy for thieves to access users' card numbers and PINs.

HB1429 passed the House by 198-4. This overwhelming bipartisan majority shows that simple, cost-effective changes can be made to support those who use SNAP. Use our tool to THANK your Representative and write to your Senator to encourage them to support HB1429 as it moves through the Senate and to include funding for the transition to secure chip-enabled EBT cards in the FY 2025-26 budget.

[Learn More & Take Action.](#)

## ELCA Evangelism Network Workshop

**Creative Connections and Supportive Spaces for Neurodiverse Youth and Adults**



The Gospel is good news for everyone; yet, too often, our churches struggle to reflect the full diversity of God's people, especially when it comes to neurodiverse youth and adults. That's why the ELCA Evangelism Network invites you to our next monthly gathering: "Creative Connections and Supportive Spaces for Neurodiverse Youth and Adults," led by the Rev. Carla Christopher, on Monday, July 28, at 3:00 p.m. ET.

This conversation will explore how congregations can move beyond accommodation into celebration, creating environments where neurodiverse individuals are seen, heard, and empowered to lead. Whether you're a ministry leader, educator, parent, or ally, this session will equip you with:

- Insight into neurodiverse experiences within church settings;
- Practical tools for creating inclusive worship, education, and fellowship; and
- Creative ideas for engagement that go beyond traditional models.

There is much we can learn from our siblings in Christ across the nation curating sensory friendly worship and faith formation spaces. Just a few favorite ideas from neurodiverse people and faith and families/guardians of neurodiverse youth include:

Creating a more welcoming and accessible environment begins with thoughtful attention to sensory and comfort needs. Adjusting the lighting to be dimmer and using warmer hues can help reduce overstimulation, while avoiding strobe or flashing effects ensures a more calming space for everyone. Providing a range of seating options, such as rocking chairs or soft cushions, can offer physical comfort and a sense of safety. Sensory-friendly items like fidget tools or textured materials may also help individuals stay grounded and engaged.

Sound quality is another important consideration. Controlling the volume of microphones and speakers, and investing in equipment that minimizes distortion, can make a significant difference for those who are sensitive to noise. Finally, offering a quieter room equipped with a live audio or video feed allows individuals who need a break from the main gathering to continue participating in a way that supports their well-being.

Creating an environment of care and inclusion begins with clear communication and thoughtful preparation. Providing detailed schedules, including the timing of events and explanations of any potentially unfamiliar terms, helps reduce anxiety and supports meaningful participation. Offering flexible options for engagement, such as Zoom access or small group gatherings, allows individuals to connect in ways that meet their comfort levels and needs. Just as important are systems that welcome feedback, suggestions, or specific requests, signaling that everyone's voice matters.

Supportive community also takes shape through the presence of trained volunteers who model self-awareness and care. When regular breaks are encouraged and healthy boundaries are shared with openness and respect, it cultivates a culture of trust.

Clergy and lay leaders are warmly encouraged to join this support network to curate inclusive, inspiring spaces.

**Zoom Details:**

Meeting ID: 818 8446 7818

Passcode: 331005

## ELCA Disability Ministry Grant Applications Open

ELCA Disability Ministry Grant applications have been open now since May 15. Deadline to submit applications is July 31, 2025. This year the ELCA will be giving a total of \$35,000 in grants. Applicants can apply for a grant up to \$10,000. For instructions on how to register and apply, please visit:

<https://www.elca.org/our-work/grants/impact-church-ministry>

[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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