

# SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

## Blessed to be a Blessing



The Church Board (council/consistory) of Zion's Union Church Maxatawny recently challenged its members to raise \$5,000 to help three local service agencies in these difficult times. The congregation has been blessed to be financially stable during the pandemic and the Board pledged to match any donations received from various church accounts.

Despite having only virtual on-line worship, thanks to the generous stewardship of its members over a three-month period the goal was exceeded and \$5,755 was received, which the Board matched for a total of \$11,510. The Salvation Army received \$4,642; Helping Harvest of Berks County received \$4,146; and Second Harvest of Lehigh County received \$2,722.

Zion's Union Church was organized in 1826. In 1987, under the guidance of UCC pastor Willis Heckler, Zion's helped forge a new concept known as "shared ministry," in which Lutheran and UCC worship services were merged and one pastor served both congregations. Things went so well that in 2013, under the leadership of Lutheran pastors Jimmy Lee Werley and Herb Michel, the congregation took the further step of legally merging both congregations to become one of the very first "federated" congregations.

As a federated congregation, members take pride in being both Lutheran and UCC at one and the same time as the congregation is affiliated with both the ELCA and the United Church of Christ and supports both national churches 50/50 with their benevolence dollars. Zion's is currently served by Lutheran pastor Jeffrey Butz.

## Thank You for Your Support!

Congregations of the Northeastern PA Synod have been faithful and generous in their mission support offerings throughout the months of COVID-19 restrictions. This strong support of synod-wide and church-wide ministries has sustained and invigorated mission endeavors in partnership with congregations across the ELCA.

Such a bold response in challenging times gives us confidence that the Triune God into whom we are baptized hears our relentless petition: Give us this day our daily bread.

Thanks be to God! And, thank you. Thank you for your regular mission support offerings. Thank you for your witness to new life in the Risen Jesus to neighbors near and far.

Bishop Samuel Zeiser



## Learning Ministries Day 2021 Save the Date - January 23



On Saturday, January 23 Learning Ministries Day will be held via Zoom for the first time ever. We will offer three one-hour workshop sessions with over 15 workshop options total. Our keynote speaker will be Barbara Rossing, professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, where she has taught since 1994. She will be speaking on "Journeys through Revelation: Apocalyptic Hope for Today."

A \$25 fee will be charged for each participant which will include the keynote, three workshops of their choice, and a goodie bag mailed directly to their home. Satellite churches will be established for people without computer access to participate in a safe and socially distanced manner. Workshop descriptions will be available in November and registration will be open from December 1, 2020 to January 15, 2021 (Check the synod website at [nepasynod.org](http://nepasynod.org)).

Keep an eye out for additional learning opportunities provided by the Faith Formation Ministry Team starting in March 2021. Faith Formation Saturdays will be initiated as a monthly opportunity for any and all to gather and learn from the comfort of your own home.

Synod News is published monthly by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
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