

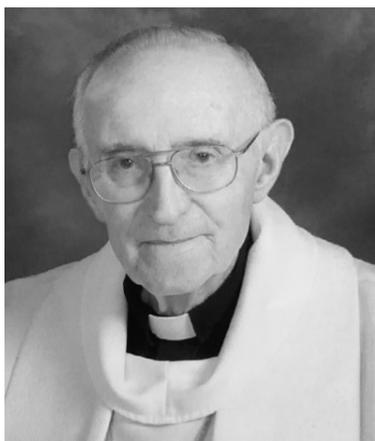
SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

A Note from the Bishop Elect

Dear Friends in Christ - The Seasons of Christmas and Epiphany proclaim the good news: "Christ with us" and "Christ revealed to us!" I cling to these words. I long to hold tight, loved ones who must stay apart for a time: my parents, siblings, nephews and nieces. And I grieve for those we have lost, cry out for an end to this present suffering. But I also hear this great promise with new ears and insights: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in deep darkness a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:2 NIV). Let us trust that the Light of the World is here already, and yet his coming is on the cusp, ready to start making all things new. In the coming days, I so look forward to sharing the vision that God is ready to reveal, for new life and renewed purpose across our Synod. More to come: keep watch! - Chris deForest, Bishop Elect

The Rev. Richard H. Stough Honored for Navy Chaplaincy



The Rev. Richard H. Stough was recently recognized for 30 years of service as a U.S. Navy Chaplain with a \$1,000 contribution to the ELCA Federal Chaplaincy Ministry Fund for Leaders Scholarship Endowment Fund in honor of his service. The Endowment supports word and sacrament ministry candidates who will minister to military service members, and those who will serve as Veteran's Administration Chaplains or as Federal Prison Chaplains.

Because of its role in lifting up the Endowment Fund, this synod is designated an "ELCA Medallion Synod." Congregations can become "ELCA Medallion Congregations" by similarly supporting the Endowment Fund. Contact the synod office for more information.

Learning Ministries Day 2021 - Registration Deadline is Jan. 15

On Saturday, January 23, Learning Ministries Day will be held via Zoom for the first time ever; and you are invited! 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. Online registration will be open until the end of the day on January 15, 2021. Checks must be received to the Synod Office no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, January 15. Workshop descriptions and the registration link can be found on the synod website at godslove.org.

Hope, Reading Receives NAACP Community Impact Award



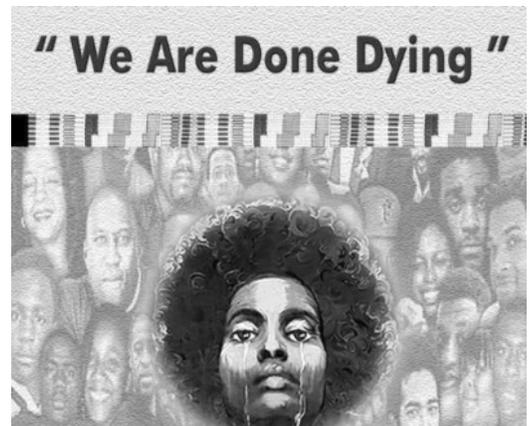
Food distribution staff at Hope

On Saturday, November 14, the Reading Chapter of the NAACP met for its 33rd annual Freedom Fund Gala - virtually, of course. Meals from "Grill Then Chill" were delivered to the homes of attendees. Following the meal, awards were presented to local organizations for their racial justice efforts. The Gala theme was, "We Are Done Dying."

Among the recipients of the 2020 Community Impact Award is a congregation of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod - Hope Lutheran Church in the Northwest section of the City of Reading. The award citation reads, in part, "We are thrilled to honor the church's dedication and commitment to making a difference with programs supporting the fullness of life for the residents living in our community."

Hope hosts the largest food pantry in the Helping Harvest Food Bank service area. Additionally, Hope's Table community outreach ministry provides a weekly meal for area residents; and Hope sponsors Café Esperanza, a One World Everybody Eat affiliate. The congregation has also offered summer and after-school programs for the multicultural children and youth who live in the neighborhood.

Pastor Mary Wolfe, who accepted the award on behalf of the congregation, commented, "We are so honored to be considered for this award. Hope has been enriched in many ways through the relationships we have been privileged to form with all of our neighbors."



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