



Celebrating Success!

The Conclusion of the 37th Synod Assembly



On Saturday, June 8, over 376 Lutherans gathered in person and virtually to participate in the 37th Northeastern PA Synod Assembly. The theme, "Hungry for Life Together in Christ," celebrated the 50th anniversary of ELCA World Hunger and highlighted the hunger ministries that congregations are implementing within their communities. Pastor Eileen Smith LeVan, who co-chairs the NEPS Hunger Team along with her husband, Brian, presented how our congregations are improving hunger issues through

ministries like food pantries, community gardens, and weekly food distributions. The ELCA representative, Marie Anne Sliwinski, Senior Director for Building Resilient Communities, expressed how Lutheran Disaster Response, AMMPARO, God's Work Our Hands, and our synod are helping individuals not only in our country but around the world through mission support and volunteer work.

Deacon Kat Tigerman introduced six congregations in Reading discerning themselves to be the first pilot 6261 community. "Our small sterling congregations are making the effort to talk, share, and consider the future," says Bill Knox of Hope Lutheran, Reading. Many shared how their congregations are growing in friendship, community, and faith. Members of the Assembly also gave \$2,365 towards ELCA World Hunger. The three resolutions passed by the synod



assembly can be found at godslove.org/assembly2024. Congratulations to Jim Doxsey, Rev. Dana Heckman-Beil, and Amy Mietelski on their election to the Synod Council! The Assembly also elected the following voting members to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix, AZ: Bishop Christopher deForest, Nancy Reichelt, Mark Stana, Seth Noggle, Betty Jane Schaefer-Hassler, Ron Mordosky, Jackie Williams, Stephanie Druckenmiller, Rev. Brian Beissel, Deacon Dawn Talley, Rev. Tom Scornavacchi, Rev. Lauren Applegate, Rev. Chris Druckenmiller, Rev. Ken Melber, Jr., Don Boyer, Stephen Hikes, Jean Sandberg, Rev. Nelson Quinones, Amanda Melber, Alicia Wood, Elizabeth Leibenguth, and Maria Marcano. To rewatch the excitement, visit the assembly webpage.

Witness and Service Team Grants are a Hugh Help!

Submitted by Georgia Suranofsky

During the assembly, we learned that over 2/3 of those congregations attending the in-person event, have either a food or garden ministry! Here is just one story about an amazing food ministry.

The Mifflin Community Food Ministry (MCFM) was created in 2002 to provide a local, community-based source of food to those persons and households in the Governor Mifflin School District experiencing hardship or need, giving them sustenance and aid in the way of food and clothing on a temporary basis one a month.

I was told by Janet Reese, Board Member and one of the MCFM founders, that this food ministry is set apart by their lack of involvement with state or federal programs which in turn allows them for the past 22 years to pray with clients, distribute information on what is happening at their churches and invite the clients, share the gospel and inspirational materials with the families.

4 local churches including St. John's Evangelical Lutheran-Mohnton, New Life of Shillington, Calvary United Methodist and Zion Evangelical Congregational Church are the sponsors of the ministry Zion is the host church where donations are collected, stored and then distributed. Community donations supply most of the non-perishable food and paper products

distributed to MCFM clients. 8 local churches and several organizations also provide non-perishable food, volunteer distribution tasks and money.

Food distributions prior to Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas include grocery store gift cards for clients' use to buy perishable items and clients receive a gift also. In tears, 1 woman told the President of the food ministry, "I have never received a Christmas gift."

Last year, the community food ministry experienced a dramatic increase in the average number of households served per month going from 84 over 100. The number climbed in December 2023. This was the busiest month ever, serving 149 households representing 482 people.

Gail Colahan, a member at St. John's Evangelical in Mohnton remembered the grants that are available

through the Witness and Service team and applied. The grant was approved for use this year and is providing meat and produce for the 12 monthly distributions.

The Mifflin Community Food Ministry would not be successful without God's helping hand and the wonderful support received from volunteers, organizations, and churches that donate their time, money, and food," When we all share the burden of trying to make a community a better place, it lightens the load.



Take a minute to view some photos of the ministry by [clicking on this link](#).

You can find information on the [synod website](#) about the grants available from the Witness and Service Team. Your mission support giving makes these grants possible.

Thank you for your continued support!