VOLUME 33 | ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER 2025

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly:

The Work of the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania

Written by: Pastor Mike Bennethum, LAMPa Policy Council Chair

In a well-known scripture, the prophet Micah proclaims, *"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"* (NRSV Micah 6:8) It has been pointed out that we Lutherans often are more comfortable loving justice and doing kindness; that is, we find satisfaction in feeding hungry people but shy away from calling out and addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty. For the past 46 years, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) – funded in part by your mission support giving – has taken up the important, but daunting task of working to change systems that perpetuate inequity and injustice.

2025 Lutheran Day at the Capitol

LAMPa's staff – Tracey DePasquale, Director, and Pastor Erin Jones, Communications and Advocacy Engagement Manager, joined this year by Hunger Advocacy Fellow, Daniella Garber – work with a Policy Council composed of representatives of Pennsylvania's seven synods, the United Lutheran Seminary, and a synod bishop to develop a biennial Policy Agenda that guides our church's engagement with state legislators and departments in the governor's office.

The current Policy Agenda includes the following priorities:

- Hunger: improving access to healthy, affordable food;
- Creation Care: advocating for laws that protect clean air, water, and land;
- Poverty: addressing homelessness and housing insecurity;
- Education: working toward adequate and equitable school funding;
- Healthcare: working to ensure all Pennsylvanians have access to affordable care;
- Civil Rights: working to reduce hate crime and safeguard the right to vote;
- Immigration: standing for welcome to our newest neighbors; and
- Violence Reduction: addressing the root causes of violence, including trauma and extreme poverty.

The LAMPa staff and Policy Council pursue this ambitious agenda in several ways:

- By forming and participating in coalitions with leaders of other denominations, faith-based organizations, and community groups that are passionate about these same issues;
- By engaging with state legislators and those who work in the governor's office, regardless of party affiliation, to advance measures that benefit all Pennsylvanians;
- And, most important, by equipping and supporting the members of the 1,050 ELCA congregations in Pennsylvania so that each of us becomes more confident expressing our faith in the Good News of Jesus by becoming bold advocates for a just and compassionate society. The widely used Bonhoeffer curriculum is just one example of this.

Policy Council Chairs: NEPS Bishop Christopher deForest, Pastor Dillon Epler, and Pastor Mike Bennethum

LAMPa Council Policy Meeting

Each of you is an important partner in this ministry. Check out LAMPa's website, lutheranadvocacypa.org. Sign up to receive helpful Action Alerts regarding pending legislation that addresses the issues above. Follow LAMPa on Facebook and Instagram. Sign up to join approximately 250 of your fellow Lutherans at the next Lutheran Day at the Capitol (tentatively Tuesday, April 21, 2026).

At the center of Lutheran ethics is God's command to love our neighbors as ourselves. Please join in this ministry of neighbor-love by supporting LAMPa's work. Thank you for your mission support giving that helps to make this possible!

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godslove.org/missionsupport.

LAMPa
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania

Action Alert

STAY INFORMED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

LAMPa's Action Alerts connect faith and public life by giving you quick, meaningful ways to advocate for justice and compassion in Pennsylvania. Each alert includes background and an easy way to contact legislators on issues like hunger, housing, and creation care.

SIGN UP TODAY → lutheranadvocacypa.org