



The Servant

“Bringing God’s Gifts of Hope and Healing”

**Lutheran
Congregational
Services Inc.**

A quarterly newsletter of Lutheran Congregational Services

!!!Help Needed!!!! EXPERIENCING THE EXODUS: THIS FAR BY FAITH !!!Help Needed!!!!

God called to Moses from a burning bush. We heard God’s voice on November 20th, 2006 when FEMA asked us to help the Orlando family, whose property had just been flooded for the third time in 26 months. This family of five, whose father, Lou, is permanently disabled, was truly in need. Due to the generosity of people from our synod we had immediate funds to provide lodging until FEMA could get them into another trailer on higher ground.

After exploring many options, we determined with the family that the only one that made sense was to build an elevated structure on the property they “owned,” i.e. on which they were paying a mortgage. Why? Since the old house was beyond repair, trying to sell the property would not have covered the mortgage. They could not afford to rent while continuing to pay off the property. Besides, the family had a clause in their insurance which provided funds specifically to build a foundation that would take the house out of the flood plain.

Given the current family finances, their history of hard work and frugal living, their need and the fact that we thought we were aware of most of the families who would need our help, we decided to move forward in faith. We trusted that between the funds we had and continued volunteer work and generosity from members of our synod and other communities of faith, God would provide what was needed to get this family back into their own basic house.

As the Israelites in the wilderness, we have continued to learn that while God’s timing is not our timing, progress is made toward the promised land.

Drawings and clearances for the house were not finished until October 2007. It took until May 2008 to get the foundation finished.

Starting in March 2008, Kelly, the wife, mother and only wage earner, encountered serious medical problems, had to stop working and then had major surgery. While a miracle seemed to occur at the house, in that as of this third week in June the entire structure has been framed and enclosed and work is progressing on the inside, **at this point funds are not available to complete it to a point where the family can move in.** Despite a ready pool of eager and skilled volunteers, **we have to pause until “manna” in the form of about \$20,000 worth of donated materials and funds is provided and gathered.** While we think we know where some of this may come from, the resources are not yet secure so we cannot spend them. Instead, we continue to pray as well as to ask our brothers and sisters for assistance.

God provided for the Israelites: a way through the sea to escape Pharaoh’s army, water from a rock, and manna and quail when their provisions ran out. Jesus taught us that disciples must boldly step out in faith and that once we put our hands to the plow, we should not look back.

Please join us in prayers of thanksgiving for what God has provided as well as petitions for what is still needed. Help us gather the manna God is willing to provide for the completion of this project.

From the President

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In May, the Board of Directors for Lutheran Congregational Services, Inc. approved a partnership compact with Liberty Lutheran Services. LLS is a multi-service SMO in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. It is a three year agreement that is renewable, and it can be canceled at any time upon the agreement of both parties. We believe that it will enable LCS to strengthen its ministry presence in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, while at the same time enhancing and expanding its ability to serve the congregations of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod with a new array of services in the months and years ahead.

I believe that this agreement is just another example of LCS' unique ability to serve as a bridging agent between congregations and the institutions of the church. LCS is small and has limited resources and staff but through such arrangements it can accomplish more than its size would indicate it can do.

I ask you to pray for this new venture and the benefits that it will hopefully bring to LCS and LLS, as well as the congregations of our respective synods and beyond.

Also in May, Pr. Kerry Smart, and I traveled to the Scranton – Wilkes Barre Mission District to train several pastors so that they might be able to lead LCS' Marriage Preparedness Series ministry for congregations and pastors in that area of our Synod. The first series is scheduled for this fall. LCS will handle the PR and the registrations for this newest extension of its MPS ministry. In addition, it will continue to provide support for the leaders.

Once again LCS, through cooperative work and creative efforts, is able to meet a ministry need in an area of the synod where LCS has been unable to serve previously.

I hope that these two examples help you begin to understand how LCS is eager to be a vital partner in ministry with the congregations of our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and beyond. Is there a ministry that you or your congregation would like to accomplish? Give LCS a call. It would love to partner with you to make good things happen in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,



Wine, Music, and Food Fundraiser a Huge Success

The gorgeous sun-drenched afternoon and pleasant late spring temperatures provided a perfect backdrop for LCS' first *Wine, Music and Food* event at Clover Hill Vineyards and Winery. With 217 people in attendance and **Tropical Beat Steel Band** providing cool Caribbean sounds, the afternoon was filled with good conversation, great wine and tasty food.

Preliminary figures indicate that the event raised nearly \$9,000 for LCS' ministries. The committee is beginning its planning for a repeat in 2008. While this first effort was a success, the committee knows that there is room for improvement in some aspects of the event and is dedicated to making 2009 even better.

The Committee wants to give a special thank you to the sponsors of this year's event. They were

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
The Kyle David Group, LLC
KNBT, Division of National Penn Bank
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Easton
Stephen's Funeral Home
Bradford D. Wagner, Esq.
M/M Gerard M. Latchic & Mrs. Betty Laubach
Peripheral systems, Inc.
Campbell, Rappold & Yurasits, LLP
Certified Public Accountants
The Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Dennis S. Ritter
Fleetwood Bank

When you frequent one of these businesses or when you see one of the individuals, thank them for their support of the event.

Council Retreat Leadership Available through LCS

Is your congregation council looking for an opportunity to get away to do some planning, to improve its cohesiveness or to better understand its role? LCS can help. Simply contact Pastor Ritter at 610-770-9205 or dennis@lutherancongregationalservices.org. LCS will work with you to create a workshop or retreat that will meet your needs at an affordable cost.

Need a Supply Pastor?

If you are in need of someone to supply for you because of vacations or other absences, call LCS. Pr. Ritter and Pr. Smart, as well as Ruth Doty are available and eager to serve in this regard. You may also wish to have a special LCS Sunday emphasis or a presentation to an adult class/forum. Call the office at 610-770-9205 or e-mail us at info@lutherancongregationalservices.org.

Redner's Tapes

Faith, Whitehall	\$ 2,890.25
Miscellaneous	\$ 420.00
Rosemont, Bethlehem	\$ 9,288.19
Total to LCS	\$125.98

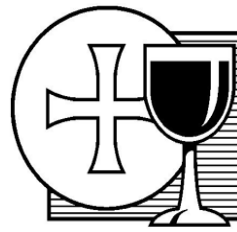
Background Searches Offered to NE and SE PA Synod Congregations

LCS is now able to provide congregations with a low cost national background search process that can be used when hiring certain staff or enlisting volunteers for children and youth ministries. These background checks are made against a national criminal and sex abuse database, rather than only a Pennsylvania state database.

The service is totally web based and reports are generated to you within minutes of entering the individual's data. Finally, LCS is able to provide a "no fuss" monthly billing process.

If you are interested in signing up for this service, there is a one time setup fee of \$15.00. Based on your congregation's level of support to LCS, a background check would either cost \$14.00 per search or \$18.00 per search.

Please contact Kathy Reyher at 610-770-9205 or email her at kathy@lutherancongregationalservices.org.



Lay Eucharist Visitor Training

Remaining 2008 Schedule:

Appearing below is the remaining schedule for 2008. For more information, or to register members for any of these sessions, please contact Pastor Kerry Smart at 610-770-9205 or kerry@lutherancongregationalservices.org.

Fall 2008 Schedule

September 13 at New Jerusalem, Saucon Valley

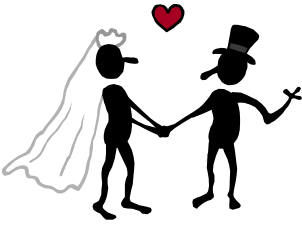
October 11 at St. Peter's, North Wales

November 15 at St. John's, Stroudsburg

All sessions are from 9:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. on Saturdays. Participants should bring a pen and paper, a Bible, and their lunch. Registration fee is \$22.00 per person. Checks are to be made out to Lutheran Congregational Services.



We are looking for qualified counselors or pastors willing to lead any of LCS's **Grief Support Seminars** (your service will be remunerated) Contact Pastor Kerry Smart at 610-770-9205 or kerry@lutherancongregationalservices.org if interested.



Marriage Preparedness Series Schedule 2008

* = a previously married track
will be offered on these dates only

Fall Schedule 2008

Northeast Penn Sites

***Sunday, September 14, 21, 28**

Good Shepherd Lutheran, Wilson Boro
2:30-4:30 pm

Sunday, October 5 & 12

Zion United Lutheran, Brodheadsville
2:00-5:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 6, 13, 20

Holy Spirit Lutheran, Emmaus
7:00-9:00 pm

Southeast Penn Sites

Wednesday, September 10, 17, 24

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Pottstown
7:00-9:00 P.M.

* = a previously married track
will be offered on these dates only

Cost is \$55 per couple. Couples can register on-line at www.lutherancongregationalservices.org or by calling LCS (610-770-9205) and requesting a registration packet. Payment must be sent to the agency in either case. Contact Pastor Smart at 610-770-9205 or kerry@lutherancongregationalservices.org.

James Siegfried Assumes Treasurer's Duties

On June 1, Mr. James Siegfried assumed the duties of LCS' treasurer. Jim is a life-long member of Arndt's Lutheran Church, Forks Township. He is a Financial Associate with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and the father of a son and daughter. He replaces Mr. Robert Bell, who retired from the position after serving as treasurer for 12 years. Please thank Jim for serving in this capacity when you see him!

Need Help to Make Your Mortgage Payments?

If you or someone that you know is struggling to make monthly mortgage payments, Pennsylvania may be able to help.

The Pennsylvania House Finance Agency (PHFA) offers three programs to aid mortgage holders:

1. The Homeowner's Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (HEMAP) – These loans have a term limit of 24 months from the date of the mortgage delinquency, or a value cap of \$60,000, whichever comes first. Recipients are required to pay up to 40% of their net monthly income toward their total housing expense. There is a minimum monthly payment of \$25.
2. Refinance to an Affordable Loan Program (REAL) – These loans are meant for individuals who have contracted bad loans or owe more than their residence is worth. It provides affordable 30-year fixed rate mortgages to individuals who could not otherwise qualify for typical mortgage refinance programs. There are certain income and other criteria that must be met.
3. Homeowner's Equity Recovery Opportunity Loan Program (HERO) -- These loans are meant also for individuals who have contracted bad loans or owe more than their residence is worth. It provides fixed rates for up to a 30-year mortgage and 100% financing. The PHFA buys the loan from the bank and negotiates affordable terms with the consumer and services the loan. Certain eligibility requirements must be met.

Pennsylvania residents should contact their state representative for more details regarding any of these three options.

Special Gifts

In Memory of:

Loved Ones by M/M Robert S. Hassay, Sr.

John Fleck by Barbara K. Fleck

Barry M. Rice by Linda Rice

Martin W. Sell by Dorothy B. Sell

In Honor of:

Zachary Michael Hoffman by Darina & Michael Hoffman

The Rev. Werner M. Koch on the occasion of his 30 years of ordination and 30 years at St. Stephens's, Bethlehem by Claire Larkin

Pat J. Pechacek by Thelma M. Kiess

June & Joe Schumacher on their 25th wedding anniversary by The Rev. John & Mrs. Judy Schumacher

Joseph Schumacher by The Rev. John & Mrs. Judy Schumacher

The Rev. Catherine Ziel by The Rev. Joseph & Mrs. Elaine B. Molnar

LCS' Wish List

We are interested in obtaining a new Power Point Projector, a collapsible ladder, and two new HP flat screen monitors.

Donations or contributions toward these items would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

The Staff of LCS

Use GoodSearch.com and Help Support LCS

Lutheran Congregational Services is now a listed charity on GoodSearch.com!

GoodSearch.com is a Yahoo-powered search engine with a unique social mission. It gives 50% of its advertising revenue to the not-for-profits and schools that its users choose. **You and our many supporters can make a difference for LCS by using GoodSearch.com as your search engine when you are surfing the net.** Each time you do so and designate Lutheran Congregational Services as the recipient, money will be contributed to LCS's account. For example:

- + 100 supporters search the internet twice a day= \$730/year for LCS
- + 1000 supporters search the internet twice a day=\$7,300/year for LCS

**Invite your friends
or fellow parishioners to join you
and the dollars will
add up quickly at no cost to you!**



Spiritual Gifts Discernment Offering Available

Do you have members who are searching for the meaning and purpose of their life? Are some looking for ways to become involved in ministries that will help them to feel more fulfilled?

Lutheran Congregational Services has a ministry that may help your members find that for which they are searching. *Discovering God's Vision for your Life: You and Your Spiritual Gifts* is an eight hour course that can be offered in a variety of formats to meet busy schedules. Through a sound, biblically based curriculum, the course can help participants **discover, develop and deploy** the gifts with which God has blessed them.

For more information you can e-mail Dennis at dennis@lutherancongregationalservices.org or call him at 610-770-9205.

Workshops For Confirmands

New for 2008-2009: *Inter-faith Experience at the Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley (Whitehall). See the dates listed below.*

Confirmation Workshop Dates for 2008-2009:

[Sundays except where noted]

- Oct 19, 2008 **Good Shepherd, Allentown**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Oct 21, 2008 **St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem**
[Tuesday] 4:00-6:30 PM (20 youth max.)
- Oct 24, 2008 **Congregation Keneseth Israel, Allentown**
(Friday) 6:30-10:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Oct 26, 2008 **Lutheran Home at Topton, Topton**
2:00-4:30 PM (25 youth max.)
- Nov 2, 2008 **Pocono Lutheran Village, East Stroudsburg**
1:30-4:00 PM (15 youth max.)
- Nov 9, 2008 **Luther Crest, Allentown**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Nov 23, 2008 **Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley, Whitehall**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Dec 2, 2008 **Village Partners-St. Joseph, Allentown**
(Tuesday) 2:30-5:00 PM (15 youth max.)
- Dec 7, 2008 **Good Shepherd, Allentown**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Jan 4, 2009 **San Martin de Porres, Allentown**
12:30- 3:00 PM (15 youth max.)
- Mar 15, 2009 **Pocono Lutheran Village, East Stroudsburg**
1:30-4:00 PM (15 youth max.)
- Mar 22, 2009 **Lutheran Home at Topton, Topton**
2:00-4:30 PM (25 youth max.)
- Mar 27, 2009 **Congregation Keneseth Israel, Allentown**
(Friday) 6:30-10:00 PM (25 youth ax.)
- Mar 29, 2009 **Good Shepherd, Bethlehem**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)
- Apr 19, 2009 **Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley, Whitehall**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)

Apr 26, 2009 **Luther Crest, Allentown**
1:30-4:00 PM (25 youth max.)

Apr 28, 2009 **St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem**
[Tuesday] 4:00-6:30 PM (20 youth max.)

For more information, or to register your confirmation class for any of these workshops, please contact Pastor Kerry Smart at 610-770-9205 or kerry@lutherancongregationalservices.org.

Please complete this form and send it **with payment** to:
Lutheran Congregational Services Inc.
1923 Hanover Avenue, Allentown, PA 18109

Name of Congregation:

Address:

Name of Contact Person:

Congregation's e-mail address :

Phone Number:

(please list the number you can be reached at in case of a cancellation)

Workshop and date you wish to attend:

Number of Youth Planning to attend _____

Cost: Annual Supporting Congregations of LCS
\$5.00/youth _____
Non-supporting Congregations of LCS
\$6.50/youth _____

Make check payable to:
Lutheran Congregational Services.

We Gratefully Acknowledge Our Supporters March 15, 2008 through June 16, 2008

CONGREGATIONS

Cedadr, Cetronia
 Christ, Conyngham
 Christ, Easton
 Christ, Jim Thorpe
 Christ, Lower Saucon
 Emmanuel, Nuremberg
 Friedens, Oley
 Good Shepherd, Easton
 Holy Cross, Bethlehem
 Holy Cross, Moorestown
 Holy Trinity, Bethlehem
 Holy Trinity Memorial, Catasauqua
 Hope, Tatamy
 Jerusalem, E. Salisbury
 Jerusalem, W. Salisbury
 Jordan, Orefield
 Messiah, Bethlehem
 Mt. Zion, Zion Grove
 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
 Rosemont, Bethlehem
 Salem, Bethlehem
 St. James, Coopersburg
 St. John, Allentown
 St. John, Coplay
 St. John, Emmaus
 St. John, Fogelsville
 St. John, Nazareth
 St. John, Sinking Spring
 St. John, Slatington
 St. John, St. Johns
 St. John, Whitehall
 St. Mark, Bethlehem
 St. Matthew, Bethlehem
 St. Paul, Allentown
 St. Paul, Trexlertown
 St. Paul, Whitehall
 St. Peter, Bethlehem
 St. Peter, Easton
 St. Peter, Plainfield
 St. Timothy's, Allentown
 Trinity, Reading
 Ziegels, Breinigsville
 Zion, Old Zionsville
 Zion, Perry Twp.
 Zion Spies, Reading
 Zion, Shoemakersville

INDIVIDUALS

Auvil, Steven & Jane
 Bailey, M/M Dennis M.
 Bastian, M/M Linford S.
 Beam, M/M John T.
 Berge, Charles
 Berger, Eleanor M.
 Bieber, Joyce
 Bodine, The Rev. Danny
 Boettger, Anna Mae
 Cool, Helen M.
 CURA Hospitality
 Dechert, M/M Lester E.
 Fabian, Arlene (Grace Marko)
 Geist, Robert R.
 Gery, M/M William P.
 Hammer, Rev. & Mrs. Melvin
 Hannabery, M/M Robert T.
 Hassay, Sr., Robert
 Herman, M/M Kenneth D.
 Hoffman, M/M J. Michael
 Keim, M/M Thomas F.
 Keinert, M/M Arthur
 Kiess, Thelma M.
 Kolb, Jacob
 Kotsch, Dolores
 Krapf, Rev. & Mrs. Norman C.
 Larkin, Claire L.
 Leidy, M/M George
 Loucks, Rev. Robert H.
 McCardle, M/M Neil N.
 Molnar, Rev. & Mrs. Joseph
 Ramsden, Rev. & Mrs. William E.
 Reimert, M/M Franklin W.
 Reitz, M/M Forrest
 Rice, Linda A.
 Ritter, Rev. Dr. & Mrs. Dennis S.
 Rogers, Esther B.
 Schuler, M/M Harold W.
 Schumacher, The Rev. & Mrs. John
 Sell, Mrs. Dorothy B.
 Sheriff, M/M Bron A.
 Shoemaker, Rev. Charles H.
 Stahley, Mrs. Helen S.
 Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
 Tomlinson, Rev. & Mrs. John W.
 Volk, Rev. & Mrs David G.
 Zinn, M/M Edward V.

Trailer Talk

We just received some very good news.

As many of you know, since December 2007 we of LDRN-NE PA have been working hard to get 15 families who were still in FEMA trailers since the flooding of 2006 out on their own.

First of all, we want to report that of these families, five have moved out, three more will move by the end of June, and we are helping one family build a house which should be complete by the end of the summer. That covers over half! A special thanks to Barb Daigle who has worked valiantly as case manager and to Dennis Steffy, our volunteer who, in addition to doing assessments and planning work projects, has helped Barb haul a lot of things and move one family!

The good news we received is that the remaining 6 families have received an extension for the use of the trailers. We will continue to work them to the best of our ability and to partner with other organizations in this long term recovery effort.

The families who are still in trailers are located in Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Susquehanna counties. If you are aware of any available rental units or trailer options or any possible way to supplement our rapidly depleting funds, please let us know. For a list of furniture or other items these families need to set up housekeeping contact denise@lutherancongregationalservices.org or call 610.770.9205.

WISHLIST			
ITEMS NEEDED	# of families who need this	ITEMS NEEDED	# of families who need this
KITCHEN		LIVING ROOM	
DiningRoom Table+ 6 chairs	4	Coffee Table	4
Dish Towels, pot holders, etc	3	Couch	5
Microwave stand	3	Desk	3
Mixing Bowls	1	End Tables	8
Silverware	2	Living Room Chair	2
Storage cabinet "pantry"	1	Loveseat	3
Tall/Short glasses (set)	2	Recliner	3
Trash Can - Kitchen	1	MISC	
Tupperware	1	Area Rug	2
APPLIANCES		Bookcase	2
Big Vacuum	3	Computer	1
Chest Freezer	2	Curtains	4
Clock Radio	2	Curtain Rods	1
Dishwasher	3	Laptop	1
DVD Player/VCR Player	2	Play Station	1
Clothes Washer and Electric Dryer	2	Stereo	2
Lamps	6	Throw Rugs	2
Microwave	3	Toy Box	3
Refrigerator	4	Trumpet	1
Standing fans	2	OUTDOORS	
Stove	4	Gas Weed Eater	1
Television	2	Lawn Mower	1
Toaster	1	Trash Can - Outside	2
BEDROOM		CLOTHING	
Crib (converts to bed) and mattress	1	BOYS	
Dresser	14 dressers	Boys Size 10 Pants & Jeans	1
Nightstand	6	Boys Size large Shirts	1
20 Pillows plus Cases	2	Boys Lg Shirts w/collar, Must be solid/striped	1
Queen beds, mattress, springs	5	Boys Sneakers Size 7	1
Queen Sheets. Blankets and spreads	4	Boys Dress Shoes Size 7	1
Twin sheets/blanket - for girls and boys	1	(Boys Summer Clothes)	1
Crib Sheets/Blanket-Girl	1	TWIN GIRLS	
Double bed, mattress and sheets	3	Girls Size 10 Dresses	1
Twin Bed, mattress and box springs, sheets	7 sets	Girls Dress Shoe Size 4	1
Verticle Dresser	1	Girls Sneaker Size 4	1
BATHROOM		(Girls Summer Clothes)	1
Bath Sink Set (Soap/Toothbrush)	2	MENS	
Matching Towels/Washcloths	2 families	Mens Jeans Size 40	1
Shower curtains	3	Men's Shoes 10 1/2 to 11	1
		WOMENS	
		Womans Pants 16-18	
		Womans Shoes 9 1/2	

To help call 610.770.9205

or email:

denise@lutherancongregationalservices.org*Thank you!*carol@lutherancongregationalservices.org

Children Experience Disaster Trained Adults Can Help!

Have you ever slept on a Red Cross cot? You may have noticed signs along the highway about how many children in our area have slept in a disaster shelter this year. During the evening of April 25 over a dozen of us adults got to try out the experience.

The occasion was our first ever sponsorship of a Church of the Brethren training for volunteers willing to work with young children in Red Cross shelters or disaster recovery centers. This may have been our first attempt, but we certainly hope it is not our last. The training was excellent!

What did we learn in this intensive 25 hour training? We learned about how disasters effect young children and how the children process such experiences. We learned how adults can assist these little ones to feel as secure and yet powerful as possible. We learned how Children's Disaster Services, a program of the Brethren Disaster Ministries, quickly and efficiently sets up sites in whatever facility is available so that their teams can provide safe childcare while parents try to take care of business of recovery. In the process we also learned a lot about ourselves: our motivations, gifts and areas for growth in this ministry.

What good is such training? Not only does it prepare adults for work in disaster centers, it is helpful for those who work in any setting with young children, for, unfortunately, children can experience many different types of traumas in their young lives. Many of those who attended this workshop are going on to apply for certification so they can be called up by Children's Disaster services in the event of an identified incident and need.

While we can't prevent all children from experiencing disaster, with training, more and more of us adults can help them. LDRN-NE PA looks forward to sponsoring future trainings in our northeastern Pennsylvania area.

By the way, the cots really weren't too bad, at least not for one night!



Camp Noah Floats Again!

While tornadoes and floods cause serious damage, the aftermath often presents opportunities for ministry. How proud we are that for the third year, volunteers from our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod have responded to the chance to share God's love and care with children affected by disaster through that wonderful program called Camp Noah! This time we sent a full team June 14 -21 to Prattville, AL (tornado) and are sending 4 volunteers July 19-25 to fill out a team in Rushford, MN (flooding in 2007).

Designed as day long Vacation Bible School type programs, Camp Noah and Camp Noah II help children process their experiences in age appropriate manners. Camp after camp, Camp Noah participants witness God's Spirit working through the program and all involved to build hope and resiliency in children.

Rejoice with us in the continued dedication of the team from Friedens, Oley, and their leaders, Pastor David Rowe and AIM Kathy Schaeffer. This congregation has taken on Camp Noah as one of its ministries. This year they committed to a week, gathered and trained their team and did all the preparations, not knowing until 6 weeks before departure whether they would be matched up with a site and exactly where they would be headed. They were prepared to discover that their services might not be able to be matched with a site. That's stepping out in faith! **The report from Prattville is that 50 children filled the camp and many opened up about how the tornado affected them.**

Just to give you some insight into the twists and turns that disaster response frequently takes: As many of you know, this year we attempted to raise a second team which would go out the week of July 12. We had 7 eager respondents. A full team needs 15 adults. The place which needed a Camp Noah that week (Arkansas) was also trying to recover from tornadoes, and, it turned out having difficulty making progress on setting up their site. Cindy Johnson, who heads up the national program, decided things just weren't working out for that project and didn't have anywhere else to use a partial team that week. Rather than give up and not go at all, four of our volunteers were able to flex their schedules and will soon be headed out

to southeastern Minnesota to join a team from outside Minneapolis.

As it turns out, **it looks like** the funds received and pledged to date from individuals, congregations and Thrivent branches **will be** just enough to support what we are actually be doing this summer. God provides!



Be Prepared! It's Not Just for Boy Scouts Anymore!

This year's Synod Assembly provided the perfect opportunity to offer a forum on congregational preparedness for disaster.

What is a disaster? A disaster is more than an inconvenience. A disaster is an event beyond the control of the individuals affected that results in great harm, suffering, destruction and damage. It disrupts personal and community life, involves a significant number of people and causes physical, emotional, economic, social and/or spiritual crises. A disaster damages a community's ability to sustain life without outside assistance.

Why should a congregation take care to prepare for disaster? The seventeen people who attended from 14 congregations noted that you never know when something might happen. They affirmed that not only does a congregation want to minimize the negative impact of a disaster on its own ministries and properties, the body of Christ seeks to be ready to respond to any opportunity for ministry to neighbors near and far. They identified that while the disasters that are most likely in our territory include flooding, snow and ice storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes as well as chemical disasters along a rail line and epidemics, there are many other possibilities.

How does a congregation prepare for disaster? First of all, members and leaders need to think about what is critical for the mission of the congregation as well as what opportunities might present themselves as a result of a disaster. A congregation needs to ask: what are the disasters most likely to occur in its area? What are other, less obvious ones? How might any of these negatively affect the congregation and the community? Is there any way to *mitigate*, that is, to take steps to lessen or eliminate the potential damage and enable the congregation to recover as quickly as possible? What other steps need to be

taken to maximize the ministry it will be able to do in the midst of disaster?

If you or your congregation would like more information about how to prepare a plan, please contact Ruth Doty, Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, ruth@lutherancongregationalervices.org. We would be happy to set up a consultation with your congregation. Even better, we'd love to set up a workshop with you and other congregations, Lutheran or otherwise, in your area. Further excellent information is available at www.ldr.org or www.communityarise.org. The latter resource also includes models of congregational preparedness plans.

Remember, the best amount of preparedness is any. Only you can do this for yourself. Boy Scout or not, be prepared!

The Sound in Drums Or The House that Love is Building

"For now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land." Song of Solomon 2: 11-12.

The time for singing has definitely arrived in Drums (just north of Hazleton)! They may be a far cry from turtle doves and maybe all the neighbors don't agree, but the sound of hammers, nail guns, power saws and drills is music to our ears! (Actually some of the neighbors come over and cheer us on!) As this article is being written, the first complete house that Lutheran Disaster Response Network – Northeastern Pennsylvania (LDRN-NE PA) is building is under roof, windows, doors and siding completely installed, plumbing and rough wiring are complete and much of the drywall is up.

There must be a touch of Amish or Mennonite or is it Pennsylvania Dutch in the volunteer team from Weisenberg Lutheran known as Sons of a Carpenter. As of June 11 we "only" had a foundation, though it is twelve feet high. June 12 we had the steel beam in place. Then the "Sons" arrived. June 13 we had three walls and the complete floor. June 14 we had all the walls, frames for some interior walls and had started the roof. June 15 the entire roof was shingled! By

June 22 the siding was just about complete! Wow! Watching a barn raising can't be more exciting!

How is the family doing? They are really excited! They find it hard to believe their eyes! The only complaint Kelly, the wife/mother, has is that since she was undergoing major surgery on June 16, she can't get up the ladder to see the progress in side. We've found her a comfortable, padded Adirondack chair, though, so she can sit under the tress and "supervise." (By the way, the surgery went well.)

God is wearing many faces and using many hands in this project. How heartwarming it is to have so many volunteers and teams who not only work on the house, but provide food and accommodations for other workers! From June 12th to 23rd alone 50 volunteers put in over 3000 hours on the property alone. That doesn't count people who are feeding the crews and providing other assistance. While we can't name every team and person, we trust that each one knows how precious he or she is to us and how much their collective efforts mean to the Orlando family.

The Orlando house is set among wonderful pine trees, but, as you read on the front page, the project is not yet "out of the woods" financially. God has, through generous donors, congregations doing fund raisers which are supplemented by Thrivent Chapters, a \$2000 Care in Regions grant from Thrivent Financial and a \$5000 grant from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church brought us this far.

Praise the Lord that the long winter of preparing for this project is truly over! Please continue to keep the Orlando family and all of our volunteers and staff in your prayers.

Warning: Check Your Smoke Alarm

A recent study on smoke alarms found disturbing news for people with hearing loss.

In a study conducted by the Fire Protection Research Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to fire and building safety, the typical smoke alarm failed to wake up almost half of participants with hearing loss.

Fatalities from home fires have been reduced by half since smoke alarms became available in 1970's. Unfortunately, most smoke alarms use a high-pitched sound signal that is not heard well by many people with hearing loss.

In the study, 38 volunteers listened to various smoke alarm signals both while awake and asleep. The volunteers had mild to moderately severe hearing loss. None of the volunteers were deaf. The study also measured the effectiveness of devices that use pillow vibrators or strobe lights to alert the individual.

The high-pitched signal used by most smoke alarms failed to awaken 43% of participants. The pillow vibrator device work up more than 80% of participants. The strobe light alerting device had the highest failure rate, alerting only 27% of participants.

The most effective signal was a loud, low-pitched sound, which work more that 92% of listeners. Low-pitched sound is in the better hearing range of most people with hearing loss. However, these devices are no commercially available.

The Fire Protection Foundation also found "a high level of misplaced complacency among people who are hard of hearing in terms of their need for specialty alerting devices."

The lessons to be learned from this study:

1. ***Don't be complacent!*** Test your home smoke alarm. Can you hear it without your hearing aids? Would you be alerted while asleep?
2. ***Don't depend on a strobe light device.***
3. ***Consider purchasing a bed or pillow shaker alarm*** if you can't hear your current smoke alarm.

The Foundation recommended that manufactures study the feasibility of producing the more effective, low-frequency smoke alarm that was heard by more than 92% of participants.

Jesus Calls Us . . . to Action!

November 1, 2008 (9:00 am - 3:00 pm)

at

Union Lutheran Church

Schnecksville, PA

Keynote Speaker: Andrew Genszler, ELCA

Sponsored by LCS, LAMPa, NEPS & Micah 6:8

This day focused on advocacy is designed to help professional leaders, socialministry/service team members, congregational council members and others **learn what it can mean to walk humbly with God, to love kindness and to do justice.**

LCS Remembered with Three Special Gifts

Recently, LCS was remembered by three congregations with special gifts. First, Zion (Spies) Lutheran Church sent a check for \$1,000. It was a portion of a bequest that the congregation had received from the estate of one of its members. Second, St. Peter Lutheran Church, Easton which late in 2007 merged with St. John Lutheran Church, Easton sent a check to the agency for \$10,520.87. It represents a portion of the money it received from the sale of its building. The gift is designated to be used to support LCS' work in the Easton area. A recommendation will go to the Board to place a major portion of this gift in the agency's endowment fund where it will continue to further the ministry of LCS for years to come.

Finally, at the end of 2007, LCS received a \$4,000 gift from Redeemer Lutheran Church, Allentown. This was in addition to the congregation's regular support and represented a portion of a bequest that the congregation had received from one of its members.

The agency gives thanks to God for these unexpected gifts and reminds congregations that their financial support and other acts of partnership are critical to LCS' ability to serve them and the wider church. **Thanks be to God!**

Trevor Ferrell Speaks at LCS' Annual Dinner

Nearly 100 friends and supporters of LCS gathered at Muhlenberg College on Wednesday evening, May 21st, to celebrate the agency's 35th anniversary of its incorporation. In addition to an excellent meal, attendees were inspired by the story of Trevor Ferrell, who as an 11 year old boy, made a decision to help the homeless inhabitants of Philadelphia that continues to make a difference today. He reminded everyone who attended that they should follow their passion and be ready to make a difference in their communities.

Dr. Debra Seeger and Mr. Ernest Siegfried, former executive directors/CEO's of LCS brought greetings and shared memories of their time at the head of the agency. There were also some letters that were shared from other executive directors/CEO's who could not be present.

Awards were given to the members of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit for their exceptional support of LCS' ministry of disaster response as an LDR affiliate. Also recognized were Mr. Dennis Steffy for his work as a project coordinator for LDR – NE PA and the Rev. William Horn, chaplain at Good Shepherd Home, for his years of service to LCS' Workshops for Confirmands.

The evening concluded with a brief worship service and the installation of Board members for 2008-2009.

Special Gifting Opportunities

Who said that you can't have your cake and eat it too. Charitable Gift Annuities are an excellent way to make a charitable gift while receiving a life time income at a high fixed rate. You will receive tax savings to the full extent of the law at the time you make the gift to LCS or your congregation and it will continue to provide life income to you and/or your spouse until you and/or your spouse die. Current examples are:

Two lives – Joint and Survivor		
Younger Age	Older Age	Rate %
57	59-60	5.1
65	69+	5.5
70	79+	5.9
80	85-86	6.9

Single Life	
Age	Rate
60	5.5
70	6.1
80	7.6

For more information about Charitable Gift Annuities or other opportunities to leave a legacy, you can contact Pr. Dennis Ritter at LCS, 610-770-9205 or The Rev. Gregory Kramer at Lutheran Planned Giving, ELCA Foundation, 1-570-374-2044.

Tips for Resolving Workplace Conflict

Conflicts are a natural and inevitable part of life, especially in today's high powered work environments. While it may be necessary to involve a supervisor or manager to resolve some issues, here are some helpful tips that you can try before taking that step.

- **Prepare:** Take stock of the situation and ownership of what your role has been in creating the conflict. Write down the issue as you see it.
- **Be Direct:** Speak directly with the person with whom you are having the disagreement.
- **Time it Right:** Make an appointment with the person that is mutually agreeable.
- **Fight Fair:** Focus on the issue not the personalities and control your emotions.
- **Use 'I' Statements:** Instead of beginning your statements with "You should/ shouldn't..." begin them with "I..." It will be less accusatory.
- **See the Other Side:** Carefully listen to your co-worker. Repeat back what she/he has said in your own words.
- **Seek a solution you can both accept!**

Smart Summertime Eating

Summertime brings many opportunities for picnics, special events and travel. Often they bring with them the temptation to eat foods high in calories. Use these strategies to control your eating habits and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

- Choose healthy foods for picnics and other summertime gatherings (vegetable salads, fruit and lean meats for grilling)
- Before heading out to a ballgame, carnival or other event take the edge off your hunger with some healthy foods (whole wheat bread, fruit, or a lean cut of meat)
- Use substitutions to sweeten lemonade or ice tea. Pour yourself a glass of water and add a slice or two of lemon.
- Keep plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables around as snacks.
- Watch your alcohol consumption in warm weather. The recommended limit is one drink for women and two drinks for men per day.
- If you do splurge on a summertime treat, monitor your portion and or choice. At a fair, carnival or ballgame share the treat with someone else.
- Forgive yourself when you do overeat or indulge yourself with a treat. Refocus your healthy eating habits at your next meal or snack and schedule some extra physical activity for your day.

