

AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

DIAKON LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRIES

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries celebrates our continuing partnership with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod and its congregations, as we live out our mission to demonstrate God's command to love the neighbor through acts of service. Diakon maintains a nearly 150-year tradition of care for people of all ages and faiths. In 2008, Diakon increased benevolent care by more than \$1 million to \$13.27 million, including \$4.213 million within the synod. The increased benevolent care reflects Diakon's mission and its response to current economic conditions, which find more people with limited financial resources.

During 2008, Diakon undertook extensive renovations at Luther Crest in Allentown, including construction of a Wellness Center with indoor pool and initial steps for Bridgegate, a community of new apartment homes. Planning continued for senior-living expansion at The Lutheran Home at Topton, with steps taken to build a model home that incorporates cutting-edge technology and design to help older adults remain independent longer. The model will be the first of its kind on the East Coast.

In 2008, Diakon assumed operations of Inroads EAP, a Reading-based employee assistance program, to create Diakon Inroads Employee Assistance Program, which eventually will be Diakon's overall provider of EAP services. Diakon Family Life Services expanded its Girls on the Run of Lehigh County program to serve 180 girls at eight sites, established a partnership with the Highmark Foundation to be Berks County's provider for KidShape, a family-based weight-management program for overweight children, and developed a pastoral care team concept at the mission-district level to provide care-giving and support for church leaders and their families.

Diakon Hospice Saint John continued expansion efforts, particularly in relation to serving residents of Diakon senior living communities. In early 2009, Diakon Volunteer Home Care – Berks County transitioned from eight small teams to three area teams for Reading and eastern and western Berks County and surrounding regions. The change provides clients with more easily accessible services, reduces response time to requests, increases the program's ability to meet short-notice requests, and uses volunteers more effectively. In other news, the Northeastern Pennsylvania office of Diakon Adoption & Foster Care served nearly 650 children and families and

was licensed to serve medically fragile foster children.

We thank God for the gifts of staff, volunteers, congregations, donors, and board members who, together, enabled us to touch the lives of some 80,000 persons last year, including some 30,000 within the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Daun E. McKee, president/CEO

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA LUTHERAN CAMP CORPORATION (BEAR CREEK CAMP)

Bear Creek Camp and Conference Center is the year-round outdoor ministry of both the NE and SE Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA. In our mission to provide opportunities for adventure and discovery within God's creation and within Christian community, we served 1,200 children through our summer church camp programs last year. Over 4,000 were impacted by our Nature Center, and retreat programs ministered to another 1,500 adults and children. Also, thousands used our two retreat facilities for programs of their own churches and groups.

2008 was a most exciting year, as we completed and dedicated the three season Sanctuary, our new outdoor chapel on the banks of Bear Creek. This long awaited covered worship facility has benches to hold over 200 people, a fireplace for campfire gatherings, and is located away from the busyness of central camp.

This past year we welcomed Rick Frederick as our new Assistant Director, as Ben Larson took an Assistant Director position with Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp in Colorado. Rick is an AiM, and he has been involved in various capacities of outdoor ministries for many years. Karen Gower became BCC's Environmental Programs Manager, replacing Charlene Wilds. She comes to us with a degree in Environmental Education and a deep commitment to the Lutheran churches of eastern PA.

BCC continues to increase the visibility and accessibility among the churches we serve. We have revamped our website, making all of our materials and program registration available online. Winter/spring '08, I attended meetings of each Cluster/Conference/ Mission District pastors to share our mission and programs. A special first-time summer camper discount rate of \$299 is being offered for 2009, in hopes to introduce our

excellent programs to families whose children have never had a church camping experience.

We again held a Fix-It Up Campaign to accomplish renovations and improvements:

- New kayaks
- New central volleyball court
- Replaced 20 mattresses
- Staff housing renovations
- Completion of Cabins #3-6 overhaul
- East Site Program Pavilion renovations
- Adirondack shelter platforms
- Butterfly House
- Replaced 4 platform tents
- Trail improvements
- Furniture refinishing
- Retreat Center trim painting

A big thanks goes out to everyone who made this endeavor a success.

Bear Creek Camp asks all of our churches and supporters to please consider adopting a project in 2009. The many projects and equipment needs are listed at www.bearcreekcamp.org, and the camp staff is ready to host your crew's work day throughout the year.

There are many exciting developments underway for 2009:

- Finalizing a conservation easement on 1,880 acres to secure the camp's pristine environment for future generations
- Implementation of \$210,000 of renovations and equipment improvements, with revenues from the conservation easement
- Creation of an endowment with the easement revenues for the purposes of providing camper scholarships, dealing with deferred maintenance, and enabling new program ventures
- Determining the next steps toward developing a new adult and family retreat facility to better meet the needs of our synods' churches
- Hosting a national church Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Consultation Team to do an audit review of our ministry

Thank you for being a partner with us in offering excellent outdoor ministry to the churches of eastern Pennsylvania.

Robert Stover, executive director

GOOD SHEPHERD HOME AND REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

At Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, we have just completed one of the most exciting years in our history. It was a year when we served more people in more places than ever before, we opened a highly anticipated joint venture with the University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS) in Philadelphia, and we celebrated a century of care.

In 2008, Good Shepherd celebrated our 100th anniversary with numerous events and activities. On February 21, 1908, the Rev. John H. and D. Estella Raker, affectionately known as Mama and Papa, founded Good Shepherd Home. Mama and Papa Raker, followed by their son, the Rev. Dr. Conrad W. Raker, led Good Shepherd for 72 years. Their legacy still guides Good Shepherd. It has instilled in the organization the sense of mission and compassion that is responsible for our longevity and success.

Last year, while we commemorated our first 100 years of providing care to the men, women and children of eastern Pennsylvania, Good Shepherd focused on revolutionizing rehabilitation in our second century. In July 2008, we opened the doors of Good Shepherd Penn Partners (GSPP) in Philadelphia. The joint venture now provides all post-acute care for the entire UPHS network. This partnership and relationships with other hospitals, universities, churches, and advocacy groups will keep Good Shepherd on the leading edge of rehabilitation for years to come.

As Good Shepherd expanded into the Philadelphia market, we also expanded our footprint in the greater Lehigh Valley area. In 2008, Good Shepherd opened new outpatient sites in Blandon and Macungie. Today, Good Shepherd provides rehabilitation care at more than 30 locations throughout 8 eastern Pennsylvania counties.

In 2008, we reinforced our commitment to providing the most advanced, most compassionate, and most proven rehabilitation care. Our patient outcomes are impressive and compare favorably to similar facilities in the region and nation. For example, at the Good Shepherd Specialty Hospital, more than 85 percent of the patients who rely on mechanical ventilation to breathe are successfully weaned from the device during their stay.

Fiscal year 2008, which ended on June 30, marked the sixth consecutive year that Good Shepherd achieved a positive operating margin. Obviously, the economic landscape has changed quite a bit since that time. No organization, business or industry is immune to the perils of the

economic downturn. However, at Good Shepherd, we are confident that by being proactive, focusing on our core business, and building upon our strengths, we will weather the storm.

To that end, Good Shepherd will continue growing and expanding our mission by opening the region's first inpatient rehabilitation unit for children in July of this year. Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital-Pediatric Unit will be located on the first floor of 2855 Schoenersville Road in Bethlehem. The pediatric unit is a natural extension of Good Shepherd's commitment to children, whom we have served since 1908. Today almost 1,600 children receive outpatient pediatric rehabilitation at Good Shepherd.

The opening of the 16-bed Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital-Pediatric Unit means that children, age newborn to 18, with a variety of injuries and conditions will no longer have to travel to Philadelphia or farther to receive inpatient rehabilitation care.

We would like to thank you for partnering with Good Shepherd as we bring expert rehabilitation care to the people of eastern Pennsylvania. Your support, and the support of others like you, has allowed Good Shepherd to grow, thrive and expand our mission for more than 100 years.

For more information on Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, please visit www.GoodShepherdRehab.org.

Sally Gammon, president and CEO
Richard Drobnicki, chair, board of trustees

LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONAL SERVICES, INC.

I want to begin by saying, "Thank you!" to the Board, staff and volunteers who did so much to make 2008 a good year. Once again this small agency successfully partnered with congregations and other organizations to do ministries that made a difference.

In addition to the traditional ministries of the agency, LCS entered into a partnership with Liberty Lutheran Services in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod to provide some of its congregationally directed ministries there. It worked with two pastors to field test a day-long grief workshop for children. It created a new workshop for Confirmands focused upon the Islamic faith, and it partnered with the Northeastern Pennsylvania synod, the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania, Micah 6:8 and the Mission Investment Fund, ELCA to create a day-long advocacy

workshop. Finally, it accomplished the work of completely building a house for a family impacted by 3 major floods in a little over 2 years.

During 2008, a total of 140 youth and 51 adults from 17 congregations participated in our workshops for Confirmands. This year the agency added a workshop with the Muslim Association of the Lehigh Valley that was designed to introduce youth to the Islamic faith. It takes its place alongside workshops at Luther Crest, Good Shepherd Home, Pocono Lutheran Village, the Lutheran Home at Topton, Keneseth Israel, and San Martin de Porres.

Attendance at the agency's Marriage Preparedness Series offerings was down in 2008 with only 70 couples served. However, its Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training sessions trained another 89 lay people from 37 congregations in the theology and practice of administering Holy Communion to the institutionalized and homebound. LCS' *Journeys through Grief* also continued to be well used as series were held in the Emmaus, Oley and Easton areas with a total of 36 individuals participating.

Background checks for congregations is a growing service of LCS with 29 congregations from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, 7 congregations from the Southeastern Pennsylvania synod and 2 outside organizations enrolled. The process is web based and provides data from a national database within moments of inputting the person's key information. It is secure, easy and economical to use.

Even amidst the backdrop of a deepening recession, the congregations of the Lehigh Valley conducted another successful Christmas Ingathering in 2008 as they provided gifts and other items to the residents and clients of nearly 30 agencies throughout the Valley.

Lastly, 2008 brought to completion the agency's work with survivors of the 2006 floods which impacted 12 of the 14 counties that comprise our Synod. Twenty-nine families were assisted during the year. Of particular note is the fact that LCS achieved its goal of building an entirely new dwelling for a struggling family in Drums, Luzerne County. All totaled in 2008, 203 volunteers put in 6,593 hours of labor so that our less fortunate sisters and brothers could have safe, sanitary and secure housing.

As you can see from these brief sketches, LCS seeks to live out its vision to be "the agency with which congregational leaders choose to partner to do creative and effective ministry."

Dennis S. Ritter, president and CEO

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

2008 was another successful year in the life of Muhlenberg College. Muhlenberg College continues to receive local, regional and national publicity on its academic, athletic, arts and service learning programs, as well as articles on the results of research carried out by its faculty and students.

Religious Life is vital to the mission of Muhlenberg College. Students of many faith traditions find a supportive environment in which to practice, learn from one another and serve the community. Students are gathering increasing energy for Lutheran Student Movement, sponsoring on and off campus events. The annual Advent Candlelight Carols service collected over \$2700 for Jacy Good '08, who is recovering from a tragic automobile accident on graduation day in May. Muhlenberg continues to host groups from congregations to many college events and facilities and will host the Synod-wide Lutherans in Faith Together (LIFT) event in June 2009, as in 2007.

Related to the election cycle, the Center for Ethics concentrated on the theme "Politics, Ethics & Citizenship". Students registered hundreds of voters, and participated in campus visits by Barack Obama, former President Bill Clinton, and Joe Biden, each having been invited and organized by the College Democrats. College Republicans invited and received Republican spokespeople. Senator John McCain was invited by the students, but he chose to visit another Lehigh Valley campus. Marian Wright Edelman, president and founder of the Children's Defense Fund, spoke at the 2008 Commencement exercises.

Muhlenberg faculty, staff and students continue to contribute thousands of hours of service in the Lehigh Valley and the region. Faculty are offering lectures at community organizations, generating useful polling information, and supporting and advising school districts. The staff is helping to organize student community service initiatives, and five Alternative Spring Break service trips. Students are volunteering in schools, health clinics, and with a program that helps low income citizens prepare their taxes. Students also run homework clubs, teach English to immigrants, help out at shelters and raise thousands of dollars for a variety of local and global causes.

Muhlenberg College's Admission efforts were record-setting once again. The college received 4846 applications for freshman admission; the acceptance rate was 39.8%, and the freshman class numbered 597.

Through this exciting year, Muhlenberg College remains committed to the student experience

through faculty teaching, community service, spiritual enrichment and public engagement opportunities. You can see more about Muhlenberg College at www.muhlenberg.edu.

Peyton R. Helm, president

PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

In 2008 the Council continued to focus its work around its mission statement:

The Pennsylvania Council of Churches is a voluntary association of separate and autonomous Christian churches, within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through which its members seek to manifest their fellowship (koinonia) with one another, to engage in common ministries of witness and service, and to advance towards the goal of visible unity. (Constitution and Bylaws §12)

To carry out this mission, Council members (among other things):

- worship and pray together,
- advocate for a just and humane society,
- provide pastoral care for truckers, travelers, and truck stop employees, for seasonal farm workers, and for persons at leisure, and sponsor continuing education events for pastors.

Among the highlights from the past year of this common ministry are:

- The Council's Public Advocacy Action Team carried on its witness on matters of public policy, with an emphasis on health care reform and governmental reform. To participate in the Council's public advocacy efforts, visit the redesigned Web site, pachurchesadvocacy.org, for issue updates and action alerts.
- The Leisure Ministry program, which trains and places summer chaplains in parks and campgrounds around the state, took significant steps toward becoming financially self-sufficient. In 2008, 25 chaplains served in 43 state, federal, and private parks and campgrounds across the state from Memorial Day through Labor Day.
- Clergy were challenged and inspired by the 2008 Pennsylvania State Pastors' Conference on preaching, with four talented teachers of preaching discussing dimensions of their own practice of the craft.

While the Council thanks you for your past support of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, it continues to depend on you for:

- Financial support—Member church bodies to provide nearly seventy percent of the core

budget income. Needless to say, 2008 was a difficult year financially. For the Council to be what its mission envisions, continued financial support from its members is critical.

- People—The Council needs each church body to identify people willing to engage in its common ministries of witness and service.
- Prayers—When you meet, include intercessions for the Council and its ministries in worship. Urge congregations to mention the Pennsylvania Council of Churches, as well as their own local ecumenical agency, in Sunday intercessions. Pray for fellow Council members regularly.
- Promotion—Visit the website (www.pachurches.org) and publicize its address; mention Council activities in your own church body communications; interpret the Council and its mission to congregations and clergy.

Thank you for helping your 42 ecumenical partners in Pennsylvania continue their witness for Christian unity and the common good of *all* God's people.

Gary Harke, executive director

THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PHILADELPHIA

The Connect Program and Enrollment

In February of this year over fifty prospective seminarians gathered at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia for the annual Project Connect pre-seminary gathering. It was promising to see so many college-age persons gather to discern their calling for public ministry. They are among the hundreds that this exciting program of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries has identified, nurtured, and sustained through a grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. Because of the Project Connect program and the longstanding Theological Education with Youth (TEY) program, we are seeing a dramatic trend in college-age students coming to the seminary. In addition, our applications for admissions and commitments are trending much higher than the last two years.

The Intersections Institute

Increasingly, young adults want to serve the church in a variety of ways. And many believe a seminary education, though not necessarily a Master of Divinity, is important to help them prepare for this calling. In cooperation with Gettysburg Seminary, we are providing an innova-

tive program funded by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans called the *Intersections Institute* that will prepare students for these vital ministries. LTSP has made application for a new MA in Public Leadership (MAPL), for which a pilot project will begin this fall under our current degree programs.

Thank You

We are so grateful for the support of our synods in these challenging economic times. Despite the faithful support from synod budgets, we are becoming more reliant upon individuals and congregations to support our Leadership Fund. This May 3 – Good Shepherd Sunday – we returned to a past approach, asking congregations in Region 7 to lift up a special offering to support the Leadership Fund. As of this writing, giving to the Leadership Fund is 30 percent ahead of last year's record.

The Capital Campaign

The campaign for The Brossman Learning Center is currently in full swing in Southeastern Pennsylvania, Upstate New York, and New England. We are grateful for the support of our donors and friends. We are approaching \$17.5 million towards our \$20 million goal. The end is in sight, and we know that under the capable leadership of the Rev. Paul Brndjar, our Executive Director of Development, we will soon be able to celebrate the completion of the campaign.

With the death of Dr. William Lazareth, a former dean and professor at LTSP, the seminary established The Dr. William Lazareth Lectureship in Theology and Ethics with the help of his family, seminary alumni, and friends. This lecture will be presented each year in the fall.

At this year's annual Spring Convocation, the seminary remembered the Rev. Dr. John H.P. Reumann. We are raising funds to establish a Chair in Biblical Studies in his memory.

Faculty and Staff Searches

Given current economic challenges, the Board of Trustees authorized only four vacancy replacements. There will be no new hires at the seminary in 2009/10. LTSP was pleased to call the Rev. Dr. Storm Swain as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care. Dr. Swain, a native New Zealander, earned her PhD at Union Theological Seminary in New York. An Anglican, she will also hold the position in Episcopal Studies that was established by the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. The seminary was also pleased to call the Rev. Dr. Quintin Robertson to serve as the Director of the Urban Theological Institute. He is the former admissions director for the Interdenominational Theological

Center in Atlanta. We have called as our seminary musician Dr. Michael Krentz. Dr. Krentz received his doctorate in Organ Performance and Choral Directing from Northwestern University. Finally, Larry House is back with LTSP as Director of Stewardship. Paul Brndjar has agreed to stay on as Executive Director of the LTSP Foundation for another year, and we are delighted.

I Thank God for You

I thank God for you every time I reflect on all God has accomplished at LTSP over the years. By God's grace and your constant support, we are a vibrant and lively community of learning and worship. I am overcome with an enormous sense of thankfulness to God that I am privileged to serve as president of this wonderful school. I am so grateful to the dean, senior staff, faculty, and all the support staff who spend countless hours making sure that leaders are prepared with a theological education for a church in mission. God is good to us.

Philip D.W. Krey, president
Addie Butler, chairperson