

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Meet Your Synod's Staff



Diane Hemerly

Diane is the financial administrator at the synod office. She pay the bills, reconciles the various account statements, does the daily book-keeping, and verifies the reports from the Mission Investment Fund. She also prepares the Bulletin of Reports and the Minutes Book for the Synod Assembly; and she assists Pr. Mary Gade with the work of the Candidacy Committee.

Diane has worked at the synod office for 5 years. Prior to that she worked at Dunn and Bradstreet for over 19 years, and at the Lehigh Conference of Churches for 2 years.

She and her husband Jim, have a daughter living in San Francisco and son, who is a commander in the Navy, living in Japan. They have one grandson. Diane had a kidney transplant over 18 years ago and she gives thanks daily for her continued good health.

Diane is an avid NASCAR fan. She also enjoys crafts such as making candy lollipops, sewing, and making wreathes. She is a member at Ziegels, Weisenberg Township.

Christ, Conyngham Outdoor Worship Space



In early 2016, leaders of Christ, Conyngham began exploring ways to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the congregation in 2018. One of three significant projects identified was restoring a courtyard area located between the buildings housing the sanctuary and Christian Education/Fellowship spaces. The challenge was to re-imagine the space, taking creation care and reaching out to the community into consideration.

An outdoor worship space looking over the Conyngham Sugarloaf Valley was designed and constructed by ThorneCare Landscape Solutions, a business owned and operated by one of the congregation's young adults. Financing was provided by Mission Investment Fund, which allowed the congregation to use existing funds for giving to the Campaign for the ELCA.

The courtyard project and a parking lot restoration project occurred in tandem, along with the congregation's third anniversary project- giving \$100,000 to the Campaign for the ELCA. Lutheran World Relief Hunger Appeal has been the recipient of \$50,000. Plans include giving \$50,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response in 2017.

The space features a fully accessible worship space and stone altar, a baptismal fountain which pours forth from the altar, and a fire pit for social gathering. The fountain color may be changed based upon the season of the church year. The worship space includes capacity for sound and landscape lighting, and utilizes an open area with pavers marked with the sign of the cross. In addition, a Celebration of Life tree on the wall allows folks to have a leaf engraved with the names of their departed loved ones and two benches by the tree for seating.

Coaching

Do you have goals you would like to achieve but struggle to make time or map an approach to them?

Do you know of situations or projects so complex that you cannot keep the overview and be in it at the same time?

Are you looking for ways to be more effective in what you do?

Then why not find out more about coaching?

What is coaching?

Coaching is a focused, very effective way of intentionally addressing your goals and achieving them through a step by step process. Usually, coach and client meet or talk by phone once a month for about one hour. A good coach does not need to be an expert in your area of interest. A good coach is trained to draw the expert out of you.

- Coaching is *not* counseling.
- Coaching is *not* spiritual direction.
- Coaching is *not* a consultation process.
- Coaching is *not* about winning.
- Coaching *is* an intentional effort to strive for results and growth.

The synod has experienced as well as newly trained coaches, who are available to work with you. If you are curious, you can talk to a coach at no cost to discern if coaching seems right for you. For more information, please contact Mike Bennethum at 610-266-5101 or mike@nepsynod.org.

Parish Secretaries' Christmas Luncheon



On Tuesday, December 13, the synod staff hosted for the first time a Parish Secretaries' Christmas Luncheon. Parish secretaries from the entire synod were invited to come together for a catered lunch, followed by a time of fellowship and games. There were even prizes!

The event provided a wonderful opportunity to network with other secretaries in similar circumstances, and to share ideas and challenges. Some hope to continue the experience in their own mission district.

There was tour of the Lutheran Center for those who had never been there, including an introduction to the Resource Center. It turned out to be a productive and helpful day, and the staff hopes to plan another event for next year.

Because so much food was left over, the staff contacted the Lehigh Conference of Churches, which was happy to stop by and pick up the food to distribute to the hungry and homeless.

