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March, 2023 LMD NL news will be due Feb. 13, 2023. E-Mail any information to me at lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com.

Community Free Dinners – St. John’s Lutheran Church, 1028 Church Street, Fogelsville. Dinners will continue the **3rd Friday, every other month** (except November, when it will be held on the 2nd Friday) from 5-7 PM. Dinners are served "to-go", while supplies last. All are welcome.

The Clothes Closet is open: We only have one person trying to help a lot of people at one time. **Another person is needed to help people shop.** The hours are **Thursday mornings 9:30-11:30.** We want to keep this vital ministry to the community going. For more information, please contact Leslie Talago, Parish Administrator at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943) or email LETalago@StLukesLuth.org. Thank you to all who help contribute things!!

CROP Thank You

Thank you for helping our 2022 Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk raise

\$31,822.55 (as of 1/13/23) to help our neighbors in need locally and around the globe!

As a result of your faithful efforts, the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank and

Lehigh Conference of Churches Kitchen will each receive over \$3900 for their vital ministries,

and our food insecure neighbors who have survived floods, drought, war, and other disasters are receiving life-giving assistance.

Let’s continue to increase awareness of the need and encourage family, friends, and others to join us in helping our food insecure neighbors with **ONLINE**

GIFTS at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa>

Alternatively, **CHECKS FOR “CWS/CROP”** may be sent ASAP to Linda Held, Allentown CROP Hunger Walk Treasurer, **3441 Devonshire Road, Allentown, PA 18103.**

BIRTHDAY or ANNIVERSARY GIFT IDEA: In honor of loved ones, give the gift of life to neighbors in need with a **GIFT TO “CWS/CROP”** at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/allentownpa>

Debi Olphin, CROP Hunger Walk Coordinator for **Asbury United Methodist Church in Allentown**, shared this inspiring report and the attached photo:

Asbury Church is very mission minded. The United Methodist Women and a group called Asbury In Missions (AIM) are constant supporters

of the CROP Hunger Walk. **AIM has a monthly Mission brunch** with a donation request. They also collect **spare change** at the end of each church service to donate to mission groups all year long.

My biggest tip is to keep an **ongoing list** of names and contact information year to year: family, friends, church family, bank, and employers. (I graciously ask for more every year.)

Start promoting early, requesting donations, and recruiting walkers. Keep walkers informed and engaged leading up to the day of the walk.

Set up your **CWS online page**. **Email** all contacts in your address book. Post to **Facebook** if you have an account. Give yourself time so you can **follow up** a few times with your request to people you haven’t heard back from yet.

CWS gives so much **educational information** on their website. Share tidbits with your requests.

I send a **“thank you”** as soon as I receive a donation with info about what that donation means, no matter what the amount, e.g., \$50 provides one month’s food for a family of five through a refugee program or provides a first-aid kit for an entire village.

Fundraisers can be held **anytime** of the year for the CROP Hunger Walk.

Since COVID, the day before the walk, my husband and I plan a day for a **drive-by food bank collection** at church for the Allentown Ecumenical Food Bank. We have collected hundreds of pounds of food each time. Even my husband’s coworkers contribute each year. It’s contagious once you get started. **Just ask!**

Thank you, Asbury UMC, for your life-giving ministry and for sharing some great ideas about how to increase awareness and enthusiasm for the CROP Hunger Walk and other ministries to help our food insecure neighbors near and far!



*ASH Wednesday
February 22, 2023*

Dear Lehigh Mission District Antisemitism on our Doorsteps

The ripple of antisemitism against the Jewish community has reached the Lehigh Valley area. However, before we can address this topic, we need to confess that Dr. Martin Luther was antisemitic.

What does this mean? Dr. Martin Luther perpetuated lies, biases, and prejudices about the Jewish community that led to the persecution of Jews in Germany through his writings.

One of Luther's books was titled, "On the Jews and their Lies" -- ironic since it was Luther perpetuating lies about the Jewish community in Germany. The Protestant reformer wrote other books, pamphlets, and preached sermons that expressed his hate against the Jewish community.

Historian and Martin Luther biographer, Dr. Lyndal Roper, writes, "Luther's vicious anti-Semitism has been one of the most fraught subjects in the history of Lutheranism, because it has been difficult for scholars after the Holocaust to recognize and accept its nature and extent." (Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet, 2016. Pg 413.)

What does this mean? Luther was antisemitic towards God's Chosen People. Many Lutherans seem to have an entitled ignorance when it comes to addressing Luther's antisemitism and its history in Lutheranism.

Lutherans should not give carte blanche to Luther's antisemitism. Our Lutheran confession needs to continue to denounce Luther's antisemitic writings as wrong and evil both then and today.

I took the Joint Catechetical Classes from St. John's UCC and St. John's Lutheran Church to a Jewish temple. We met our host of the evening, Martina Obenski, for a discussion on similarities and differences between Christians and Jews, followed by a Shabbat service. There we were worshipping the same God, acknowledging the same Jesus, and hearing the same Scriptures.

However, antisemitic threats from a man in New Jersey sent a ripple through our host synagogue, Congregation Keneseth Israel in Allentown, and forced them to take safety measures. A plain clothed police officer monitored the entrance to the synagogue during our visit.

There we were wearing a kippah, looking like tourists, and being unaware of the Jewish community being threatened. Our Christian entitled ignorance overlooked this palpable difference that traumatizes the Jewish community.

Por qué? Why do Christians overlook the effects of antisemitism? Because we don't know what it means to feel threatened. We don't know what it means to have an undercover officer at the doors of our churches for protection. We don't worry what others may say about our Christian faith because we are the dominant religion.

At the end of the Shabbat service, we left behind the kippah and returned to the safety of our home. Our Jewish siblings don't have that privilege when they go to worship, when they go home or to work or to school. There is a clear difference between Christians and Jews.

An important similarity in the Torah and the New Testament is a teaching of Moses and Jesus who taught, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment." The second commandment is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

What does this mean? The passion found in our heart calls us to deepen our affection with God. The soul's call is to awaken our consciousness to see God around us. The mind calls us to reflect our thoughts on the ultimate concern. That is God.

Jesus wraps the heart, soul, and mind together with the highest form of love called agape. We are to take the intensity of our heart, soul, and mind and show our neighbor unconditional love.

Moses and Jesus taught us to love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself.

**The Rev. Nelson Quiñones,
Lehigh Mission District Dean**

OPERATION SUNSHINE

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Paula & Dick Skelly Co-Trip Coordinators

Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers.

Mar 15 (Wed.) – Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre – SISTER ACT: Based on the musical comedy movie, *Sister Act* tells the hilarious story of Deloris Van Cartier, a disco diva, whose life takes a surprising turn when she witnesses a murder and the cops hide her in the last place anyone would think to look – a convent! Under the suspicious watch of Mother Superior, Deloris helps the secluded sisters find their voices as she unexpectedly rediscovers her own. A sparkling tribute to the universal power of friendship, *Sister Act* is reason to rejoice!

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 10:00 - Return approx. 5:15 PM

Cost \$117 - Payment Deadline: Thurs., Feb. 16, 2023

April 27 (Thur.) – Paper Mill Playhouse – MURDER ON THE ORIENT

EXPRESS: The exotic Orient Express is about to go off the rails! With a train full of suspects and an alibi for each one, it's the perfect mystery for detective Hercule Poirot, n'est ce pas? Adapted from Agatha Christie's masterpiece.

Private Buffet Luncheon at The Stage Tavern in Mountainside featuring main courses of House-Made Cheese Ravioli, Chicken Piccata and Herb Roasted Pork Loin with Mushroom Gravy. All this served buffet style with soup and salad, some sides and assortment of desserts.

Bus leaves St. Timothy's at 9:30 AM - Return approx. 5:00 PM

Cost \$130 - Payment Deadline: Thurs. Mar. 9, 2023

MULTI-DAY TRIPS

April 20 to April 23, 2023 (Thru - Sun) – PARADE OF NATIONS AND

VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TATTOO: This trip includes a 3-course dinner on The Spirit of Norfolk Dinner Cruise, Reserved seats for the 70th Annual Parade of Nations, a performance of the Virginia International Tattoo Show (the term "Tattoo" here is a ceremonial performance of military music by massed bands from around the world including acrobats, choral groups, and precision military drill teams), and much more. **Call the office to receive a full itinerary and pricing. Final payment is due by March 1, 2023**

September 17 to September 23, 2023 (Sun.-Sat.) – CHICAGO WITH AN 2 OVERNIGHTS IN CLEVELAND

- Join Operation Sunshine to visit one of the great cities of the US, Chicago, IL. This fun-filled trip is packed with activity. On our way out to Chicago, we will stop for an overnight in Cleveland where we will visit the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In Chicago, we will have a guided bus tour of the city, a visit to the Navy Pier is also in our itinerary. We will visit Chicago's famous "Skydeck," the Shedd Aquarium, the Lincoln Park Observatory, a cruise on Lake Michigan and More! Our overnight in Cleveland on the return trip will include a bus tour of the city. **Call the office to receive a full itinerary and pricing. Final payment is due by July 31, 2023.**