

JULY 2016

LIFE TOGETHER



Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church

GREAT STARTS Begin With You!

Abiding Hope is a direct result of fellow Lutherans who were willing to pay it forward.

In 1896, Luther Memorial, gave of their time and money to establish a mission church at Liberty Street and Brown Avenue. Zion's Lutheran Church ministered to their neighborhood for more than 100 years.

In 1955 another inner city church: St. Matthew's gave of their time and money to establish a mission church even further out at 54th and Peach. Our Savior's Lutheran Church continued under that name until 2002.

At that time Zion's and Our Savior paid forward their gifts and consolidated under the name of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church.

Because Christians, long since gone, have expressed their faith without expectation of any return, we find ourselves where we are today.

And where are we?

We have paid off a \$370,000 mortgage. We have built a brand new, energy efficient church surrounded by private residences as far as the eye can see. And we were able to do this without taking on debt. God has truly blessed this congregation.

There will be expenses incurred in the actual move to W. Grandview Blvd. that are not part of the construction budget. There are items that cannot be moved, items that need to be moved professionally and items that are simply not worth moving. The actual cost of transition will be somewhere around the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range. We need to understand that these expenses are not for things that are nice to have, but for things that we need to have. So it is time for us to follow our forebear's example and pay it forward.

The last verses of Matthew, often referred to as The Great Commission of Jesus stated the following: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Jesus is telling them, AND US, that their teaching is not to be limited to one time and place.

The ministry of Abiding Hope has its roots in at least five different worship spaces. We are moving to a sixth, but our mission, as impossible as it sounds is still the same..."go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

In contemporary language, he is telling them, and us, it's time to pay it forward. Amen.

Abiding Hope's
mission is to
be a loving family...

LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!

Pray with us and join
with us as we seek
to live in a loving com-
munity with one another
and share the hope of
Jesus Christ with those
who need it most!



"LIFE TOGETHER"

A newsletter from
your friends
and family at
Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church
5312 Peach Street
Erie PA 16509
814-868-8685
fax - 814-864-3856
Church e-mail:
ahadministrator
@hotmail.com

Courtesy Ed Whitbred sermon 5.29.16



Pay It Forward with A Gift that Keeps on Giving

Opportunities abound for us to “Pay It Forward” in our new church home at 2402 W. Grandview Blvd.

Several families have already donated: The Penn’s purchased two brand new stainless steel refrigerators for our kitchen, Mike and Barb Paris purchased a pew and donated funds toward landscaping. Ed and Carol Whitbred have made a generous donation that will enable the church to enjoy a new voice sound system. The Gesler’s have donated the funds necessary to move our organ and pianos. Norm and Mary Christie along with Erie Industrial Trucks are securing new industrial shelving for the Food Pantry. But this is only the beginning. The list of needs is a long one.

The Church Council is hopeful we can raise \$30,000 in donations. You can help us with a single donation or with a specific item such as a dishwasher or by adding to your weekly offering for the next 3 to 12 months. (Mark as a *Great Starts* donation)

Prayerfully consider how you can help “pay-it-forward”. Some opportunities include:

- * Give a pew for \$1,376
- * Give an altar chair for \$192
- * Donate a dishwasher
- * Give a round table with 8 chairs for Fellowship Hall: \$280 per set
- * 12’ x 16’ storage shed
- * Give toward landscaping by giving a tree, shrubbery or lawn planting
- * Give toward signage
- * Give toward storage shelving for kitchen storage closets or Sunday school rooms
- * Donate toward window coverings
- * Finance our Open House/Start Up costs



Our adventure does not end when we move in; it is just the beginning. Together we can make this move a truly GREAT START toward a future full of mission, discipleship and service to our Lord.

Parish Staff and Leadership

Pastor Emeritus

Albert U. Gesler, Jr.

Office Assistant

Denise Miller

Financial Secretary

Pat Wenzel

Coordinators of Music Ministry

Edwina Gesler
Joe Burgert
Bob Holderer

Director of Parish Nurse Program

Jeanne Tropper RN

2016 Church Council

President

Rick Penn

Vice-President

June Beard

Secretary

Jacque Holmberg

Treasurer:

Cheryl Tufts

Members:

Andy Saska
Missy Smith
Don Fuller
Joe Burgert
Kevin Petrone

Attention Young People: Organ Pedals For Sale

Young church members, sixteen and under, are invited to choose a note(s) on the organ’s pedal board to call their own. At the back of the church is a sign with all of the notes on the organ pedal board. The long, light pedals are \$10.00 each and the short, sharp/flat pedals are \$5.00 each. After the organ is moved to our new church, you will then always be able to see your “very own note” every Sunday. Questions/additional information... please see Edwina Gesler or contact her @ 899-0762.



Abiding Hope Council Update

At the May 24 and June 7 meetings, the May 10 and May 24 minutes were approved. Written and verbal committee reports were received. The complete minutes are posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Highlights are:

- The Prayer Team intends that each worship service will have a special prayer addressing our congregation's specific needs. (June Beard)
- The Worship Team is planning for the Thanksgiving at the Disposition of a Church Building, the Dedication of a Church Building, and our first worship services related to our relocation. (Joe Burgert)
- The Welcome Team is developing a brochure for distribution to our new neighbors. An open house may be planned once we can set a budget and date. The web site is progressing. There is a need for a person with the skills to begin and maintain a Facebook page for the church. (Cheryl Tufts)
- After touring both the new and our present buildings, the Moving Team is starting the task of sorting, packing, donating and disposing of our congregation's belongings. The pews will have a new home with a UMC congregation in North Richmond, OH. (Jacque Holmberg/Therese Penn)
- Fundraising: The present effort will be directed at raising money to complete the new church with a goal of \$30,000. This effort is separate from our Stewardship program.
- The Call Committee continues to discern.
- Motion to use the Velocity Net internet and phone service, the non-hosted proposal. Approved.
- The general consensus of council is to use the NW corner room of the new building as a conference-type room to be furnished with our present Heritage Room table and chairs.
- Pat Wenzel has agreed to serve as Financial Secretary. Thank you, Pat.
- On July 3 there will be one worship service at 9:30 AM.
(Next meeting: Tuesday, July 5 at 7:00 PM)

Cookies & Candy Mailings

Jan Tower is sending a big **thank you** to everyone who helped by donating cookies, candy & postage costs for the holiday "goodies" that were mailed out in the past.

Since the program is on hold, Pringle cans are no longer needed.



Abiding Hope Contacts

Ministers

All the members of Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

Council

Rick Penn-814-460-8457

Parish Nurse

Jeanne Tropper -814-823-1484

Thrivent Financial

Edwina Gesler - 814-899-0762

John & Jacque Holmberg - 814-864-3797

Worship & Music

Edwina Gesler 814-899-0762

Joe Burgert - 814-838-3820

Building Committee

Mike Paris - 814-450-3419

Finance

Cheryl Tufts-814-882-6860

Office

Denise Miller - 814-868-8685

June Beard-814-450-1579

Building Maintenance

Bob Hicks - 814-868-8560

Hospitality

Jacque Holmberg
814-864-3797

Mission Committee

Rick Penn - 814-460-8457

Care Committee

Connie Burgert - 814-838-3820

Outreach Committee

Ed Whitbred - 814-397-0990

KAFP

William Overmoyer-836-1676

& Mary Christie-490-7618

Christian Ed

Missy Smith - 814-490-6323

Altar Care

Cheryl Hicks - 814-868-8560

Stewardship

Church Council

WELCA

Liz Stroup - 814-881-3194

Newsletter

Nancy Cunning -814-833-3109

A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!



July Birthdays

7/1	Adam Fladd
7/2	Breanna Gilson Danielle Watson
7/3	Elena Thompson
7/6	Mariah DiPlacido Shelley West
7/7	Keira Spano
7/8	Beth Watson
7/9	Brandon Penn
7/11	Payton Poff
7/15	Jett Derry
7/16	Jordann Pacileo
7/19	Jim Crosby
7/21	Joe Pacileo
7/24	Sonia Moore
7/27	Giavonna Baughman
7/28	Ashley Baughman
7/28	Lydia Watson
7/29	Joe Bennett
7/30	Mary Anne Grumblatt
7/30	Carol Williamson
7/31	Marge Katarzynski
7/31	Gary Watson



July Anniversaries

7/5	Jim and Chetta Crosby
7/6	Beverly and Steven Shingledecker
7/16	Marty and Gregg Harris

Prayer requests

The following members of the Abiding Hope family are dealing with health issues. If you would like to send a card to let them know they are in your thoughts, addresses are listed in our current directory or call the church office. Please remember: Linda Hancock, Gordon Wunch, Joshua Haight, Hannah Vogt, Dan Ditzel, Carrie Fiske, Marilyn Martin, The Hoehn Family, The Turner Family, Eileen, Joyce Brucker, Chetta Crosby, Mary Anne Grumblatt, Maryellen H., Joyce Hersperger, Elmer Lawrence, Mary Sontheimer, Jim Pacileo, Kevin Petrone, Damian Santabene and Evelyn Senger. *A prayer request form is on the table in the fellowship hall. The names of the people you request will remain on the prayer list for four weeks.*



Project Dignity Monthly Ministry Appeal

Each month Project Dignity is collecting one-of-a-kind, non perishable items. Each month the KAFP hopes to gather enough of a specific item to provide each of our families with that personal care or household item so that our Food Pantry patrons have not only healthy meals but personal dignity and a clean home. Please donate monthly by dropping your items in the collection basket in the back of the sanctuary. **July item: Laundry Products**



Holy Communion Training Rescheduled

A training, presented by Pastor Sandra Jones, assistant to the bishop, is rescheduled for Monday, July 11 at 6:00 PM at Abiding Hope. This training is to prepare members interested in the Visitation & Holy Communion distribution ministry which brings Holy Communion to our shut-in members. Any of our authorized Lay Distributors for worship services who desire to participate in this type of visitation ministry would also need to take this training. Please call Connie Burgert (838-3820) by Thursday, June 30 to RSVP.



WELCA for July

There will be no WELCA (Women of the ELCA) meeting in July. Watch this space for future meetings and activities.

Prayer Shawl Update

The Prayer Shawl Committee will be taking the summer off and not meet until September.

Coming Soon ~ AHLC web site ~ www.abidinghopeluth.com

The Abiding Hope web-site is close to going live; hopefully within the next couple weeks. Currently it contains the nuts and bolts of church functions including contact information, staff information, council structure, history and standing committees. We all know that this hardly scratches the surface of what happens on an ongoing basis in our congregational life. In order to really get value out of this site, we need to keep it current and inclusive. As part of site building we are working on an updating process that will funnel information, either time sensitive or ongoing, to the site on a regular basis.

What we need at this point is a recap of any activity or organization that you may

currently be involved in. At the very least we need a description of the activity or organization along with contact information for the group. As we continue to fine tune the site, we will stress the use of digital photos. If you want to forward a photo in jpeg form, feel free. But for the time being please limit it to one. Send all correspondence by email to Ed Whitbred at cjwhitbred@verizon.net.

The more our web site is complete the better prepared we will be to introduce ourselves to our new neighbors.

Thank you for your help.

Ed Whitbred



WELCA /Outreach Project for Wounded Warriors

Abiding Hope's WELCA group and the Outreach Committee are teaming up with other NWPA WELCA groups to collect items for Wounded Women Warrior's Veterans programs. Items will be collected at the WELCA retreat on September 18, 2016 to be distributed by the Erie VA Medical Center.

Items requested include: Women's socks, and underwear (sizes 5-10), panty liners, hair brushes, hair scrunches, puzzles,

books, gift cards from Top's (gas), Wal-Mart or Target and hair cut services. In kind gifts are also requested for Homeless Veterans (both men and women) and include: backpacks, shirts, slacks, sneakers, winter hats and gloves, hand and foot warmers, new boots, shaving cream, shampoo and men's shower gel, notebooks, flashlights, small first aid kits, stamps and envelopes.



Caring Committee

We would like to be sure that our shut-in's attend our last church service on Peach Street and our Dedication Service on W. Grandview. The Dedication Service has been scheduled on October 16, 2016 at 3:00 PM. We do not know the date of the

last church service on Peach Street. If you could provide transportation on either or both of these days please contact Connie Burgert @ 838-3820 or email cburgert@roadrunner.com.



July Scriptures

- 7/1 2 Corinthians 8:1-7
- 7/2 Luke 9:1-6
- 7/3 Isaiah 66:10-14
Psalm 66:1-9
Galatians 6[1-6] 7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20
- 7/4 Acts 19:21-27
- 7/5 Acts 19:28-41
- 7/6 Luke 10:13-16
- 7/7 James 2:14-26
- 7/8 Acts 7:9-16
- 7/9 John 3:16-21
- 7/10 Deuteronomy 30:9-14
Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10:25-37
- 7/11 James 2:1-7
- 7/12 1 John 3:11-17
- 7/13 Matthew 25:31-46
- 7/14 Hebrews 5:1-6
- 7/15 Ephesians 3:14-21
- 7/16 Luke 8:4-10
- 7/17 Genesis 18:1-10a
Psalm 15
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42
- 7/18 Colossians 1:27-2:7
- 7/19 1 John 2:1-6
- 7/20 John 6:41-51
- 7/21 Acts 1:15-20
- 7/22 Acts 2:22-36
- 7/23 Luke 8:22-25
- 7/24 Genesis 18:20-32
Psalm 138
Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]
Luke 11:1-13
- 7/25 Colossians 2:16-3:1
- 7/26 Romans 9:30-10:4
- 7/27 Matthew 5:43-48
- 7/28 Romans 11:33-36
- 7/29 Ephesians 4:17-24
- 7/30 Mark 10:17-22
- 7/31 Ecclesiastics 1:2, 12-14;
2:18-23
Psalms 49:1-12
Colossians 3:1-11
Luke 12:13-21

Calling all Kids ~ It's VBS Time!!!

2016 VBS dates: Sunday, July 17 to Thursday, July 21 - 6:30 to 8:45p.m.

At New Hope Presbyterian Church ~ 5440 Washington St.

Theme: ***"Ocean Commotion" - Learning about Noah***

Volunteers Needed:

- Opening & Closing the daily program
- Teachers for Pre & K, Grades 1 & 2
- Teacher Assistants - All grades
- Crafts & Games, Auxiliary, Kitchen



**First Sunday
Fellowship Hour**
~

**Sunday, July 3rd
10:30 AM following
the one service at
9:30 AM**

Hosted by the
Hospitality
Committee

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Come and share  
good eats and fellow-  
ship. Enjoy an update  
and Q & A about  
our new church  
building on  
W. Grandview Blvd.

A volunteer organizational meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 30 @ 6:30pm @ New Hope Presbyterian Church at 5440 Washington St.

Further information/questions, contact: Missy Smith 774-4852 - [kquilly@yahoo.com](mailto:kquilly@yahoo.com)  
Elly McIntosh 864-6456 - New Hope's VBS coordinator

## ***Update on W. Grandview Building site***

Just as we are busy packing for the move on Peach St., work continues at a feverish pace at the W. Grandview site. The sanctuary is getting ready for the August 1 delivery and installation of our new pews. Ceramic tile has been laid, ceiling fans and lights are installed, closet doors have been installed and trim painted. Narthex and altar wall stone work is complete and ready for the installation of our cross. The elevator installation is very close to being complete. The stairwell has been painted and lighting installed. We are looking more like the beautiful church we envisioned each day.

On the lower level the vinyl flooring has been laid and Sunday school rooms are ready for carpet installation. Bathrooms are ready for commodes and sinks. The Food Pantry has begun to be cleared of stored items and will soon have a sealed floor. The Community Room is ready for carpeting and our kitchen awaits the installation of our countertop.

Outside the sidewalks are nearly finished; grading of the parking lot begins next week. The canopy is finished and looks lovely and will prove to be a nice addition. Renaud-Peck has donated top-soil which will help in the huge landscaping project we are about to begin.

The Committee continues to work diligently to keep the finances in check while being aware of the need to spend to secure the site as well-built, safe, functional and economical to run.

With move in only weeks, not months away, please consider what you and your family can do to assist us with completing this major task through the GREAT STARTS program. God Bless you and Abiding Hope Lutheran Church.

**The Building Committee**

**A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!**

## ***Moving Team Update***

Things should be looking a bit different around our building as the Moving Team has been busy sorting, packing, and either giving away or discarding items - all in preparation for our relocation to West Grandview Blvd. Several items on display in our narthex are there for all members to "take a trip down memory lane." These items will most likely not be taken to the new building. Other items which are placed on a table in the old narthex (with the ramp) may be freely taken by anyone who would like them. Two rooms – the old garage/music room and the room at the end of the hallway - are filling up with boxes ready to be moved. The dumpster is filling up with items that are not salvageable or of further use.

No specific "Pack-it-Up" dates are

scheduled for July, but people will continue to work in different areas throughout the building in preparation for the relocation.

Thank you to the folks who have given their time and effort to start this moving process -and an early thank you to all of you who will volunteer with the actual move itself. We will send out a call for your help! It is our hope that the move itself will take place over a period of time, rather than trying to do it all in one day. Time will tell!

If you have any questions about particular items making the shift from our old building to our new building, please contact John or Jacque Holmberg.



## ***Emergencies***

In case of pastoral emergencies, and until a new pastor is called, please contact Rick Penn at 864-2426.



## ***June Finances At a Glance***

To meet budgeted expenses we need weekly offerings of \$2,681; We are currently not meeting this need as a congregation and many weeks are falling short of this critical obligation. For the year-to-date we are over \$17,000 behind.

Attendance has been down. This is

not unusual for the summer months and being without a Pastor has not helped. Please do what you can to help and please be pro active by inviting absent members to return

and friends and relatives to visit us.



## ***Volunteers Needed***

Bethany Outreach needs volunteers for several programs.

The Regency at South Shore is looking for volunteers as well to interact with their residents.

Info for both is on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.



**Lay Worship Leaders  
& Lay Distributors for  
July and August:**

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July 3rd

Rick Penn
June Beard &
Kevin Petrone

July 10th

Pastor Sandra Jones

July 17th

Ed Whitbred
Carol Whitbred &
Judi Pacileo

July 24th

Jacque Holmberg
Joe Bennett & John
Holmberg

July 31st

Ed Whitbred
Jacque Holmberg &
Rick Penn

August 7

Rick Penn
June Beard &
Joe Bennett

August 14

Ed Whitbred
Carol Whitbred &
Kevin Petrone

August 21

Pastor Sandra Jones

August 28

Jacque Holmberg
Judi Pacileo &
John Holmberg

Juvenile Diabetes

W *hat is Juvenile Arthritis?*

Juvenile arthritis (JA) is not a disease in itself. Also known as pediatric rheumatic disease, JA is an umbrella term used to describe the many autoimmune and inflammatory conditions or pediatric rheumatic diseases that can develop in children under the age of 16. Juvenile arthritis affects nearly 300,000 children in the United States.

Although the various types of juvenile arthritis share many common symptoms, like pain, joint swelling, redness and warmth, each type of JA is distinct and has its own special concerns and symptoms. Some types of juvenile arthritis affect the musculoskeletal system, but joint symptoms may be minor or nonexistent. Juvenile arthritis can also involve the eyes, skin, muscles and gastrointestinal tract.

Types of Juvenile Arthritis

Juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA). Considered the most common form of arthritis, JIA includes six subtypes: oligoarthritis, polyarthritis, systemic, enthesitis-related, juvenile psoriatic arthritis or undifferentiated.

Juvenile dermatomyositis. An inflammatory disease, juvenile dermatomyositis causes muscle weakness and a skin rash on the eyelids and knuckles.

Juvenile lupus. Lupus is an autoimmune disease. The most common form is systemic lupus erythematosus, or SLE. Lupus can affect the joints, skin, kidneys, blood and other areas of the body.

Juvenile scleroderma. Scleroderma, which

literally means “hard skin,” describes a group of conditions that causes the skin to tighten and harden.

Kawasaki disease. This disease causes blood-vessel inflammation that can lead to heart complications.

Mixed connective tissue disease. This disease may include features of arthritis, lupus dermatomyositis and scleroderma, and is associated with very high levels of a particular antinuclear antibody called anti-RNP.

Fibromyalgia. This chronic pain syndrome is an arthritis-related condition, which can cause stiffness and aching, along with fatigue, disrupted sleep and other symptoms. More common in girls, fibromyalgia is seldom diagnosed before puberty.

Juvenile Arthritis Causes

No known cause has been pinpointed for most forms of juvenile arthritis, nor is there evidence to suggest that toxins, foods or allergies cause children to develop JA. Some research points toward a genetic predisposition to juvenile arthritis, which means the combination of genes a child receives from his or her parents may cause the onset of JA when triggered by other factors.

Juvenile Arthritis Symptoms

Each of the different types of JA have their own set of signs and symptoms. You can read more specifics about the diseases by following the links above, and by visiting the Arthritis Foundation’s website dedicated to pediatric rheumatic diseases, KidsGetArthritisToo.

A Message From Parish Nurse Jeanne Tropper RN

Juvenile Arthritis Diagnosis

The most important step in properly treating juvenile arthritis is getting an accurate diagnosis. The diagnostic process can be long and detailed. There is no single blood test that confirms any type of JA. In children, the key to diagnosis is a careful physical exam, along with a thorough medical history. Any specific tests a doctor may perform will depend upon the type of JA suspected.

Juvenile Arthritis Treatment

Unfortunately, there is no cure for juvenile arthritis, although with early diagnosis and aggressive treatment, remission is possible. The goal of treatment is to relieve inflammation, control pain and improve the child's quality of life. Most treatment plans involve

a combination of medication, physical activity, eye care and healthy eating.

Juvenile Arthritis Self Care

An important part of JA treatment is teaching the child the importance of how to follow the treatment prescribed by the healthcare team. Self care also involves helping the child address the emotional and social effects of the disease. Self management encompasses the choices made each day to live well and stay healthy and happy.

Juvenile Arthritis & The Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation understands the needs of families with juvenile arthritis are unique and pressing. Learn more about our research efforts through our work with CARRA and our involvement in PARTNERS.



Do you know a member of Abiding Hope who could use a card of encouragement or support? Please communicate with Connie Burgert by putting a note in her church mailbox.



**You Are Invited:
A Celebration of Ministry
in honor of Randy Gullickson's
Retirement**

Sunday, August 21, 2016

1:00 to 4:30 PM

1:00—Worship in the Amphitheater

2:30—Appetizers and Desserts in the Dining Hall

3:30—Program & Celebration

4:30—Benediction

Please RSVP by August 1st
deb@lutherlyn.com or 724-865-2161

Feel free to bring a card. Contributions can be made towards a gift at www.lutherlyn.com/donate or send a check with "Randy retirement" in the memo.



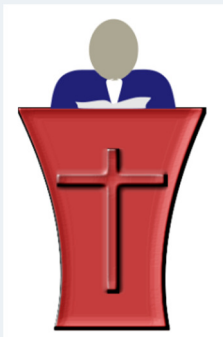
2016 NWPA Synod Assembly † Thiel College June 16-18

About one-hundred and forty-five participants celebrated the arts and the God-given talents and skills that enrich our lives, with an exploration of how dance, music, and the visual arts have shaped our Christian Spirituality and tradition, given expression to our vocation, and enhanced our worship of the Triune God. All this - along with taking care of the necessary business items of our agenda, worshipping, and enjoying fellowship together. It was a busy three days.



Hear Yea! Hear Yea!

The Call Committee has recommended a Pastoral candidate to the Church Council. The call process will continue.



Reports were received from the Bishop and the Treasurer. Our synod presently has 81 congregations, 23 of those without a pastor. We are asked to direct/refer any folks who are being pulled by the Spirit and may be discerning their path in ministry to the synod office. There is a need for not only ordained ministers (through the seminary or the newly-updated TEEM process), but also for Lay Worship Leaders. We presently have 3 people from this synod in the ordination process. Much of the knowledge gained through developing this synod's TEEM process, along with our new Manual for Candidacy, is proving very helpful to the ELCA churchwide offices. Two congregations have completed their ministries this year: Emanuel, Titusville and Elam, Anita. Two congregations are voting on disaffiliation with the ELCA. The legalities of the 2014 theft case (\$155,000) are drawing to a close. Sentencing and the receipt of a restitution check is scheduled for July 2016. None of the congregations' Mission Support gifts received have been affected by this. New steps have been implemented to safeguard against future occurrences.

Reports and/or presentations were received from our synod agencies and institutions: Lutherlyn, Bethesda Children's Home, Lutheran Home at Kane, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Lutheran Seniorlife, LAMPa, Lutheran Service Society, GladeRun Lutheran Services, Pennsylvania Council of Churches, Village at Luther Square, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Verbal reports were also received from Women of the ELCA (SWO), Thiel College, our Vocations Committee, the Institute for Ministry Education, the Leadership Support Committee, and our Reformation 500 team.

The total budget of \$836,870 (\$852,808 in 2016) was approved with 50 cents of every \$1.00 received for mission support (undesignated gifts from congregations and individuals) passed on to the churchwide offices.

The election of a new synod council vice president, board member for the Lutheran Home at Kane, and of Bethesda Children's Home, plus members to serve on the Discipline and Consultation committees occurred.

Three keynote presentations were received: 1). Scott Weidler who serves the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as Program Director for Worship and Music presented "Singing in Community" and a forum on "SMALL PACKAGES – HIDDEN TREASURES: Making music in smaller congregations"; 2). C.. Noelle Partusch is an Associate Professor of dance at Mercyhurst University and specializes in Labanotation and liturgical dance. Her keynote address was "Liturgical Dance: Prayer is More than Folding Your Hands". NOTE: Ms. Partusch and three of her students participated as worship leaders throughout the assembly; and

Theme: Christian Spirituality and the Arts

3). Robyn Sand Anderson, a native of Decorah, IA, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Art and Art Education. Sand Anderson quietly showed us that non-objective painting expresses those things that are hard to understand or explain, wrestling with the mystery of life's questions. Her keynote presentation was "Faith Expression through the Visual Arts". Two breakout sessions with the choice of 9 forums for learning and sharing were offered. These Christian Spirituality and the Arts-themed forums included wood sculpturing, readings from his written work by the "prophet of Oniontown", a living presentation of the Meal in the Upper Room, and creating prayer shawls, among others.

Recognition of Rostered Leaders Anniversaries (Note: Rev. John Coleman – 15 years) and Congregational Anniversaries (Note: 2 local congregations celebrated benchmark anniversaries: St John Lutheran Church, Girard with 150 years and Messiah Lutheran Church, Erie with 100 years). Recognition of congregations that fulfilled their Mission Support gift pledges and the presentation of the McCoid Order to a pastor actively involved in the Kairos Ministry. Eight synod council recommendations were acted upon, including that the Synod's Compensation Guidelines reflect an increase to the base salary of slightly less than 2%, and that the Synod's Mission Support Formula be affirmed (20% of total current regular giving by members), among others.

The Memorials and Resolutions that were acted upon are posted on the Abiding Hope bulletin board. The topics included military personnel, veterans, and their families; the Doctrine of Discovery; refugees; urging divestment from fossil fuel corporations; and support of the unification of PA seminaries.

Worshipping together:

Memorial Liturgy (a Taize-style worship service) remembering all our departed saints (Necrology: THE REVEREND DR. STANFORD O. STENSON and THE REVEREND EMERY EARL "Scoop" OKERLUND).

Festival Eucharist with the Ordination of Benjamin David Austin
Morning Prayer

The assembly was followed by a special travel presentation, "On the Trail of Martin Luther". A representative of Collette Gateway® supplied detailed information about this NWPAsynod, ELCA-sponsored trip scheduled for July 12-22, 2017. This 11-day trip starts at \$3,999 and includes round-trip air from Pittsburgh plus 14 meals. For more information, contact Ralph Jones at (814)589-7660, or bishop@nwpaelca.org (preferably before mid-September, when the offer will open to folks outside of our synod. It is hoped that between 38 and 44 people from our synod will travel together.) Information is also available at <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/735199>.

Abiding Hope members at the 2016 assembly: John and Jacque Holmberg (elected delegates), Bob Holderer (Synod Council member), Rev. Albert and Edwina Gesler, Rev. Gail Zackrison.

Marriage Encounter Weekends



September 16-18, 2016

at Spruce Lake Retreat Center, Canadensis, Pa.

October 21-23, 2016

at the Olmsted Retreat Center in Ludlow, Pa.

Weekends run from

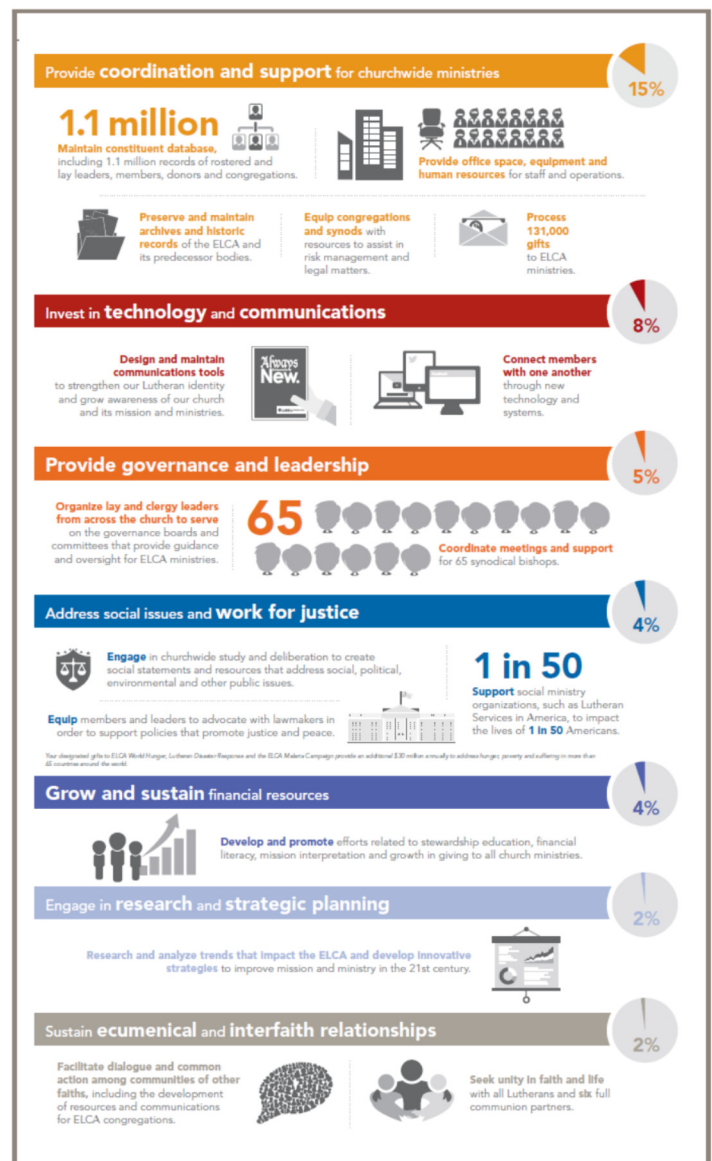
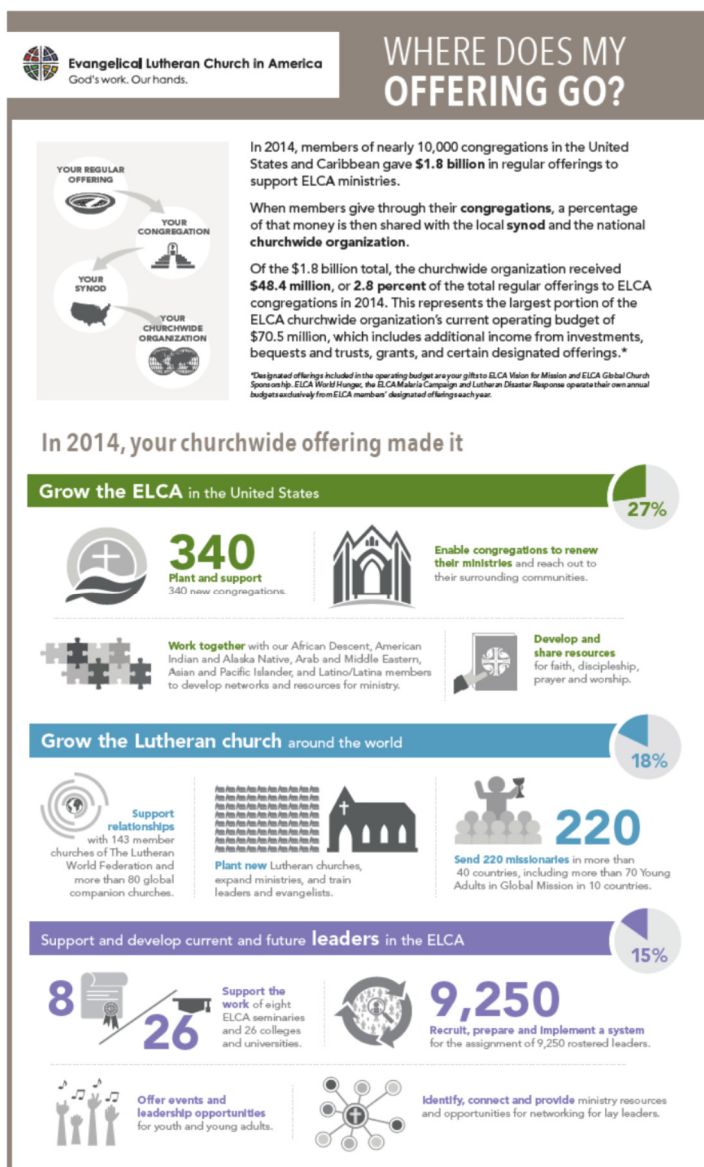
Friday – 8:00pm to

Sunday – 3:00pm.

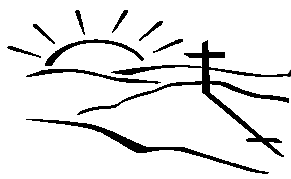
Flyer on bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

A Message About Mission Support

In an effort to help us all better understand the ways that our offerings are used, articles about the various supported ministries and agencies have been included in our monthly newsletters. Each year our congregation votes to determine our support of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod mission. For every \$1.00 that is given to our synod's Mission Support (undesignated gifts from congregations and individuals) 50 cents is passed on to the church wide offices. (This is our Mission Support to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.) On the 2 pages below, you will see how the ELCA church wide uses our offerings. Together we can accomplish so much!



A LOVING FAMILY...LIVING THE FAITH, SHARING THE HOPE...OF CHRIST!



Abiding Hope Lutheran Church

5312 Peach Street
Erie, PA 16509



JULY 2016

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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A LOVING FAMILY. . . LIVING THE FAITH,
SHARING THE HOPE. . .
OF CHRIST!



Worship Services with
Holy Communion
Sunday - 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday - 5:30 p.m.

**GOD IS
GOOD!**



Abiding Hope
Lutheran Church
(814)868-8685