

## Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania - 2011 Report to the Synod

Dear Partners in Christ,

This been a year of many changes in Pennsylvania, in the ELCA and at Lutheran Advocacy Ministry. In the midst of these changes we remain deeply thankful for our partnership with all the Pennsylvania synods and ministries and awed at the ways in which God is present, moving Lutherans around the state to voice their faith convictions in the public arena on behalf of the poor and the vulnerable. Thanks be to God! Read about some of the areas of our ministry below:

- **Hunger** – Hunger advocates in Pennsylvania united around strong funding the **State Food Purchase Program**, which funds food pantries and nutrition programs. LAMPa gave support to establishing a **Hunger Garden** on the State Capitol grounds as a teaching tool and reminder about the pervasiveness of hunger in the Commonwealth. LAMPa led Lutherans around the state in the passage of federal **Child Nutrition Reauthorization**, holding workshops and Paper Plate Campaigns over the summer. The ELCA Bishops in Pennsylvania signed a joint letter to Congress expressing their support.
- **Poverty** - LAMPa staff helped to draft and move a resolution to conduct an **in-depth analysis of the occurrence, effects and trends of poverty** and low income and to make recommendations for comprehensively addressing these trends. This initiative will encourage **private-public partnerships** in addressing the root causes of hunger and poverty and involve hearings and public education on poverty in the Commonwealth. While the resolution did not receive a vote by the end of the session, we have begun outreach to members of the new administration and legislature.
- **Health Care** – LAMPa focused efforts on saving **adultBasic health coverage**, which covers 42,000 working poor adults. LAMPa was also part of the Pennsylvania Health Access Network conference on **federal reform implementation** in Pennsylvania, including focus on the creation of the exchanges and rate review.
- **Affordable Housing** - After a multi-year effort, LAMPa advocates were part of the passage of a **State Housing Trust Fund**, a vehicle by which to expand safe and affordable housing in the Commonwealth.
- **Creation Care and Tax Policy** – LAMPa is a go to-place for Lutherans with questions about **natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale**. LAMPa took part in a state-wide Consultation of Lutherans on Natural Gas Drilling and has acted as a resource for congregations in issues related its impacts on creation and communities. LAMPa has acted in Harrisburg primarily around support for an extraction tax that will protect the environment and support impacted areas.

LAMPa met this year with leaders in the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod to develop a plan for hunger and advocacy education, and provided resources and support to ministries addressing hunger and poverty. We are thankful for our synod Policy Council representatives –Christine Adams and the Rev. Karen Parsch and for the leadership of Bishop Jones.

LAMPa launched a new website in 2011, [www.lutheranadvocacy.org](http://www.lutheranadvocacy.org) and a monthly e-newsletter, *LAMPa Highlights*, to better serve, inform and lead Lutheran voices for justice.

In Christ,

The Rev. Amy E. Reumann, Director