

REPORT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA LUTHERAN NETWORK

Mission

The Pennsylvania Lutheran Network (PLN) is committed to cooperation, collaboration, and support for mutual benefit in ministry to insure that no part of the church need stand alone in our calling to be faithful to the mission God has entrusted to us.

Value Statement & Purpose

The PLN is an aggregation of the Specialized Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in Pennsylvania intentionally organized for mutual support and collaboration as we work to extend and focus the ministry of ELCA congregations in Pennsylvania.

The PLN is a facilitating mechanism through which the synods, institutions, and organizations related to the ELCA in Pennsylvania can maintain relationships, cooperate, and collaborate in ways that can fulfill already existing commitments to the ELCA, to each other, and to the public.

The PLN is not a new organization to join, but a network in which all can participate, fully or selectively, to sustain values and fulfill goals for their mutual benefit in ministry, education, and service in church and society.

Activity

The PLN gathers annually in assembly to consider a topic of interest, to reconnect partners in ministry, and to provide the opportunity for cooperative efforts in our shared ministry.

In 2011, the assembly focused on the February 2011 restructuring of the ELCA and its implications for Network's member organizations and, indeed, for all of the ELCA baptized here in Pennsylvania. The Reverend Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director for the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA, was the keynote speaker on the theme ***Restructuring and Resurrection***. A Panel of participants that represented outdoor ministry, campus ministry, ELCA colleges, theological education, social ministry organizations, evangelical mission, and advocacy ministry reflected on implications of the restructuring for both their individual ministries and for their partners across the commonwealth; in turn this guided table conversations among all participants. Finally, a discussion, led by Jill Schumann, President/CEO of Lutheran Services in America, provided the opportunity for deepening conversation about the Network's future.

A Planning Council meets between assemblies to provide direction for the Network.

Bishop B. Penrose Hoover, Convener