

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

The Gallery at St. Paul, Douglassville



The Gallery at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Douglassville consists of photographs of members of our congregation living, learning, serving and receiving the blessings of Christ's love.

We asked: How to add art to our bare walls? What type of art should it be? Biblical art? Nature art? Over time, a theme emerged - let's showcase the work of our congregation. Let's show visitors to our church who we are and what we do. And we dusted off the slogan, "God's Work. Our Hands."

We are fortunate in many ways.

There was no shortage in finding busy hands in our congregation. They are everywhere. From our Property Committee hanging a new wooden cross, to our quilters creating beautiful heirlooms, to the work of the Basket Social event, to the children in our Child Development Center. We also were blessed to have six members of the congregation who are immensely talented photographers, and they all donated their time and talent to capture extraordinary images.

We further asked the congregation to provide us with a picture of their hands on their wedding day, and three large collages were created. During the month of August, a temporary art gallery was on display in the Fellowship Hall. There were over 50 photographs, printed as 8 x 10's, for all to view. A sponsor form was created, allowing for members of the congregation to contribute to the expense of framing. We worked with a local framer to provide three prices in three sizes.

We will spend the month of September in anticipation of seeing the photographs in their new size, framed; and then in October we will unveil The Gallery at St. Paul's. We hope our members and visitors will enjoy viewing the pictures for years to come. And since we had such beautiful photographs, we also plan to make a 2019 church calendar and note cards, which can be sold at our Fall Apple Festival and Christmas Bazaar.

To learn more about The Gallery Project, contact Pr. Greg Frey at gfrey@stpaulsdouglassville.com.



Camp Noah in Reading for Refugee Children from Puerto Rico



After the devastation in Puerto Rico from hurricane Maria, over 400 refugee families ended up in the Berks County area. Thanks to a generous grant from ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran Congregational Services was able to connect many of these families with agencies and churches who could provide help.

A group of Berks County churches, with generous financial support from the Reading Lutheran Parish, came together to host a Camp Noah during the week of August 13 at St. Luke, Reading. The churches also partnered with Centro Hispano, a nonprofit organization that serves the Latino community in Berks County.

The goal was to provide children from some of these families an opportunity to share their experiences with others who had lived through the same devastation, and then help the children to learn skills needed to move ahead with their lives. There were nearly 40 campers; over 40 in-person volunteers; and in-kind donations from over 50 congregations/ministries/benevolent organizations from Philadelphia to the Poconos.



Pr. Rebecca Knox reports: "A favorite moment was as I was driving a van-full of campers home the first day and a child was reading a unique bilingual birthday card created for each camper by St. John's Lutheran, Hamburg. The camper said, "These people do not even know me, why did they gave me a card?"

I replied, "Because they love you like Jesus does."

The camper replied, "Cool!" and showed the card to the camper sitting in the next seat... "Look what they made just for me!"

Julia Menzo of Liberty Lutheran recruited volunteers and charitable donors; and Luci Bower was the staff coordinator. Pr. Katie Lyon (Christ, Reading) was a key organizer and hopes to work with Liberty Lutheran and its congregations to offer a Camp Noah experience next summer for refugee families in the Philadelphia area.



(Photos by Ralph Paparella, Friedens, Olev)

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