

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Bishop Zeiser Visits Germany



For eight days in August, Bishop Samuel Zeiser visited our companion synod, the Löbau-Zittau district of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony. After his arrival in Dresden and before his visit to the church district, Bishop Zeiser preached in Kreuzkirche (Holy Cross Lutheran Church) as part of a sermon series "Europe and the churches." He was preceded by preachers from the Czech Republic and Russia. Bishop Zeiser spoke about ecumenical relationships in our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. After the service he answered questions from members of the congregation.

Bishop Zeiser then spent several days visiting with pastors and congregations from our companion synod. He valued this opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of their history, ministries, and challenges. A special treat was meeting with Bishop Carsten Rentzing and Friedemann Oehme, the adviser for ecumenical relations in the Landeskirchenamt, Oberkirchenrat. During their trip on a Saxon steamship they not only enjoyed the beauties of the Elbe Valley, but also engaged in meaningful discussions about ecumenical cooperation and the current situation in the United States.



Another highlight was a visit to Herrenhut, the home of Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf and the Moravian church, where Bishop Zeiser toured the brand new Zinzendorf School (similar to our middle schools). The people there (in the former East Germany) were extremely proud both of this new school and an older one for developmentally challenged children located across the street.

Eric Gombert Joins Synod Support Staff



Eric Gombert has joined the team at the Synod Office as Finance Administrator/Bookkeeper having spent many years processing payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable while working for companies, churches, and even for his Homeowner's Association.

Eric was born and raised in the Lehigh Valley, graduated from Whitehall High School, and attended St. John's Lutheran in Whitehall. He is currently also the Cantor (music director) at St. John's Lutheran in Allentown, and a member of the board and the finance committee of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Eric and his husband, Matthew, enjoy spending time with their Great Dane, organic gardening, and roasting their own coffee.

Outdoor Contemporary Worship



On Sunday, August 18, five Lutheran churches (St. Paul, Mountaintop; St. John, Nanticoke; St. Mark Pond Hill; St. John, St. John's; and St. Luke, Freeland) gathered for an Outdoor Contemporary worship service, followed by a church picnic with all the trimmings.

The event was hosted by St. Paul's in Mountaintop. Steve Perillo and the Followers Band provided the music, and Pastor Michele Kaufman led the worship.



Last year the Nanticoke parish invited St. Paul to join them for an outdoor worship event. This year the invitation was extended to St. Luke and St. John, and was tagged as "Lutheran Day." Even with 90+ degree temperatures, about 135 people came together for the worship, food, and fellowship. The band continued to entertain throughout the afternoon.

Pr. Kaufman concluded the sermon by saying: "If there is an alternative reason for our gathering today, it is to build bridges that we might work together and support one another in the future. We need to be less defensive and more cooperative. The forces in this world may be working to tear us apart, but Christ is the thread that binds us together; he calls us to be one. Working together, consider what we can accomplish."

A fall event is currently being discussed.

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