

✧ **WEST BERKS MISSION DISTRICT** ✧
Newsletter - June 2009

The West Berks Mission District is a coalition of area Lutheran Churches working together to do effective, cooperative ministry. YOU are a member of the West Berks Mission District!

The WBMD office is located in St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1015 Windsor Street, Reading PA 19604.

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WBMD Spring Assembly Report

Wow! What a turn-out! Our Spring Assembly, held on April 30th at Robeson Lutheran Church in Plowville, was attended by approximately 180 people with 37 of our 45 congregations represented! All congregational Council members as well as voting delegates and rostered leaders were encouraged to attend this event. A significant portion of the assembly was devoted to the Mission District phase of *Exploring God's Work Among Us*, our Synod's emphasis on ministry renewal. Representatives were asked to bring the results of the surveys done within their congregational settings as well as the "Love Letters from God" developed by Church Councils. Thank you to all who participated in this exercise; we hope you found it meaningful. And special thanks to the good people of Robeson Lutheran for sharing their fantastic facility and refreshments with us!

We want to share the top three themes of the responses to the questions that were asked on the surveys.

1. **What are the BIG ISSUES facing people in the corner of the world where you live that we should be tackling together? What's breaking God's heart?**
 - **Economic distress** (65 responses included comments ranging from the recent economic down-turn's, loss of jobs and lost investments to the extreme poverty of so many folks)
 - **Lack of spiritual commitment and moral confusion** (31 responses)
 - **Social ills and crime** (23 responses)

2. **Where have you seen God at work out in your local neighborhood or community lately? What GOOD THINGS happen where you live and WHO is doing them?**
 - **Feeding the hungry** (66 responses listing food pantries and Greater Berks Food Bank)
 - **Youth programs** (24 mentioned after-school programs, day camps, VBS, student gatherings after high school sporting events, etc.)
 - **Serving the homeless** (20 responses, many naming Family Promise & Opportunity House)

3. **What could the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod do to help STRENGTHEN, ENCOURAGE, and/or EQUIP your congregation to make a difference in your community?**
 - **Financial help** (28 responses said congregations need help to fund outreach ministries)
 - **Provide resources, training, and leadership programs** (24 responses)
 - **Evangelism and Witness training** (24 responses)

At the Assembly, folks gathered in groups of three, each from a different congregation, and shared their council's "Love Letters". The triads were then asked to finish this sentence:

"God's purpose for the church is..." We'll share some of those results in next month's newsletter.

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WBMD Summer Outdoor Worship

Bern Lutheran Church in Leesport will again be hosting the outdoor worship series on **Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM.**

Bring a lawn chair and come each week to hear a different pastor and share in an informal worship service. **The series will begin on Wednesday, June 24th** when the service will be led by Pastor Steve Belinski from Grace Lutheran Church in Reading. We will be offering some special services and invite you all to come offer your worship and praise to our awesome God!

Watch for the full schedule in next month's newsletter! In the case of inclement weather, we will worship indoors.

“Love for Children” Summer Day Camp In partnership with Bear Creek Camp

2009 SCHEDULE & CONTACT LIST

June 22-26	Hope Lutheran Church 610-374-2071
June 29-July 3	St Luke's Lutheran Church 610-375-9216 with St. Mark's, Reading, 610-373-1252 & Christ, Reading, 610-376-0311
July 6-10	Holy Spirit Lutheran Church 610-376-0825
July 27-31	Grace Lutheran Church 610-375-3961 with St. Paul's, Reading, 610-373-3135
August 10-14	Zion Lutheran in Womelsdorf 610-589-4130

All camps are open to any children in grades 2-6. Please contact the congregation to register your children and for more information. Most camps offer field trips and swimming. The camps are run by Bear Creek Camp Counselors.

This year's theme is: **“Branching Out in God's Family.”**

OPERATION BOOK-BAG 2009

It's time again to begin collecting school supplies for children whose families cannot afford to buy them. Many churches collect supplies during Bible School or other summer events. Last year, nearly 600 filled book-bags were delivered to the Reading schools! This ministry is a blessing to both the students and the school staff. Your continued help with this project is greatly appreciated! These are the items requested:

Elementary -

Crayons, erasers, primer tablets, rulers, pencils, glue sticks, construction paper, safety scissors, pencil box or bag, small packs of tissues, back-pack/book-bag

Middle School -

3 or 5 subject notebooks, notebook paper, assignment books, colored pencils, highlighters, tissues, calculators, erasers, pencils, pens (blue or black), back-pack/book-bag

Monetary donations are also appreciated. Make checks payable to: West Berks Mission District
– **memo: Operation Book-bag**

All items should be brought to the WBMD office by August 14th. Please refer questions to Dick at WBMD at 610-375-8303 or via email at Dick@WestBerksMissionDistrict.org.

As always...

Thanks for your support!

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly

**Sovereign Performing Arts Center
Friday and Saturday, June 5 – 6, 2009**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!
Could you help? Please call 610-375-8303.

*To all who helped to decorate the
hospitality bags: Thank You!!*