

✧ **WEST BERKS MISSION DISTRICT** ✧
Newsletter - January 2010

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.

Director – Dawn Baxter *Mission Associate* – Dick Kleinsmith *Bookkeeper* – Susan Rigby-Moore

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Now on the web at www.WestBerksMissionDistrict.org

Ministry Report for 2009 – All Made Possible By Your Support!

- † Our Lutheran Pantries, at seven different sites, together serve an average of 3,000 people per month! Sadly, more than half of these are children. The pantries are hosted by Bethany, West Reading, and St. Luke's, Hope, Incarnation, St. Paul's, Christ-Glenside, and St. John's, in the city of Reading. Many of our congregations are also involved with food ministries in their local communities.
- † Emergency food boxes are available at the WBMD for social service providers to deliver to their clients
- † More than 250 people attended our Outdoor Worship services in the summer of 2009
- † The WBMD "Love for Children" Day Camp partnered with Bear Creek Camp to provide a camp opportunity for children at 4 city and 1 rural Lutheran Church sites
- † 32 secretaries and Pastors enjoyed a Parish Secretary's Appreciation Luncheon
- † Tutoring/after-school programs continue to meet at 6 of our Lutheran Churches in the city
- † Easter hams and Thanksgiving turkeys were provided to congregations to share with families in need
- † 526 book bags were filled with school supplies and delivered to 18 Reading elementary and middle schools in September
- † 127 people attended the Annual Lenten Prayer Breakfast
- † Published monthly WBMD newsletters to be included with congregational newsletters
- † WBMD Director attends meetings of the Clusters (and retired pastors meeting) to maintain communications with district Pastors
- † Making congregations aware of the opportunity to assist homeless families through Family Promise of Berks County's Interfaith Hospitality Network
- † The fall Bowl-a-Thon Fundraiser provides a fun activity for folks of all ages and the money raised allows for low-income children to attend Day Camp at no charge
- † Approximately 175 youth and chaperones attended the annual WBMD Captive Free weekend event hosted by Trinity, Reading in February. 200 school-kits were packed to be sent to Tanzania.
- † Provide bookkeeping services for the Hospital Visitors Program, the Reading Lutheran Parish, Family Promise of Berks County
- † Office serves as a central communication hub and resource center
- † Provide color copy service to our congregations at minimal cost
- † WBMD laptop computer and projector are made available to congregations for special presentations

**The 45 Lutheran Congregations of the West Berks Mission District are
indeed serving our community in Jesus' name.**

Thanks to YOU, together we are

Witnessing Boldly; Making a Difference!

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FALL ASSEMBLY REPORT

It was exciting to read over the papers turned in at the Assembly! Groups of three people from different congregations were asked to meet together briefly and share about an important/exciting ministry happening in their congregation. WOW – some great stuff is happening!

So many of you were eager to report on the outreach ministries you are involved with such as feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, welcoming children to after-school programs, youth ministry, mission trips, clothing and household goods giveaways and more. Others are celebrating wonderful music ministries, new energy in Sunday School programs, contemporary worship opportunities and increased stewardship even in difficult times.

Let's share our strengths! If there is a ministry you are interested in starting, call the WBMD to see if we know of another congregation who might already be doing it and could perhaps offer some guidance.

**Let's help each other as we do
God's Work with Our Hands.**

WBMD ANNUAL YOUTH EVENT with *CAPTIVE FREE!*

**Friday-Saturday, February 19th & 20th
Hosted by Grace Lutheran in Shillington**

The Youth Event is open to all youth in Grades 7-12.

Registration information has been e-mailed to the churches and is available on the web at
www.westberksmissiondistrict.org.

Please check with your pastors or youth advisors if you would like to participate!

**CAPTIVE FREE will have a Concert at 7:00 PM
Saturday evening that is open to everyone. Great
for families! Free-will offering.**

Diakon's Kathryn's Kloset – We have developed a new ministry partnership! We made our first trip to their Baltimore warehouse in December and picked up more than \$12,000 worth of donated laundry detergent to distribute through our pantry system. **Special thanks to Mr. Paul Ott and Penske Trucking for donating the truck.** We are hoping to continue these trips on a regular basis. **NEEDED – people willing to drive the truck for a day and a used pallet jack** – call if you can help. More info next month...

You're invited to ...

American Cancer Society Benefit Concert Trinity Lutheran Church 108 S Robeson Street, Robesonia Saturday, January 9, 6 – 9 PM

14 year-old Amanda Lyn, a local singer/songwriter, will be having a concert to honor all those who have, or are, fighting the difficult battle against Cancer. Light refreshments will be served. There will be no charge, but a free-will offering will be taken. Donations are tax-deductible and checks should be made out to American Cancer Society. Other local performers will also make guest appearances.

Call (610) 693-6062 for more information.

Property Committees

“Everything that happens at the church involves the property committee!” We heard this in October, when the WBMD hosted a gathering of interested members of congregational property committees. Those present had the opportunity to share ideas, recommend vendors and tradesmen they were pleased with and discuss possible ways that we might work together to develop some purchasing power in local stores where we often buy products. We checked into the possibility of negotiated fuel oil prices but were too late for this season. We may want to be looking into developing a consortium to negotiate lower electric rates. If anyone has contacts that might help us through this process please contact us ASAP.

The group will be meeting again in the spring but if you would like to join the email list of property chairs, please contact us and we will include you.

WBMD Calendar of Events



January 7 – Retired Leaders Group Breakfast
January 8 – Rostered Leaders Epiphany Dinner
January 26 – WBMD Council Meeting, Epiphany
February 19-20 – Annual Youth Event with Captive Free,
Grace, Shillington
March 23 – WBMD Council Meeting, Nativity
April 26 – West Berks WELCA Cluster
April 29 – WBMD Spring Assembly at Trinity, Reading