



MinistryLink

Sharing Ministry in @SEPASynod



We're Stronger Together

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod is a network of relationships and resources that cares for your congregation and leaders and connects you to tools for 21st Century ministry. The Synod pools resources to do ministries that no congregation can do alone. Many vital synod ministries are strengthened by financial support from you and your congregation:



Kat Steinly with Good Shepherd's youth group

As a youth growing up at Trinity, Perkasio, Kat Steinly's pastor suggested that she consider ministry, "but it didn't resonate with me at the time. I went to college for music, and found myself longing for more." So she entered seminary. **"We're blessed that the Synod's Candidacy process is evaluative, supportive and formative,"** she says. **SEPA really tries to bring candidates together to build relationships.**" The Synod is very supportive of the contributions of younger leaders, she says. "And I have really appreciated the financial support each year." As a senior she is working in youth ministry at Good Shepherd in King of Prussia.



Teri Lanan

After the death of a long-time pastor, Trinity, Lansdale entered the transition process. "We rushed through the process and didn't engage the Synod," says Teri Lanan. When the next pastor left, **"the second time we worked closely with the Synod, and it made all the difference in the world,"** says Lanan, who was council president at the time. "The Synod and the dean were very hands-on. They really got to know our congregation and offered aid, options, and solutions that really met our unique needs, she said." As a result Trinity's partnership with the Synod is strengthened, and Lanan has joined the Transitional Ministry Development Team, helping other churches through the process.

"At least 35,000 persons are released from prison or placed on probation in the Philadelphia area each year," says Linda Manson, mission developer of Living Gospel, a synodically authorized worshipping community that provides life-skills training, help with job searches, and spiritual community for former offenders and their families. These returning citizens often experience God's grace on the inside, but find they are ostracized in local churches, she says. **"I'm so blessed to be doing this ministry, and I'm grateful that the Synod thinks out of the box when it comes to new forms of faith community."** Learn more at ministrylink.org/livinggospel



Linda Manson distributes ashes with Welcome Church in Suburban Station.



John Woehr

As a member "having a fair amount of computer savvy and strong inclination for details and precision, I was involved in various aspects of ministry that involved communication" at two different congregations, says John Woehr III of Little Zion Lutheran Church at Indianfield. **"When the Synod developed the Communicators Network it was a blessing to become a part of that larger ministry. It gave me opportunities to both share what I had to offer and to benefit from what fellow communicators had to share."** He also worked on congregation constitutions, with support from Synod Council's Committee on Constitutions. "My experience in dealing with these folks has been a pleasure and a blessing."



Tom and Susan MacPherson with Irete students.

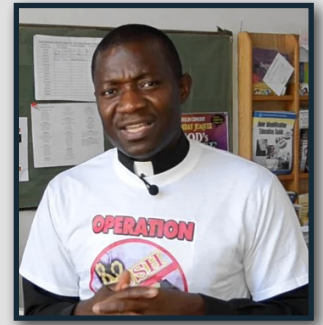
After a 2008 visit to Tanzania with St. John's, Mayfair, Tom and Susan MacPherson were moved to make a difference in our companion synod. "We did not wake up one morning and say, let's be missionaries," Tom recalls. "On the contrary, I thought I was in control. Boy, was I wrong." In 2011, the Synod commissioned the MacPhersons as self-funded missionaries serving at Irete Children's home. Their original two-year term extended to three. Back home, Susan says: "We thank the churches and members of our Synod for the opportunity to serve our sisters and brothers in the North Eastern Diocese of Tanzania. SEPA's impact there was overwhelming...showing God's love to the students and children of the home, as well as the community of Lushoto."



Cheryl Lafferty with youth on a Rhawnhurst Turning Point Service Day Outing

When members of Redemption, Northeast Philadelphia and another local church began dreaming and praying about an activity center for area youth, they found a receptive ear. **"The synod was open to the idea of this grassroots, ecumenical, community mission when we first shared it with them over 7 years ago, and have walked with us since then with encouragement, prayer, and funding to see this vision become reality,"** says Cheryl Lafferty, director of Rhawnhurst Turning Point, which now serves dozens of 6th to 12th graders with homework help, arts programs, service projects and Bible study. "They have also been invaluable in helping us network with other Christians and congregations, as we shared God's Spirit at work and created new and life-giving partnerships with others."

When Moses Suah-Dennis fled the Liberian civil war and organized a church in a refugee camp in Ghana in 1996, little did he know that God had called him to East Lansdowne. After immigrating to Philadelphia and studying at LTSP, he was called to plant a Liberian church connected with Immanuel Lutheran Church.



Pastor Moses Suah-Dennis

"The synod staff and the candidacy committee showed visionary leadership in matching my gifts for ministry with this congregation and community," Pastor Dennis says. "When we started there were just seven of us at prayer meetings. Today 140 worship regularly. Continual support from our director for evangelical mission and exposure to churchwide resources were reassuring and reinforcing." The two communities formed Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church in 2012.

Learn more of their story at vimeo.com/sepasynod/crushebola or vimeo.com/sepasynod/fi12



Pastor Bill Vanderslice

"The Committee of Deans is a collegial ministry that connects congregations, lay leaders and rostered leaders and helps us discover what it means to be a 21st Century church," says Pastor Bill Vanderslice

of St. Paul's, Red Hill and Dean of the Upper Montgomery Conference. Deans, "as deployed staff within the Office of the Bishop, walk along side congregations and leaders to provide guidance and support," he says. **The joy that comes from working with individuals who have a passion for the gospel reminds me how God works through us as the body of Christ to accomplish more together than we can accomplish on our own."**