



WEST BERKS MISSION DISTRICT

Newsletter - December 2020

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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The WBMD Assembly on September 17, 2020 was held via Zoom.

The pandemic has taught us how to be creative and try new ways of being the church together. We gathered for our Assembly via Zoom and not only accomplished our normal reports and business, we even discovered a way to elect a new Dean! With sincere thanks to Rev. Ken Melber and George Freestone for facilitating our process, we elected the Rev. Rachael Dietz as our next Dean. With thanks to Sally Sassaman and the Rev. Katie Lyon for completing their terms of service on our WBMD Council, we elected two new members to the Council. We welcome Rev. Wayne Heintzelman and Rev. Aaron Decker and appreciate their willingness to serve in this way.

The meeting included a brief devotional time and reports from our WBMD treasurer, Jane McClellan Renner; our Associate to the Bishop, Rev. John Richter; and a Director's report from Dawn Baxter. The Assembly also approved the proposed budget for 2021 which remained the same as the 2020 budget. We also heard a report from Pastor Melber regarding the October virtual Synod Assembly and the process that would be used to elect a new Bishop. (This resulted in Rev. Christopher de Forest being elected the new Bishop of the NE Pennsylvania Synod)

Thanks to all the rostered ministers and congregational representatives who participated in our Zoom Assembly!



Thanks to you...
Our Virtual CROP Walk on October 11th was a SUCCESS!!!

Thanks to everyone who participated in any way for this year's virtual CROP Hunger Walk. The planning team was uncertain about how we could organize an event for this year due to the pandemic, but the increased need both locally and globally spurred us on. We knew it was more important than ever to raise money to feed our hungry neighbors both near and far. And you were all **FABULOUS** in helping to find ways to make the Walk happen with 25 congregations participating!

Our Walk has now collected over \$23,000 for Church World Service and Helping Harvest. What a great response!

Check out this link to view our Thank You video!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWQutMlfuM>

Ministry during a pandemic....

Doing ministry this year has been difficult. It seems that everything has changed. People of faith are used to gathering for worship; sharing in joyful events; offering sympathy during times of sorrow with hugs, and meals and "just being there". We can't "be there" for each other right now, and that's hard. Especially for your pastors.

Congregations are not all doing the same things. Some have returned to their buildings to worship but without singing or any personal contact and with limited numbers of folks allowed to come together. Most continue to find other ways to gather as the body of Christ. Some are meeting outside, many are meeting virtually, some reaching out through phone calls and/or mailings. We continue to worship and serve in Jesus' name by whatever means we feel are safe and meaningful for people. We are reminded daily that we are called to love our neighbor every time we put on a mask for the protection of others.

Most of our WBMD events have been cancelled but we are still doing ministry together. Please continue to lift up our pastors, ministry leaders and congregations of the WBMD in prayer. ***Be well... Be safe... Be blessed.***