Words from Don – June 24, 2018

Here’s bringing you all my best wishes during these early days of summer. Whether you are in your first weeks of summer camp, or still in the throes of summer staff orientation, we pray that your summer campers experience the growth in faith that comes with the assurance of knowing that God loves us beyond measure. May these experiences be safe in every way, fun, and full of learning. The ministry for which you are providing leadership – there’s nothing more important! Have a great summer.

The monthly LOM Newsletter is not published during the summer months. During this time, I send, according to no particular schedule, news items that I feel are important for everyone in the LOM network to know about.

REGISTRATION for 2018 LTE and LOM ANNUAL CONFERENCE now LIVE on LOM Website

You can now register for the LTE and the Conference! I suggest you register now so you can be sure to get the accommodations you need.

Registration: https://www.lomnetwork.org/conference/

If you are applying for a scholarship, first-timer grant, or financial assistance of any kind for the LTE or Conference, you can apply online from a link at the same address as above. Make sure you apply for the scholarship and when approved, you will get a code that you will need in order to get the amount of scholarship discounted from the registration fee when you register.

See you in Texas! It’s going to be the best one ever.
ELCA Youth Gathering, June 27-30

LOM will have an official presence at the Youth Gathering! We will have a significant space in the Interactive Learning Center. In order to keep the cost as low as possible and at a scale appropriate for LOM’s very minimal budget, and in order to enhance the impact of our presence, we are fortunate to be collaborating on our space with ELCA Advocacy. ELCA Advocacy works for change in public policy based on Lutheran social teaching and the experience of Lutheran ministries globally and in communities across the United States. It’s a natural ministry partner for LOM to be working with on an initiative like this.

The title of our mutual space will be: “Be the Change - Means of Grace, Scenes of Grace.” We will recreate a “space apart” that allows youth and leaders to connect with the rest of God’s good creation as they experience it at our camps and retreat centers. Through the sounds, scents and scenes of natural beauty, they will be reminded of the restorative spiritual power and blessing of that connection and the many fun and profound ways faith is nurtured in the natural settings of our outdoor ministry sites. Through videos and interactive displays, participants will learn how earthly creation is threatened by climate change. They will be challenged to “be the change” in the face of climate change -- to show their camps some love and to speak up to protect the planet. They will be equipped to connect with policymakers through letters and/or petitions and be invited to take a selfie or record a video with a photo of their favorite camp in front of a specially designed backdrop and share it on social media.

All of us in LOM can be grateful to Heather Lutz, Board member of Caroline Furnace (VA) and chair of the LOM Education Committee, for spearheading the LOM team that worked with a team from ELCA Advocacy to develop this space. The space will be staffed during the Youth Gathering by Heather Lutz, Don Johnson, and summer four staff members “on loan” from Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center (NJ) – Haley Bunting, Deborah Oravbiere, Sam Peebles, and Jonathan Sterling.

Let us know who will be at the Youth Gathering from your camp/retreat center and please ask them to stop by our space in the Interactive Learning Center to get their free gift as an LOM member representative!!!

Prayers –

Prayers of SYMPATHY for Dan Baker, executive director of Mount Carmel Ministries (MN), who’s Dad passed away on May 29.

Prayers of CONGRATULATIONS to Dave Herder (LOM Board member and Board liaison to the LOM Development Committee) and Ellen Herder. Dave and Ellen recently became grandparents for the first time. Neil Andrew was born on May 23rd. Neil’s parents are Andrew Herder and Kalyn Jacobsen-Herder who met at Good Earth Village while on summer staff. Andrew works for Luther Crest during the summer (he is a high school math teacher). More specifically Andrew works at Pilgrim Point (UCC Camp), for which Luther Crest is contracted to provide management services.
AND...a great big thanks from the whole LOM network for the wonderful contribution that Ellen and Dave have made to LOM!!! They have contributed $1,000 to LOM in honor of the arrival of their first grandchild. Thank you so much, Ellen and Dave, for all you continue to do to be part of assuring the continuing strength and vitality of outdoor ministry throughout the whole church. Consequently, we are hoping you are blessed with many more grandchildren in the days ahead!

We Raise Foundation (Formerly Wheatridge Foundation) Seeking Submissions for the Richard E. Herman Leadership Award —

We Raise Foundation is searching for an inspired, young leader to honor with the Richard E. Herman Leadership Award. The award will recognize the commitment and service of one leader (20-35 years of age) interrupting the cycles of poverty, violence, and inequality in the United States, whether through their professional work or as a volunteer. The Leadership Award is intended to lift up the innovative, creative, and committed work of emerging leaders, encouraging and honoring them through a monetary award and support resources. This focus is driven by an understanding that Jesus’ life, ministry, and teachings involved deep engagement with and love for those on the margins of society. The Leadership Award seeks to honor an individual who is responding to Jesus’ prophetic gospel message that calls Christians to follow in His way.

LOM organizations have been invited to submit nominations.
For more information –

This Looks Like it will be a Great Event –

The 2018 Sustainable Pathways event will be held at Calvin Center (Hampton, GA). The event on September 9-12 will focus on two themes: Creation care and diversity. Please check out the program brochure and register today. Sustainable Pathways, a programmatic partnership between the Presbyterian and Methodist counterparts to LOM - PCCCA and United Methodist Camp and Retreat Ministries - is open to camp and retreat leaders of all denominations.


And don’t forget about COMPASS POINTS

October 14-17: Non-Profit Business Management
This certificate class will cover a wide range of topics relevant to the managing a non-profit business including communications, governance, risk management, finances, and a basic business plan. This course will be held at Kavanaugh Conference and Retreat Center (Crestwood, KY) and will be taught by Dan Scheneman of Heartland Presbyterian Center (Parkville, MO) and Lauri SoJourner of Lake Logan
Conference Center (Canton, NC). You can learn more about this class (and register) by going to [www.compasspointsprogram.org](http://www.compasspointsprogram.org).

October 17-20: Articulating Our Mission, Role and Value
This certificate class will focus on the importance of a camp and retreat center’s mission. Course content will include the development, implementation, and articulation of a mission statement. Learners will discover how this statement helps drive and shape all aspect of ministry at a camp and retreat center. This program will be held at [Kavanaugh Conference and Retreat Center](http://www.compasspointsprogram.org) (Crestwood, KY). This course will be taught by LOM’s own Randy Youngquist-Thurow of Agape/Kure Beach Ministries (NC) and Cat Holbert of Lazy W Ranch (CA). You can learn more about this class (and register) by going to [www.compasspointsprogram.org](http://www.compasspointsprogram.org).

Call for Session Proposals from the ACA for the ACA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

LOM has received a specific invitation from the American Camp Association (ACA) for LOM leaders to submit proposals to lead a session at the next ACA National Conference.

Submit a Session Proposal for the ACA National Conference
ACA often hears there aren’t enough sessions for faith-based camp professionals. The 2019 ACA National Conference theme – *Empowering Communities* – makes it a perfect time to connect your work to other faith-based camp professionals and secular camp professionals. The Conference is February 19–22 in Nashville, Tennessee. The ACA conference program review team is accepting educational session proposals through September 14, 2018. [https://www.acacamps.org/conference/call-for-proposals](https://www.acacamps.org/conference/call-for-proposals)

More important news on the next page!!
As LOM continues to make progress in accomplishing the goals of our most recent Strategic Plan, we are now on the verge of expanding the capacity of LOM in these significant ways:

- More deeply cultivating an active network of support throughout the camp and retreat center staffs of LOM.
- Providing opportunities for more outdoor ministry staff to get together more frequently, regionally, and around specific subjects.
- Providing opportunities for more LOM organizations to access cooperative projects such as summer camp staff recruitment, and to expand those that already exist on a regional basis to encompass wider geographical areas.
- Stepping up the sharing of news and ideas among the organizations of LOM.
- In summary, addressing Strategic Plan MRA 1, Goal 1: Engage 100% of our member organizations striving for all members to feel ownership in the health and relevancy of LOM.

With this in mind, we are now ready to organize LOM into 5 “territories” (these are not intended to be strict boundaries; LOM member organizations will be free to self-select which territory to be aligned with) –

- The West – ELCA Regions 1 & 2
- The West Midwest – ELCA Region 3
- The South Central – ELCA Region 4
- The East Midwest – ELCA Regions 5 & 6
The East – ELCA Regions 7, 8, & 9

Each Territory will have a Territory Coordinator. This will be a volunteer position with a significant perk – reimbursement for travel and registration to the LOM Annual Conference. Responsibilities will include:

- Keeping in touch with the staff of LOM organizations in the assigned Territory.
- Providing information and news items about LOM organizations in the assigned Territory to the LOM executive director and LOM webmaster.
- Organizing volunteers in the Territory for planning events and activities that will take place on that Territory, including Territory Gatherings.
- Investigating collaboration opportunities with ministry partners throughout the ELCA, other denominations, and professional associations.
- Staying alert for trends and needs of organizations in that Territory that have the potential of being addressed by LOM nationwide and/or territory events.
- Encouraging organizations and individuals to provide financial support of LOM.

All Territory events and activities will be open to LOM members from throughout all of LOM, and publicized throughout all of LOM. They will be supported by LOM because registration for all activities will be through the LOM website and administered by the LOM Administrator. This will require a slight adjustment in the compensation for the LOM Administrator.

We are pleased to announce that each Territory now has a coordinator in place and ready to begin networking. Welcome and thank you to these pathfinders for the expanding development of LOM to be the platform for all outdoor ministry organizations to work together so that all can be strong and vibrant ministries.

The East Territory: Karen Heser

Karen Heser serves as the Program and Development Assistant at Bear Creek Camp in Eastern Pennsylvania. She wears many different hats from the office to the outdoors and enjoys seeing God’s touch in every facet of outdoor ministry. She has a Bachelor’s Degree in Communication Studies with a
minor in Environmental Studies. She spent her summers during college working at Christikon in Montana where she is from originally.

The West Territory: Kyle Lefler

Kyle Lefler serves as the year-round Program Coordinator at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp in Lakeside, Montana. Her work at FLBC includes overseeing year round retreat programming, hosted retreat ministry, onsite summer camp operations & making sure all the ice cream in the canteen is fit to sell, among other things. Kyle is passionate about working with young people in an outdoor setting and striving to create intentional community spaces where they are unconditionally loved & accepted, empowered & advocated for. Prior to her time at FLBC, Kyle served women experiencing homelessness & addiction through the Lutheran Volunteer Corps in Washington DC & served on the summer staff of Mar Lu Ridge (Maryland) for 5 summers. She believes in the power of early morning lake swims, affirmation notes & slowing down to watch the sunset. You can find Kyle online at instagram.com/toflatheadwithlove.

The West Midwest Territory: Dave Holtz

Dave Holtz, Vikings Fan, Father of 3, Husband of 1...and follower of Jesus Christ, has been a fan of outdoor and youth ministry since he was in second grade! Since December 31st, 1973, baptism day,
Dave has been loved and blessed by God in so many ways. As a second grader with his father, Dave experienced camp for the first time. Beans and Weenies, smores, and campfires caught his attention and opened the doors to Jesus' love and grace. Dave currently serves as Executive Director at the Luther Crest Bible Camp in Alexandria, Minnesota. He loves swimming, playing games, chatting, playing guitar, mowing the lawn and his work takes him all over the country in the name of Jesus.

East Midwest Territory: Jeff Thompson

Jeff Thompson serves as the Program Director at Lutherdale Bible Camp in Elkhorn Wisconsin. Jeff and his wife, Jordan, have a one year old, Emmy, who keeps them on their toes as she learns to walk. They also have a chocolate lab named Barney and like spending their free time boating on the lake. Jeff says, “I’m excited to help LOM as a territory coordinator so that I can give back to an organization that has helped me grow in my outdoor ministry career.”

South Central Territory: Phil Geleske

Phil Geleske lives in Northlake Texas with his wife Anna. Recently, after a 35-year career as a parish pastor and outdoor ministry executive director, Phil retired to begin a new career as an intentional
interim pastor. Phil did his undergraduate study at Valparaiso University and graduated from Trinity Lutheran Seminary. A native of Indiana, Phil served congregations in Illinois and Texas and, prior to retirement, was the Executive Director at Briarwood Retreat Center in Argyle, Texas.

Outdoor ministry played an extremely important role in Phil’s early faith development and Phil remains a strong advocate for the ministry. Phil has served on the Education Committee of LOM, a faculty member of the LTE, and is currently serving as the co-chair for the 2018 LOM Conference that will be held in New Braunfels, TX in November.