What’s Inside

Don’t have time to read the whole issue right now? Here’s a quick summary from our Executive Director Don Johnson:

Future Church. We’ve been hearing lots about this lately throughout the ELCA. At the LOM Zoom Forum on March 26, we had the opportunity to learn and discuss this initiative of ELCA Churchwide with one of its leading architects, Phil Hirsch, director of the Christian and Leadership Home Area of ELCA and the newest ELCA appointment to the LOM Board of Directors.

In the lead article about Future Church in the March issue of Living Lutheran, Phil is quoted as saying, “…people don’t just come to church as a matter of course anymore. Instead of expecting that people are going to come to us, maybe we need to think about going to them, particularly for young adults.” This is just one reason, in the midst of many reasons, why our outdoor ministries are so critically important to stay right smack dab in the middle of the ELCA’s efforts to live into the future as a robust and relevant church. Outdoor ministry organizations have become experts in going to the people with the Gospel, particularly people who are young adults.

Even as outdoor ministries are uniquely positioned to be at the cutting edge of the future ELCA, we know that the future of outdoor ministry in a post-pandemic world will have its own set of challenges. Even as we relish going back to normal, we know in our hearts that future normal will be different from normal of the past. We can “pat ourselves on the back” for the magnificent ways we’ve been creative in adapting to the realities of the world. We’ve learned many new ways of going to the people rather than waiting for the time when they can come to us. When we add what we’ve learned during this past year to the traditions that have formed such a firm foundation from the 100 years before this one, I can’t help but think that “Future Camp” is going to be very exciting indeed.

The future day is getting closer to when I can get a hug from you in person. Until then, I continue to look forward to seeing you virtually around the network!

–Don Johnson
Another Reminder

Have you set your adventure camps, servant trips, and senior travel programs for 2021 and 2022? If so, please submit them for LOM’s Journeys for Youth website. We’d like to list these camps by May. For more information and to submit, go to http://journeys.lomnetwork.org/about

Your Spring LOM Auction Assignment

Think about a cool donation for this year’s LOM Auction in Minneapolis! With the current circumstances of the world, allow this to be a time to think creatively about what that may be. It could be a small item you could bring for the silent auction that showcases your camp OR it could be a bigger item you bring for the live auction. Or, how about a trip or excursion that everyone will be talking about? So, get thinking about who you know and what resources they may have to donate cool, new items to the annual LOM Auction! Questions? Contact Daniel Kirschbaum at daniel@rainbowtrail.org

Trying to Save Money?

LOM members receive special discounts on goods and services from a variety of companies. Taking advantage of just one of these discounts could pay back the money you spend on having your camp listed on the Camp MatchUp App. There are now 33 special discounts. Take a look at the list of discounts here: https://www.lomnetwork.org/partners/vendor-discounts/

Give a Monthly Gift

Please consider including LOM as you plan your charitable gifts for 2020. More and more LOM contributors are finding it helpful to make their gifts automatically. It’s easy to do! Whether you choose to do it this way, or to give a one-time gift, go to: www.lomnetwork.org/donate/. Or send a check payable to Lutheran Outdoor Ministries to: Jon Skogen, LOM Administrator, 1218 W. Addison St., Chicago, IL 60613. Thank you to the following current automatic monthly contributors:

- Jeff Bluhm
- Rod Boriack
- Anthony Briggs
- Penny Christensen
- Jenny Frantz
- Chad & Sarah Hershberger
- Dave & Nicole Holtz
- Meggan Manlove
- Angie & Nathan Pile
- Lindsey Scheid
- Jake & Anna Sorenson
- Darryl Thompson Powell
- Green Lake Lutheran Ministries
- Luther Crest Bible Camp

Save the Date: LOM Conference

Join us for the LOM Annual Conference, which is held each fall. The annual conference is a gathering of LOM members and features continuing education, networking, fellowship, and time for renewal. This year’s annual conference will be held on November 8-12, 2021, at the Great Wolf Lodge in Minneapolis, MN. Gather with outdoor ministry professionals, speakers and leaders to dive into the theme of “Total Inclusion.” This year’s conference is inspired by the ELCA Total Inclusion grant initiative and will focus on opportunities and resources as we work towards a wider and more intentional inclusion of people who have been historically marginalized in the church. The conference schedule allows for plenty of time for discussion with peers in ministry, as well as dynamic worship and fellowship. Learn more about all the amazing projects taking place around LOM, spend time getting to know exhibitors and partners in ministry, bid on amazing items at the annual LOM auction and enjoy Minnesota. Registration is coming soon! somewhere in this item there needs to be the reminder that two representatives to the Conference from most LOM member organizations will be eligible for reimbursement of the full amount of the registration fee (includes lodging, meals, and program) at the double occupancy rate from the Total Inclusion! Grant plus up to $300 reimbursement for airfare.
New Podcast

A new LOM Podcast is available with Drew Benson, staff psychologist at LeaderWise. The focus is mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Taking care for ourselves and those we work with. Practical ideas and tools that will help you at any time and especially during these days of pandemic. This, along with many other LOM Podcasts, is at https://www.lomnetwork.org/podcasts/

New Research

As in previous years, the items in which LOM directors showed significant differences from their colleagues centered on higher faith emphasis and stronger connection to congregations or denominational ministries. This explains the prevalence of integrated ministries in LOM (designated in the report as “Type 4”). There was also a large and statistically significant increase in agreement from previous years with, “Our camp emphasizes summer staff formation as much as camper formation,” indicating a renewed or increased focus on this aspect of ministry. To see the full report of all OMC Camps or the report of just LOM sites, visit https://www.lomnetwork.org/omc-survey-preliminary-report/

Registration Open

The Compass Points certificate program courses that were scheduled for April will now be held on September 12-18. Pilgrim Center in Wisconsin will be the host site for the Articulating Our Mission, Role, and Value course and the Nonprofit Business Management course, which will be offered back-to-back. Only seven rooms remain, so please register as soon as possible. Learn more at www.compasspointsprogram.org

More information at www.lomnetwork.org where you can also check out our featured site, Lutherwald (IN)!
New Business Member: Tic Tac Toe Marketing

Tic Tac Toe Marketing works with camps and conference centers to nail down messaging that has an impact, develop comprehensive and strategic marketing plans, and create materials that get attention. Owner, Casey Fuerst, worked for 20 years as the Director/Marketing & Leadership Development for a camp and conference center. She now enjoys supporting organizations like yours through marketing that has real impact!

During the last week in February, we were saddened to hear that Jeanne Sorensen died. Jeanne, alongside her husband, Connie, served as directors of Ingham-Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camps in Iowa for many years. The family has designated the camps for memorials which can be sent to the camp or online at www.okoboji.org/donate.

Thanksgiving for the report from Chris Andreason, executive director, Pathways (MN): “Spring is here, and Nikki and I welcomed our first born, Meredith Tamara Andreasen, into the world at 7:46am on Saturday, March 6th. We are overwhelmed with joy at being new parents.” Congratulations!

Innovative Program: The Blend

This is one of the programs nominated for LOM’s Innovative Program Award last year.

The Blend is a pilot program at Good Earth Village (MN) to provide a camp experience where blended families (stepfamilies) are guided through common blended family dynamics alongside the camp experience. The purpose of the three days is to facilitate activities and discussion where blended families will connect, learn, and discover practical skills to strengthen their family. The weekend will be filled with facilitated conversations, team building activities, worship, and classic camp activities (canoeing, high ropes, games, hikes, etc.) This program is in partnership with the organization, Guide your Heart. Guide your Heart is a non-profit in Rochester, MN working to foster partnerships, centralize access to impactful resources, and mobilize community support to reduce the emotional, financial, and social toll of divorce on families, friends, neighbors, and communities. We originally planned to implement this program in 2020, but due to COVID-19 we need to postpone it.
In Memory of Bob Quam

A legendary leader and beloved member of the LOM family has passed away - Bob Quam, now retired but who served for many years as the executive director of Christikon (MT). These words from the current executive director of Chirstikon - Mark Donald

"It's with shock and sadness that we share a huge loss in the Christikon community. Bob Quam died Sunday of natural causes. He was 74.

Bob served as Pastor/Director of Christikon for 39 years and had a powerful impact on the lives and faith of countless staff and guests over that time. His presence and influence on Lutheran Outdoor Ministry was deep and lasting, and helped us focus and understand the importance of our place in the larger Church. He will be greatly missed.

In light of the times, a memorial service will be planned at a later date, and we'll share more information as it becomes available. We ask your prayers for his family and the Christikon family as we mourn his loss and celebrate his life. May God bless his memory."

All of LOM prays with support and sympathy for the Christikon community. May God bless and comfort all those who mourn.

Educational Opportunity

An extraordinary educational opportunity is being offered by Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) and coordinated by our awesome partner in ministry, Phoebe Morad, the executive director of Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC).

NEW THIS FALL: Certificate in Climate Justice and Faith

This certificate offers a cohort-based, online trans-continental curriculum which empowers participants to cultivate moral, spiritual, and practical power for leadership in the work of climate justice in communities of faith and in collaboration with others.

Topics covered include theology, ethics, and spirituality related to climate justice; climate change knowledge; and social change practices that connect ecological well-being with racial, economic, and gender justice.

Lay and rostered leaders throughout the Lutheran World Federation communion and from other faith traditions are invited to complete an interest form if you are curious to know more about this inaugural, non-degree learning program scheduled for September 2021 - May 2022. Long-term collaboration and networking are expected to endure well beyond certificate completion date.

For detailed information and updates visit: https://www.plts.edu/.../certificate-in-climate-justice.
LOM Leadership Training Event

Professional Development for Outdoor Ministry Leaders

IDENTITY & VISION

NOVEMBER 4-8, 2021

LUTHER PARK - CHETEK, WI

The purpose of the Leadership Training Event (LTE) is to provide an entry-level educational opportunity for outdoor ministry professionals. The LTE helps to develop well-trained, committed, and diverse outdoor ministry professionals; enhance the quality of outdoor ministry programs; support professionals through formal and informal learning; and assist in the retention of professionals in the network.

$550.00 per person (double/triple occupancy)
A limited number of scholarships are available
Registration opens in May
For more information visit us online: www.lomnetwork.org/lte/
The Impact of LOM

Brittney Swanson will be celebrating her third anniversary of serving as the executive director of Lutheran Lakeside Camp (IA) on May 15. Recently, the Board of Directors of Lutheran Lakeside had a Board Development Retreat. They used the Board Leadership Video Series by Keith Johnson. Marv Nysetvold, executive director of neighboring Camp Shetek (MN), served as the discussion facilitator. Don Johnson consulted with the Board on the format for the retreat. The following is a reflection from Brittney, now, a few months after the retreat took place.

Lakeside's board had a retreat using LOM's video collection of board governance. The board is very new and eager but lacked direction until this retreat. The videos were so helpful, practical, applicable, and digestible. With the help of our facilitator, Marv Nysetvold, the board left with 7 tasks to work on. 3 months later, we had our next board meeting. I was so excited to hear that every task had been worked on, the board was functioning in a whole new way, and was taking leadership and ownership of themselves. As the director I was used to setting agendas, running the meeting, and talking almost the whole time. This board meeting was different! I did almost no talking, every board member was present and engaged. They all had updates, reports, and were excited about the work they were doing. Now that the board has been educated on what a board does and how it is supposed to function, they have direction and purpose. With this new and improved board Lakeside's ministry is going to thrive! In just a few short months, we have started a new development plan, assembling committees, engaging volunteers, scheduled a year's worth of meetings, strategized future board members, created job descriptions, board orientation procedures, and lots more. I am so excited to see what God will do with this ministry and I know the sky's the limit with this strong foundation. I am so grateful to LOM, Don Johnson, Keith Johnson, and Marv Nysetvold for helping make the board retreat possible.

Every year we have countless volunteers, donors, churches, families, organizations, and individuals who are incredible assets to Lakeside and make our ministry possible. Our top ministry partners are those who went above and beyond and really made our ministry possible. This year LOM was selected as a top ministry partner for being a vital resource during the pandemic, assisting with staff and board, offering educational opportunities, scholarships, and more. When the pandemic started, LOM was quick to respond taking action and offering resources. There were regular zoom calls, faith formation, guidelines, policies, much needed community and regular updates when things changed. Without these resources we would not have been able to prepare, adapt, and pivot our ministry the way we did. LOM assisted in setting up a mentor program for our staff and offered the educational resources needed for our board retreat. With the financial assistance of LOM our staff were able to attend compass points and will be able to attend the LOM conference. Every time we as a ministry or we as individual camp professionals need a resource, advice, help, guidance, education, feedback, or a shoulder, Don Johnson and the LOM are there to assist and they truly make our ministry better and more functional. We are grateful for their partnership and all they offer to Lakeside.
The Power of Prayer

As we continue our look at leadership through the lens of the book of Nehemiah, we come to Chapter 9 which is all about prayer. This is the longest prayer in the Bible. During this time period, it is a real time of revival and the people in our story were praying. They would spend about a quarter of the day reading God’s Word and a quarter of the day in worship. After each of their activities, they would pray.

Praying persistently, like our followers in Nehemiah, is a characteristic of a good Christian leader. Jesus modeled this for him as he often would pray many times through the night. Jesus reminded us that whatever we ask for in prayer, we will receive.

Prayer for a leader is two-fold, I think. First, as Jesus told us, we should make our requests known. Praying for what troubles us and what we seek guidance for is important. But I also think it is important to pray in thankfulness to God. Celebrating how we see God’s hand in our work is an important part of a leaders’ prayer life.

Having trouble on what to pray about? Look to Nehemiah for help. In verse four of this chapter, we see them praying about seven things:
1. God, the eternal authority.
2. God, the creator
3. God, who sustains and keeps us
4. God, the Sovereign God.
5. God, who gives us gifts
6. God, who is faithful.
7. God, who gives grace.

Commit to regular prayer time as a leader. Pray for your joys and concerns. You may just find that it improves your work life and strengthens your relationship to God.

–Chad Hershberger