

Words from Don

This is the last newsletter before we give our excellent editor, Chad, a break so he can concentrate on his real job serving as the executive director of Camp Mount Luther (PA). This gives me pause to acknowledge how grateful we are for Chad's outstanding work month after month to provide us with an attractive, thorough, organized collection of the news and information that's important for all of us in LOM. Thank you, Chad!

We are so fortunate to have Chad and the other members of the contract services team whose work for LOM is so often in the background. Their work is important for all of us in LOM to stay on track with our mission of encouraging, education, equipping and empowering bold and faithful outdoor ministry leaders for service in the church and the world. Jon Skogen, our administrator, who is persistent and meticulous in keeping our ever-changing databases up to date. We would be lost without our LOM events coordinator, Randy Youngquist-Thurow, sharing from his wealth of experience in letting no detail of LOM events go untended. Jenny Frantz, our conference coordinator, has sure had her hands full with unprecedented progression from the Great Gathering to the cancelled 2020 conference (except for the myriad of virtual events!) to planning for the 2021 conference when nothing during these times is for sure. Andrea Lee, our curriculum development manager, has been so accommodating as we have made adjustments that the pandemic has mandated. And a big shout of thanks to our LOM bookkeeper, Kris Hinkeldey, for making sure all the financial details are right at her fingertips when needed for PPP applications and the like. Thank you, one and all!

As impressed and grateful as I am with these unsung heroes who have kept LOM moving in good directions during this very challenging time, what's most impressive to me, however, is the resilience, adaptability, creativity and faithfulness of all of you who are providing extraordinary leadership for the outdoor ministry organizations of LOM. And now the summer is just about upon us! Whether you've decided to once again refrain from your normal summer programming, or to do alternative programming during his summer, or charging full speed ahead into the excitement of having real campers at your real site with real summer staff, we all know enough about each other to know that your decisions are grounded in health and safety and the bold proclamation of the Gospel.

And just because we won't be sending you this great newsletter during the summer months doesn't mean it's the last you've heard from me! We'll be keeping you updated from time to time with occasional email blasts.

Until you hear from me next - have a great summer!

-Don Johnson

What's Inside



Research Update



Environmental Map



New Territory Map

The Monthly Monday Mobilization ZOOM

Join LOM Executive Director Don Johnson and specially invited guest co-hosts for this monthly time of sharing, inspiration, proclaiming of what we won't miss about our ministry during the preceding month and what gets us excited about the new month ahead of us.

These times of collaboration and collegiality will come to life on the Monday of the first full week of each month in the remainder of 2021, 11:30 AM Eastern, 10:30 AM Central, 9:30 AM Mountain, 8:30 AM Pacific. Here's the actual dates: June 7, July 5, August 2, September 13 (the Monday of the first full week is Labor Day), October 4, November 1, December 6.

Plans are not yet finalized, but there might be a BIG Monday Mobilization into 2022 on January 3, 2022. Stay tuned!!!

New Podcast

A new podcast is now available - <https://www.lomnetwork.org/podcasts/>. This one is a conversation with Kathryn Schaefer, program director at Cross Roads (NJ) and Jena Vander Broek, program director at Luther Crest (MN). It's about a creative new program that both of their camps are collaborating on - the Bold Transformational Faith initiative. This program was the winner of the 2020 LOM Innovative Program Award. It's a fascinating conversation!



Calling All Camps!!!

Do you have an item to donate for this year's LOM auction? Start thinking and planning! Big or small, we'll auction them all! 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? Let's break last year's auction total and support an organization we love! Camps are encouraged to give weeks of camp that your camper families can bid on, too.

Remember, we'll have an online catalog of items to see ahead of time, so you have plenty of time to apply for a line of credit for those big-ticket items! Or you can begin crowdfunding with all your friends to take that adventure trip you've always wanted. Plan ahead, open your wallets, and always remember, "It's not about getting a good deal; it's about supporting a great cause!" To correspond with the auction committee, e-mail auktion@lomnetwork.org.

And the Research Shows...

Jake Sorenson at Sacred Playgrounds (Jake is a member of the LOM Board of Directors) has been reporting on some significant research on the degree to which pastors value camp. You can check out the data and Jake's analysis at - <https://sacredplaygrounds.com/2021/03/do-pastors-value-camp/>



Build A Hands-Free Water Dispenser: Jack Kallio, the Maintenance Manager at Lake Lucerne Camp & Retreat Center (WI) figured out how to inexpensively customize regular water coolers into fancy hands-free water stations using hardware store parts. Then, because they are thoughtful and generous members of our OMC community, the Lake Lucerne team created a video, spec sheet, and instructions so that you, too, could build these: <https://www.episcopalccc.org/news-resources/2021/4/11/build-a-hands-free-water-dispenser>



Innovative Program: Voyageurs

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

The Voyageur program at Metigoshe Ministries (ND) welcomes teenage and adult campers with developmental and/or physical disabilities to experience an Adventure Anchored in Christ. Each camp experience is made accessible to all including waterfront adventures, games, worship, and Bible study. The Voyageur Partner program is for high school youth. They have the opportunity to experience camp by assisting counselors during a Voyageur week.

In 2020, they were able to have a Virtual Voyageur Week with over fifty campers participating in different virtual sessions and campfire recordings. The Voyageurs had a chance to interact with their peers and sing some of their favorite camp songs. To help make this virtual experience happen, they reinvented an existing program for high school campers called Voyageur Partners. Each year these campers sign up for a week of camp where they experience camp by working

alongside people with physical and intellectual disabilities and form friendships and bonds that are indescribable. With lacking the extraordinary experience of this program and our Voyageur campers not on-site, they knew the Voyageur Partners still needed to have that connection in some way. Voyageur Partner campers helped plan and lead bible study, games, silly coffee hours, campfires and amazing garden sessions for our Voyageur's to experience online. The ability to still share God's love with campers not present with us this summer was incredible. The Voyageur Partners took the challenge of connecting virtually and made incredible projects happen. From giving tours of the lake to leading Bible study for the Voyageur to just enjoying time together over Zoom the Voyageur Partners went out of their way to make sure Voyageurs still felt included in camp programming during a crazy summer. Nothing about



Sep 12-18, 2021:
[Compass Points](#)

Nov 5-8, 2021:
[Leadership Training Event](#)

Nov 8-12, 2021:
[LOM Conference](#)

More information at www.lomnetwork.org where you can also check out our featured site, Lutherhaven (ID)!

this experience was the same for Voyageurs or Voyageur Partners, but they made the best of it. They continued to form relationships, gather in community and grow in faith all while adapting to this summer and finding new ways to be together and creating intentional experiences for campers at Camp Metigoshe.

If Coronavirus continues to be a threat for the summer of 2021, the camp hopes to continue to find ways to be innovative with our programming to protect campers' safety and to create an unforgettable experience for them.

Get on the Environmental Map

Our friends at Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) are spearheading a great new initiative. It's the map of Caring for Creation Ministries. It's a map on which all of our LOM camps and retreat centers are going to want to be found. LRC Director Phoebe Morad is extending this invitation to all the outdoor ministry organizations of LOM – "Does your camp highlight and educate environmental awareness and care for creation in special ways? Send a link of a story of your particular work in energy sustainability, natural resource stewardship, or eco-justice ministries to [Phoebe Morad, Director of Lutherans Restoring Creation](#) to be added to the growing [Map of Caring for Creation Ministries \(click\)](#). We know we are missing *many* examples and want to ensure we leverage assets and *Let Our Lights Shine!*



A Care for Creation Success Story

On Earth Day, April 22, this conservation easement announcement was made on behalf of Mar-Lu-Ridge (MD) by their executive director, Sarah Lefler. "It was five years of hard work", said Sarah, "but we are so pleased."

In 2016, Mar-Lu-Ridge was contacted by Shawn Clotworthy of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The state DNR expressed an interest in securing the property of Mar-Lu-Ridge as part of their Project Open Space program. Our land lies within the Catoctin Mountain chain and was therefore desirable as the state worked to secure this wildlife corridor. A great variety of rock and trees, wildlife and flora was found within our property, and the DNR asked to proceed in securing the easement. The process took several years, and recently, we executed a contract with the state of Maryland DNR to place all 455 acres of property stewarded and operated by Mar-Lu-Ridge, in partnership with the Delaware Maryland and Metropolitan DC synods, into a Conservation Easement with the state of Maryland.

The decision to enter into this agreement is in keeping with our

mission statement, which reads in part, "...and encourages care of God's creation." We feel that preserving the natural state of our forests, streams, ponds and flora will provide habitat for wildlife, and an outdoor sanctuary for our community for generations to come. The Board of Directors voted unanimously to enter into the agreement on January 31, 2020.

We acknowledge the Piscataway tribes, who utilized this land for hunting and shelter, and the many families who utilized the forests as woodlots and the open space as farmland prior to the sale of the land to the Maryland Synod in 1959. We remain committed to stewarding the property and its resources in keeping with the mission of Mar-Lu-Ridge, and with the details set forth in our easement.

It is our great joy to share this news with all of you. We thank the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for their diligent work on our behalf. We especially acknowledge and thank Cheryl Wise, Program Administrator of Project Open Space Land Acquisition and Planning, and Shawn Clotworthy, Program Manager of Project Open Space, who championed our case from the very beginning. We thank the past and present members of the Board of Directors for their prayerful support and interest, especially our Bishops, Rev. Richard Graham, Rev. Leila Ortiz, and Rev. Bill Gohl.

Together, we have secured the future of Mar-Lu-Ridge for generations to come.

New Business Member: CIC Health

CIC Health, one of the largest COVID-19 testing services providers in the country, offers high-quality testing at the lowest possible cost for safer schools, daily life, and summer camp experiences. We have facilitated more than 1.5 million tests, largely in youth settings. Our flexible camp testing solutions can be tailored for pre-arrival, arrival, or ongoing surveillance testing — whatever your camp needs. Our pooled testing solution, modeled on the success of our work with over 600 schools, reduces costs to as low as \$6.00 per camper or staff member and does not require us to collect and store private health information. What you can expect from our testing solutions for camps:

- Program setup and guidance
- Supplies procurement
- Training for program administration; sample observation, collection and transport; and more
- Quick, easy, and comfortable sample collection (shallow nasal swab)
- Connection to third party resources for on-site assistance

We are dedicated to helping your camp open safely and efficiently — and stay open — offering ongoing support throughout our partnership. Please reach out to us at camp-testing@cic-health.com with any questions.



LOM Worship Being Planned

We will soon be in the process of assembling a video for use as a worship experience. It is intended for use on the 2nd Sunday after Pentecost, June 6.

The video will be a worship gathering led by outdoor ministry leaders from throughout the LOM network and will emphasize our gratitude for the beauty and bounty of God's creation. It will be a marvelous opportunity for us to celebrate the emergence of outdoor ministry from grip of the pandemic and reflect the strength and resilience we find from the support we receive from each other.

The video will be ideal for use in your own outdoor ministry setting as part of staff orientation or one of your earliest sessions of summer camp. More importantly, it's something you can offer to the congregations in your

constituency, to lift up the excitement of the beginning of your summer camp ministry and to give the virtual worship leaders in those congregations a bit of a break at the beginning of the summer.

The liturgist for the worship will be Pastor Darryl Thompson Powell, president of the LOM Board of Directors. Preaching will be Rev. Jen Kindsvatter, director of programs, Lutherhill (TX).

We are looking for still pictures to use for the background during many of the songs, readings, and prayers. Beautiful pictures of the natural world (every one of our camps is in a beautiful setting!!!) and kids and people of all ages having fun, experiencing Christian community, and growing in faith. Please send them, by May 10, to: director@lomnetwork.org.

We are aiming for the worship video to be available for you to download and send to congregations by May 28.

From one of our LOM Ministry Partners



LDA Deaconesses and Deacons: Serving Across the Street and Around the World

Explore. Become. Serve. It's the invitation the Lutheran Diaconal Association (LDA) extends to women and men of all ages, from any Lutheran church body, who long to follow Christ's call to serve in a deeper way.

Since the LDA's founding in 1919, more than 780 deaconesses and deacons have accepted that invitation. "As the LDA begins its second century of service, 26 diaconal students are in formation, and more than 450 consecrated deaconesses and deacons serve God's people," said Deaconess Lisa S. Polito, the LDA's Executive Director.

What is a deaconess or deacon? A deaconess or deacon is someone one who serves. "Sometimes deaconesses and deacons do actual foot-washing like Jesus did; but more widely, they serve Christ by walking with those the world easily forgets—the marginalized, the poor, the powerless, the sick," explained Deaconess Valerie Webdell, LDA Co-Director of Education and Formation.



LDA deaconess students share a laugh during conversation at student seminar.



Two deacon students participate in worship, an integral part of the LDA's student seminar experience.

How is being a deaconess or deacon different than serving at camp or church? All people who reach out to others with care and compassion in a hurting world are practicing diaconal service. Some people desire to serve as a professional in ministry and enter a more formal training and formation process to become deaconesses and deacons.

"Our students are formed in their identity as 'one who serves,'—all in the context of intentional Christian Community," explained Deaconess Valerie. "Our Communities provide mentoring, support, prayer, and encouragement to students as they go through the program." The LDA's Education and Formation program combines academic requirements, hands-on ministry experiences, student seminars, and spiritual development.

What do deaconesses and deacons do? Deaconesses and deacons in the LDA serve wherever and however God calls them. They are environmental engineers, camp directors and counselors, triathletes, nurses, attorneys, social workers, educators, dancers, chaplains, parents, and grandparents. They serve in churches, nonprofit organizations, hospitals, schools and universities, and government. Formation in the LDA equips them to use their gifts and training in diaconal service, and the diaconal community supports and sustains them on their journey.

To learn more: Contact Deaconess Valerie at Valerie.webdell@valpo.edu or 219-464-6925. Visit the LDA's website at <https://thelda.org/>

Territory News

We've made a slight adjustment in the alignment of the LOM Territories. For the past few years there have been five territories. The South-Central Territory had only a handful of camps and we've now decided to combine those camps into the other territories, leaving us with four territories.

It's important to note that individual organizations can self-select the territory in which they prefer to be aligned in lieu of the geographical alignment. All territory activities are open to the participation of all LOM organizations regardless of the geographical alignment. The territory coordinators are listed below.



EAST: Sarah Lefler, Mar-Lu-Ridge (MD)



WEST-MIDWEST: Dave Holtz, Luther Crest (MN)



WEST: Margie Fiedler, Flathead (MT)



EAST-MIDWEST: Jeff Bluhm, Lutherdale (WI)



Nominations Requested for Annual LOM Awards

It's not too early to submit nominations for the annual awards that will be presented at the 2021 LOM Annual Conference, November 8-12, Bloomington, MN. The deadline for making nominations is October 1.

The Manlove-Howells

Leadership Award: The Manlove-Howells Leadership Award is given each year to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in Christ's Church through the field of outdoor ministry. It recognizes those who have provided visionary insight, inspired collaborative efforts among colleagues, and offered valuable guidance to current and future outdoor ministry leaders. Nominations are reviewed by the Recognitions Committee. A selection will be made, and the 2021 Manlove-Howells Leadership Award will be awarded at the annual LOM Conference. Applications must be submitted by October 1.

[Click here to submit the Nomination online](#)

The LOM Diversity Grant:

LOM will award a \$2,000 grant for an outdoor ministry organization to initiate a **new** project or a **new** element of an existing program that promotes diversity within the ministry and community. Applications will be reviewed by the Recognitions Committee. A selection will be made, and the grant will be

awarded at the LOM Conference each November. Each year, the grantee from the previous year will give a brief presentation about their project at the LOM conference. All materials, including the application and all required emailed attachments, must be completed and returned by October 1, to be eligible for the grant. The grant will be presented at the Annual LOM Conference in November.

[Click here to submit your nomination online:](#)

The LOM Innovative Program

Award: LOM will present the Innovative Program Award to an LOM member organization that has highlighted an innovative program in their organization. The \$1,000 award will be for a program that could include but is not limited to: a new program, serving your population in a new way, reaching out to new populations in your area, or something that benefits the environment or teaches environmental issues, etc. All materials, including the google form, application cover sheet, and all required emailed attachments, must be completed, and returned by October 1st to be eligible for the award. The award will be presented at annual LOM Conference.

[Click here to submit your application online](#)



Jerry Manlove and Margie Fiedler have both received the Manlove-Howells Leadership Award



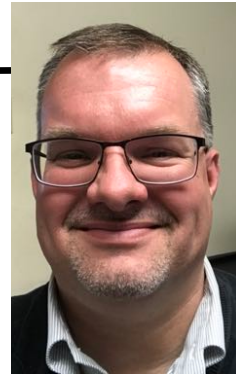
LOM News will not be published during the summer camping season. The next edition will be published in early September. We will be keeping you updated through e-mail blasts throughout the summer season and may have special communications as events warrant.

Have a Great Summer Season!

From the LOM Board and Staff

In Conclusion

*Parting Thoughts
from the LOM Webmaster/Communications Coordinator*



Ending Well

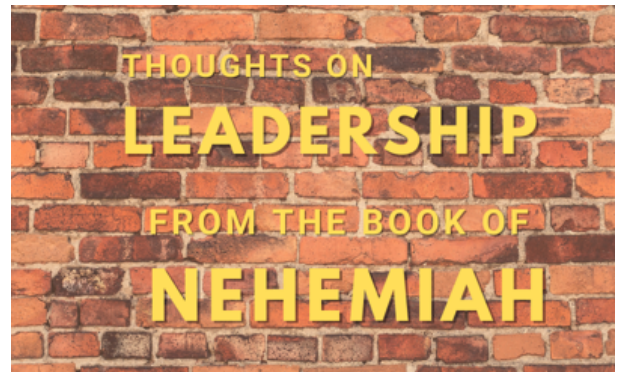
This month, we'll wrap up our series on leadership, looking at the book of Nehemiah. And so, it's probably appropriate to talk about endings in this column.

At the end of this book of the Bible, we see the negative side of things. Problems arise. But the leaders did not allow the problems to get to them. They pressed on for God's interests.

This reminded me of a leadership lesson I learned from Rev. Michael Cooper-White. Michael served as president of Gettysburg Seminary when I was on the board there. He's written a few books on leadership and the one I like best is "On a Wing and a Prayer." In that book, Michael, an amateur pilot, compares leadership to flying a plane.

He relates that the hardest part of flying a plane is the landing. Once you get the plane airborne, it cruises along. But trying to get it to stop is going against what the plane wants to do. So, the last part of flying, the landing, is the toughest.

Michael reminds us that as leaders, we need to land well. When our time with an organization is ending, we need to not "phone it in" but rather have a good landing. I remember in the book being told that a pilot can have hundreds of thousands of good landings. But, if they crash land even once, that will be what they are remembered for.



In Nehemiah, our main character overcomes a lot. And he continues to press on and serve the mission of God, even when their project is coming to a close and people seem to be less interested in the work. As leaders, let us have good landings, and stay on task until the end.

-Chad Hershberger



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