***LAMPa Report to Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly***

***In response to God’s love in Jesus Christ, we advocate for wise and just public policies in Pennsylvania that promote the common good.*** Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania is a shared ministry of seven Pennsylvania synods, ELCA Service and Justice, and Pennsylvania ELCA agencies and institutions. Through LAMPa, Lutherans called to be part of God’s healing and reconciling mission in the world are supported to voice their faith convictions in the public square with and on behalf of our most vulnerable neighbors and the world we share, while seeking to create a more just Commonwealth.

Since last year’s assembly, LAMPa celebrated 43 years of advocacy ministry that supported and deepened your congregational efforts to address hunger, poverty, health care, civic engagement, housing and homelessness, and care for creation. Our decades of advocacy on these issues have enabled us to lift up the needs of your ministries and communities to secure emergency food, shelter and access to health care as the nation emerged from pandemic. In the midst of a nationwide housing crisis, your advocacy through LAMPa lifted the cap on funding for the state housing trust fund, which Lutherans helped create more than a decade ago, and won passage of a Whole-Home Repairs law, a first-of-its kind program that will help maintain and improve its aging housing stock, increase energy efficiency, and help keep Pennsylvanians in their homes -- particularly important to preserving generational wealth for communities that have experienced racial discrimination in housing and lending. Your care for creation was turned into bipartisan support for investments in environmental conservation and protection for waterways (and the drinking water we draw from them) at a time when one third of the state’s streams have been deemed impaired.

In its work of equipping disciples, growing leaders and supporting vital congregations, LAMPa assisted with the Homeless Remembrance Blanket Project on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol, soliciting and delivering invitations from ELCA-affiliated ministries around the country (including this synod) to members of Congress to visit and learn from their work with neighbors experiencing homelessness. LAMPa continues to educate faithful advocates through our website, e-news and other resources, as well as teaching. LAMPa supports congregations in adding advocacy to their service on God’s work. Our hands. Sunday, and would welcome the opportunity to help NWPA Synod ministries take their service another step toward justice by adding advocacy. LAMPa staff continues to serve in consultation to the ELCA task force developing the social statement on Faith and Civic Life, and urges all to devote time to the newly released study and to offer feedback.

To receive action alerts that allow you to act from your faith on developing policy, or to learn how LAMPa can help your congregation deepen its ministry of service and accompaniment with public witness, send a note to LAMPa@LutheranAdvocacyPA.org.

We give thanks to God for you and for the support of our Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod Policy Council representatives, Dennis Groce and the Rev. Brenda Martin.

With deep gratitude for all the ways in which you support LAMPa’s ministry,

Tracey DePasquale

LAMPa Director