

April 22, 2021

## Mar-Lu-Ridge Conservation Easement

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” Psalm 24:1

We have some very exciting news to share!

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 Catoclin 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.  
Thanks be to God!

Sarah Lefler  
Executive Director