

UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

Published Monthly by the

UNITED CHURCHES OF LYCOMING COUNTY

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ARE YOU ABLE TO VOLUNTEER FOR 2020*

W are getting ready to fill the ministries schedule for 2020. Both clergy & laity

are needed. **Worship:**

Nursing Home

and Assisted Living Centers:

Sundays at 2: Manor Care South
Valley View AristaCare

Sundays at 2:15: Manor Care North (2 services)
Rose View Center

Sundays at 3: Williamsport Home (2 services)

Sundays - The Hillside (3:10), The Meadows(3)
Leighton Place (3), Elmcroft (3)

Thursdays at 11 - Presbyterian Home

Prison Worship Services (Sundays)

Lycoming County Jail - 1:45 and 3:15 p.m.

Pre-Release Center for Men/for Women - 3:30 p.m.

Daily Telephone Devotion Line - Record from your home.

Volunteers have responsibility for one week at a time.

Footsteps to Follow Editorials: Clergy and people in professional parachurch leadership are invited to sign up for a week's turn at these newspaper editorials in the Saturday morning Sun Gazette.

Please contact me today at director@uclc.org or 570-322-1110 to let me know what parts of these ministries you are able to partner with us to provide to our community. We need you!



CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING: Several Ministeriums are hosting ecumenical Thanksgiving services this year. All are welcome to attend.



- ▶ The Muncy Ministerium Service will be Sunday, Nov. 24 at 7 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 602 South Market Street, Muncy, in the Living Water Cafe.
- ▶ Hepburn Lycoming Ministerium Service will be held Sunday, Nov. 24 at Heshbon Park United Methodist Church, 2898 Heshbon Road, Williamsport at 6 pm.
- ▶ The Nippenose Valley Community Service will be at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 5973 Jacks Hollow Road, Bastress on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m. Preacher: Pastor David Havrilla of Oval United Methodist Church.
- ▶ South Williamsport Ministerium will be at Nesbit United Methodist Church, 155 West Village Drive, South Williamsport, on Sunday, November 24 at 7 p.m.

You are welcome to attend!

FOOD PANTRY *

Mona Rudio, Coordinator 570-322-1657

Email - foodpantry@uclc.org

Thanksgiving is a time for love and fellowship. During this harvesting we gather what we can to aid in survival. As Christians we are to give accordingly to those around us in need.

Our Pantry is designed to help those in need not just by handing out a bag of food, but by walking with and talking with each person while they go through and pick out what food they need and want. One individual had just gone through cancer again and with our thoughts, prayers, and personal connection she had said we helped her feel warmth, comfort, and strength to get through it, when she just wanted to stay in bed and do



nothing. The days she came into the pantry we always asked how she was feeling, what she felt she could eat, and reminded her that Our Lord is with her leading her along the way! She is now in remission and doing well, PRAISE be to GOD!! Communication and prayer leads in the correct direction the Heavenly Father wants us to go!

PLEASE continue helping us help others in our community, not just by handing them a few days of food, but hope to continue their journey. Currently we need donations of:

<i>Cereal</i>	<i>Snacks</i>	<i>Canned Beans</i>
<i>Soups</i>	<i>Canned Meats</i>	<i>Sauces and Gravy</i>
<i>Stuffing</i>	<i>Dried Potatoes</i>	<i>Canned Vegetables</i>
<i>Crackers</i>	<i>Ramen Noodles</i>	<i>Egg Noodles</i>
<i>Flour</i>	<i>Healthy Snacks</i>	<i>Condiments</i>
<i>Cake Mixes</i>	<i>Canned Fruit</i>	<i>Sugar/Sweeteners</i>
<i>Coffee/Tea</i>	<i>Hot Chocolate</i>	<i>Popcorn</i>
<i>Poptarts</i>	<i>Hamburg/Chicken Helper</i>	

Your support and thoughtfulness in picking up extras for others when you are shopping for yourself and your family is greatly appreciated! We always have you in our prayers and praise to the Almighty above! Happy holidays to all!!

We are located at the rear of 320 Park Ave in Williamsport and the hours are: *(Please note our time change!)*

Monday: 9-11 for donations

Tuesday & Thursday: 10:15- 2:00 for Client distribution

CROP WALK INITIAL REPORT

The initial report from our CROP Walk Treasurers is that our three county walks have collected \$8,641,06 and they are still counting. These funds will help fight hunger & poverty around the world and respond to disaster. Remaining CROP envelopes should be brought to United Churches office as soon as possible.

75% of the funds are distributed throughout the country and the world to make a difference in the lives of people like Lucia Martins and her family who live in rural Timor-Leste. They are farmers like most of their neighbors. When the dry season

began in May, just like dozens of dry seasons before, the family has had a hard time making ends meet. During the dry season, families don't plant seeds or seedlings because there is no water to nurture them to harvest. Food shortages between May and December affect everyone. The ones who are at the highest risk of nutritional losses and sickness are young children.

CWS staff are teaming up with mothers and government health workers to change this. One way is to help farmers like Lucia learn to plant wisely when the rainy season begins each December. Lucia participated in hands-on training helps practice making raised garden beds, natural fertilizer and compost. "We learned that if we plant close to our house, and use drip watering and homemade treatments, we can continue planting through dry season. Then we can eat more and better food year-round, which is very good for my children."



With this new information, Lucia and her family will be more food secure in the future, but there are still so many communities and families in Timor-Leste that need this training Your CROP Hunger Walk will help make that happen. So, thank you for all your work to help make this a possibility!

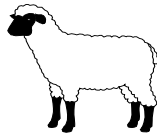
25% of your CROP Walk funds is sent back to us and distributed to area programs helping the hungry. This year they are being split between the Son Light House Food Pantry, Muncy, the New Love Center, Jersey Shore, the American Rescue Workers, Williamsport, and the United Churches Food Pantry, Williamsport. Son Light House (Muncy area) serves 917 individuals monthly. United Churches Food Pantry served 364 individuals monthly. The New Love Center in Jersey Shore served 977 individuals the month of Oct in Lycoming and Clinton counties. American Rescue Workers operates a food pantry for people in the Williamsport area and also provides meals for people in shelters and in need in the area.

Immigration: Myth vs. Fact is a presentation by Shoba Wadhia and students from Penn State's Center for Immigrants' Rights Clinic to be presented this Sunday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. at City Alliance Church, 420 Elmira Street, Wmspt. Discussion opportunities and refreshments will be available. It is sponsored by Penn State Law, Center for Immigrant's Rights Clinic, Thrive, City Alliance Church, and the Religion and Race Committee of the UMC.

Save the Date: First United Methodist Church in Muncy will hold its annual Women's Retreat on Saturday, May 2, 2020, from 9:00 until 3:00 in the church's Living Water Café. It will be led by The Rev. Susan Halverstadt, and her theme is "Sisterhood: How and Why to Create a Community of Faith." Childcare will be available upon request. Registration will begin in April. At that time, those interested may call the church office at 570-546-8030 or go to www.firstumcmuncy.org.

SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS*

J. Morris Smith, Th.D.,

570-322-6538, shepherd@uclc.org**CHRONIC ILLNESSES OF THE POOR**

The population that is less likely to be able to afford adequate health insurance or care leave themselves vulnerable to life-long battles with chronic diseases. Neglect of childhood care morphs into adult chronic diseases. For instance, among the generationally poor, poor nutrition and heredity make diabetes, heart failure, lung diseases, and alcoholism major illnesses among the poor. Bone development during pregnancy and childhood leave marks for debilitating pain as age becomes a factor. Work related chronic conditions can be traced to exposure to heavy lifting and long hours of labor. If the child gets addicted to tobacco at an early age, smoking and chewing have a long time to develop cancer and regressive issues.

The above paragraph is just the tip of the iceberg that is floating in the ocean of poverty. Shepherd of the Streets makes the effort to curtail the need for financial assistance to the underserved, underinsured, disfranchised, and disabled by helping with the cost of medicines, travel to medical facilities, and medical equipment that serves not only to help in the cure, but makes for education that otherwise leaves the ill in fear, confusion, and despondency.

Shepherd of the Streets seeks to alleviate the fear, inform the confused, and bring light to the despondent. In order to devote our resources to medical assistance, we have chosen to serve the poor in this field by financial assistance and clinical counseling. The Gospels tell of twenty-six healings by Jesus, of every kind of persons: fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, servants and masters, mentally ill and possessed, paralytics and lepers, deaf and mute, living and dying, congenital conditions and impediments. Such was the Lord's way of showing the mercy and grace of God and of dealing with fear, ignorance, and superstition.

Jesus said: I Am the Way, and He described that way as Truth and Life. This is a ministry that I do not mind begging for. We are constantly running out of funds. If you are not a regular giver to the Shepherd of the Streets, will you begin during this season when nature retreats to be rejuvenated? Send your gift of mercy to Shepherd of the Streets, P.O. Box 2184, Williamsport, PA 17703, or bring it by 320 Park Ave. and see what we do in the Name of Jesus.

We also make available family sized hygiene items because they suffer the most when there is not enough money to feed, clothe, and house the family, and most illnesses are a surprise to the budget. These items are donated by people and churches, and should be dropped off at 320 Park Avenue between 9 and 2 Monday - Thursday.

THE PLACE TO BE FOR LUNCH WEDNESDAYS *

Join us Wednesdays for lunch and an interesting program! The lunch line opens about 11:45 a.m. and you are always assured of a tasty \$6 lunch, warm ecumenical fellowship and a thoughtful program designed to enrich your life mentally, physically, spiritually and socially.



Parking is free in the Pine Street lot north of the church from 11 to 1:30. No reservations are necessary, but a call to the United Churches Office 570-322-1110 if you are not a regular attender will help our caterer, Heidi, to prepare.

Please note that if the Williamsport Area School District closes schools because of winter road conditions we will not have Ecumenical Lunch. If you aren't sure what we are doing, call Gwen at 570-419-1464.

NOVEMBER:

- 13- **The Rev. Bert Kozen**, Pastor, Church of St. Luke, Jersey Shore and Church of the Immaculate Conception, Williamsport and Chaplain (Brigadier General -PA) National Guard. *"The Failures and Successes of Ecumenism in Bosnia"*
- 20- **The Rev. Mark Brumbach**, Pastor, South Williamsport United Methodist Church, *"A Heart For Honduras"*
- 27- **The Rev. Gwen Bernstine**, Staff, United Churches, *"The Favorites That Instantly Comfort Us"*

DECEMBER:

- 4- **Mrs. Tiffany Haller**, Director of Religious Education, St. Ann's Catholic Church, Williamsport, *"Waiting"*
- 11- **Mrs. Patty Gohrs**, Staff, United Churches, *Christmas Traditions From Around The World"*
- 18- **Mr. Tom Wetzel**, Pianist, *"Joyous Christmas"*
- 25- **Christmas**

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED**Ms. Linda Jackson, President*

World Community Day was the time women throughout the county brought in donations used to fill the Christmas stockings for the 1,125+ nursing home residents in Lycoming County. The pens, notebooks, hand cream, emery boards, tissues, combs and Christmas cards are ready. Don't forget that the filling of the Christmas stockings will be on Monday, November 18th at Pine Street UMC, Williamsport at 9 am. (Parking permits will be available at the church.) They also prepare 50 modified gift bags for children who have mothers in the State Correctional Institute at Muncy.





Tammey Aichner, Coordinator, ucm@uclc.org



We are winding down our semester! I am not sure when stress levels are higher.. when school first starts or when finals are approaching. During finals week, we will celebrate the completion of our study on The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe with a movie, a tea party and Turkish Delights. As that week nears, prayers are needed for the students and the professors. Prayer requests often include internships, health issues of family members and car concerns...all while trying to work to pay bills and loans, study to keep grades up, be a loving neighbor with roommates and stay grounded in God's Word! They find their strength in Him and I am amazed by each one of them.

On the evening of November 8th, all worry was set aside as students, faculty and friends gathered for a worship night on campus. Our very own Bernice gave her testimony! Bernice is a child of God and lives her life in service to Him. She places others before herself and shares her love of Christ in words and actions with them. She is a reminder to me, though, that students like Bernice are the very ones we often neglect. We think they are good, strong...and we forget to look deep enough to see what the smile is hiding. We don't take the time to find out why they have a heart to serve the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned, and the forgotten. We close our eyes to the potholes that existed in their road. We think because someone gives of their time and treasure that somehow they do not have a need of their own. But, we are called to walk alongside our brothers and sisters. To encourage them in times of struggle. To pray for them!

Thank you for supporting Campus Ministry.

THANKSGIVING DINNERS



- ◇ Monday, November 25 from 11-1 at West End Christian Community Center, 901 Diamond Street.
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at the American Rescue Workers from Noon until 3 in the dining room at the Castellano Center, 320 Park Avenue, Williamsport. Delivery is available only to shut-ins and handicapped: call 570-323-8401x110 by noon Wednesday.
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1407 Allegheny St, Jersey Shore from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at Sojourner Truth Ministry, 501 High St, Williamsport serving at 11:45 a.m.

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BPUSA) has opened a new chapter. The North Central PA Chapter will hold meetings the third Wednesday of each month from 6-7:30 at the RiverWalk Center, 423 East Central Ave., South Williamsport. Chapter leader Kim Andy can be contacted at 570-419-1434 or bpusanorthcentralpa@gmail.com. BPUSA is a national non-profit self-help organization offering support, understanding, compassion, hope, and healing to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents struggling to rebuild their lives after the death of their loved one(s). It is open to all grieving, regardless of the circumstances of the death of their children, grandchildren or siblings. There are no dues or fees to become a member. There is helpful information and brochures on their website www.bereavedparentsusa.org.

POVERTY: A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE *Christian Social Concerns Committee*

He shows pity to the needy and the poor and saves the lives of the poor. (Ps 72:13)

We need to be the “he” in the above line from Psalm 72. We can be thankful for all that people of faith are doing for individuals and families in need. However, much more needs to be done to meet immediate needs and advocate for changes to economic and political policies and practices. Before we give thanks on Thanksgiving Day, we need to assess what needs to be done in both charity and justice for those in need in our communities, nation, and the world.

Ending hunger in Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania is the 26th hungriest state in the country.

- One in 8 households struggles to put food on the table.
- 1,517,069 live in counties with poverty rates of 20% plus.
- 46,671 veterans live below the poverty line.
- If Medicaid is block granted, an additional 465,400 people could be uninsured, compared to the 692,203 people currently uninsured.
- One in 6 children and 1 in 8 women live in poverty in Pennsylvania.
- An individual must earn \$15.71 per hour in Pennsylvania to provide for a family, yet, the state minimum wage is \$7.25 -Source: *Bread for the World* – www.bread.org

2019 Nobel Prize in Economics: Focus in fighting global poverty – Three economists shared this year’s Nobel Prize in Economics for their new, experiment-based approach that has transformed development economics. They sought ways of obtaining reliable answers regarding best practice in contrast with previous awards for mostly economic theories. The award winners sought smaller, more manageable questions on such topics as effective interventions for improving educational outcomes or child health. The Laureates’ research finds – and those of the researchers following in their footsteps – have dramatically improved the ability to fight poverty in practice. These are very positive signs, yet much more needs to be done.

DIAL - A - DEVOTION *

Have you called yet today?
The number is 570-322-5762.
It's available 24/7.



Devotions are three minutes or less, change weekdays and once on the weekend, and are designed to lift your spirits and help you to have "A Closer Walk with God." The devotionists this fall are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 11/11-17 Mrs. Tiffany Haller | 11/18-24 Mrs. Gail Landers |
| 11/25-12/1 Mrs. Patty Gohrs | 12/2-8 Rev. Georgianna Welsh |
| 12/9-15 Mrs. Dorothy Wagner | 12/16-22 Mrs. Connie Couture |

Listen today and tell others about this ministry!

AREA MINISTRY NEWS

Habitat House Application: Everyone needs a place to call home. Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity will be building their next home on Diamond Street in Williamsport beginning in the spring of 2020 and are currently receiving applications for home-ownership. Qualifications include...

- You are living in a substandard or unsafe housing.
- You spend more than 30% of your gross income on rent.
- You have satisfactory credit, reasonable debt, and a steady income within 30-80% of the median area income.
- You are willing to partner with Habitat and contribute 250 "sweat equity" hours - such as volunteering on the construction of your home, attending other Habitat activities, and attending home-buyer education classes.

Owner Benefits:

- Habitat homes are sold to approved applicants at fair market value with a 30 year, 0% interest mortgage.

To apply go to www.lycominghabitat.org/homeownership to find their Homeownership Application, or contact them for details at 570-322-2515 or contact.us@lycominghabitat.org.

Sojourner House of Hope, (a Christ-based, short-term, communal living house for screened women coming out of homelessness and returning to the community with tools for becoming self-sufficient,) has been fundraising and planning for many months. As we close in on the transformation work on the physical House, we continue to raise funds, are seeking skilled labor, and are now accepting applications for female mentors, volunteers, volunteer staff, and paid staff positions. Mentors and volunteer staff are required to attend training so we can best offer unified care. Please visit www.stmwilliamsport.org for more details, or visit us from 8-1, Tues-Fri for more information.

Many volunteer options are available!

After School Kids is an after school program offering hearty food, homework help, and activities on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:45. Volunteers welcome! Training provided, clearances are required. Please call 570-323-1797, leave a

message and you will be contacted.

Interested in volunteering in any capacity? Volunteer orientations are 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 9 am. Call to RSVP 570-323-1797, please leave a detailed message.

American Rescue Workers...

CHRISTMAS BASKETS SIGN UP

Christmas Basket and Toys for Tots Sign Ups.



October 1st -

November 20th

Monday - Tuesday - Thursday - Friday (Not Wednesday)

Mornings: 9-Noon at

337 Bridge Street, Social Service Center

Items needed for sign up:

1. Birth certificate for newborns
2. Social Security cards for each household member
3. Proof of income
4. Tax returns or explanation of benefits

(Food Assistance Hours will change during October and November: Monday - Tuesday - Thursday - Friday: 1 - 3 pm, and Wednesday 1-4 pm.)

Operation Christmas Child: National Collection Week is November 18-25. Drop off locations include the Christian Church at Cogan Station, Pine Street UMC Williamsport, Radiant Light Church Muncy, and Newberry Church of Christ, Williamsport.



Chancel Choir Director is being sought by Montoursville Presbyterian Church. This is a compensated position that requires 2 hours Thursday evening rehearsals and 2 hours Sunday (warm-up and worship service). Meetings and preparation as needed. If you or someone you know has the musical gift to lead our wonderful Chancel Choir, please contact Neil Bixler at 570-407-2126 or nbixler@live.com.

Electronic Wurlitzer Organ is looking for a good home. It has three rows of keys and foot pedals. Contact Nancy Ulrich at 570-447-8851.

Victorian Christmas Soup Luncheon will be held on Saturday, Nov. 23 from 11 - 2 at Trinity Episcopal Church, 844 W 4th St, Wmspt. The menu includes a choice of Soups, Salad, Bread, Pie and Beverage. Suggested donation is \$9 for the meal. Veterans' meals are free. Soup may also be purchased by the quart or pint. A Craft Sale and Tours of the church will be held. Details: 570-322-0126.

CREATION CORNER*Christian Social Concerns Committee*

Book Review: *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*, Rev. Dr. Leah Schade and Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, editors. Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

With the first commandment in mind, to be stewards of creation that God created and found good, readers will find of interest the "eco-biographies" of a wide variety of writers from interfaith perspectives that help shape their efforts to conserve/preserve/restore the integrity of God's creation.

This book, suitable for personal use and adult discussion groups or courses in religious education, does not dwell on lists of environmental consequences of a warming planet, nor extensively detail scientific explanations, nor relate the reasons or causes for inaction said to be responsible for the climate crisis. But neither are these subjects absent or overlooked.

Rather, it offers a moral and ethical clarity as to why and how people of faith can and should step up to address such climate concerns, as they have done for other social issues.

The seven sections all contain examples from the Christian, Jewish and Islamic faiths, and other perspectives, each ending with "questions to ponder and a spiritual practice."

The section themes are: interfaith friendship; local activism; science and policy; voices from the margin; liturgy, moral vision, and vocation; being uprooted; and grief, love and trees.

Co-editors Schade (ELCA) and Bullitt-Jonas (Episcopal) note a textual theme of our emotions resulting from our intellectual understanding of rising CO₂ and temperature levels. While there may be denial from ignorance, more aware people may grieve over what has been lost and what is now occurring, and feel powerless, hopeless and helpless.

Examples of resourcefulness fill the book with purpose, hope, wisdom, inspiration, resilience, transformation, strength for sustaining the efforts and leadership. Readers will see positive results derived from actions and personal lifestyle changes being multiplied to bring widespread change. There are shared core values and commitments to interlink with other social movements, spiritual practices to learn, convincing arguments for your engagements, advice for staying "grounded" and balanced to avoid "burnout" and ways of finding your "love force" spiritually for God's creation and how to apply it.

On the secular side, some consideration is given to the science of atmospheric physics (our opponent), insurance industry consequences from environmental catastrophes, food and military security concerns arising from changing ecological conditions, the connection of climate change and population movements (refugees, immigration, geographic density), the ways extreme heat can affect personal health, the importance of holding oneself and others accountable, ways to be supportive of green businesses and the clean energy movement, learning

lessons from other social movements, appreciating how a "climate generation" of young people worldwide perceive climate change as a "threat multiplier" amplifying poverty, human rights violations, war, etc., and must be matched by a "love multiplier," the insights from how we responded to WWII and Sept. 11, 2001 and applying them to our current situation.

Emphasis is given to topics such as

- coping with climate realism;
- being a climate activist for a livable world as a way to love and define our humanity and serve God;
- finding optimism while being discouraged;
- discovering faith when hope is missing;
- accepting our vulnerability yet taking risks;
- making ourselves available to the Spirit, and appreciating the many ways to love God and His Creation;
- resisting climate change denial and its manifestations;
- finding alternatives to emotional fear; understanding "the Greatest Commandment" (loving neighbors as ourselves) means to act on climate change, protecting our world;
- learn from the church: Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Roman Catholic Pope Francis;
- consider what meaning is present when Christians pray that "God's will be done on earth" and contemplate the challenge of our hands doing God's work;
- ways to proceed in solidarity with future generations;
- what directions to take to pursue our moral/ethical power;
- how to deal with our guilt and complicity due to lifestyles built into and impacted by economic and socio-political systems not of our making but into which we are born;
- envision ① what is ② what could or should be (hope), ③ what God's intent for us is, and ④ see the goodness of Creation that God wishes to be abundantly sustainable, and how we can work for such eco-justice;
- the need to gain the maturity that life includes paradox (hope and despair, beauty and brutality, joy and sorrow).

Furthermore, we are tasked with the question of how we might convert our current sense of vocation, moving us to become restorers of Creation, with the time, talent and treasures we have. Might we become a second version of the WWII "Greatest Generation" who proudly said "We don't get to do what we want; we have to do what needs to be done?"

Do we have other more important roles, as citizens, expressing solidarity of a "one for all" ethic, restraint, a sense of limits, and sacrifice? Through our pain and grief can we articulate a critique of injustice that leads to a promise of resurrection?

Is the "Tree of Life", with its roots, trunk and branches that rise, a suitable metaphoric symbol for our place in the natural environment? Are we engaged in destructive ways that sabotage our health, and impact a fragile earth. If God helps you make peace with your body, can God also help humanity make peace with the body of earth? Is the future of the "Tree of Life" at the mercy of our decisions and indecisions?

All of the above, and more, are considered in this book.