

# UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

Published Monthly by the

## United Churches of Lycoming County

202 East Third Street, Williamsport PA 17701

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Rev. Gwen N. Bernstine, Executive Director and Editor

*Issued mid-monthly, September through May. Items marked with an asterisk may be of special interest to your congregation.  
Deadline to submit articles - First of each month.*

Volume XXVII Number II

February 9, 2010

## **D**IAL - A - DEVOTION \*

Have you called yet?

The number is 322-5762.

It's available 24 hours a day.

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 devotionalists this fall include:

2/8-14 Rev. Jeff Zetto      2/15-21 Mrs. Dot Wagner

2/22-28 Rev. Gwen Bernstine   3/1-7 Rev. Jim Behrens

3/8-14 Rev. Kenton Hunt

*Listen today and tell others about this ministry!*

*It's a great way to have a closer walk with God.*

*Business cards are available at our office  
to help publicize this ministry.*



## PRE-LENTEN SERVICE\*

**O**ur County Ecumenical Pre-Lenten Service will be held Sunday, February 14, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. J. Morris Smith, Th. D., our United Churches Shepherd of the Streets and the Permanent Deacon at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Williamsport; will speak at Bethany Lutheran Church, 369 Broad Street, Montoursville. Shiloh Baptist Church Choir will provide special music. A time of fellowship and refreshment will follow the service. Plan to join with Christians from around the county in this ecumenical celebration.

## UCM - LASAGNA DINNER

**T**onight - (if you receive this newsletter on Wednesday) is our United Campus Ministry Lasagna Dinner. Hope you can join us!

**Wednesday - February 10, 2010**

**5:00-7:00 P.M.**

**at St. Paul Calvary United Methodist Church**

1427 Memorial Avenue, Williamsport  
meat or meatless lasagna, salad, bread and dessert  
suggested donation - \$7/adults, \$3/children under 12  
Dine in and enjoy the musical entertainment  
or take outs are available.

## **POVERTY - A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE\***

*from our Christian Social Concerns Committee*

**T**he devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread. Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" (Lk 4:3-4) Many of us will read this first temptation of Jesus in the desert on the First Sunday of Lent's Gospel. Jesus does not reject bread. He rejects the manipulation by the devil. Bread and other food, however, are key food items that strain the monetary resources of people living in poverty. How will we make sure there is sufficient and nutritious food for all in need in our communities, nation, and the world? Jesus later says to the devil: "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" (Lk 4:8) We serve God by serving those in need.

**Lycoming County: Free and Reduced Lunch – the Numbers Are Higher in 2009** One indicator of need for children and their families is the number and percentage of total school population children eligible for free and reduced lunch. The data from the PA Dept. of Education for Lycoming County for the current school year indicates that 42% of all children in the county numbering 7,036 children are in need. This increase of 417 children over the prior year is clear evidence of the hardships being faced by children in our midst. We serve God by providing bread and other food to those in need.

### **Child Nutrition: Reauthorization in 2010**

**We have the tools to end child hunger in our county and country.** Strengthening child nutrition programs is an immediate and direct way to reduce child hunger and improve health and educational outcomes. Programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); school breakfast and lunch programs; and preschool, summer and afterschool meal programs are vital in providing children the food they need for healthy development. These programs were scheduled for reauthorization in 2009; but that legislation has been delayed until 2010. To learn more visit [www.bread.org/learn/child-nutrition](http://www.bread.org/learn/child-nutrition). Then write to Congress so as to serve God by serving those in need.

This Lent may we resolve to increase our efforts to assist the poor in our county and to advocate for legislation in congress that eliminates child hunger and helps working families in need.

## **FOOD PANTRY \***

*Gail Burkhart, Coordinator*

*Contact at: 322-1657*

**O**ur United Churches/Center City Food Pantry provides a three day supply of food to those in need. This January we helped 160 families, including 198 adults, 85 children and 64 elderly for a total of 347 persons.

Each of you that support us, financially, physically and emotionally, never cease to amaze me. Typically we get most of our food donations the first Monday of the month. Many congregations have a basket or boxes in the vestibule where members drop off food and then a good hearted soul collects the food and brings it to us.

This week we had a cheerful person pop in with extra donations because their congregation was concerned that all the attention focusing on the needs of the Haitian people would deter folks from supporting those in our community who know all too well the feeling of hunger in their bellies.

What a blessing that the needs of both are being considered, those of our community and those of a nation thousands of miles away who've had their world devastated!

When there are needs to be met, whether in our own backyard or somewhere half a world away, the folks of Lycoming County know how to step up to the plate and help their brothers and sisters in Christ. How very special you are! Remember that you are always in our prayers.

Donations, if possible, should be brought in on Monday mornings from 9:30 - Noon. We are in the Sojourner Truth Ministry building, next to our Shepherd Ministry on the corner of High & Center Streets. Items the pantry especially needs this month include:

<i>Oodles of Noodles</i>	<i>Cake Mix &amp; Frosting</i>
<i>Canned Fruit</i>	<i>Mac-N-Cheese</i>
<i>Oatmeal Crackers</i>	<i>Canned Veggies</i>
<i>Cookie Mixes</i>	<i>Chunky Soups</i>
<i>Pancake Mix</i>	<i>Syrup</i>

Persons needing food should call 322-1657 and leave their name and number on the answering machine to make an appointment to receive food on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 - 3 and at other times by appointment.

**G**ood Friday Ministerium Services will be listed in our March newsletter. Please contact us with your information by March 1.

## SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS\*

*Dr. J. Morris Smith*

*Contact at: 322-6538*

### THANKS FOR THANKSGIVING BASKETS

A great big **THANK YOU** for all who helped make the Thanksgiving Basket give out a success this year. Your faithful participation once again made this endeavor a success. Without your contribution there would be no thanksgiving dinner for over 350 families, involving over 1,000 children.

Also, thanks to Gail Burkhart, our food pantry administrator, for her leadership from registration to final clean up. We also thank the many youth and others who helped put the baskets together, the volunteers who worked administering the day, and the women of the Pre-Release Center who helped at the give-out itself. God bless all of you.

### HEAT AND THE GREAT FEAR

A great fear comes upon many of our community who cannot pay the high price of fuel (oil or gas) and soon electric, for heating their homes. Many live in homes that are poorly insulated, others were unable to pay last year's price and have unpaid, overdue bills prohibiting them from getting their utility activated.

We received a grant for utility payments in December and began distribution on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was gone by the 4<sup>th</sup>. It was for \$18,000. We have continued to receive requests and each voice has that fear...the fear that their home will be very cold this winter, and the fear that they will be evicted, and the greatest fear of all ...that Children and Youth will take their children because they have no heat.

### BLANKETS AND BEDDING

'Tis the season for blankets and clean, fresh bedding. We constantly are looking for good, warm blankets. If you have blankets that you no longer use, bring them by our office at 669 Center St.

Remember, many of our clients have no way to wash their sheets. So they sleep on them until they can't stand it, and come to us for a fresh set. Again, if you have sets of full, twin, queen sheets that you no longer use, we can recycle them immediately.

### PRESCRIPTION COSTS UP

We were paying about \$1,500 per week in prescription costs in November, but since then we are paying about \$2,500 per week. This is because so many have lost their job and with it, their medical insurance. But, drawing unemployment (average \$560 per month) puts them over the maximum to qualify for Medical Access at the Department of Public Welfare. These have turned to us for life-sustain-

ing medications, adding to our clients who are uninsured and under-insured.

Again, thank you for your faithfulness...it is overwhelming.

We thank all of those who collect hygiene items, bedding, and baby needs for us. We appreciate the monetary contributions to fund our general budget to keep our ministry open, and the donations for discretionary and prescription funds. The list of hygiene items we use follows, and are regular sizes of:

<i>Deodorant</i>	<i>Toothpaste and Toothbrushes</i>
<i>Soap</i>	<i>Shaving Cream and Razors</i>
<i>Tissues</i>	<i>Shampoo and Conditioner</i>
<i>Toilet Paper</i>	<i>Women's Hygiene Products</i>
<i>Combs</i>	<i>Towels and Wash Cloths</i>
<i>Baby Diaper</i>	<i>Baby Shampoo, Powder, Oil</i>
<i>Baby Q-Tips</i>	<i>Baby Wipes.</i>

### WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE \*

*Mrs. Regina Gross, President 322-2619*

**C**hurch Women United of Lycoming County will hold their service on **Friday, March 5 at 1:30 p.m.** at St. Paul-Calvary United Methodist Church, 1427 Memorial Avenue, Williamsport, PA.

As you may or not know, the World Day of Prayer is a world wide ecumenical movement of women of many faith traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first of March. Each year a different country serves as the writer of the worship service. The women of Cameroon invite you to "Africa in Miniature" a country in which climate and culture are rich with diversity and where people are bound together by a love for music, family and faith. Women shine in every religious activity, displaying great conviction and tireless participation in ecumenical work. The worship service emphasizes the importance that the people of Cameroon place on music and celebration in their praise to God and music.

Walker and catheter bags will be collected at this service to be distributed at area nursing homes.

**UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY \****Sharon Comini, Coordinator,**Contact at: 419-5376 or [ucm@uclc.org](mailto:ucm@uclc.org)*

The students have settled in to the semester and things are going well. We have had some interesting Faith Talk discussions this semester. Thanks especially to Pastor Deibler for an inspiring prayer service recently. We are working on getting things ready for our fundraisers. Our lasagna dinner is this week, February 10, from 5:00-7:00 at St. Paul Calvary United Methodist Church. We hope the weather this year is better. It seems like we always have a snow storm on lasagna dinner night. Our mission trip has changed. We didn't have as many students sign up to go to West Virginia as we had hoped for, so we are making alternate plans do something locally that more students can be involved in.

Lent is just around the corner, and we look forward to joining some local churches for their Lenten dinners and Worship. We will begin by joining with Trinity Episcopal Church for their Ash Wednesday service.

We are always looking for new students to join us for a Monday night Faith Talk on campus, or for the Wednesday evening dinner and worship at Trinity Episcopal Church. If you have any Penn College students in your congregation, please let them know about UCM. Also, if you are interested in finding out more about United Campus Ministry, we are always happy to come and visit your church and let you know who we are. Blessings to all of you in this approaching Lent season.

**FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

We want to invite you to be part of a very important conversation and endeavor for the future of ecumenical ministry in our county.

Our conversations have included:

- Thanking congregations for their support and involvement in the ecumenical work of our county and encourage sustained giving as part of their annual budgets.
- Increasing the awareness people throughout the community - in pews and out - of United Churches Ministries and seeking their support.
- Create community fund raising activities.
- Developing options for planned giving.

Additional ideas and help are welcome and needed. Please contact Ms Pam Markle, at [pam.markle@thrivent.com](mailto:pam.markle@thrivent.com) or 323-9727 or Rev. Gwen Bernstine at 322-1110 or [uclc@sunlink.net](mailto:uclc@sunlink.net).

**WEDNESDAY ECUMENICAL LUNCH \***

Join us from 12 to 1 p.m. for the Wednesday Noon Ecumenical Lunch Program. Enjoy a tasty \$4 lunch, warm, ecumenical fellowship and a thoughtful program designed to enrich your life mentally, physically, spiritually and socially. The parking is free in the Pine Street lot north of the church from 11 to 1:30 p.m. No reservations are necessary.

To check about cancellations due to winter storms listen to WRAK or call Gwen at 419-1464.

**FEBRUARY:**

10- *Rev. Ron Shellhamer*, Interim Pastor, Church of the Savior and St. Matthew Lutheran Churches, "**The Church in Liberia**"

**Lenten Series: People Jesus Met****On His Way To Jerusalem and the Cross**

17- *Rev. Rob Manzinger, Ph.D.*, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Williamsport, "**A Lawyer who Tests Jesus**"

24- *Rev. Ken Wagner-Pizza*, Pastor, Trinity Episcopal Church, "**The Disciple Who Wanted to Know More About Prayer**"

**MARCH:**

3- *Rev. Jeff Zetto*, Pastor, Bethany Lutheran Church, Montoursville, "**The Brother Who Wanted Some of the Family Inheritance**"

10- *Rev. Judy Stanley*, Interim Pastor, Montoursville Presbyterian Church, "**The Crippled Woman**"

17- *Rev. Glenn McCreary*, Pastor, Church of the Resurrection, Muncy, "**Zacchaeus**"

24- *Rev. Ann Runnels*, Pastor, Nisbet United Methodist Church, "**The Widow with a Gift**"

31- *Rev. Gwen Bernstine*, Executive Director, United Churches, "**The Disciple Who Allowed Satan into His Heart**"

This is a ministry that everyone in our congregations and community is welcome to participate in. Make plans to join us and you're welcome to bring a friend!

**BIBLES NEEDED AT COUNTY PRISON**

There is a shortage of bibles for the prison, and for the Pre-Release Center.

Please help by:

- Sending a check to Chaplain Andrew France, Lycoming County Prison, 277 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Williamsport, PA 17701
- Donate bibles directly to the Prison – Simply call Andy at 326-4623 or 419-6635
- Contact Andy with questions, suggestions, etc.

The Lord is alive and active in the Prison and at the Pre-Release Center. Thank you and thanks be to God.

Chaplain Andy France

**CREATION CORNER***from our Christian Social Concerns Committee***Earth Day Sunday 2010 Materials for Church Leaders**

**A**s the 40th anniversary of Earth Day (April 22) approaches, educational materials are available to direct our attention to the "act locally" part of the "think globally, act locally" maxim. Our Earth Day Sunday theme "Sacred Spaces and an Abundant Life: Worship Spaces as Stewardship" is the Eco-Justice program of the National Council of Churches (NCC) (visit [www.nccecojustice.org/resources/](http://www.nccecojustice.org/resources/)).

Keeping in mind the Biblical passage, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded" (Luke 12:48) we can consider what our ancestors bequeathed to us. We also need to ask ourselves how we, will be regarded by future generations.

Being good stewards of our worship spaces (the NCC theme) involves ecological stewardship, fiscal discipline and social justice responsibility. Building these practices include:

**Energy Efficiency and Conservation** (for example, install programmable thermostats, weatherize, lower the temperature of the hot water heater, replace broken appliances with energy efficient ("Green Star") models, set a goal of reducing energy consumption by 10%). Specific NCC guides are:

- Carbon Reduction Campaign
- Simple Steps for Churches to become energy efficient
- Green Churches
- Energy Star Congregations

**Reducing toxic materials and products.** We may be exposed to chemicals (formaldehyde, volatile organic compounds, triclosan, phthalate, etc.) unnecessarily. Specific NCC guides include:

- Healthy Spa and Green Cleaning Guide
- Food and Health
- Indoor Air Quality

**Water and Land Conservation.** The NCC offers advice on how to reduce water pollution from pesticides, fertilizers, and storm water runoff. Tips for reducing water use are also noted. Five NCC guides are:

- Water Conservation
- Water Stewards
- Simple Steps Congregations can take to conserve water
- Stewardship of Lands and Wilderness
- Rooted in God's Word and Lands

**Worship Resources** guides include that for

- Green Church Worship and Education Resources
- Earth Gospel

- Specific Earth Day Sunday resources include sermon starters, a bulletin insert, tips for successful stewardship, and adult and youth study discussion activities.
- All this and more is available at the NCC web site (<http://nccecojustice.org/resources/>.)

**RESOURCES FOR MINISTRY**

**L**ove Blankets for Hospice: Susquehanna Health Home Care & Hospice needs help with donations of handmade blankets for patients at the end of life. They prefer blankets to be 48' x 72'. They should be quilted, knitted or crocheted from new, soft materials. Blankets can be dropped off at their office in Divine Providence Hospital, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor weekdays between 8 - 5. Monetary donations towards a quilt can also be made. For details, call (570) 320-7690.

**S**tudent Recognition and Support: The Williamsport Area School District is spotlighting students with special achievements and/or exceptional work. Knowing that many congregations lift area students up in prayer - this resource, telling stories of many of the students, will be e-mailed to United Churches and sent on. To request these releases contact Gwen at [director@uclc.org](mailto:director@uclc.org).

**G**irls on the Run: Messiah Lutheran Church, 324 S. Howard St., South Wmspt, Pa is currently hosting this program. It is an interactive running/life skills program for girls in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades. The curriculum is designed to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living with warm-ups and workouts encouraging emotional, social, mental, spiritual and physical health. The \$45 program fee includes snacks at each session and a T-shirt. No girl is denied participation because of financial need. To register, or request details, call Michelle McElwee, (570) 322-7873.

To learn about future programming opportunities contact Debbie Best at [bestd@diakon.org](mailto:bestd@diakon.org) or 320-1520.

**R**eaching Out to At Risk Kids: You are invited to join with the Montoursville Ministerium for a discussion with State Police Troupier Mike Knight on Wednesday, February 24 (at lunchtime, 11:30-12:30) at Bethany Lutheran Church. Mike will discuss his recent efforts to field a league of baseball teams for potentially at-risk kids as part of programming at the Campbell Street Center. Last spring's efforts yielded only two teams due to lack of volunteers. Troupier Knight has also single-handedly beautifully maintained the Maynard Field located on the Center's grounds as one of the finest fields in the area. Please consider being present. Call Rev. Jeffrey Zetto at (570) 368-8933 or Rev. John Manno at (570) 368-8598. You are welcome to bring a "brown-bag" lunch. Beverages will be provided.

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES \***

**F** **faith Community / Parish Nurse Training** will be presented in 7 sessions beginning April 17. They are offered by Diakon Family Life Services and are open to all Denominations. Held at the Upper Susquehanna Synod office, Lewisburg, sessions are 4/17, 5/8, 6/5, 9/18, 10/9, 11/6, and 12/4, 2010 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Course Cost is \$350 with \$200 due at registration.

The course incorporates curriculum developed by the International Parish Nurse Resource Center and is provided by Ephrata Community Department of Staff Development CME, and has been approved for 49.6 contact hours. Ephrata Community Hospital is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Each student completing the course will receive the Contact Hours certificate. Make check payable to Diakon Congregational Health Ministries and mail to Debbie Best, Cong. Health Min. & Family Life Svcs, 522 N. Grier St, Wmst, PA 17701. Contact Debbie at (570) 320-0520 or [bestd@diakon.org](mailto:bestd@diakon.org) for details.

**S** **tages of Spiritual Development: An Interdisciplinary Study** is a two-session workshop to be held on Monday evenings February 15 and 22 from 7-9 at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville. Chaplain Karl A. Pölm-Faudré, PhD, Director of the Education, Research and Outreach, Div. of Spiritual Care, will be the instructor.

Can a person be spiritually immature as differentiated from spiritually mature? The scriptures of all the world religions indicate such to be the case. What would be the characteristics of 'spiritual' maturity, and how would it be attained?

Employing the developmental model, an evolving international and interdisciplinary consensus among theologians, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and neuropsychologists suggests a paradigm of six stages of spiritual development.

In this two-session workshop, we will examine this paradigm as it applies to the nature of the divine, human nature, good and evil, divine-human and human-to-human relationships, salvation and the meaningful existence. Illustrations of the stages will be offered from Judaism, Buddhism and Christianity.

Handout materials will be provided for each registered participant. Enrollment is limited. Reservation absolutely required. To register, call Tina or the voice mail at 570-271-3700 and leave the workshop title, your name, contact phone number and email address.

**SPECIAL EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES \***

**F** **astnacht Lenten Activities:** New Covenant United Church of Christ, 202 East Third St. Williamsport, will be holding their annual Fastnacht Social and Talent show on Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. This annual event featuring homemade fastnachts has been a tradition at the church for over 50 years. The following evening, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm, an Ash Wednesday service will be held to mark the beginning of Lent.

**W** **omen's Lenten Breakfast:** New Covenant United Church of Christ, 202 East Third St. Williamsport, will host a Women's Lenten Breakfast on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am at the church. The program will be "The Journey to Openness" and will be conducted by Rev. Clara Benson. A good will offering will be taken. Please call the church office at 326-3308 to make reservation.

**B** **us Trip to New York City:** First Church of Christ (Disciples) is putting together a bus trip into New York City for Saturday May 15. They leave at 7 a.m. and return about 10:30 p.m. and the cost is \$45/person. If you'd like to include a ticket to see the Broadway show WICKED the cost for the bus and orchestra seat is expected to be ~\$170. Contact Pastor Ken Weiss at 323-6325 or [kweiss1213@hotmail.com](mailto:kweiss1213@hotmail.com).

**C** **areer Expo:** The Williamsport Area High School will be holding a Millionaire Career Expo: "Building Bridges to the Future" on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup> from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Williamsport Area High School. There will be food available and hands on demonstrations. Everyone is welcome to attend. It's a great way to encourage students to focus on getting that diploma!

**G** **amblers Anonymous -** A new chapter has recently started in the Muncy area. The group meets Mondays at 7:30 p.m. in Room 201 of the First United Methodist Church 602 South Market Street, Muncy.

**E** **-Mail Newsletter:** Our United Churches News is now available via e-mail. If you'd like to receive your newsletter this way, instead of a hard copy, please contact Gwen at [uclc@sunlink.net](mailto:uclc@sunlink.net).

YOKEFELLOW

**Evadna Cline, Director, Yokefellow Center - 326-6868**

In 1996 song writer Ray Boltz wrote the following song which was put to music by Steve Milliken. This song has a message for us to ponder: Has everyone been served? The response to that question was a resounding,

*"No, No, Not Everyone Has Been Served."*

*No, no we need to take them to His word.*

*How can they know Him when they've never heard?*

*No, no, not everyone has been served.*

*With tears in their eyes they prayed for the cities*

*where millions of people suffer each day,*

*they live and they die never knowing why.*

*No one is there to show them the way.*

*And the Father says, Has everyone been served?*

*For so long He has heard,*

*We are the light and we know the truth.*

*No, No, not until all have been served.*

*No, no, we need to take them to his word.*

*In every nation let this cry be heard,*

*No, no, not until all have been served.*

We can never be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream. It's time for the Church to take our religion out of the box and get involved! It's time to get up off our blessed assurance and educate ourselves. It's time to let our voices be heard in Washington and Harrisburg and at the voting booth. Our elected officials need to know that God is not satisfied, and there are throngs in the world who have not been served! It's time for change and if we don't get involved in changing things, then who will? If not now, when? If not us, then who?

Dr. Martin Luther King said, "I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed; "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal."

"We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people." No, no not everyone has been served!

Crime rates haven't changed dramatically since 1973... But sentencing policy has grown increasingly punitive with huge increases in felony convictions and longer sentences. Pennsylvania is listed among the states with the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest prison growth rate in the nation! Our state prison population has increased 24% since 1999 to more than 47,000 prisoners. The PA Department of Corrections is growing at the rate of 3.7% per year. We of the church hold the bread of life in our hands! Will you help take the Word to them. Will you go to show them the way? We are the light and we know

the truth. So, can we implore God, No, no, not until all have heard. No, no, we need to take His word to every prison. Let this cry be heard, No, no, not until all have heard!

NEWS ABOUT HAITI

When disaster strikes in a far away place - I like to have someone who has been there help to make some sense of it for me. I remembered our friend, Rev. Bob Wallace, now serving in York, PA who has been to Haiti several times, most recently in September of 2008. I wrote to him, and this is part of his response....

"We ended up being there when one of the hurricanes hit on the north side of Haiti. We were not really impacted in Port-au-Prince though the people obviously were very jittery from past experiences."

"We volunteered at Grace Children's Hospital in Port-au-Prince who reaches out to children with tuberculosis and AIDS. They have numerous out-clinics and village programs which helps improve the health of the children. They do much with little. We were able to help change, bathe, dress, and feed children and simply spend time with them. Their spirit was amazing. The Haitian spirit is special. They have such a desire and will to survive. It humbled us all."

"This January we have been told that the main building of Grace Children's Hospital was severely damaged in the quake. One child died from internal injuries. They also lost one of their beautiful staff members, his wife, and their two year old son who were crushed in their home."

"Staffers are now caring for the children in the courtyard that had served as a 'playground' for healthier children. They are looking for another facility to use temporarily for the Hospital. Work is difficult as supplies run out."

"The home where we stayed, (St. Joseph's Home for Boys) was completely destroyed. However, not one of the boys was inside at the time. There was a staff person who jumped off the 7th story to save his life and eventually has been brought to the USA for treatment. (Bill Nathan is his name; his rescue to the USA was on TV. He is an exceptional Christian man)."

**Church World Service** - and relief agencies everywhere have sent all sorts of supplies. *The next page* lists the contents of school and health kits that are most needed.

Kits are currently being accepted in the Colonial Park Depot (Harrisburg) and directions are available at our United Churches office.

We will also have our annual collection in May here at First UMC, Williamsport. Lots of items will be needed - the cupboards are getting bare.

### **CHURCH WORLD SERVICE BLANKET AND KIT COLLECTION \***

This sheet outlines ways churches can begin NOW to respond to the Blanket, Kit and Layette Appeal of Church World Service. Our collection will take place Saturday, May 1 at First United Methodist Church. With the disaster in Haiti these kits are desperately needed, and then warehouses will need to be restocked. You can help insure that when disaster strikes, these relief items are available. The school and health kits are the most needed.

**PASTORS:** Please remove or duplicate this page and share it with your key leaders who will translate them into action.

**LEADERS:** Please share this sheet with others whose response will bring great blessings to many others.

**A BLANKET** is the basic component of every disaster response!

The causes are many - war, disaster, civil strife. The results are tragically the same - people moving, running. With them are only the few possessions they wear or carry. For many, one of our blankets serves as a shelter, a roof between a family and bad weather. It is privacy in a crowded camp, and a tote in which to gather a few salvaged belongings.

\$5 allows CWS to purchase wool-blend blankets in bulk from manufacturers.

*(Envelope/flyers for this collection are available from the United Churches office.)*

Durable donated blankets, including quilts and comforters are also accepted.

They must be 60" X 68" minimum. **Please add \$2.00 each** for processing.

**SCHOOL KITS** make the first days of school a dream come true.

Imagine new paper, pencils and crayons all because someone far away shared a school kit!

**Each School Kit contains:**

- 1 pair blunt scissors
  - 1 pencil sharpener
  - 1 large eraser
  - 1 box of crayons (24 crayons)
  - 6 new pencils with erasers
  - 2 pads 8 ½ x 11" ruled paper (150/200 sheets)
  - 1 30-cm metric ruler (12") *(Rulers with inches on one side and centimeters on the other are OK.)*
  - 12 sheets colored construction paper
  - 1 cloth bag (~12 x 14") with cloth handle **and a closure**
- (Some bags may be available from United Churches office – Thanks JanWay!)*

Place all items in a cloth bag, and secure contents via a button, snap or velcro closure.

**Please add \$2.00 each** for processing.

**HEALTH KITS** bring clean hands, good grooming, and bright shiny smiles to friends around the world!

**Each Health Kit contains:**

- 1 hand towel
- 1 washcloth
- 1 comb
- 6 band-aids
- 1 new bar of soap (bath size)
- 1 toothbrush
- 1 tube of toothpaste (4-7 oz)
- 1 metal nail file or nail clipper

*Place all items in a one gallon zip lock bag. Please add \$2.00 each* for processing.

**NEW: EMERGENCY CLEAN UP BUCKET KITS** sent nationally and internationally now.

- 1 - 5 gallon bucket with reseal able lid
  - 1 - 8 oz cleaning towels (reusable like Easy Wipes)
  - 1 - 50 oz dry laundry detergent
  - 1 - 12 oz bottle household cleaner (like Lysol)
  - 1 - 28 oz bottle disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn)
  - 1 - 100 ft Clothesline (or two 50 ft clotheslines)
  - 5 - packages dust masks (like Benchtop)
  - 6 to 14 oz insect repellent (drops or lotion, NOT aerosol)
  - 5 - Scouring pads
  - 7 - Sponges, assorted sizes
  - 1 - Scrub brush
  - 50 Clothes pins
  - 2 Pairs latex gloves
  - 1 Pair work gloves
  - 1 - 24-bag heavy-duty trash bags (33-45 gallon)
- Please add \$3.00 each** for processing.

Please purchase all liquids in unopened plastic bottles. Place all items in the plastic bucket and seal the lid.

**NEED SOME HELP?** Instruction flyers for these and the layettes, samples, blanket offering envelopes, information and speakers are available through our United Churches office, 570-322-1110. (No sewing kits.)