

# UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

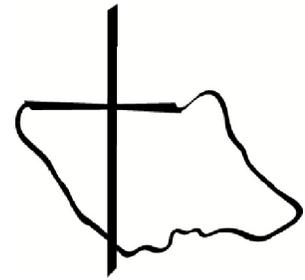
Published Monthly by the

**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 XXIV

Number 2

February, 2012

## **30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ECUMENICAL PRE-LENTEN SERVICE \***

**7:30 P.M., Sunday, February 19, 2012**

Christ United Methodist Church  
148 South Main Street, Hughesville



**Speaker: The Rev. Glenn McGreary**  
Resurrection Catholic Church, Muncy  
Episcopal Vicar of the Western Pastoral  
Region, Diocese of Scranton

Special Music: Bethany and Christ United  
Methodist Churches Combined Choirs

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to witness to the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who calls us to renew our faith and unite as people of God, with one another. Join us!

## **FLOOD RECOVERY \***

**W**e need your help identifying people who still have major unmet needs after the flooding this fall in our area. Pastors and congregations form a safety net that connects our community. You are in the perfect position to find those who thought they had cleaned up from the flood, but find that black mold has invaded their house. Other may still not have heat, their water isn't yet safe to drink, and/or they are over-whelmed with the paperwork and think nobody cares.

We are working together as a community to help individuals affected by the Tropical Storm Lee disaster who do not have adequate personal resources for basic needs. Areas of focus include: clean-up, building and repair, long term personal needs - spiritual counseling and support - furniture, relocation into permanent housing. The number we can be reached at is **570-322-7648**. Please use this number to request assistance for yourself or someone else, volunteer, or for details.



Visit us at the following web site - [www:uclc.org](http://www.uclc.org)

**CAMPUS MINISTRY \*****Sharon Comini, Coordinator,**Contact at: 447-3491 or [ucm@uclc.org](mailto:ucm@uclc.org)

Our annual soup sale is here. Please show your support and order some homemade soup today. The donation is \$5. All orders will be delivered. Proceeds will go directly to supporting our work at Penn College. Available are:

**Chicken Noodle Soup****Chili with Meat****Vegetable Beef Soup****Hot Sausage and Shrimp Gumbo****Italian Wedding Soup****Italian Vegetable Soup****Mushroom Lovers Soup****Pasta Fagioli****Creamy Chicken Noodle Soup****Beef Noodle Soup with Vegetables**

The students at UCM have been very busy since the semester started. On January 14, some students volunteered and worked at Albright Life for the Martin Luther King Jr. day of service. Some of the students cleaned and organized the storage area while other students painted the hallway. It was a very worthwhile day of service and we were happy to help. We also helped Messiah Lutheran Church with their clothing drive held at the beginning of the month. UCM is always looking for ways to help in the community, so if your congregation needs some work done, we'll see what we can do to serve.

Thanks to Pastor Paul Doriani from Covenant Central Presbyterian Church, Father Shane Kirby and Amanda Bair from St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Church, and Pastor Rob Manzinger from First Baptist Church for leading our Faith Talks since the semester started. If you have a Bible study or discussion you feel may benefit the students at UCM, we have openings in March and April. Let me know if you are interested.

**DIAL - A - DEVOTION \***

Have you called yet?

The number is 322-5762.

It's available 24 hours a day.



**D**evotions 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 winter include:

2/13-19 Mrs. Melanie Taormina	2/20-26 Rev. Gwen Bernstine
2/27-3/4 Pastors Jim/Kathy Behrens	3/5-11 Mrs. Dorothy Wagner
3/12-18 Rev. Gwen Bernstine	3/19-25 Fr. Dan Kovalak

**Listen today and tell others about this ministry!****MARK YOUR CALENDAR**United Churches 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Golf Tournament -

Thursday, September 27 at White Deer Golf Course

**UNITED CHURCHES FOOD PANTRY \*****Gail Burkhart, Coordinator 322-1657**

**O**ur Food Pantry is getting settled into our new space at 600 Campbell Street, on the corner of Campbell St. and Memorial Ave. in Williamsport. We're still working hard to 'refine' our new space and procedures to serve both clients and food donors. It's going so well that no one minds the extra effort, thought and muscles needed to get us settled in our new home. We are all enjoying the space, great parking and flat sidewalks with no sewage to wade through... it's just a blessing every day.

Our clients have all expressed their appreciation that we're back to a regular schedule with much needed food for their cupboards. They all seem anxious to 'catch' up with us about their lives and families and take time to talk to us about their concerns and worries. That's a part of the pantry that most folks don't know or see, but we feel that it's as important to be there for them on those issues as it is to help them with their food choices. These are people who have somehow lost their way in our crazy world, and who knows, perhaps what they see in us or hear from us will help them turn things around. We are also seeing many new clients and clients that are transferring because we're in a more convenient location for them.

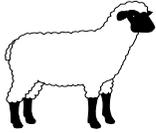


For now, it's all good in the United Churches Food Pantry world and we thank one and all for the parts they played in making it happen. When persons have to ask for food, in most instances, it's difficult and making the physical aspect of that process easier just helps us all to obey the mandate that we've been given 'to feed My children'. Toward that end, we are grateful for the following food donations this month:

**Jelly****Saltines****Jello****Tea and Coffee****Spaghetti Sauce****Flavored Oatmeal Packets****Canned Veggies** (we have abundant corn from the federal gov't)**Pasta** (egg noodles, elbows, spaghetti noodles, penne)**Plastic Grocery Bags** (recycle them with us instead of the stores!)**Granola Bars****Raman Noodles****Canned Tuna****Mac-N-Cheese****Pork-N-Beans**

As always we appreciate all that you do for us and since this is February, the 'heart' month, know that we pray from our hearts for blessings for each of you.

## SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS\*



**J. Morris Smith, Th. D.,**  
**Contact at: 322-6538**

AS THE FATHER SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU”

I am often asked, “Why did you become shepherd of the streets? What motivates you to do this ministry day in and day out? Don’t you get worn down by all the disheartening cases?” I consider ministry to the poor to be the highest form of serving Jesus Christ.

As the Son of God, the Father sent Jesus through the virgin womb of a humble girl from an insignificant hill-country village of which it was later said that nothing good had ever come. This handmaid of the Lord said of Him while still carrying the Holy Child in her womb. “He has scattered the proud, He has lifted up the humble, He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

As the King of Kings, He was sent past the throne room, past the bedroom, past the hotel room, to a barren grotto at the edge of town, where sheep were sheltered, born the lowest so that He could scoop up all mankind in His incarnation.

And there, in that place, wrapped in swaddling cloth and lying in a manger, He was first worshiped, not by theologians or rabbis, nor prophets or priests, but by shepherds, the poorest of the poor, the most shunned, disfranchised, and distrusted of the culture.

As the Son of Man He was sent to be raised in His mother’s hometown, a place called Nazareth, and there He would be prepared, not by tutor or governor, nor by academy or seminary, but in a humble carpenter’s shop.

At thirty years of age, He was sent by the Father away from that home to fulfill His charter to “preach the good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed.”

His mission would take Him first to Judea where He would be introduced by a prophet in camel’s hair who ate locusts and wild honey with words like: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for Him...produce fruit in keeping with repentance.” When asked how one produced such fruit, John would proclaim: “If you have two tunics, you should share one with the person who has none...and the one with food should do the same.”

As Savior of the world, He embarked on three years of ministry in which He dared to reach beyond legal and social barriers to touch a leper, raise a dead girl, be touched by a bleeding woman, and confront demons...all against religious and cultural indoctrination. He reached out to a ruthless tax collector named Zacchaeus, a woman of the streets named Mary Magdalene, and a smelly beggar named Bartimaeus...all against the moral sympathies of His day.

He would eat at the sinner’s table, because “they need a physician”, ask for a drink from the hand of a Samaritan adulteress because “the field is white unto harvest”. His inner circle included poor uneducated fisherman, a tax collector, a terrorist, and a traitor.

As the Word by which all things were created, He became flesh and with human voice spoke wonderful things...words which empowered the lame to walk, gave sight to blind eyes, opened deaf ears, and stilled palsied hands. They were words that gave hope to those crushed by economic disparity, ostracized by social discrimination, paralyzed by political despotism, segregated by racial disdain, and excluded by religious decree.

And so, in like manner as He came and did, He so sends us to do what He did and say what He said, with compassion for the harassed and the helpless caught by the inequities of economy and culture...the marginalized, the frightened, and the panicked.

And that, beloved, is all the motivation I need, all the excitement I need, and all the satisfaction I could hope for, giving me strength, healing and joy.

Some of the ways you help serve Jesus Christ by reaching out to the poor is by providing hygiene items, bedding and baby needs. We also appreciate the monetary contributions to fund our general budget to keep our lights on and Shepherd Staff paid, and the donations for the discretionary and prescription funds. The list of hygiene items are:

**Regular sizes please...**

- Deodorant      Toothpaste and Toothbrushes
- Soap              Shaving Cream and Razors
- Tissues          Shampoo and Conditioner
- Toilet Paper    Women’s Hygiene Products
- Combs            Blankets/Sheets/Pillowcases
- Nail Clippers   Towels and Wash Cloths
- Baby Diapers, Wipes, Shampoo, Powder, Oil, Q-Tips

**United Churches**  
**Is Your Church**  
**E - X - T - E - N - D - E - D**  
**In Ministry**

### WEDNESDAY ECUMENICAL LUNCHES\*

**J**oin us from 12 to 1 p.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. The 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 Gwen, Office-322-1110 if you are not a regular attender will help the caterer know how much food to prepare. (Call Gwen at Cell-419-1464 to check for weather cancellation.)



#### FEBRUARY:

- 15- **Rev. J. Morris Smith, Th.D.**, Shepherd of the Streets, *“Serving the Poor”*
- 22- **Mr. Robert and Rev. Gwen Bernstine**, Presidential Hobbyists, *“Happy Birthday Mr. President (George Washington and Others)”*. An *Ash Wednesday Service* with communion and imposition of ashes will be held in the Sanctuary at 1 for all who are interested.
- 29- **Rev Bob Hickox**, Executive Director, Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity, *“Faith In Action”*

#### MARCH:

- 7- **Ms. Susan Duchman**, VP of Operations, Chief Nursing Officer, Susquehanna Health System, *“The Tower from a Care-giver and Patient Perspective”*
- 14- **Rev. Dr. Pamela Ford**, Pastor, Pine St. United Methodist Church, *“Understanding Your Grandchildren”*
- 21- **Ms. Wendy McCormick**, Harpist, **Ms. Lucy Henry**, Flutist, *“Celtic and Old Time Favorites”*
- 28- **Mr. Eugene Breisch**, **Ms. Marciline Brown**, and **Mr. Scott Williams**, Project Impact and Bridge Haven, *“Helping Families of Inmates”*

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES\*

**L**eadership Conference: The Northumberland Presbytery is holding a free seminar February 18 at Montoursville Presbyterian Church from 9-Noon. It is open to all Clergy and Lay Leaders. A Certificate of Continuing Ed. is available. Call the Presbytery office to register or for details at 570-368-3906. Classes offered are:

- The Church Unleashed: How To Harness The Power Of Media To Share The Gospel With The Un-Churched Throughout The Susquehanna Valley.
- Interwoven: Prayer – Expanding Our Hearts in the Presence of God.

**O**lder Adult Ministries Workshop: Albright LIFE, 901 Memorial Ave., Wmspt. is offering this workshop for Lay Leaders, Pastors and other interested persons to help congregations reach out to older adults. It will be held Saturday, February 18 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.. There is no charge but reservations are needed as soon as possible. Contact them at 570-322-5433 or [tracy.hass@albrightcare.org](mailto:tracy.hass@albrightcare.org).

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

*from our Christian Social Concerns Committee*

**H**e defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me? (*Jeremiah 22:16*) Who is defending the cause of the poor today – politicians, business leaders, us? Jeremiah and Jesus make clear in whom and how we are to find God. Let’s make a personal and collective Lenten resolution to defend the cause of the poor and needy.

**Lycoming County Unemployment Rate:** The preliminary rate of unemployment for Lycoming County for December 2011 was 7.2%.

**Food Stamps Are in Jeopardy:** SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) formerly the Food Stamp Program, is in the news because of comments made by some presidential candidates. Below are several things you probably don’t know about the program.

**A large and growing share of SNAP households are working households.** In 2010, more than three times as many SNAP households worked as relied solely on welfare benefits for their income. The share of SNAP households with earnings has continued growing in the past few years — albeit slowly — despite the large increase in unemployment. One reason why SNAP serves more working families is that, for a growing share of the nation’s workers, having a job has not been enough to keep them out of poverty.

**SNAP responded quickly and effectively to the recession.** SNAP spending rose considerably when the recession hit. That’s precisely what SNAP was designed to do: respond quickly to help more low-income families during economic downturns as poverty rises, unemployment mounts, and more people need assistance. In 2010, for example, SNAP kept more than 5 million people out of poverty and lessened the severity of poverty for millions of others.

**Today’s large SNAP caseloads mostly reflect the extraordinarily deep and prolonged recession and the weak recovery.** Long-term unemployment hit record levels in 2010 and has remained extremely high. Today, 43 percent of all unemployed workers have been out of work for more than half a year; the previous post-World War II high was 26 percent in 1983.

**SNAP’s recent growth is temporary.** The Congressional Budget Office predicts that over the long term, SNAP is not growing faster than the economy. So, it is not contributing to the nation’s long-term fiscal problems.

*Sources: Center for Budget Priorities and Bread for the World*

**What can I do to defend those who participate in SNAP?** Learn more about SNAP and how you can take action by visiting the ecumenical resources of Bread for the World at [www.bread.org/ol/2012/](http://www.bread.org/ol/2012/)

**Church Women United's  
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

Friday, March 2 at 1:30 p.m.

Church of the Savior, Lutheran

533 North Grier Street, Williamsport

**L**et Justice Prevail is the theme of Church Women United's World Day of Prayer Service this year. The women of Malaysia, who prepared this service, remind us that our harmony as a people is rooted in peace and welcome. They ask us to focus our prayers on nurturing and empowering a welcoming and peaceful community.

Walker and catheter bags and lap robes will be collected at this service to be distributed at area nursing homes. Pre-cut crinoline for our Christmas stocking project (which is collected in November) will be available at this celebration.

Church of the Savior is handicapped accessible. The front entrance has a chair lift. Parking is available on street or in the lot south of the church. Plan to enjoy the social hour which follows the celebration.

Also, please note on your calendar the May Friendship Day Celebration is scheduled for Friday, May 4. The luncheon will be at Noon and the program at 1:15. Details will be announced at the March celebration.

**CREATION CORNER**

*from our Christian Social Concerns Committee*

**Religious Responses in Confronting  
the Challenge of our Climate Crisis**

**C**limate change is perhaps the gravest calamity our species has ever encountered. Its impact could dwarf that of any war, any plague, any famine we have confronted so far. It could make genocide and ethnic cleansing look like sideshows at the circus of human suffering.

*-George Monbiot\**

Engaging efforts with the secular scientific community, religious approaches to the global issue of climate change are many and varied. The February "National Preach-In on Global Warming" coordinated by Interfaith Power & Light (IPL), gathered many resources now available at [www.InterfaithPowerandLight.org](http://www.InterfaithPowerandLight.org) to respond to global warming.

Examples include denomination-specific sermon preparation notes and guides for reflections, devotionals, Bible studies and youth activities. Hand-outs explain what global warming is, why we should care, and how it is a faith issue. Putting faith into action by encouraging safeguards for clean air quality receives a high priority of social commitment.

Of especial interest is the IPL 30-minute DVD, "Preaching for the Planet: Interfaith Messages on Global Warming," with narrators from the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist and Islamic faith communities. This is another visual media example in the tradition of earlier efforts, such as the

DVD "Blessed Earth: Serving God, Saving the Planet" that was prepared for the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, ([www.blessedearth.org](http://www.blessedearth.org)).

The 2006 DVDs "ReVision: What If?" and "The Great Warming" ([www.thegreatwarming.com](http://www.thegreatwarming.com)) were produced in association with the National Assoc. of Evangelicals.

Documentary films originating in the secular community include "The 11th Hour", ([www.11thhourfilm.com](http://www.11thhourfilm.com)) and, of course, "An Inconvenient Truth" based on Al Gore's book by the same title.

No matter what your source of information on climate change, be it The Union of Concerned Scientists, the leading science-based nonprofit working for a healthy environment and a safer world ([www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org)); or the church and climate resources from the ecojustice program of the National Council of Churches ([www.nccecojustice.org/resources](http://www.nccecojustice.org/resources)) and their upcoming Earth Day 2012 emphasis on "The Ethics of Energy", it seems imperative that our faith communities have much to offer and apply in providing a dialogue toward a solution in confronting the challenge of our climate crisis.

\*The George Monbiot quote is taken from the liner notes of the music CD "Rhythms Del Mundo/Cuba" produced in cooperation with Artists' Project Earth (APE), that "aims to help create a better world by bringing the power of music and other arts to 21st century challenges.

**YOKEFELLOW PRISON MINISTRY (YPM)**

**Rev. Danesta Whaley, Council Director - 326-6868**

SO... WHOSE JOB IS IT ANYWAY??

**F**ocus for a moment on HIS words to us saints – GO! Make disciples..(Mt. 28:19) Go! Into all the world (Mark 16: and Go! Bear fruit (Jo. 15:16)

Yokefellow Prison Ministries goes weekly to 'the least of these' with a message of hope. Here is one of our volunteers, sharing his brief testimony of the ministry.

What's a "good kid" like me doing in a room surrounded by accused rapists, child molesters, thieves, and murderers? Well, there but for the grace of God is myself!

I've been involved in Yokefellow Prison Ministry for 9 years now. I go to the Lycoming County Prison's multi-purpose room every Thursday night for 90 minutes. After a brief welcome where I state who we are and why we're getting together, we'll then spend the first 30 minutes singing out of an old hymnal while I play guitar. What I can't do skillfully I make up with vigor.

The rest of the time we get into the Word, always oriented around small group discussions. I hate lectures myself because I space out after the first 5 minutes, so why impose such a horrible thing on the inmates? These guys are stepping out of an institutional environment filled with blaring televisions, yelling, fighting, cursing and senseless chatter

-continued on page 6

*Yokefellow - continued from page 5*

all day long. The calm Yokefellow environment provides an atmosphere of respect where we listen to each other, really listening, not just nodding heads automatically, and when possible, bouncing off the comments made.

Being a county prison, we don't have the guys for very long so my desire is to say something that sticks. The message of the Cross is outrageous enough so my message has to similarly be outrageous. My prayer is "Lord, help me to think outside the box so that these guys can be delivered out of the boxes they find themselves in." (by Lynne Whelden)

There is room for more to co-labor with us! We recently held a volunteer training and it is amazing to see who the Lord chooses to Go and make disciples (Us!) **SO WHOSE JOB IS IT ANYWAY?** Ours! Come and be a part with us. Call our office and set up an appointment to see us. We will fit you into the place HE desires. Let's GO together! We are always willing to come speak about our ministry. Pray, help, donate and GO! Yokefellow Prison Ministries, 1200 Almond St., Williamsport, PA 17701

#### EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**W**omen's Lenten Breakfast: Women are invited to join with the women of New Covenant United Church of Christ for a Women's Lenten Breakfast on Saturday, February 25 at 8:30 a.m. There will be a time of preparation for lent, a great breakfast and good fellowship. There is no charge for this breakfast, but reservations are appreciated. Call New Covenant UCC, 202 East Third St., Williamsport, at 570-326-3308.

**S**pecial Invitation to Clergy and Church Members: You are invited to the Open House for the new *Susquehanna Tower at Williamsport Regional Medical Center*. The Open House will be held Sunday afternoon, February 26. Please come and enjoy refreshments, a tour of this new facility, and a gift bag.



The dedication ceremony that was also scheduled for that afternoon was held earlier as staff and workers got ready to open the facility. There will be a special opportunity this spring for clergy and lay leaders of our faith communities to get to see the beautiful new chapel that is at the heart of the Susquehanna Tower and discover details about the facility.

The heart of Susquehanna Health's healing mission is a Christian Faith-Based Identity. The Rev. Dr. John Charnock, SH Director of Pastoral Care asks congregations to please pray God's blessing upon this new building and staff.

**P**ro-Life Prayer Breakfast: The Susquehanna Valley Chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life will host a Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, March 24, 2012 beginning at 9:30 a.m. It will be held at the Holiday Inn Express, Williamsport, in the Grand Ball Room. The principal speaker will be J. Howard Langdon. Howard has been an attorney with an office in Muncy for over 36 years. He and his wife, Rachel, reside outside Lairdsville on a small farm where they raised their three sons and enjoy their three grandsons. They are active members of the Moreland Baptist Church. Howard graduated from Washington and Jefferson College and Rutgers Law School (Newark). For the past twenty years Howard has served as chair of the Lycoming County Life Chain Coordinating Committee. Breakfast Buffet \$13 Adult - \$10 Children 12 & under. RSVP by March 10 to 570-745-3328 or 570-398-0722.

**A**ARP Tax-Aide: Free tax help is available for taxpayers with low and moderate income with special attention to those age 60 and older, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at STEP Office of the Aging, 2138 Lincoln Street, Williamsport. Appointments are needed, call 570-323-3096. Bring with you:

- copy of last years income tax return(s)
- W-2 forms from each employer
- unemployment compensation statements
- SSA-1099 form if you were paid SS benefits
- all 1099 forms showing interest, dividends, assets sold, misc. income, pension or annuity payments
- all forms indicating federal income tax paid
- dependent care provider information
- all receipts/canceled checks if itemizing deductions
- SS cards/documents for yourself and dependents.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRIES

**M**ake Love Blankets for Hospice: Wrap a patient in love at end of life by donating a handmade blanket. Every patient who comes into the Gatehouse receives a handmade blanket and now their supplies are extremely low. They rely on blanket donations from the community. Blankets should be approximately 48' x 72'. They should be quilted, knit or crocheted and only made from soft new materials. The blankets can be dropped off at Susquehanna Home Care and Hospice, Divine Providence Hospital, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, M-F from 8-5pm. Monetary donations towards a blanket can also be made to Susquehanna Home Care and Hospice. For details call 320-7690 or 1-800-848-2213.

**UNITED CHURCHES CHALLENGE 2012****“HomeMade Missions”**

**T**he Board of Directors of the United Churches of Lycoming County expresses a deep word of appreciation to our congregations, ecumenically minded individuals, our own board, the Amazing Grace participants and all the golfers who shared in our first annual tournament. With your support we reversed the trend of taking financial resources out of investments, in fact we took none out in 2011.

Thank you good friends for responding to the 2011 Challenge. We will be able to continue to respond to needy family emergencies through our Shepherd Ministry, maintain our Food Pantry (now at The Center), provide a Campus Ministry at Penn College, conduct services at retirement homes and sponsor settings and events that lift unity and cooperation.

Our 2012 Challenge will be to continue special giving efforts like those above. However, as we look around the county, our churches are creating and maintaining some inspiring ministries that illustrate what United Churches is all about. So this year we will be highlighting a few examples of what we are calling “HomeMade Missions” which come out of the heart and soul of our congregations. These efforts are local, indigenous and respond to human need as perceived in the challenging words of Jesus. This month we spotlight:

**Montoursville Presbyterian Church Retiree Lunch**

In November, 2008 Faye Konkle and Judy Shimp, members of Montoursville Presbyterian Church (MPC) approached their church board (the Session) about the possibility of serving a free lunch for retirees. Fay and Judy would take responsibility for the meal including scheduling, cooking, advertising and recruiting help. The Session approved and granted \$75 seed money.

The fourth Friday of the month was chosen as the normal date for the lunch. Everyone would be seated, a blessing asked, and church volunteers would serve each person. Meals would also be delivered to shut-ins. Free advertising was obtained through the Sun-Gazette, Webb Weekly and East Lycoming Shopper.

The first lunch was served in January 2009 with 50 in attendance. A free-will donation basket collected enough to pay for the lunch and return the seed money to Session. Each month attendance increased and currently 100-125 folks are served. It is also their practice to observe Lent by serving meatless meals on these Fridays, which many appreciate because that is their custom. Guests are from many backgrounds and there is no limit on who

may attend. The only request is that they be retired or unable to work.

The entire congregation enjoys this mission and 20-25 volunteers always come to by 10 a.m. to help prepare, serve and wash dishes. They also make home baked good. A nurse from the congregation also offers blood pressure checks to those who want them.



Fellowship has become wonderful! The congregation has gotten to know each other and the community much better. The congregation works as a team, both men and women pitching in to get everything done. And the free will basket always provides enough money for the cost of the food with a little left over to share with others for various needs.

They are now entering their fourth year and report that none of them have lost their enjoyment of this activity. Faye Konkle writes, “We feel it is a golden opportunity for God’s people to share the love of Christ with others. We see the folks who attend getting to know one another and savoring this time of fun food and fellowship.”

Does your congregation have a mission you think could be uplifted and featured?

Please contact Gwen at United Churches, 322-1110 or [director@uclc.org](mailto:director@uclc.org)

Watch for another spotlighted HomeMade Mission in March and see how God worked with Pine Street United Methodist Church and our Wonderful Community to create the Amazing Grace Homeless Shelter, now run by the American Rescue Workers!

### **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 morning, May 5 from 9-11:30 at First United Methodist Church. With the disasters around the world these kits are desperately needed. You can help insure that when disaster strikes, (like when we had flooding this past fall) these relief items are available. The school and emergency clean up buckets 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 box of 24 crayons
- 1 pencil sharpener (hand held)
- 1 large eraser
- 6 new pencils with erasers (unsharpened)
- 3 70-count spiral notebooks 8 ½ x 11" ruled paper (200/210 sheets) - no loose leaf or filler paper please
- 1 30-cm metric ruler (12") *(Rulers with inches on one side and centimeters on the other are OK.)*
- 1 cloth bag (12x14-14x17 inch) with cloth handle  
Cotton or canvas - no reusable shopping bags or backpacks



Place all items in a cloth bag. Patterns for bags are available at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)

**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 wide tooth comb
- 6 standard size band-aids
- 1 bar of soap (bath size still in wrapper)
- 1 toothbrush
- 1 nail clipper

*(\*\*\*\*\*Do not include toothpaste.*

*It will be added by CWS at shipping because of expiration dates)*

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
- 18 cleaning towels (reusable like Easy Wipes)
- 1 - 50-78 oz dry laundry detergent
- 1 - 12 oz bottle household cleaner (like Lysol)
- 1 - 24-28 oz bottle disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn)
- 1 - 100 ft Clothesline (or two 50 ft clotheslines)
- 5 - packages dust masks (like Benchtrop)
- 6 to 9 oz insect repellent (pump, drops or lotion, NOT aerosol)
- 5 - Scouring pads
- 7 - Sponges, assorted sizes
- 1 - Scrub brush
- 48-50 Clothes pins
- 2 Pairs latex gloves
- 1 Pair work gloves
- 1 - 24-28 bag heavy-duty trash bags (30-45 gallon)



**Please add \$3.00 each** for processing.

Please purchase all liquids in new, 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.)