



# UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

Published Monthly by the  
**UNITED CHURCHES OF LYCOMING COUNTY**  
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*Issued mid-monthly, September through May with special e-mail only summer issues.. Items marked with an asterisk may be of special interest to your congregation. Deadline to submit articles - First of each month.*

VOLUME XXXI NUMBER 1

JANUARY 14, 2014

**Please notify us if you change your e-mail address**

**— Thank You** for receiving our Newsletter via E-Mail.  
*It is a wonderful donation of postage, office supplies and volunteer time.*  
*Please send it on to others who can make use of the information.*

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

**H**as Christ Been Divided? (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:13) is the theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18-25). Begun in 1908, these days have been set aside each year so that Christians the world over may share the prayer of Jesus: “that all may be one... that the world may believe” (John 17:21). The following events have been scheduled to help in your observance.

1/18-25 - **Special Devotions** for each day will be provided by Gwen Bernstine on our Telephone Devotion Line, reachable 24 hours a day at 570-322-5762.

1/22 - The **Ecumenical Lunch** program at Noon at Pine Street UMC, 441 Pine St. The Rev. Dr. John Charnock help us understand how Christians seek unity in Christ by gathering in faith forums. We look forward to joining them for lunch (\$6) and these programs. If you are not a regular attender please contact us at 322-1110 or [director@uclc.org](mailto:director@uclc.org) to help us prepare.

1/24 - **Service of Prayer at Holy Cross Orthodox Church**, 1725 Holy Cross Lane (Next to St. Ann's Catholic Church on Northway Rd. and Sheridan St.) Friday at 7:00 p.m. All are invited to attend. A fellowship time follows.

**P**romoting Peace Within Our Community is the theme of this year's **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebrations**. We will join with brothers and sisters of all faiths to celebrate the King holiday, honoring the civil-rights leader's legacy through the following events...

1/15 - The **Ecumenical Lunch** program at Noon at Pine Street UMC, 441 Pine St. **Pastor Dorothy Anderson** will speak on the topic “**Let Freedom Ring**”.

1/18 - **Peace Walk** beginning at **9 am** at the corner of Campbell Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard and walking to Lycoming College's Recreation Center on East Fourth Street.

1/18 - **Day of Service** beginning at **9:45 am** at Lycoming College's Recreation Center, (registration begins at 9 am). The program includes speakers, Judge Marc Lovecchio and Rev. Adam Kitrell and special music by the After School Counts Singers from The Center. The Service Project will begin at 10:30 and 40,000 meals will be assembled for those in need.

1/20 - Tim Wise, a prominent anti-racism writer and educator will bring a Keynote Address at the Klump Academic Center of Pennsylvania College of Technology at 6 p.m. **-details for each event on page 2**

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

## KING EVENTS

- continued from page 1

**D**r. King Day of Service: Saturday, January 18, 2014. Those participating will assemble 40,000 food packs for our North Central Food Bank.

- ★ The day will begin with a peace walk starting at 9 am at Campbell Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard and end at the Lycoming College Recreation Center about a mile way. Walk - Sing - Carry a banner or a poster - Enjoy! (Several people will provide rides to anyone needing a ride back to their car after the day of service.)
- ★ **The Day of Service** at the Lycoming College Recreation Center. **Guest speakers**, Judge Marc Lovecchio, and Reverend Adam Kittrell will help us to discover ways to Promote Peace throughout the year within our communities. We will enjoy special **music** from the After School Counts Singers from The Center. Everyone will then go to one of 17 assembly lines to put together **40,000 meals** of macaroni and cheese or beans and rice. The sealed packages will be distributed by the Central PA Food Bank throughout our area. **Children's activities** will be available for young ones who are unable to participate in the food packing. **Lots of help is needed, so put this on your calendar and plan to come.**
- ★ **Donations** toward the cost of the meals (it costs 25¢ per meal or \$1 to feed a family of four) continue to be accepted/ Please visit the Indiegogo.com website to make a donation at <http://igg.me/at/mlkservice> .

**A**nti-Racism Speaker, **Tim Wise** will be the Featured Speaker at Pennsylvania College of Technology on **Monday, January 20 at 6 p.m.** at the Klump Academic Center.

**Tim Wise**, the prominent anti-racism writer, educator and speaker, will deliver this keynote address. In 1990, Mr. Wise received anti-racism activist training from the New Orleans-based People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. He then began working as a youth coordinator and went on to work with the Louisiana Coalition Against Racism and Nazism which was founded to defeat political campaign candidate David Duke. Mr. Wise has worked with various community organizations on the anti-apartheid movement, public housing, and affirmative action.

This appearance by Tim Wise, whose six books include his most recent, "*Dear White America: Letter to a New Minority*," and his first, a memoir, "*White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son*," is free and open to the public. A graduate of Tulane University, he has contributed essays to 25 books, has appeared on hundreds of radio and television programs, is a regular contributor to discussions about race on CNN, and has been featured on ABC's "20/20."

A question-and-answer session, reception and book-signing will follow Wise's speech. At least one of his books will be on sale at this event.



**Tammey Aichner, Coordinator**

Contact at: 570-419-5376 or [ucm@ucl.org](mailto:ucm@ucl.org) .

**O**ur students have enjoyed their winter break and hopefully have returned refreshed. Even though school was out, that didn't mean they were inactive. The first weekend of December, we rang the Salvation Army bell in front of KMart. The weekend prior to Christmas, we shopped for and delivered gifts for 2 deserving boys.

Thank you to our January pastors for Faith Talks, Captain Debbie Engel (Salvation Army), Pastor Timothy Hartzell (Faith Wesleyan Church) and Rev. Gwen Bernstine (United Churches).

We have had great support from all of you in contributing information to our first newsletter, "The Flame". Thank you. Please continue to send information to [ucm@ucl.org](mailto:ucm@ucl.org) for inclusion.

**CALLING ALL COOKS!** We are still looking for volunteers to make soup for our fundraiser. Do you have a family favorite? Please contact me so that we can plan accordingly. Do you just like to eat? We need you, too. Look for our order form next month!

**DIAL - A - DEVOTION \***

Have you called yet?

The number is 570-322-5762.

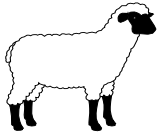
It's available 24 hours a day.



**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 devotionalists include:

1/13-17 Pastor Dianna Harrod 1/18-26 Rev. Gwen Bernstine  
1/27-2/2 Pastor Dorothy Anderson 2/3-9 Pastors Jim & Kathy Behrens  
2/10-16 Dr. Margaret Balliet 2/17-23 Mrs. Dorothy Wagner

Listen today and tell others about this ministry!



## SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS\*

**J. Morris Smith, Th. D.,**  
*Contact at: 570-322-6538*

### WAR ON POVERTY?

**F**ifty years ago (1/9/64) President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed “War on Poverty”. Government figures showed 19% of the population were in that category. Today, fifty years later, 15% are in that designation, even though population has increased. Not much to show for billions of dollars that has been thrown at the problem. Why so little result?

The root of a problem is usually exposed by the goal of a program (to eliminate poverty). When God sent His Son to save every human from the bonds of sin, He established His plan on truth and righteousness. God accounted for what was right, not what was needed. When government seeks to break the chains of poverty, they establish rules that create fairness, so the aim of any government program is to meet a need, but it assumes that the need is caused in every person by the same faults. It is indeed a war: it is righteousness versus fairness. The Latin word “jus” means right...as related to truth. It is man-made rules establishing fairness versus God-ordained truth establishing justice. It is the right thing to do, because it is the only thing that truly meets the need.

Justice is the principle virtue of the will. Particular justice is the virtue by which one with constant and perpetual will gives what is objectively right to another. Did you ever notice that the statue of Justice is blindfolded. This is to prohibit judgment by “fairness” and to establish a prudent decision on what is right. The scales she holds in her hand are balanced...impossible if seeking to place right on one plate and fairness on the other. Was Jesus fair to the other nine disciples when He allowed only Peter, James, and John to enter into the mysteries (raising the dead girl, the transfiguration, the inner sanctum of Gethsemane)? No, but He was right. Was it fair for the master to give one servant 5 talents, another 2, and another one? No, but he was right and just in doing so.

Fairness is in the eye of the beholder...justice is in the righteousness of God. To be just, one cannot establish some rule to fit all situations. To apply justice to any situation, it must consider “at this time, at this place, under these circumstances”.

Jesus said that the poor you have with you always. This is not to say that a poor person cannot move up, and conversely, a successful person cannot fall. But, it does let us know that people are very diverse in applying their faculties. All men are created equal only in the sense that we all have been made in the image and likeness of God. How God’s

investment has been managed (various social-familial-educational factors apply) is the issue. Fairness is never the issue.

“O God, give your judgment to the king; your justice to the son of kings; that he may govern your people with justice, your oppressed with right judgment, that the mountains may yield their bounty for the people, and the hills great abundance, that he may defend the oppressed among the people, save the poor and crush the oppressor.” -Psalm 72:1-4

**Shepherd of the Streets Celebrates 25 years  
 Be A Part Of this Vital Service!  
 Donate \$25.00 to the Shepherd of the Streets.**

**W**e celebrate 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Shepherd of the Streets. This program has touched more than 75,000 lives during its existence and continues every day to...

- assist people who need hope and peace in the midst of poverty and need.
- advocate with local agencies and health services

The current Shepherd, Dr. Morris Smith defines poverty as the “absence of hope.”

Imagine finding oneself, an out of work single parent, with the gas, electric and water bills due, a sick child in need of critical, life maintaining medication, the rent is three months behind and the refrigerator is broken. Each day brings a new set of challenges and demands; just breathing seems to be a struggle, which bills should be paid, where the next meal is coming from. As one can imagine, life feels empty, overwhelming and hopeless. The need is so great and resources are so limited.

Any one or a combination of these human conditions needs a community response. In 1988, the United Churches of Lycoming County organized a single humanitarian effort

*- continued on page 4*

## Shepherd of the Streets Celebrates 25 Years - *continued from page 3*

in the form of an organized ministry to “assist the needy in our midst.” Twenty-five years later the Shepherd of the Streets continues to provide spiritual, financial and material aid to the disfranchised, the disabled, the sick, the marginalized and the rejected.

This simple and timeless philosophy of neighbors helping neighbors in time of need is orchestrated through the collective generosity of area churches, private foundations and caring individuals. The Shepherd of the Streets program seeks to enable and recharge those in our community who are crushed by economic disparity, social disadvantage, frightened and challenged.

The Shepherd of the Streets provides aid and assistance through:

- Guidance and Counseling
- Prescription Assistance
- Documentation
- Bedding
- Baby Diapers and Supplies
- Utility Help
- Dental, Audio and Visual Assistance
- Work Preparedness
- Transportation Assistance
- Hygiene Items

In addition the Shepherd of the Streets accepts financial support for four main areas.

- **Prescription Fund:** to assist the uninsured and under-insured with the costs of medications, glasses and transportation to medical appointments.
- **Utility Fund:** provided by grants from the Plankenhorn Foundation, this fund assists with the costs of oil, gas, electric and water.
- **Oral Surgery Fund:** for those who have been triaged by the Susquehanna Health Dental Clinic.
- **Discretionary Fund:** for those who need resources for getting into the job market, with documentation, travel for emergency family needs.

Since 2001, Dr. Smith has served as the Shepherd of the Streets in Lycoming County. He and his team of volunteers embody the biblical guidance of Matthew 25: 35-36, 40 “*I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me.... Inasmuch as you did for the least of these, you did it to me.*”

**We all need to be a part of the Shepherd of the Street efforts. Please open your hearts and generously support The Shepherd Of The Streets. Join in the effort to celebrate and keep the efforts going by encouraging the families of Lycoming County to contribute \$25.00 to the Shepherd of the Street Program by March 31, 2014.**

Send your donation to United Churches of Lycoming County, 202 East Third Street, Williamsport PA, 17701. Please note in the memo that it is for the Shepherd of the Streets. You can also make your donation online at [www.uclc.org](http://www.uclc.org). For questions call 570-322-1110.

### WEDNESDAY NOON ECUMENICAL LUNCHESES\*

**J**oin us Wednesdays for lunch and a program. The lunch line opens about 11:45 a.m. You're 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 lot north of the church from 11 to 1:30. No reservations are necessary. Call United Churches, 570-322-1110 if you're not a regular attender to help our caterer, Heidi Potter, know how to prepare. Both laity and clergy are welcome! (Call Gwen, 570-419-1464 to check for weather cancellation.)

#### JANUARY:

15- **Pastor Dorothy Anderson**, Co-Pastor, Love Unlimited, “*Let Freedom Ring*”

22- **The Rev. Dr. John Charnock**, Director, Mission Integration and Ethics, Susquehanna Health, **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: “Faith Forum: Christians Seeking Unity in Christ”**

29- **Captain Debbie Engel**, Auxiliary Captain, Salvation Army, “*Meeting the Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Needs of People of All Ages*”

#### FEBRUARY:

5- **Mrs. Becky M. Pryor**, Newberry Branch of NGA (Needlework Guild of America) “*Providing New Clothes for New Tomorrows for One Hundred Years*”

12- **Mr. Robert Bernstine**, Presidential Hobbieist, “*Happy Birthday Mr. Lincoln*”

19- **Mrs. Candi Watkins** and **Mrs. Carol Waltz**, Area Musicians, “*Love Songs*”

26- **Mrs. Carol Sides**, President, Lycoming/Clinton County NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) “*Education, Advocacy & Support for Individuals, Family Members, Providers & the General Public*”

Make plans to join us and bring a friend!



**WORSHIP LEADERS FOR 2014\***

**W**e still need a bit of help. We have put together and sent out the ministries schedule for 2014. The worship service schedule was complete (all slots full) but some dates didn't work for people, so we now have these vacancies, if you can help let us know.



**Sundays:**

- Valley View: 2 pm - April 20 (Easter)
- Rose View Center: 2 pm - March 30, August 31
- The Meadows: 3 pm - March 16

**Wednesdays:**

- Sycamore Home: 10:30 am - March 19, May 14, July 9, October 8

Please contact us at [uclc@sunlink.net](mailto:uclc@sunlink.net) or 570-322-1110.

**FOOD PANTRY \***

**Gail Burkhart, Coordinator 570-322-1657**

**E-mail - [foodpantry@uclc.org](mailto:foodpantry@uclc.org)**

**T**he beginning of a new year...a clean slate. Before you know it, we'll be grouching about things we resolved not to complain about for 2014! What am I saying?

That change is hard for us all, but the thing is that we have to keep on trying, we can't give up. Whether it's eating healthier, losing weight, exercising, complaining less, getting along better with our neighbors, whatever it is, we have to realize that change isn't going to happen overnight, it won't happen unless we put our best efforts into it, and I believe it won't happen if we don't pray about it!

Our elected officials have much work to do to balance federal programs for the poor. Some would say we give too much, too many handouts. While others say we need to do more for those that are 'the working poor', the unemployed. I'm not one to think that I have all the answers but I do know that a lot of work needs to be done to help our fellow citizens enjoy all the benefits and freedoms envisioned by our forefathers when they settled these awesome United States.

Having said that, until we can get all 'the wrinkles' ironed out so that it may be true that all our brother and sister citizens may be free of the yoke of poverty I truly believe that we have to help each other and one day we truly will be free and equal.

The supporters of the Churches of Lycoming County have much to be proud of in this arena. We do contribute to

the programs of the UCLC to help each other. The Food Pantry comes to mind immediately for me. The donations that came in our doors for the holidays were astounding! They not only provided food for the holidays but will help to carry us through the Winter.

We're so grateful to anyone who contributed to make that happen. In the month of December, which was a short month because of the way the holidays fell on the calendar, we served more than 400 people. That's amazing considering we were open until the 18<sup>th</sup> of December and the American Rescue Workers and Salvation Army gave food baskets and presents to many families to cover the time until we reopened in January.

But we need to stay on top of the situation and continue the effort to keep our neighbors who are food insecure, fed. There are items that we need in the pantry this month to do that:

- cereals (cold & hot, any flavor)*
- chunky soups*
- saltines*
- canned peas*
- canned fruits*
- pop tarts*
- pasta (any shape)*
- tuna fish*
- instant potatoes*
- popcorn*
- powdered drink mixes*
- spaghetti sauce*
- tea bags (regular flavor)*



Have a good month, stay warm & know that you are in our prayers and we hope that you return the favor and pray for us as well.

**S**ouper Bowl Sunday is one way to help our United Churches Food Pantry, or other groups in our area, to assist people in need. It is an effort to glorify God and care for "the least of these" by each worshiper giving a can of food or the cost of a can of food (\$1) on Super Bowl Sunday (February 2, 2014). Groups call 1-800-358-7687 on the day of the game (between noon and 5 p.m.) to report the amount collected, then send your funds/food to the charity of your choice. Reporting your collection enables the full impact of this simple act of caring to be determined and announced. In 2013 the grand total generated was \$7,477,285 collected in cash and food items by 8,100 groups, for their charities. Be part of a modern day miracle by getting your church on board. For details go to: [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org).

**POVERTY - A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE\****from our Christian Social Concerns Committee*

**T**he magi on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matt 2:11) In January, many Christians celebrated the Epiphany which commemorates the wise men who searched for Jesus. Having found him, they gave him precious gifts. God can be found in all people. Jesus showed love to those most in need. What talents, time, and treasure do we bring to serve those in need in our communities, nation, and the world?

**Immigration Is a Poverty Issue:** Soon after the visit by the magi, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph fled to Egypt for their safety. As we reflect on the migration of the holy family to Egypt, we recognize that they were pushed out by political conditions. Many today migrate from their homelands because of harsh economic conditions. They are pushed by poverty. Those who become refugees owing to civil or military strife very often encounter harsh conditions which may further push them along to seek safety and humane living conditions. How are we called to share our talents, time, and treasure? What are we called to do for those who seem to be living so far away? Globalization takes on a different meaning when we think of God's all-embracing love.

**Cuts to Unemployment Benefits Hurt Hundreds in Lycoming County:** On December 28, 2013 long-term unemployment benefits were cut. In Lycoming County, 840 persons\* lost their benefits that day. With a county poverty rate of 13.7%, the loss of benefits for these individuals and families is just one sign of further cuts pending unless Congress protects programs such as SNAP (food stamps) and WIC (nutrition for mothers and infants) which also face cuts in 2014. For many in our county, state, and nation – 2014 will not be a happy new year. (\*Source: Pew Research Center)

**Ecumenical Poverty Initiative – a Resource for Faith-based Statements and Suggestions for Action:** The goal of the Ecumenical Poverty Initiative is to empower and mobilize the faith community to speak and act to end the scandal of poverty in the United States. Churches have been powerful voices for generations on a range of defining social justice issues, most importantly the need to address poverty. Central to any Christian message is the call to care for the "least of these" – to love and care for our neighbors. With more people both in the United States and globally living on the economic margins, people of faith are drawing more deeply upon that rich tradition of social justice engagement to speak

out on the need to address the range of poverty issues, and create community practices and national policies that lift people from a life of poverty. For more information visit [www.faithendpoverty.org](http://www.faithendpoverty.org) .

**RESOLUTION ABOUT IMMIGRATION**

**T**he Board of Directors of the United Churches of Lycoming County" affirms that now is the time to pass just and compassionate immigration reform. Remembering that our Lord was a refugee during his early years, whose safe passage was ensured by the generosity of wise men/travelers/astrologers from other lands, we feel called upon to raise our collective prophetic voice on behalf of immigrants of our day. We, also, know that most of our ancestors were immigrants to this country.

Therefore we ask people of faith to support immigration reform and encourage Congressional support of new laws that....

Provide a path to citizenship for undocumented persons in the country:

- ◆ Preserves family unity as a corner-stone of our national immigration system;
- ◆ Provides legal paths for low-skilled immigrants including agricultural workers to come and work in the United States;
- ◆ Provides adequate support for refugees, asylees, vulnerable populations, and migrant survivors of violence;
- ◆ Restores due process protections to our immigration enforcement policies;
- ◆ Addresses the root causes (push factors) of migration, such as persecution and economic disparity;
- ◆ Stops the militarization of the border and stops enforcement programs for separating families and violating human rights.

We look forward to your support for justice inspired by faith in Jesus Christ.

The Board of Directors of United Churches unanimously approved this resolution at their December 19, 2013 meeting. We provide it here for your consideration as you make your own decisions and provide advocacy on this issue.

**NEWSLETTER MAILINGS:** If you can receive our Newsletter via e-mail please let us know. Not only is it much cheaper and less labor intensive to send it to you over the internet, but we find it takes at least a week to have it delivered after we take it to the post office. To make that change, contact Gwen at [director@uclc.org](mailto:director@uclc.org).

**CREATION CORNER***from our Christian Social Concerns Committee*

Environmental Aphorisms, Quotes, Quips, etc.

**P**erhaps you are looking for some shorthand way to perceive God's good Earth, to motivate you on behalf of the integrity of Creation, or redeeming it. Consider the following this year in your search.

- ▶ We've got to stop treating the Earth as dirt!
- ▶ "The question is not what you look at, but what you see." Thoreau
- ▶ "The children are our most endangered species." Daniel Berrigan SJ
- ▶ Dilution is still pollution; it's no solution, merely delusion.
- ▶ "The American people see themselves marching through wilderness, drying up marshes, diverting rivers, peopling the wilds, and subduing nature." Alexis de Tocqueville
- ▶ "The earth is all we have in common. It is what we are made of and what we live from, and we cannot damage it without damaging those with whom we share it." Wendell Berry
- ▶ "Food is the unifying fabric of humanity, connecting us to the earth and each other." Ed Kenney, chef
- ▶ "If we do not permit the earth to produce beauty and joy, it will not in the end produce food either." Joseph Wood Krutch
- ▶ If you can't spell it, or pronounce it, don't eat it.
- ▶ "If economic growth and ecological health aren't reconcilable, which do we choose?" Jay Griffiths
- ▶ "Our greatest problems result from the difference between how people think and how nature works." Gregory Bateson
- ▶ "Anyone who thinks you can have infinite growth on a finite planet is either a madman or an economist." Quaker economist Kenneth Boulding
- ▶ "We treat the earth like a business in liquidation." Herman Daly
- ▶ "We are already fighting World War III, and I'm sorry to say we are winning it. It is the war against the Earth." Ray Dasmann
- ▶ "What we most need to do is to hear within us the sound of the earth crying." Thich Nhat Hanh
- ▶ "Zen is simple. Simple! So simple: Infinite gratitude to the past, infinite service to the present, infinite responsibility for the future." Goto, a Zen roshi in Japan
- ▶ We are defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy.
- ▶ Judge each day not by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you plant.

- ▶ "Leave the coal in the hole, the oil in the soil, the gas under the grass." unattributed saying
- ▶ Use it up, wear it out, make do or do without.
- ▶ Renewable energy is homeland security.
- ▶ One solution comes up every morning (the sun!).
- ▶ Whenever there is a huge spill of solar energy, it's just called a nice day.
- ▶ Renewable Energy: The Answer is Blowing in the Wind.
- ▶ Renewable is Doable.
- ▶ The climate is changing faster than we are.
- ▶ Climate change is not a matter of faith; it is a matter of science.
- ▶ "Some may still deny the overwhelming judgment of science, but none can avoid the devastating impact of raging fires, and crippling drought, and more powerful storms." President Barack Obama
- ▶ The Holy Land is Everywhere.
- ▶ "There are no unsacred places. There are only sacred places and desecrated places." Wendell Berry
- ▶ "Oh Beautiful for smoggy skies, insecticided grain, for strip-mined mountains majesty, above the asphalt plains. America, America, man sheds its waste on thee, and hides the pines with billboard signs, from sea to oily sea." George Carlin
- ▶ I pledge allegiance to the Earth, and all the Life which it supports, One Planet, in our care, irreplaceable, with sustenance and respect for all. Unattributed
- ▶ "Sing to the Lord, bless his name...Let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar...Let the fields exult...Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy." Psalm 96
- ▶ "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain..." Romans 8:22

**GOT CHURCH NEWS ?**

**L**ooking for more ways to promote your church events? Email information to [News@uclc.org](mailto:News@uclc.org) for possible inclusion in United Churches' ongoing event promotion. Include What / Where / When / web site / Facebook / Who For / Cost & details. Our broadcasting department will develop them for use in producing one minute weekly Public Service Announcements (PSA) for area radio stations, postings on Facebook, Twitter, Connect Williamsport, etc. Kathy and Lou Kolb who chair that department hope this effort will result in some more people attending area church events. Regardless, it would show the public that there are active churches inviting them to events.

**UNITED CHURCHES  
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. . . . . Member at Large
- Staff:
- Rev. Gwen Bernstine . . . . . Executive Director
  - Rev. J. Morris Smith Th.D., . . . . Shepherd of the Streets
  - Mrs. Patty Gohrs . . . . . United Churches Adm. Assistant
  - Ms. Toni Fogal . . . . . Shepherd Secretary
  - Ms. Gail Burkhardt . . . . . Food Pantry Coordinator
  - Mrs. Tammey Aichner . . . . . United Campus Ministry Coord.

**Mark Your Calendar**

**P**re Lenten Service will be held Sunday, March 2 at New Covenant United Church of Christ. Clergy are encouraged to vest and arrive by 7:15. This annual ecumenical service begins at 7:30 pm.

**C**hurch Women United's World Day of Prayer Service will be held Friday, March 7 at 1:30 p.m. Shiloh Baptist Church, 433 Walnut Street, Williamsport. Mark the date and plan to attend.

**YOKEFELLOW PRISON MINISTRY**

*Rev. Danesta Whaley - 570-326-6868*

North Central Regional Director

MY TIMES ARE IN HIS HANDS – Psalm 31:14

**H**APPY NEW YEAR to one and all! Thanking our Lord for HIS bountiful blessings each and every day. As was promised last month, here is a brief story/testimony of one dear Yokefellow volunteer, Dick Hess, Sr. who has ministered in the prisons for 27 plus years! God is always faithful as we make it our Aim to please HIM always. Our times are truly in HIS hands!

This time of year we hear many stories about journeys. "Over the River and through the woods to grandmother's house we go."

In Luke 2: 4 Joseph and Mary went from the town of Nazareth to Bethlehem. In Luke 2:15 The shepherds said let's go to Bethlehem to see this thing that has happened. In Matthew 2:1 Magi from the east came to Jerusalem.

In all of our lives we have numerous journeys. Little did I know 33 years ago when my wife and I were having some problems in our marriage, and decided to see a Christian counselor, that I was being prepared for a new journey. Through this counseling I learned there was such a thing as a workaholic, and I was one. After going through counseling for several years and spending 21 days in a drug and alcohol rehab center to overcome my addiction. God's plan for me, as promised in Jeremiah 29:11, started to become clear amidst this new journey. 2 Corinthians 1:4 God comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. This said to me loud and clear, do something with what you have learned about how you have been comforted.

My wife and I started and ran a Christ centered support group for several years dealing with damaged relationships. For the last 27 years this journey took me to a Yokefellow Prison Ministry at the Muncy SCI. Also for eleven years as spiritual advisor to a man at the Frackville SCI until he got transferred.

This journey, like most journeys required planning, preparation, sacrifice and work. Most important for me, on this journey, are the blessings I see the women of Muncy receive as they put into practice what they learn and see their lives changed in various ways.

John 13:17 Jesus said, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

– Yokefellow Volunteer Richard (Dick) Hess



### NEW DAY CENTER LOCATION NEEDED

**F**amily Promise of Lycoming County (FPLC) is in need of a new Day Center location. Redeemer Lutheran has asked them to move by March 1<sup>st</sup> so that they can get the building ready for their new pastor. FPLC is grateful for their support, they have charged \$1/year to FPLC to lease the building these past 3 years.

FPLC is committed to keeping homeless families together: they need a place to operate from. If you know of a place they might move to, please call Melissa Magargle, Executive Director, at 570-567-7103.

FPLC current Day Center is about 2500 square feet and houses two full time staff, volunteer secretary, secure space for families to store their belongings, gathering space for families during the day as needed, and storage space for donated items.

During 2013 FPLC, with the help of over 1000 volunteers, served 27 families, consisting of 80 people of which 41 were under the age of 18 (20 were under the age of 5). The average length of stay was 40 nights and they had over 3209 bed nights. 2013 was blessed with 2 babies born while their parents were in the program and new families also brought in a 2 week old baby and 2 month old baby.

FPLC provides not only food and shelter to families but also counseling, support, and training, as well as mentoring for graduates to help keep them in their home after graduation from the program.

### OUTREACH IN OUR COMMUNITY

**S**imply God 101: In today's society, texting is the quickest form of communication. It takes a matter of seconds to read a text message. There is an urgency to share God's word, so why not use the most popular and quickest form of communication? Simply God 101 does just that. This is an outreach ministry of First United Methodist Church in Williamsport that shares God's word thru the use of technology and social networking.

Simply God 101 was formed in 2012 as a grassroots effort to inspire and encourage individuals wherever they are on their walk with Christ. They do this by writing their own devotions and sending them to others via text messages and e-mails three-days a week, allowing people to stay connected to God and to each other throughout the week. The devotions are also posted on their web page at [www.simplygod101.com](http://www.simplygod101.com), Face-book and Twitter. As a result of Simply God 101, lives are being transformed. People look forward to the positive messages that come across their

mobile devices. The devotions stick with them personally and provide encouragement as they go about their day at work, home, and in social settings. Each time someone says "yes" to receiving devotions, we all "win one" for Jesus. After all sharing the love of Christ is not about a denomination, but is rather about sharing God's Kingdom.

For more information or to sign up for Simply God 101 devotions, please call or text your information to Melissa Lundy 570-419-0445 or Terry Garner 570-279-0167.

### EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**M**ontoursville Area High School Drama Class is presenting **James and the Giant Peach** on Saturday, January 18 and Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. at the Montoursville Area High School, 100 North Arch Street. Directed by Mrs. Denise Conner, admission is a canned or non-perishable food item for St. Anthony's Soup Kitchen in Williamsport.

**H**eat and Eat Event: The Jersey Shore Ministerium will have a **Soup and Chili Cook Off** on Sunday, January 19, 2014 from 2 - 4 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 236 South Main Street, Jersey Shore. A donation of \$1 will get you five sample tastes of soup. \$5 will get you five sample tastes of soup and then a bowl of the soup of your choice and bread and a beverage. You can also obtain a quart of soup for a \$5 donation. All proceeds will go towards the Jersey Shore Ministerium Fuel Fund

**W**inter Coats Needed: The West End Christian Community Center (WECCC) is badly in need of winter coats of all sizes. People are asking for them and we have sold out already, and winter has just begun! Thank you so much. God bless you for your time and talents. He is proud of you for using them. WECCC is at 901 Newberry Street (the corner of Newberry Street and West Fourth Street, and donations may be brought there Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9-2, Wednesday, 9-Noon and 4:30 - 7, Saturday 8:30 - Noon.

**L**ook Good...Feel Better is a workshop conducted by a trained cosmetologist to teach women with cancer how to understand and care for changes in skin and hair that may occur during treatment. There are two sessions coming up, one on Monday, February 3 at Susquehanna Health Cancer Center, Ground Level Entrance, Divine Providence Hospital from 11 am - 1 p.m. The other is at the Williamsport American Cancer Society Office, 1948 East Third Street (behind Mr. Sticky) on Monday, March 3 from 6-8 pm. Registration is required at least 3 days prior to a session by calling 1-800-227-2345.

## 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 in a new way this year. You can bring your kits to United Churches office during May. If possible please have them already boxed with all of the same kits in each box. With the disasters stretching our resources these blankets and kits are desperately needed. You can help insure that when disaster strikes, these relief items are available.

**PASTORS:** Please duplicate or forward 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.)