

UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

Published Monthly by the

United Churches of Lycoming County

202 East Third Street, Williamsport PA 17701

Phone 570-322-1110 E-Mail director@uclc.org

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 I

January 12, 2010

28th ANNUAL ECUMENICAL PRE-LENTEN SERVICE

7:30 P.M.

Sunday, February 14, 2010

Bethany Lutheran Church

369 Broad Street

Montoursville Pennsylvania

Speaker: The Rev. J. Morris Smith, Th.D.

Permanent Deacon, St. Joseph the Worker Parish

Shepherd of the Streets

Dr. Smith will challenge us as we get ready to begin the Lenten season to reflect upon our life together and our journey as disciples of Christ. His theme for the evening will be "In The Desert Forty Days"

Sunday, February 14th will be a wonderful opportunity for you 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. Plan to join us for this ecumenical celebration.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

At least once a year – traditionally from January 18-25 – many Christians take time to become more aware of the great diversity of ways of adoring God. Hearts are touched and people realize that their neighbors ways are not so strange.

This year the theme is "*You Are Witnesses of These Things*" It was chosen in Scotland when churches were, at the same time, preparing to celebrate the anniversary of the 1910 World Mission Conference on the theme "Witnessing to Christ Today", which marked the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement.

In our community there are a number of opportunities to get to know more about your neighbor Christians.

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

1/20 - *Ecumenical Lunch* program at Noon at Pine Street UM Church. Rev. Maurice Frontz, Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church & President of United Churches will help us reflect on the hymns that we sing and how it reflects our Unity.

1/20 - *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.) All are invited to attend. A fellowship time follows. - find more events on page 5

United Campus Ministry at Penn College
invites you to our Mission Fund Raiser:

Lasagna Dinner

with Special Musical Entertainment!

Wednesday, February 10th

5 pm - 7 pm

at

St. Paul - Calvary United Methodist Church

1427 Memorial Avenue, Williamsport

***** DINE IN OR TAKE OUT *****
meat/meatless Lasagna, salad, bread and dessert

Suggested donation

\$7.00 for Adults ~ \$3.00 for children under 12

Proceeds will go toward our Spring Break Mission Trip
to Montgomery, WV to help rebuild houses
damaged by flooding.

For more information contact Sharon Comini - 419-5376

CAMPUS MINISTRY *

Sharon Comini, Coordinator,

Contact at: 419-5376 or ucm@uclc.org

A new year is upon us and a new semester will be starting for the students at Penn College. We had a great fall semester and we are looking forward to more inspiring Faith Talks on Monday evenings on campus and our weekly dinner and worship services.

The semester will start with a talk on what it means to be a servant, as they prepare for their trip. The students will also be busy fundraising for their Spring Mission Trip to Montgomery, West Virginia. We will have a bake sale on campus, and on February 10 we will have our annual lasagna dinner at St. Paul Calvary United Methodist Church.

You have the opportunity to help us with these events.

- Do you love to cook or bake? If you do, you can offer to make a pan of lasagna or a cake for our event. If you don't cook or bake, you can join us for the dinner. If you don't eat lasagna, you can always support us prayerfully or financially. United Campus Ministry appreciates any type of support you can offer.
- Do you have a gift for talking with college students? You can always sign up and lead a Monday night Faith Talk, or just stop by and meet the students.

Let 2010 be the year to get involved in something worthwhile. Each of the ministries with United Churches is always in need of volunteers. If you would like to find out more about UCM, you can check our website at www.uclc.org. then click United Campus Ministry. Please keep the students at Penn College in your prayers as they head into another challenging semester. God's blessings to all of you.

VOLUNTEER FOR 2010 MINISTRIES*

We still have some openings in the institutional schedule for 2010. Clergy and laity are needed. To volunteer contact our United Churches office at 322-1110 or uclc@sunlink.net.

Nursing Home and Assisted Living Center Worship:

Sundays at 2 weekly:

Manor Care South Valley View

Sundays at 2:15 weekly: Manor Care North (2 services)

Sundays at 3: Weekly - Williamsport Home (2 services)

Monthly - The Hillside, The Meadows,
Rose View Court

Wednesdays at 10 weekly - Sycamore Manor

Thursdays at 11 weekly - Presbyterian Home

2:30 weekly - Rose View Center

Prison Worship Services (Sundays weekly)

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

PreRelease Center for Women - 3:30 p.m.

DIAL - 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 devotionists this fall include:

1/11-17 Rev. Danesta Whaley 1/18-24 Rev. Gwen Bernstine

1/25-31 Rev. Ken Wagner/Pizza 2/1-7 Rev. Bob Lauver

2/8-14 Rev. Jeff Zetto

Listen today and tell others about this ministry!

SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS*

J. Morris Smith, Th. D.,
Contact at: 322-8568

JOY TO THE WORLD, THE LORD IS COME

Who did not sing this beloved praise during the season just past? I regret that it is associated with Christmas and is not in mixed into the hymnal along with other songs, hymns, and spirituals for all seasons. If you read all the verses, there is nothing that would confine it to birth of the Savior. Let it be sung as often as there is a need to praise God for unfolding the great mystery, hidden for generations but now made known: "Christ in you, the hope of glory!"

For instance, according to St. Luke, after His baptism, Jesus returned to Nazareth where he had grown up and attended the synagogue, stood up to read, was handed the scroll of Isaiah wherein he found: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn". (Isaiah 61:1-2)* And then He dared to tell His hometown crowd, *"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing"*.

Did they burst forth into joy and thanksgiving that the Lord is come? Just think of it! What could be good news to the poor, but that their very poverty has prepared them to receive the good news of the kingdom of God? What great hope for the brokenhearted that their fears and impairments are to be blown away by the very love, hope, and mercy of Divine unction? What joy would fill those ensnared by Satan's lies, captured by their own desires that they would be free? What wonderful news that those imprisoned in the darkness of world would be pierced by the very light of eternal life? What love they would come to know that God himself will take vengeance on Satan's schemes, and destroy his stranglehold on all who mourn?

This babe in the manger is anointed to restore what the worm has eaten. The poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the prisoners, the mourners fill the rooms of Shepherd of the Streets daily. Though many have had the coming of Jesus penetrate their hearts, and many have drunk from the spring of living water, many more have not. As Jesus in the field of the poor, brought healing and comfort, guidance and hope, so the presence of the Shepherd of the Streets has opportunities to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for prisoners, and to comfort all who mourn.

Thank you for your gifts of money and material that extends the love of God from you to those in such need.

We continue to need: hygiene goods, baby needs, bed-

ding and blankets, money for prescription assistance, work clothing and shoes, glasses, medical transportation, utility help, documentation, and medical transportation, and most of all your prayers on our behalf.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Souper Bowl Sunday is one way to help our United Churches Ministries, or other Ministries who help people in these difficult times. The date this year is February 7, 2010. To join this effort to help the least of these by bringing in non-perishable food or funds contact them at 1-800-358-7687 or www.souperbowl.org.

FOOD PANTRY *

Gail Burkhart, Coordinator 322-1657

Our United Churches Food Pantry provides a three day supply of food to many in need in our community. This December we helped 155 households. This included 230 adults, 123 children, and 46 elderly, totaling 399 people.

HAPPY NEW YEAR to all!! And thanks to all for making it a Happy new Year for our clients! With the turn of the new decade, winter has arrived in full force also. And when winter comes, heating bills can't be far behind, as well as car repairs when the car won't start in the frigid temperatures, pipes that have a tendency to 'act up' when it's cold. The list just grows as you think about it. So it's time for us all to tuck ourselves in and count the days for Spring to get here.

Your outpouring of generosity for the holiday season was just amazing. and with that said, we're still using those donations to carry us over into the months ahead. There are some items that are always on our 'wish list':

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>noodles of noodles</i> | <i>spaghetti sauce</i> |
| <i>pasta noodles</i> | <i>canned fruit</i> |
| <i>saltine crackers</i> | <i>chunky soups</i> |
| <i>cake mixes & frostings</i> | <i>canned tuna</i> |
| <i>mac-n-cheese</i> | <i>hot chocolate</i> |

Have a safe, warm, blessed month & thanks for everything!

WEDNESDAY ECUMENICAL LUNCHESES*

Join us from 12 to 1 p.m. and you are always assured of 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. (Call Gwen at 419-1464 to check for snow cancellation.)

JANUARY:

- 13- **Rev. Ted Corcelius**, Pastor, Christ U.M. Church, Hughesville, *"Making Health Care Choices - Sharing the Gifts of Love and Peace"*
- 20- **Rev. Maurice Frontz**, Pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church and President, United Churches, *"Singing Our Faith Together: A Message for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity"*
- 27- **Mrs. Rita Spangler**, Vice President of Facility Development, Susquehanna Health System, *"Project 2012 Update"*

FEBRUARY:

- 3- **Mrs. Pam Burkholder**, Director, Expectations Women's Center of Williamsport *"Caring for Pregnant Women"*
- 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"*

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!

POVERTY - A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE*

from our Christian Social Concerns Committee

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. (Psalm 23:1-3) May we reflect on, understand, and act upon -- in the spirit of justice -- the connections between faith, the environment, and those experiencing poverty. May we change our vision from "I" to "we" united with all of God's creation.

Connections: Poverty and the Environment The U.N. estimates that between 2000 and 2004, some 262 million people were affected by climate-related disasters. Global climate change adversely affects many areas of

the world where people are challenged by food insecurity resulting from increasingly droughts or flooding.

Working Together for People in Need and the Environment: The impacts of climate change are felt around the world and the least developed countries are often the worst affected. There is today a broad acceptance of the need to reduce global CO2 emissions and to increase resilience to climate change.

Poor people depend on the environment for their livelihoods and well-being. Improved management of the environment and natural resources contributes directly to poverty reduction, more sustainable livelihoods and pro-poor growth. To fight poverty, to promote security and to preserve the ecosystems that poor people rely on for their livelihoods, we must place pro-poor economic growth and environmental sustainability at the heart of our economic policies, planning systems and institutions. Source: UN Poverty-Environment Initiative – Numerous resources are available at www.unpei.org

A Call to Integrate Faith, Economy and Ecology:

As hope-filled people, we stand in awe of Earth's goodness and its capacity to provide abundant life for all God's creation. We recognize our interconnection with Earth — with air, water, land, plants and other creatures. We recognize the dignity of the human person as an individual and as part of a community. We embrace our power and responsibility to create a human economy that fits within Earth's ecological boundaries, more authentically serves human needs and builds community. Source: www.faitheconomyecology.wordpress.com

The St. Francis Pledge: Making a Commitment and Taking Steps for Change

- TO PRAY and reflect on the duty to care for God's creation and protect people who are poor and vulnerable
- TO LEARN about and educate others on the moral dimensions of climate change
- TO ASSESS our participation – as individuals and organizations – in contributing to climate change
- TO ACT to change our choices and behaviors contributing to climate change
- TO ADVOCATE Christian principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact people who are poor and vulnerable.

Lycoming County Unemployment Rate Remains High

The preliminary rate of unemployment for Lycoming County (Williamsport Metropolitan Statistical Area) for November 2009 was 8.9%. This percentage was 2.6% higher than a year earlier.

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WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

West 4th Street Ministerium Invites all who are interested to attend any or all the events they have planned...

- **Monday, Jan 18th**, Noon at Fleming Parish Center: Opening Service of *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* followed by a simple meal and discussion of Prayer.
- **Wednesday, Jan 20th**, 6 PM at Trinity Episcopal: Simple meal at 6 PM followed by discussion of the coming Sundays readings and compline service in chapel.
- **Thursday, Jan. 21st**, 5:30 PM at Covenant Central Presbyterian: A meal followed by a Program on Marriage at 6:30 PM.
- **Monday, Jan. 25th**, 7 PM at First Baptist: Closing Program entitled, "Pray, Why Bother?"

MEET A VISITOR FROM ETHIOPIA

Rev. Charles and Marie Mercer would like to introduce to you Kifle Silomon, a man of great faith from Ethiopia. Kifle's faith was tested by 20 years as a refugee in Russia. The Mercers worked with Kifle during both of their interims with the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy (MPC). Kifle was in charge of social ministries including the large soup kitchen program, medical clinic, homeless project, food bag program and others with a budget exceeding \$200,000. He is a Christian of great integrity and spirituality.

Kifle is here on a Religious Worker visa. He needs a job as soon as possible and he will do anything as long as it is church related. He has good English skills and his pronunciation is getting better every day. He has a wonderful ecumenical spirit. Kifle is living with the Mercers, and can be contacted through them at 220-8149.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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 Cen-

ter'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 for details.

Spiritual Care Winter/Spring 2010 Course Offerings

S Geisinger Medical Center, Danville (570-271-3700) Spiritual Care classes will be offered in March, April, May and June at Geisinger. Below is the listing of classes. For dates and times and registration information contact our United Churches office for the complete listing at 322-1110 or uclc@sunlink.net.

Science and Religion Series

Quantum Theology - Spirituality and the New Physics
What Happens at Death - Brain Mind & Consciousness

Research Workshop Series

Moral Distress in Healthcare Providers

Care-Giving Series

Art of Caring Conservation - Level 1, Level 2
Listening (or Art of Caring Conversation Level 3)
Healing Presence (or Art of Caring Conversation Level 4)

No One Dies Alone (NODA) Series

NODA Volunteer Orientation
NODA Support Group

Jewish Studies Series

Jewish Ethics
The Autobiography of God
God Then and Now

Buddhist Studies Series

No Self, No Problem
Emptiness
For Marks of a Buddhist Practice
Bodhisattva Forum

Spirituality in Fiction Series

The Autobiography of God (also under Jewish Studies)
The Fifth Sacred Thing (also under Native American St)

Native American Studies Series

The Fifth Sacred Thing

Millionaire Career Expo: "Building Bridges to the Future" will be held Monday, March 1st from 5-7 p.m. at the Williamsport Area High School.

It promises to be a grand celebration with many hands on demonstrations. There will also be food available. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

CREATION CORNER

from our *Christian Social Concerns Committee*

Resources for Understanding More About Natural Gas Well Drilling in the Marcellus Shale

Drilling for natural gas, a fossil fuel, in the Marcellus Shale is a topic here that has brought forth many considerations. The column this month continues to highlight Internet web resources that hopefully will help readers to come to a thoughtful understanding of all the issues involved. Resources include those from various sectors: academic; industrial and corporate; governmental; environmental advocacy; grass-roots groups; media; etc.

Grass-Roots Groups(Continued from last month):

- **Energy Justice Network** is a good example of a grass-roots group advocating a clean energy agenda (zero-waste, zero-emissions) using principles of environmental justice. Includes a natural gas fact sheet and much more. www.energyjustice.net
- www.un-naturalgas.org says that natural gas is not the answer. It seeks to stop industrial-scale horizontal drilling and high-volume hydraulic fracking for natural gas. It discusses well-spacing, eminent domain, water consumption and disposal, air quality, toxins, health issues, pipelines, accidents, community infrastructure, local government, energy independence, resources and documents, and has sections called "lies, damned lies and statistics" and "get answers before you are leased." Reference is made to 31 advocacy sites. Produced by the Chenango Delaware Ostego Gas Opposition Group.
- www.shaleshock.org lists 28 groups that are "protecting our communities and environment from exploitation drilling of the Marcellus shale."
- A blog to "google" is **Splashdownpa**, about drilling in PA and NY. Extensive listings.
- Another blog is **Tiogagaswatch**, from Tioga County PA Gas Watch. Resources for landowners and much more.
- **Responsible Drilling Alliance (RDA)** is the newest grass-roots group locally, based in Williamsport, Lycoming County, PA. www.responsibledrillingalliance.org
- **Organizations United for the Environment (OUE)**, a local watershed "watchdog" group here, has "A Special Issue on Gas Drilling in the Marcellus Shale Deposits" in their current Fall newsletter, composed by members of RDA. See www.ouenews.org .
- **Western Organization of Resource Councils** is a western states regional network of 7 community organizations (10,000 mbrs., 40 chapters). www.worc.org

Media

- www.Propublica.org Investigative reporting on natural gas drilling.
- **Gas Land** is a documentary movie chosen to premiere

at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival. "A cross country odyssey uncovers toxic streams, dying livestock, flammable sinks and weakening health among rural citizens on the front lines of the natural gas drilling craze." Director: Josh Fox.

- WWW.Crestonemedia.org Film, "Rural Impact: What to Expect from the Gas Industry." (Youtube.com) .
- **Earth Works:** Protecting Communities and the Environment. See their Oil and Gas Accountability Project. www.earthworksaction.org .
- www.sourcewatch.org is an on-line publication of the Center for Media and Democracy. A citizen journalism project on the Marcellus Shale.
- "The Natural Gas Quest: All about drilling in NY and PA" featured on www.pressconnects.com from the Greater Binghamton NY area.
- **Wilkes-Barre PA Times-Leader** began a series in 2/2008. See www.timesleader.com/news/hottopics/shale
- **Philadelphia Inquirer** had a photo gallery of gas drilling operations in Lycoming County; see their Sunday Oct. 25, 2009 front page feature on the Marcellus Shale: "PA Tapped, Drillers Not." www.philly.com
- www.democracynow.org/2009/11/10/watchdog Amy Goodman show.
- www.northcentralpa.com Scroll down right hand side to gas drilling link.
- **Williamsport PA Sun-Gazette** regional archival links to published articles on Marcellus Shale subject; FAQs, events, & other sites. Began 10/07. www.sungazette.com

Environmental Advocates (An addition to last months' list)

- www.PaForestCoalition.org Includes a wide variety of outdoor topics, including Marcellus Shale.

Other

- MarcellusGasInfo@googlegroups.com
- **Facebook: No Fracking Way** Google search "no fracking way" +facebook . You need to be a member of Facebook to access this.
- **The Green Party of Pennsylvania** position paper, "Natural Gas Drilling and Fracking: Poisoning Pennsylvania" may be seen on their web site www.gpofpa.org
- http://pagaslease.com/natural_gas_well_mapper.php A forum for landowners includes natural gas development maps.
- A day-long workshop on the science of Marcellus Shale will be hosted by the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies (SRHCES) in Education on January 29 at Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA. Further information can be found on the www.northcentralpa.com web site. To register go to www.srhces.org . For details contact Dr. Mel Zimmerman 570-321-4185 or zimmer@lycoming.edu .

SPECIAL EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES *

Gamblers 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.

Bone Marrow Donor Drive will be held Saturday, January 16 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Little League Baseball Headquarters (Dining Hall) 539 US Highway 15 in South Williamsport. Potential Donors need must be between the ages of 18 and 55 and in good general health. When you register as a donor, you can help one of our local friends and neighbors like John Creveling, or someone else, who has leukemia. John received a bone marrow transplant from his brother about five years ago, and had been doing well, until the leukemia came back this August. He is now hoping that a new donor can be found so that he will be able to survive. You can also make monetary contributions to defray the \$65 registration costs. More information can be obtained at www.dkmsamericas.org.

CLASSIFIEDS:

Instructors Needed! Zone 7 AARP, which includes Lycoming County, is looking for energetic and motivated adults who are interested in becoming volunteer instructors for the AARP Driver Safety Program.

To become an instructor, you would receive an eight-hour training. Following the training, you would be required to conduct three eight-hour classes per year to maintain instructor status. Classes consist of two four-hour sessions.

Help your peers brush up their driving skills AND save money on their car insurance. Become an AARP Driver Safety Program Instructor!

Contact Nancy Yaudes, AARP Zone 7 Coordinator, at 570-326-6773 or email flynlady@chilitech.net.

Network Director Needed: Family Promise, a national faith-based non-profit organization providing shelter and assistance to homeless families, is seeking a Network Director to develop and operate its operations in Lycoming County. Successful candidate will coordinate with local churches, schools, and social service agencies to help clients meet immediate and longer-term needs and maintain their family unit. B.A. degree required, M.S.W. preferred. Send resume to Family Promise, c/o CCPC, 807 W 4th St., Wmspt, PA 17701.

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Brochures Help Keep You Safe and Informed: The Safe Communities Task Force of the Lycoming County Health Improvement Coalition (LCHIC) through funding from the Lycoming County District Attorney has recently updated and reprinted three educational and informational brochures to help Lycoming County residents. Two are specific to older adults:

- The **“Older Adult Resource List,”** a list of numerous local, state and national agencies and organizations, provides age-appropriate information on health issues, travel and transportation, consumer protection and more.
- **“Fraud Prevention TIPS for Older Adults,”** can help prevent loss of money, prevent identity theft and prevent embarrassment from mail, internet, door-to-door, phone and credit fraud.
- **“Crime Prevention TIPS – Did You Know ...,”** offers tips to protect you when at home, in the car, traveling, shopping or using an ATM.

They are available, FREE to individuals, groups and congregations, by contacting the Lycoming County Health Improvement Coalition at 570-323-0390, or by visiting the LCHIC website at www.LCHIC.org.

Concerned About Someone’s Driving? What can you do if you have a friend or family member who you think is unable to drive safely; whether due to physical, mental or age-related issues?

“Identifying Unsafe Drivers. Concerned About Someone’s Driving?,” a brochure developed through the local Safe Communities Task Force of the Lycoming County Health Improvement Coalition, provides information in a question and answer format that addresses how to identify, report and assist a potentially unsafe driver with local screening, testing and alternative transportation resources.

The brochure is available, FREE, by contacting the Lycoming County Health Improvement Coalition at 570-323-0390 or by visiting their website at www.LCHIC.org. Be sure to indicate whether you want the Lycoming County version or the version specific to Bradford/Sullivan/Tioga Counties.

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.

YOKEFELLOW NEWS

Evadna Cline, Director, Yokefellow Center - 326-6868

The following is a quote from Cal Thomas' article in the Sun-Gazette this week: "No one I know makes New Year's resolutions anymore. In part this may be because the resolutions often deal with our weakness---lose weight, quit smoking---so that when we fail, we resolve to stop resolving rather than be reminded of our inability to keep our resolutions."

In a Prayer for January by Carol Kuykendall we find these words:

*Today is a new day, Lord, and I'm glad.
Yesterday was not so good. I said things
I shouldn't have said.
I ate more than I needed to eat.
I didn't love my family well enough, or
accomplish enough.

But in Your Word. You promise that the old
has passed away
And the new has come;
And when we confess our shortcomings to you,
You forgive us. So here I am Lord,
at the beginning of this new day,
Asking your forgiveness.

I surrender myself to You, right now,
Recognizing my total dependence on You.
So as I go forward from this moment of prayer
And walk through this day,
Help me carry the reality of Your presence,
Your forgiveness and Your love into all I say.
All that I do, and all that I think. Starting right now.*

As we at Yokefellow Prison Ministry look to the future, (2010) we look with hope and expectations. Help us, Father God, to look to the future as a time when many if not all are reconciled to You. A time when we and those we serve are not just starting over; we are starting now in the company of the New Beginning, Jesus Christ. May we all, volunteers, incarcerated persons, and staff persons dare to live in hope for a future, may we dare to decide to renew our lives because we are never alone.

Matthew Henry, a great theologian of our day said, "It ought to be the business of (using) every day to prepare for our last day." We are told that when an inmate is classified and housed in a prison, the staff is ordered to begin preparing that person for his/her release date, whether that date be 60 days, 6 months, or six years. To me this is a very hopeful attitude for everyone involved.

We thank you, dear God, that as we begin a new year we know that we shall not have to traverse the days and

nights alone. We thank you that in Jesus Christ You stand with us in this new beginning.

For more information about Yokefellow Prison Ministry, or to volunteer or contribute, call their office at 326-6868.

**2010 UNITED CHURCHES
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- UCLC Executive Director Rev. Gwen Bernstine

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