



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 XXX NUMBER 8

November 13, 2013

Please notify us if you changes of e-mail address

Thank You for receiving our Newsletter via E-Mail.
It is a wonderful donation of postage, office supplies and volunteer time.

VOLUNTEER NOW FOR 2014 MINISTRIES*

We are getting ready to fill the ministries schedule for 2013. Both clergy & laity are needed:

Nursing Home and Assisted Living

Center Worship:

Sundays at 2 weekly:

Manor Care South

Valley View Rose View Center

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 10:30 weekly - Sycamore Manor

Thursdays at 11 weekly - Presbyterian Home

Prison Worship Services (Sundays weekly)

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

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

Daily Telephone Devotion Line - Record from your home.

Volunteers have responsibility for one week at a time.

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

Please contact us at uclc@sunlink.net or 570-322-1110 to learn how you can be part of these ministries. We need you!



COME TO OUR ANNUAL ASSEMBLY*

Our 67th Annual Assembly of the United Churches will be held Tuesday, November 19 at Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Fleming Center, 720 W. Fourth Street, Williamsport. The church is handicapped accessible and parking surrounds the church. Registration begins at 5:45 P.M., with the dinner at 6:30 P.M. The evening will include:

- ★ Presentation of an Ecumenical Service Award.
- ★ Election of officers and new board members.
- ★ Adoption of the 2014 Budget.
- ★ 25th Anniversary of the Shepherd of the Streets.
- ★ Futuring Update.

Attending from each member congregation should be three delegates, the pastor and two lay people. *We encourage other interested persons to be present as non-voting representatives of your congregations.*

Registration is \$13.00 and includes dinner served family style. The menu is baked ham, scalloped potatoes, green beans, applesauce, rolls and butter, coffee, tea and cakes. Each person will also receive an annual report book. Pastors will receive information via e-mail. Please call the United Churches office, 570-322-1110 or at office@uclc.org to make your reservation today!

Visit us at the following web site - www.uclc.org

DIAL - A - DEVOTION *

Have you called yet?

The number is 570-322-5762.

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:

11/11-17 Mrs. Melanie Taormina 11/18-24 Mrs. Patty Gohrs
11/25-12/1 Rev. Gwen Bernstine 12/ 2-8 Pastors Jim & Kathy Behrens
12/9-15 Rev. Margaret Balliet 12/16-22 Mrs Dorothy Wagner

Listen today and tell others about this ministry!



Tammy Aichner, Coor, ucm@ucl.org or 570-419-5376

In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us." Titus 2:7-8

We would like to thank our November pastors conducting Faith Talks, Captain Debbie Engel from the Salvation Army, Pastor Joel Long from Tabernacle Baptist Church and Rev. Richard Mowery from St. Michael's Lutheran Church. Faith Talks will resume on January 13th, 2014.

November 11th was our Operation Christmas Child Packing Party. Shoeboxes and wrapping paper in hand, we will gather over cocoa and cookies to put together packages to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to children, families and communities all over the world. November 23rd is our Habitat Day. We will work on a home build and serve lunch to the volunteers. December 7th we will be standing outside KMart, in Loyalsock, to participate in the Red Kettle Campaign with Salvation Army.

Our UCM secretary has created a Facebook page. Please check it out and "like" it, United Campus Ministry-UCM. We will be posting a weekly devotion, upcoming events, pictures and updates.

So soon the semester is over. We are still in need of donations for **Student Survival Bags for Finals Week**. We would like to do a **Soup Fundraiser** to raise funds for a Spring Break Mission Trip. If you are able to help with either of these needs, please e-mail me at ucm@ucl.org.

In January, I will be putting together a newsletter called "The Flame" for the students. It will consist of events and

information that I gather from various churches and organizations in Lycoming County. If you have anything to include, please e-mail me.

Please also continue praying for the spiritual growth of our students.

UNITED CHURCHES FOOD PANTRY *

Gail Burkhart, Coordinator 570-322-1627

Why is it that we only think to take time to be thankful for our blessings in the month of the holiday of Thanksgiving? We should be thankful every day of every month for all the blessings that God showers on us!

When I think of all the blessings that come our way here at the Food Pantry, one of the first things that comes to mind are our dear friends at Faith United Methodist Church in Montoursville. They have been amazing in their care and appreciation of the work we do.

Several times, the staff from Faith have come and 'taken over' for us on a designated day to and serve clients, answer phones, do paperwork, stock shelves and any other thing that comes up during their 'shift' with us. What an amazing experience for us and our clients. The clients get to see God's love at work through His disciples and our volunteers get to see that God loves them for all the good that they do by giving them a little 'break' when someone else does their work for a few hours. It's just a wonderful experience all around. (And I suspect the people from Faith UMC enjoy their contribution too, if you judge by the wide smiles they have when they are here!)

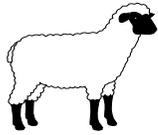
Thankful? You bet we are! But we also feel that we probably give the Faith UMC staff a lot to be thankful for also. All in all there's a whole lot of thanks being shared by everyone. So, see, we shouldn't just save thanks for the month of November. Thanks can be shared all year 'round, every day, by all of us.

We continue to experience increasing numbers of clients in October, so our need continues to grow as well. The items that we especially need for this Thanksgiving month are:

<i>stuffing mix</i>	<i>cranberry sauce</i>	<i>corn</i>
<i>hamburger helper</i>	<i>pop tarts</i>	<i>green beans</i>
<i>saltine crackers</i>	<i>granola bars</i>	<i>pop corn</i>
<i>tea bags (regular flavor)</i>		<i>jams/jellies</i>
<i>powdered drink mixes</i>		<i>canned juices</i>
<i>oatmeal packets (any flavor)</i>		<i>oodles of noodles</i>

We wish you all a very happy holiday with your families and friends. As we pray for our loved ones and friends, each of you that support the work that we do, have a special place in our hearts and we hope that you will be richly blessed for your help.

SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS*



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

This is the 25th year of Shepherd of the Streets and its outreach to the underserved of Lycoming County. You deserve the congratulations that we at the United Churches of Lycoming Co. have been receiving, for without your donations of money and materials this thing of God could not go forward. We thank you in the Name of Jesus who sent His disciples out to preach the Kingdom of God, to heal the sick, and cast out demons.

Everyone has something they want during this season of giving. The people who participate in this ministry want things that most of us take for granted. An affordable living space that is clean and weatherized, heat and blankets in cold weather, a healthy environment, enough food to eat, medicine when sickness strikes them and their children, a job that pays enough to get by, access to medical and dental emergencies. Most of our clients have families and live in constant crisis to provide bare essentials that keep their children healthy and safe.

Your generous spirit and the love you have shown helps us to meet the needs for health and safety for those confined by vital need, affordability, and insufficient resources. Your gifts shine the light of hope on the requests that relieves the stress of living in the strain of "not enough." The season of Thanksgiving and Christmas seems to accelerate sickness, stress, and fear even in the best of us.

The Salvation Army and American Rescue Workers help with toys and gifts. Shepherd of the Streets seeks to keep families healthy, safe, and warm so that their holiday season is less tense and their eyes and ears are tuned to the "reason for the season", the Messiah coming among us. Our counseling ministry accelerates during this time. Health and safety needs open the door to evangelization through the Prince of Peace. Our very grateful hearts thank Jesus daily for you and pray that you have a blessed Christmas and a very, very hope-filled new year.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made, without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. -John 1:1-5, 14 NIV



CROP Walk had a beautiful Sunday this year for folks to walk in solidarity with those who are hungry. Approximately 250 people walked throughout the county. It is good to be part of an effort to help reduce hunger in our community and around the world. Our total county earnings for 33 years are over \$1 Million! Don't forget to return your walker envelopes to United Churches.

CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING: Several of the Ministeriums in our County have reported they are hosting ecumenical Thanksgiving services this year. All are welcome to attend.



- ★ The Hepburn Lycoming Ministerium will host their Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, Nov. 24 at 7 p.m. at Saint Michael's Lutheran Church, 1877 St. Michael's Road, Cogan Station.
- ★ The Muncy Ministerium will host a Thanksgiving Service Sunday, Nov. 24 at 7 p.m. at the New Life Center, Pennsdale, with the Rev. Rob Rice from Muncy Baptist Church, preaching.
- ★ The South Williamsport Ministerium will host a Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, Nov. 21 at 7 at South Williamsport United Methodist Church, 409 Main St.
- ★ The Montoursville Ministerium is holding their Thanksgiving Eve service on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7:00 pm at Bethany Lutheran Church, 369 Broad Street.

THANKSGIVING DINNERS

- ◇ Tuesday Nov 19 from 6-8 pm at Calvary Church of the Nazarene, 3200 Lycoming Creek Road.
- ◇ Monday, November 25 from 11-1 at West End Christian Community Center, 901 Diamond Street.
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at St. Anthony's Center, 125 East Willow Street, Williamsport. Delivery is available for shut-ins (call 326-2244 by 9 am 11/28)
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at the American Rescue Workers from Noon until 3 p.m. in their 2nd Floor Dining Room at 643 Elmira Street, Williamsport. Delivery is available only to shut-ins and handicapped persons by calling 570-323-8401 ext 110 by Wednesday at noon.
- ◇ Thursday, Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day at St. John's Newberry United Methodist Church, 2101 Newberry Street, Williamsport, at Noon.

WEDNESDAY NOON ECUMENICAL LUNCHES*

Join us for lunch this fall and winter. The lunch line opens about 11:45 a.m. and you are always assured of a tasty \$6 lunch, warm ecumenical fellowship and a thoughtful program designed to enrich your life mentally, physically, spiritually and socially. 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, Heidi Potter, know how much food to prepare. Laity, clergy and people of all ages are welcome!



When winter weather makes travel difficult on Wednesdays call Gwen at 570-419-1464 to know if Ecumenical Lunch has been cancelled.

NOVEMBER:

- 13- **Ms. Dana Brigandi**, Leadership Assistant and Media Coordinator, and **Ms. Robin Glossner**, Director of Development, James V. Brown Library, *“Connect Williamsport: Our Community Calendar”*
- 20- **Mrs. Margorie Thompson**, Dir., West End Christian Community Center, *“Embracing the Needs of the Community”*
- 27- **Rev. Gwen Bernstine**, United Churches, *“Give Thanks”*

DECEMBER:

- 4- **Rev. Ken Elkin**, Pastor, St. Mark Lutheran Church, *“Pilgrim Stories: People on the Way to Santiago”*
- 11- **Mr. Abel Learwellie**, member of the Lutheran Church in Liberia, *“Trauma, Healing and Reconciliation”*
- 18- **Mrs. Lucy Henry** and **Mrs. Wendy McCormick**, Area Musicians who specialize in Celtic Music and Old Timey Favorites using hammered dulcimer, flute, celtic harp, accordion, pennywhistle, accordion and etc., *“Sounds of the Season”*
- 25- **Have a very Merry Christmas!** No lunch scheduled

POVERTY: A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE

The Christian Social Concerns Committee

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. . . . Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me. (Matthew 25:35, 40) Children, women, and the stranger are among those that Jesus identified as most in need in the society of his time. Currently many faith traditions have focused on restoring to wholeness in our society immigrants who have come here under many circumstances. Poverty is the primary cause for many who are referred to as “undocumented.” Jesus’ words above should inspire us to reach out

to all and to advocate with elected officials to see Jesus in all persons whatever their status is.

Lycoming County Unemployment Rate for August 2013

The preliminary unemployment rate for the county for August 2013 was 7.7 %. This was equal to the PA state rate and above the national rate of 7.3%.

Immigration: The “Push” and “Pull” Forces of Poverty

Many immigrants are pushed from their countries by dire economic conditions such as food insecurity and high unemployment. Worldwide, 1.29 billion people live in extreme poverty, less than \$1.25 per day. This is 650 million fewer people than in 1981 owing to economic development in their own countries. Roughly 1 billion men, women, and children are food insecure, and 870 million people suffer from chronic undernourishment. Such conditions literally push some, out of desperation. Some are pulled to the US in the hope of finding better opportunities for their children and themselves.

Undocumented Immigrants: Working Under the Radar

Many undocumented immigrants work in temporary or seasonal jobs with low pay and no benefits. These are to a large extent jobs that others do not want yet are essential to the functioning of the overall economy. The low and irregular pay results in many such workers and their families living with food insecurity and poverty.

Faith Traditions Call Upon All to Advocate for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR)

In recent weeks and months many have raised their voices by telling Congress to pass CIR. Church World Service, many evangelical leaders, and the U S Conference of Catholic Bishops have identified specific elements for reform. These include 1) an earned path to citizenship for the 11 million people in the United States without authorization, 2) the priority of family reunification in any immigration reform, 3) protecting the integrity of our borders in a humane and environmentally conducive manner, 4) protecting due process for immigrants and their families, 5) improving refugee protection laws and asylum laws, and 6) reviewing international economic policies to address the root causes – such as food insecurity and poverty – of unauthorized immigration.

Raise Our Voices to Welcome Jesus immediate action is necessary! Call our Congress and tell them: “As a person of faith, I urge you to pass comprehensive immigration reform.”

Senator Casey 202-224-6324

Senator Toomey 202-224-4254

Representative Marino 202-225-3731

CREATION CORNER

The Christian Social Concerns Committee

World Charter for Nature

Adopted over thirty years ago, the World Charter for Nature was agreed to by 111 member nation-states of the United Nations. It followed an earlier declaration of over forty years ago. You may want to compare it with the ethics you try to abide by in ecological matters, and that of your national church body, political body, and any environmental advocacy group you belong to.

It first re-affirms the fundamental purposes of the U.N., then proceeds to note what it is aware of, convinced of, and persuaded by. Some general principles follow, and then functions and implementation measures are noted. It proclaims five "principles of conservation by which all human conduct affecting nature is to be guided and judged."

1. Nature shall be respected and its essential processes shall not be impaired.
2. The genetic viability on the earth shall not be compromised; the population levels of all life forms, wild and domesticated, must be at least sufficient for their survival, and to this end necessary habitats safeguarded.
3. All areas of the earth, both land and sea, shall be subject to these principles of conservation; special protection shall be given to unique areas, to representative samples of all the different types of ecosystems and to the habitats of rare or endangered species.
4. Ecosystems and organisms, as well as the land, marine and atmospheric resources that are utilized by man, shall be managed to achieve and maintain optimum sustainable productivity, but not in such a way as to endanger the integrity of those other ecosystems or species with which they coexist.
5. Nature shall be secured against degradation caused by warfare or other hostile activities.

You may also ask yourself what you think might be missing here, and why the United States was the only nation-state to vote against it.

HELP FOR CHRISTMAS

American Rescue Workers is signing up needy families for Christmas Food and Toys Baskets NOW through December 13. Sign-ups are held Monday - Friday afternoons from 1-4 in their 2nd floor dining room, in their main building at 643 Elmira Street, Williamsport. Applicants need photo ID, provide proof of income and identification (SS cards/access cards or ID) for each member of the household. Their Toys for Tots program is for children ages 0 - 12 years of age.



Church Women United's Christmas Stockings will be assembled Monday, Nov. 18th beginning at 9 a.m. at Pine Street UMC, Wmspt., (free parking signs will be available in the church). Women are welcome to help assemble and package the 1200+ stockings that are distributed to area nursing home residents.

YOKEFELLOW PRISON MINISTRY (YPM)*

Rev. Danesta (Nessie) Whaley,
North Central Regional Director

Contacts: 570-326-6868, smileynessie@yahoo.com

DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY...JUMP IN!

LOOK carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best of the time, because the days are evil. Ephesians 5:15

Yes Dear Ones, it is a Kairos time for many – the time of not missing any opportunity the Lord is bringing your way to make a difference in the lives of others. Kairos time is a NOW TIME, it is decision making time...crucial time. Some days you may wonder if what you are doing is really making a difference, but I can assure you that if the Lord has presented you the fresh opportunity HE will continue to lead, guide and direct your steps. So don't hesitate, jump in!

It has been over 20 years that I took the Kairos time seriously when I said 'yes' to prison ministry! It is hard to believe that I started off volunteering my time to simply go into the prisons and that led me on a journey. The opportunity presented itself and I indeed jumped in; the time of decision had come and I needed not to waste any more time, but trust that the One who called me would fulfill HIS purposes. Now, working with the ministry of Yokefellowship has furthered my outreach and influence.

Yokefellowship Prison Ministry is seeking out those who will 'jump in' to fulfill Christ's mandate. "I was in prison and you visited Me". We have wonderful volunteers who are jumping in each week to serve in small group discussions in the prisons, serve on the board of Yokefellowship, pray for us, and contribute in many ways to see lives changed for the glory of God.

It is a NOW time to offer ourselves to the Lord for the service that HE desires us to give within the prisons. Our commitment to the idea that people's lives are changed through their personal discipline and the commitment of attending small group discussions within the institutions are realized as we are a small part of the journey together. Yes, we are 'yoked' together with Christ and to one another helping raise up disciples everywhere. To know more about this ministry and possibly become involved, contact Nessie.

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES*

Looking for more ways to promote your church events? Email information to 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.

Why Wait Until The New Year To Resolve To Be A New You? There are classes available at Liberty House to help you learn new things. This month topics include; responsible renters, career empowerment, wellness, team building, Amerihealth, bullying, nutrition and financial empowerment. Women interested in attending a class, only need to call 322.4637, ext 112, for more information as to date and time, and to let them know they are coming.

New Clothing For The Newberry Branch of NGA (The Needlework Guild of America) will hold their annual ingathering on Monday, December 2 at 1 PM at St. John's-Newberry United Methodist Church, Newberry St., Williamsport. At the ingathering items are displayed which will then be distributed to the various agencies working with NGA.

Organ Recital: Philip Krepps of Milton and Shirley Smith of Turbotville will present an organ recital at 1st Presbyterian Church, 102 East Third Street, Williamsport on Saturday, November 23rd from 2-3pm as part of the Preservation Williamsport's Victorian Christmas Tour of Homes and Churches. Selections will be church works of the 16th through 20th centuries, including some Christmas selections. This will be the last public performance of the original Austin Organ, a gift from Williamsport Lumber Baron, Millionaire, and church member James Walton Bowman. Shortly after Christmas the insides of the organ console cabinet will be removed rebuilt with new solid state connections.

Williamsport Civic Chorus begins its gala 70th anniversary season on Sunday, November 24th with a concert called An Afternoon with Mother Goose. It will feature Fiona Siobhan Powell, renowned storyteller, folklorist, and public radio host who will recount

children's tales, and the Chorus will perform exciting arrangements of familiar nursery rhymes. The concert will take place at 3 pm in St. Luke Lutheran Church, 1400 Market Street, Williamsport, and an audience reception will follow in the Church's social hall. Tickets may be purchased at the door as well as at Robert M. Sides Family Music Center, the Otto Book Store, and from Chorus members. Advance purchases receive a \$2 discount off the box office prices of \$12 for general admission and \$10 for students and seniors. Courtesy of a grant from the Woodcock Foundation for the Appreciation of the Arts, they are able to offer \$5 admission to the first 50 parents who buy tickets and who bring children ages 12 and under, who are admitted free.

Box City 2013 Fundraiser to benefit Saving Grace Shelter is being hosted by ARW, First UM Church and Lycoming College. Plan to sleep in a box to help end homelessness. Create a Neighborhood or Condo Complex - Build, Decorate and Design your box. The event will be held on Friday, November 22, 2013 from 6 p.m. until 6 a.m. on the Intramural Field at Lycoming College, corner of Market and Packer Streets, Williamsport. There will be a live DJ, the Homeless in American Film will be shown, hot beverages will be provided, as well as a snack tent and a warming tent. The registration fee is \$20.00 at www.arwwmpt.org and click on Box City. Participants are encouraged to get \$100 in sponsors to help them reach their goal of \$10,000 towards the operating expenses of Saving Grace Shelter located at 324 Campbell Street, Williamsport. Sponsor forms are available on the website. More information is available by contacting Dawn at 570-323-8401 ext 117 or dawnarw@chilitech.net or Mitch at 570-772-9224 or mmarcello@ccojubilee.org. They are also collecting gloves, hats, scarves, coats, sweaters, socks, blankets, etc. in an effort to "stuff the bus" with clothing for the homeless. The bus will be parked on campus that evening.

November is the Great American Smoke Out! Even if you don't smoke, you pay the price. Did you know these smoking facts...

- The price of a pack of cigarettes is not the only cost of cigarette smoking. It also costs the US over \$193 billion in lost productivity and health care expenses yearly.
- Each year, secondhand smoke costs the US more than \$10 billion in medical costs and lost productivity.
- The average pack-a-day smoker, who quits today could save \$16,000 in 10 years just in the cost of cigarettes!