

# UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

Published Monthly by the

**UNITED CHURCHES OF LYCOMING COUNTY**

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## MARCH



**A**s I walked into the office on March 1st, I took one look at the empty desk and was flooded with emotions. Sadness...that my mentor was not sitting behind it. Surprise...that I could see it. And excitement...of what God has in UCLC's future!

Gwen has taught me so much over the last 10 years. Some of the things I had hoped never to have to learn, like Word Perfect. Yes, someone does still use it! Others I thought I knew well enough, like love, until I met and interacted with her and saw what it really looked like at street level. Gwen has a way of making each person feel like they are the only person important to her in that moment. In her interactions, it is never about herself, but always about lifting and supporting the other. I am grateful to have had the chance to learn from her! I am blessed to have felt that love and support!

As I sit at this desk, I am reminded that it is the only part of the position that is "mine". Everything about United Churches of Lycoming County is just that, about United Churches of Lycoming County! We move forward together. We will be able to build on a solid foundation and add the next level. What do you see in UCLC's future? Where are the gaps we can stand in? What is it that makes UCLC hold a special place in your heart? And how can you come alongside us to use your gifts and talents so that, together, we step into what God has planned? There is not a single person that can do this alone! My friends, let's get started! - Tammy

**Join us for a Good Friday Ecumenical Service  
on April 2nd, from 12:15-12:45, on the UCLC  
Facebook page.**

**The United Churches of Lycoming County's of-  
fice will be closed on Monday, April 5th.**

### DIAL - A - DEVOTION \*

Have you called yet today?  
The number is 570-322-5762.  
It's available 24/7.



**D**evotions are three minutes or less, change daily, and are designed to lift your spirits and help you to have "A Closer Walk with God" even when we have to practice social distancing! The devotionalists this spring are:

3/8-14 Rev. Gwen Bernstine	3/15-21 Rev. Nessie Whaley
3/22-28 Rev. Ron Shellhamer	3/29-4/4 Rev. Gwen Bernstine
4/5-11 Ms. Yvonne Shenuski	4/12-18 Overseer Bernice Coaxum
4/19-25 Rev. Ken Wagner-Pizza	4/26-5/2 Ps. Jim and Kathy Behrens

Listen today and tell others about this ministry!



**SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS\***

Rev. Mark Brumbach  
570-322-6538  
[shepherd@uclc.org](mailto:shepherd@uclc.org)

**W**hy do we care about the needs of others? We care because God cares. God recognized our need for a Savior and through the giving of His Son, Jesus demonstrated the greatest act of sacrificial giving. Not one of us deserves such a generous gift but by God's grace and through God's mercy the gift has been given. How then can we refuse to generously give to those in our midst who are in need?

Many of our clients visit us each month to receive a hygiene kit. We believe that our kits help to free up limited financial resources so that they can be used to care for other needs. Our most recent survey of our available hygiene kit items has revealed that we are in need of:

- Rolls of Paper Towels
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Men's and Women's Body Wash
- Children's Diapers sizes 4, 5 and 6
- Shave Cream
- Bath Towels and Wash Clothes



Thank you for the ongoing opportunity to serve the least, the last and the lost in Jesus name through your prayerful support of the Shepherd ministry. I leave you with a word from Jesus, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." (Luke 14:12-14)

Just a reminder that all correspondence should be sent to our P. O. Box at Shepherd of the Streets, P. O. Box 2184, Williamsport, PA 17703. Please do not mail anything to our Park Ave. address or our former address on Center St. because it will be marked as undeliverable. Hygiene items should be dropped off at the Shepherd office located at 320 Park Ave., Williamsport, PA 17703. (Just across the street from the Goodwill store parking lot.)

**POVERTY: A FAITH-BASED RESPONSE**

*Christian Social Concerns Committee*

**F**or he shall rescue the poor when he cries out, and the afflicted when he has no one to help him. He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save" (PS 72:12-13). God cares for the poor always. Let us do the same.

**Lycoming County Unemployment Rate:** The most recent figure from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates an unemployment rate of 7.2% for the county. This translates into 3,700 persons seeking employment locally. These are increases over the previous month's figures.

**Nationally - How Many Americans Are Homeless? No One Knows:** Even before the pandemic, the data estimating the number of homeless were widely different. In 2017, the annual federal count was over 550,000 while the National Center for Education Statistics reported 1.35 million homeless students. (Source: New York Times 1/29/2021) Knowing the number in need is essential to meeting the need.

**Locally – Currently No One Knows:** Annually a local count of homelessness is taken by counting those in shelters and going out to those without shelter. Because of the pandemic, no external count was taken this year.

**What Needs to be Done?:** A local shelter director stated that people need to volunteer, send donations, and offer services based on skills that could be of help. For example, a barber could cut hair for someone going for a job interview. An employer could help review a job resume or conduct a mock job interview. Clothing and furniture can be donated to the American Rescue Workers so that income can be derived from sales of such items. Use our abilities!

**“Chaos” – The Future of Homelessness:** The federal “Eviction Moratorium” will expire in September 2021. A local homeless shelter director, when asked what will happen at that time, replied “chaos.” The need will greatly challenge the ability to assist those who will be evicted. As a community, we must be responding to the current need and preparing for the surge.

- Local Homeless Resources:**
- American Rescue Worker's Men's Shelter – 570-323-8401
  - Family Promise – families with children – 570-567-7103
  - Journey House – families on longer-term residency -570-326-3308
  - Liberty House (YWCA) – single women and women with children – 570-322-4637
  - Saving Grace Homeless Shelter – 570-323-4160

**Food Pantry\***



**Mona Rudio, Coordinator, 570-322-1657**

[foodpantry@uclc.org](mailto:foodpantry@uclc.org)

**Tammy Aichner, Coordinator, [ucm@uclc.org](mailto:ucm@uclc.org)**

**G**iving up something for self and giving to another, without wanting anything in return, can help and generate positivity and faith amongst the world around us. Wake up each morning and remember the 3E's of life...Engage, Encourage, and Exceed!! Engage in giving to others, encourage them of their wealth amongst the world, and exceed by continually thinking and loving all around you. We then are given what we may need and are thanked beyond belief...Love and Respect.

Being hospitable to others is one of the many ways you can start/continue living a Christ-like life. Giving, contributing, and remaining humble helps those around us wake up, learn and know how to live Christ-like. We are here to provide food to those in need, during the hard times in life, to keep them alive and thriving. Praying that they then, in return, do the same for those around them.

We pray and hope that the giving keeps on going and growing around our community! The following is a list of items that we stock and give out to our customers. When out and about in the stores for yourself please keep in mind those that are down and out, in many ways, and buy some items for them and their family. If you can't come up with an idea of what to get we do also take monetary donations/gift cards to hand out to them.

Located at the rear of 220 Park Avenue the food pantry at this time is in need of these products: EASTER meal products and MUCH MORE.....

- |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Canned meats/fruits/veggies | Cereal/Oatmeal       |
| Microwave meals/soups       | Ramen Noodles        |
| Juices and Drinks           | Healthy snacks       |
| Spaghetti/sauce             | Peanut butter/jelly  |
|                             | Ketchup/mustard/mayo |

The pantry hours are:  
 Monday.....9-11 for donations and stocking  
 Tuesday/Thursday....10:15-12 for clients (COVID)

May God bless you and keep you during the month of March!!



**W**ednesday was a beautiful morning! I love being able to start my day on campus; and to have such nice weather was an added bonus. About 20 minutes into my time at our Jesus and Java table, a young man walked by. A little downcast, preoccupied perhaps. I wished him a good morning and asked if he would like to start his day with a devotion. After a deep sigh that physically moved his shoulders, he said, "Yes. Yes, I think I would!" He took his devotion and continued on his way. I probably will never know what had happened before our paths crossed. But isn't that true for most of our interactions? We may not know the battles that someone fought before we met them. We may not know the depths of their valley they have found themselves in. However, we have an opportunity to share the love of Christ with them at that moment. Take it!

**ECUMENICAL LUNCH IS THE PLACE TO CONNECT WEDNESDAYS \***

**T**he Time Is Now to be part of our virtual lunches on Wednesdays for great programs this spring! You can bring your lunch to your computer, tablet or phone and enjoy conversation with each other and the speaker. Zoom is free. This link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88609741957> will either help you download the app or prompt it to open. You are also able to connect by phone. Call 1-301-715-8592 (toll charges apply), when prompted enter the meeting number 886 0974 1957. The passcode is 56076370. For other arrangements call United Churches at 570-322-1110.

- MARCH:** Lenten Series - Preaching the Psalms
- 10- **Rev. Sheila Core**, Retired Pastor, First Church of Christ Disciples, Wmspt., "*Psalm 51*"
  - 17- **Mr. Derek Slaughter** - Lunch with the Mayor.
  - 24- **Vicar Carol Johnson**, Pastor at Redeemer and St. Michael Lutheran Churches, "*Psalm 95*"
  - 31- **Pastor Tammy Aichner**, Executive Director, United Churches, "*Psalm 121*"

- APRIL:**
- 7- **Ms. Melodie Russell**, President of the Lycoming Tri-County NAACP, "*Our Future*"
  - 14- **Ms. Corinne Stammel-Demmien**, Program Director, Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity, "*The Diamond Street Build*"
  - 21- **Mr. Gary Parks**, Executive Director, The Taber Museum, "*Our History*"
  - 28- **Rev. Gwen Bernstine**, Retired Executive Director, UCLC, "*Remembering Our Beginnings*"

**75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**O**ur **Monthly Zoom Prayer Meeting** for March, "Finding Time for Serenity", will focus on making space, clearing clutter, and opening our hearts and minds to being present in the presence of the Spirit as we offer our meditation settings pre Easter Day. The link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85905244511>. If joining by phone, the meeting ID is 859 0524 4511 and the passcode is 542738.

**O**ur **75th Anniversary Service** is available to be viewed, and/or to use during your worship services, on the UCLC Facebook page.

**S**ave the Date! Our 10th Annual Golf Tournament will be September 24th!

**P**rayer Calendar: April prayer requests can be found on the home page of our website, [www.uclc.org](http://www.uclc.org). They are also sent out weekly via e-mail. Below you will find a few highlights!

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Hughesville Baptist Church, Pray for the Baby and Senior Pantry as we seek to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of our community. Pray for Pastor Deb Marker.

**April 8<sup>th</sup>:** City Hospital Auxiliary, Pray for all our volunteers that they may freely give of themselves in the many areas of our Hospitals where they serve. May God guide them as they show compassion and charity for those who are so needful of their patience and support.

**April 18<sup>th</sup>:** Church Women United in Lycoming County, Showing care and concern for the welfare of all with no division. Being encouraged through faith and trust as we give thanks to God by serving others on this Mission.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>:** For the Earth and ALL that dwell above, on, under, and within. Continued protection as the circles of life widen and include sheltering for life yet to be.

**April 25<sup>th</sup>:** Moreland Baptist Church, Muncy, Pray for the outreach ministries of Moreland as we seek to bring families and children in our community to Christ. Pray for Pastor John McNassor.

**April 30<sup>th</sup>:** With Thanksgiving for the renewable energy provided through trees both symbolically and generationally. Plant a new life this season.

**R**emembering 1988-2021... Our Shepherd of the Street Program began April 1, 1988. This year it will celebrate it's 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary! It was created to provide spiritual guidance, counseling and referral to help persons who are experiencing hunger, homelessness, unemployability or other difficulties, while bringing them to an awareness of the love of Christ. Providing prayer and spiritual counseling continues to be the focal point of the ministry.

The Shepherd also provides clients a listening ear, advocacy to right injustices and communicate their plight to the community and referrals to area providers.

For many years, the program provided Thanksgiving baskets to support families wishing to celebrate with a home-cooked meal but could not afford to do so financially. The ministry also provided a summer picnic and Christ-centered Christmas event yearly bringing together families for a time of fellowship, sharing and celebration with members of area churches.

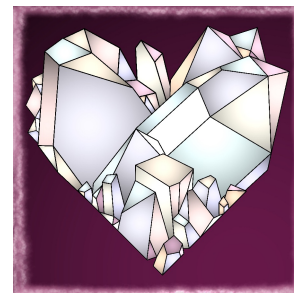
Funding has always been provided through grants and donors to provide for some clients physical needs, often helping with utilities or other housing related needs. The current physical need we provide help with is related to health care; a prescription co-pay, glasses, medical transportation, help with oral surgery, etc.

Clients requesting help through the Shepherd Ministry have continued to rise. Last year the average number of clients seen each month was 330.

We thank God for amazing staff persons and a host of volunteers whose gifts have blessed the ministry.

- Serving as Shepherd of the Street -
- The Rev. Wayne Scott
- The Rev. Joseph L. Walker, Sr.
- The Rev. Wilbur L. (Kim) Scranton
- The Rev. J. Morris Smith, Th. D.
- The Rev. Mark Brumbach

- Serving as Shepherd Secretary / Adm. Assistant -
- Mrs. Ruth Hague
- Mrs. Toni Fogal
- Mrs. Nancy Long
- Mrs. Jan Matz



**CREATION CORNER****Christian Social Concerns Committee**

Goals of Some of the Secular Environmental Groups

**Friends of the Earth:** Fighting to save the bees, promoting clean energy and a healthier food system, defend our oceans and forest from the worst effects of the climate crisis, hold governments and corporations around the world accountable for their policies that endanger the health of people and our planet, campaign for a healthier and more just world.

**Food and Water Action Fund:** Help people stand up against hydraulic fracturing (fracking), oil and gas pipelines and dirty and dangerous fossil fuel energy infrastructure at local, state and the national level inasmuch as fracking pollutes the air we breathe, contaminates our drinking water and worsens climate change. Promote a path to 100% renewable energy.

**The Waterkeeper Alliance:** Help fight plastic pollution by banning the discharge of it and related toxins into our waterways, so that our water can be kept clean, drinkable, fishable and swimmable for everyone. Promote the use of plastic-free alternatives and keeping fossil fuels in the ground.

**Oxfam America:** Apply our knowledge and experience in water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion to try to stop the spread of COVID-19 in vulnerable communities, and center attention on the need to address the deep systemic inequalities that the pandemic has both exposed and deepened. Respond to emergencies while advancing long-term solutions in the fight against inequality and injustice to every corner of the globe. Provide humanitarian assistance to make vaccines free, fair, and accessible. Help save lives and prevent an escalating hunger crisis from driving more people into long-term poverty. Strengthen the role of women as local humanitarian leaders, peace builders and human rights defenders.

**Ocean Conservancy:** Do scientific research on ocean plastic pollution and promote the International Coastal Cleanup, Trash Free Sea Alliance, Beyond the Bag initiative, as part of the Consortium to Reinvent the Retail (plastic) Bag, raise up the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear), save the Hawaiian Monk Seal, sea turtles, whale sharks, etc., and highlight the role of oceans in climate change solutions.

**The Nature Conservancy:** Highlight lands and waters facing mounting pressures in places around the world, such as in Florida, saving critical habitat for the endangered Florida panther, rebuild the decimated spruce and spruce-hardwood forests by planting 1 million trees in the central Appalachians, in Indonesia's Bornean rainforest help to prevent the disappearance of the orangutan due to the industrial logging and mining operations.

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**Job Opportunities:** Sojourner Truth Ministries is currently seeking to fill two position for a new program being implemented.

Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.  
501 High Street  
Williamsport, Pa. 1770  
570-323-1797  
www.stmwilliamsport.org

**Job Title:** Supervisor, House of Hope

**Classification:** Full Time-Exempt

**Reports To:** Director of Sojourner Truth Ministries

**Job Summary:** Oversee services and supportive housing for homeless women with a Christ-based, holistic model. In charge of the day-to-day operations of the House of Hope. Support and guide staff to develop programs and resources. Formulate case plans promoting residents' independence and self-sufficiency. Ensure the safety of all women residents and staff members by implementing, monitoring, and enforcing the program objectives of communal living. Be responsible for the maintenance and safety of the building and grounds. Work in collaboration with Sojourner Truth Ministry Director and Board of Directors.

**Salary:** \$30,000

**Job Availability:** Immediately

**Job Title:** Case Manager

**Classification:** Part-Time: 20 hours to 32 hours

**Reports To:** House of Hope Supervisor

**Job Summary:** Conduct the intake process for the House of Hope residential program for homeless and at-risk women. Complete initial needs assessment. Orient residents to the program, and its requirements and consequences. Guide the resident in formulating a plan for working toward independence and self-sufficiency. Monitor the progress of the residents and assist with modifying the residents' individual plan when needed. Ensure the safety of all women residents by implementing, monitoring, and enforcing rules and regulations of communal living. Assist the House Supervisor with other tasks as required. Work in collaboration with the House of Hope Supervisor, Sojourner Truth Ministry Director and Board of Directors.

**Job Availability:** Immediately

**Contact:** Angelique Labadie-Cihanowyz  
Director, Sojourner Truth Ministries  
c.angelique09@gmail.com  
Office: 570-323-1797  
Cell: 610-428-5721

**HELPING OUR COMMUNITY**



**W**e are one of the non-prof-its who are part of Raise the Region again this year!

It is from 6 p.m. on Wednesday March 10<sup>th</sup> to 11:59 p.m. on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

As we celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, consider making an Anniversary donation of at least \$75. Whatever amount you give, know that you support all our ministries, and that we appreciate you! Your donation is always more with the sponsors help and also thanks to those who choose to pay the costs associated with your credit card.

**Thrivent:** Did you know? United Churches of Lycoming County is an approved organization of Thrivent Financial's CHOICE® dollar program? Thrivent Choice® can have a tremendous impact on our ministry and outreach. Eligible Thrivent Financial members: Please show your appreciation for us by directing your Choice Dollars to United Churches of Lycoming County. The individual recommendations you make through Choice Dollars can make a profound impact on our ministry. To learn more, visit [www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) or contact: Pam Markle Hansen, RICP,ChFC, CLU, Certified Kingdom Advisor at 570-916-3143 (Mobile and Text), [Pam.hansen@thrivent.com](mailto:Pam.hansen@thrivent.com).

**Vaccines:** LCHIC regularly gathers information on regional vaccine sites. Please visit them at [lchic.org](http://lchic.org). UPMC has begun to register people for vaccine appointments online. Eligible individuals in Phase 1A (not just those 85-years-old and above) should phone 844-876-2822 or use this link: [https://vaccine.upmc.com/?utm\\_source=upmc.com&utm\\_medium=internal&utm\\_campaign=covid-vaccine&utm\\_content=vaccine-page&\\_ga=2.268606577.1255332686.1614008097-2049946249.1613791369](https://vaccine.upmc.com/?utm_source=upmc.com&utm_medium=internal&utm_campaign=covid-vaccine&utm_content=vaccine-page&_ga=2.268606577.1255332686.1614008097-2049946249.1613791369)

**The Earth Keeper Grant** via UMCOR is continuing through May. More biodegradable, compostable and recyclable non plastic and foam items for take-out have been ordered and will be distributed to area Nursing Centers and local independent food services. This has been an ongoing project of the Christian Social Concerns Committee. Contact Gail Landers, 570-337-1661 for more information.

*April 22, 2021 is Earth Day  
April 30, 2021 is Arbor Day*

**The Shoe Express**, housed at the West End Christian Community Center: 901 Diamond St, Williamsport, PA, will be reopening on April 17th from 10-12. If you know anyone that might benefit from this program which offers new shoes and socks to local kids, please help get the word out. Children from toddler through school age are welcome to come with a parent or guardian. We never know how many we will have, but we will be advertising a bit more prior to this start up, so would appreciate a number of additional volunteers. We would like you to obtain Volunteer Clearances (PA Criminal and PA Child Abuse) since we are working with children. The website for instructions to obtain these clearances (no cost) is printed below. Please call the Jacobs' at 570-323-4627 if you are planning to volunteer or if you have questions. Donations of new kid's size shoes and socks are also appreciated. Thanks so much!

'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you did it for Me.'- Matthew 25:40

[https://susumc.org/files/resources/policies/safe\\_sanctuaries/Safe%20Sanctuaries\\_PROCEDURES%20FOR%20CLEARANCES%20volunteer.pdf](https://susumc.org/files/resources/policies/safe_sanctuaries/Safe%20Sanctuaries_PROCEDURES%20FOR%20CLEARANCES%20volunteer.pdf)

**St. Lawrence Parish Activity Committee Lenten Soup Sale:** Tomato and Vegetable soup is scheduled for Saturday, March 13TH and Sunday, March 14TH 2021, cost: \$8 per quart. You can order by calling: Dianne Fisher 570-322-3278 OR Judy Champion 570-323-6202 OR e-mail Dianne Fisher [Actsoffaith@yahoo.com](mailto:Actsoffaith@yahoo.com) with your soup order. Include your name and your phone number. You can pay at pick up. You can pick up at the Saint Lawrence Church Hall or at Saint Boniface Priest's Garage after Mass Saturday or Sunday. You can also arrange pick up at St. Lawrence Church Hall Saturday March 13th from 10am to noon. If you need your soup delivered, just let us know by calling Dianne or Judy and we will arrange that.

**Christian Mental Health Support Group:** Providing Christ centered support to the mentally ill and their families. They now meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm at West End Christian Community Center corner of West. 4<sup>th</sup> and Diamond Streets in Williamsport. The next meeting is March 2<sup>nd</sup> and the topic will be "Learning to Relax". Each meeting is broken into two segments. The first part addresses the topic of the meeting. The second part focuses on current problems anyone in the group may be facing. For more information, call 607.432.4926.