

UNITED CHURCHES' NEWS

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UNITED CHURCHES OF LYCOMING COUNTY

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*The Churches
Serving
Lycoming County*

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Dream Week Activities

Sponsored by the Beloved Community Council

Saturday, January 14 at 10:00 a.m. - Kick Off at Sojourner Truth Ministries: Dream Week will kick off with a meal and service provided by United Churches of Lycoming County at Sojourner Truth Ministries, located at 501 High Street, Williamsport. We will be preparing and serving a meal to the sojourners and we will be delivering a message on unity. Anyone interested in assisting at this event can contact Tammey Aichner at director@uclc.org.

Monday, January 16 at 12:00 p.m. - Peace Walk: The Peace Walk begins at the Jackie Robinson statue on the corner of Third and Market Streets, Williamsport, with a few words from Dr. Nate Woods of Pennsylvania College of Technology. Participants will depart on an approximately one-mile loop and return to the statue. STEP AmeriCorps will also be partnering with the James V. Brown Library to provide a story time, craft, and Peace March for children within the library at 10:30 a.m.

Dream Week: January 15th-21st

Wednesday, January 18 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - A Night of Expressions of Hope for Our Beloved Community: The Dream Week Committee invites the public to join Lycoming College for a night of shared expressions that inspire hope and community. This open mic event is open to all students and community members to share songs, dance, letters, and spoken word in celebration of the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thursday, January 19 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Dinner and Discussion: Join us at the Pennsylvania College of Technology's Professional Development Center for a poverty simulation. The simulation will help participants understand the impacts of poverty on everyday life. The program, led by trained facilitators from the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, will feature activities and a discussion centered on structural inequality and empathy. The event is open to the public.

Friday, January 20 from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - We Have a Dream: A Community Vision Board: Students and community members will gather to share their dreams for their community, country, or the world. Participants can express their dreams through words, drawings, and paintings. Art supplies will be provided.

For a full listing of events, please visit stepcorp.org/mlk.

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Shepherd of the Streets

Rev. Mark Brumbach

570-322-6538

shepherd@uclc.org

Just a simple...

...for all the ways you are you...and your support
in 2022!

Volunteers Needed!

Prison Visitation- Both the Pennsylvania Prison Society and Prisoner Visitation and Support are in need of volunteers. PPS visits at Muncy

Women's Prison and the County Prison. PVS visits at Allenwood Federal Prison. Anyone who would like more information please contact Jim Foran jimstjosephtheworker@gmail.com or call 570-916-6277. "I was in prison and you visited me" Matthew 25:35-40.

**The United Churches of Lycoming
County Office will be closed on
Monday, January 16th, for Martin
Luther King, Jr. Day.**

Book Study

You are invited to a Book Study on "Invisible Men," by Flores A. Forbes. There will be 5 sessions starting on Thursday, January 12, 2023. The discussions will continue for the subsequent 4 Thursdays. This discussion series will be facilitated by La-Verna Fountain. The author will join the discussion for the final 2 sessions.

Participants should come prepared to have their thinking challenged and to challenge the views of the author and facilitators. The 13th Amendment had a dual purpose and has successfully fulfilled its duality. The Three Strikes legislation has had unintended (or intended) consequences. Black men, black families, and others have paid a steep price based upon the laws of the land.

Participants will be asked to read a controversial book, Invisible Men, written by

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former Black Panther, Flores A. Forbes. During the last two weeks of the five-week session, they will have the opportunity to engage directly with him regarding his viewpoints and experiences. Prior to speaking with Mr. Forbes, participants will view a discussion on the 13th Amendment and its impact.

Register to join at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/484998532667>.

Sojourner Truth Ministries

Happy New Year friends! In the last year, we have seen some real transformation in the lives of some of our sojourners. A gentleman, in recovery, has gone from homeless and unemployed to gainfully employed with his own

Poverty: A Faith-Based Response

Christian Social Concerns Committee

Trust in the Lord and do good" (Ps 37:3). Let us make a New Year's resolution to strive for justice on behalf of those experiencing hunger and poverty!

Poverty in the USA – Over the years efforts have been made to adjust the poverty thresholds to accommodate minuscule standard-of-living increases. But this outdated multiplier is still used today to determine the U.S. poverty line. **The 2022 poverty line for a family of four in America is \$27,750.** (Source: www.thehill.com)

Hunger hotspots: Famine and near-famine:

- The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reported in October 2022 that humanitarian actions are critical to "prevent further starvation and death" in six countries of highest concern—Afghanistan, Yemen, Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Somalia.
- People in each of these six countries are either already

apartment. The miracle of it all is that he maintained his sobriety through his struggles relying on God's grace and strength. He faithfully comes to the soup kitchen and we have supported him and guided him beyond a meal. What a blessing! There are many ways in which lives have been touched at STM and there is more to do. We know our God will do big things and we are ready to be his hands and feet. May you all be blessed in the new year and please come join us for a meal and fellowship!

Friends, currently we are in need of bleach and latex gloves (size large and extra large). Please bring your donations to Sojourner Truth Ministries at 501 High Street, Williamsport. Thank you all for your generosity.

facing starvation, or living with crisis-level food insecurity in situations likely to worsen further.

- The most recent WFP-FAO humanitarian outlook indicates that globally, about 45 million people are living in areas with high levels of severe hunger and malnutrition, levels signaling that there is a risk that conditions will worsen to the point of famine. People on the verge of famine can be found in 37 countries around the world. (Source: Bread for the World www.bread.org)

TAKE ACTION: Consider making a donation to the World Food Programme. Go to secure.wfpusa.org/donate/main-website.

Progress against hunger in 2022 – Bread for the World, a Christian anti-hunger and poverty organization, reports:

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The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act was signed into law in October 2022. This legislation scales up the prevention and treatment of global malnutrition and brings strategic vision, coordination, effectiveness, and accountability to the U.S. government's existing global nutrition efforts in a way that supports and partners with local and country-led nutrition strategies. Because of this legislation, U.S. government aid will better reach women and children with life-saving nutrition interventions.

In April, Bread for the World secured nearly 180 signatures from Republican and Democrat members of Congress on an **internal-to-Congress letter urging the House Appropriations Committee to fund global nutrition at \$300 million in FY23 appropriations**. The letter urges \$1.1 billion for the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) account—which includes \$290 million for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance—and \$300 million for the Nutrition Account within the Global Health Programs account at USAID. Adequate funding for the MCH and Nutrition accounts is critical to preserving effective, evidence-based, poverty-focused assistance that saves lives and helps strengthen economies in developing countries.

In July, USAID Administrator Samantha Power announced a **U.S. commitment of \$200 million to treat children with severe malnutrition**. This is the largest single investment in malnutrition treatment in history. The \$200 million committed by USAID will provide a critical increase in the amount of RUTF available, allowing UNICEF to reach an additional 2.4

Food Pantry

Mona Rundio, Coordinator

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Happy New Year and many prayers to you, your family, and your congregations for growth and prosperity in 2023. Though there are still hard times amongst us, and yet more to come ahead, never stop believing; for through struggles we gain strength, love, and patience! God is always working for the best result in His people!

We are so thankful to ALL the local churches and individuals who, during this hard year, still were able to provide to the Food Pantry. The client numbers are increasing due to the hard times and economy, along with illnesses that are preventing some people from working. Keep all those in our community in your prayers that they gain courage and be

million children suffering from severe wasting in countries with the greatest need in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region. (For more visit www.bread.org)

Habitat for Humanity

Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity seeks a people oriented, compassionate Program Manager to lead Family Selection, Volunteer Relations, and some Development responsibilities. Full time, Monday- Friday, minimal evenings and weekends, \$40,000 annually with vacation, retirement and health insurance supplement. Apply at <https://www.indeed.com/viewjob?jk=50fd605a14e844da> or email duane.hershberger@lycominghabitat.org .

Does your congregation need someone to speak Sunday mornings? Duane Hershberger, Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity Executive Director and a former pastor, is available to share gospel messages rooted in his thirty years of local and international Habitat for Humanity and various church work. Contact duane.hershberger@lycominghabitat.org .

Deadline

All information for the February Edition of the UCLC Newsletter is due February 1, 2023. Please email your submission to director@uclc.org .

less fearful, for God Our Lord is with them! We continue to follow all the restrictions and requirements in order to keep everyone safe and well! Along with the food, we are giving each, once a month, a gift card to a grocery store when they are donated to us.

Our address is 202 East Third St, Williamsport at the side entrance.

Items needed are as follows:

- Grocery Store Gift Cards (\$10) or checks made out to UCFP
- Canned meats/veggies/fruits (with pop-tops)
- Healthy snacks
- Cereal/oatmeal
- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo, salt/pepper)
- Juices/drinks

Our hours:

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Mondays: 9-11 for Donations
Tuesdays: 10:15-2:00 Clients
Thursdays: 10:15-12:00 Clients

As a reminder, when the Williamsport School District closes/or goes remote due to inclement weather, the Food Pantry also will close for the day. If there is any question, please call the Pantry. Have a blessed 2023!

**Follow us at
"United Churches of Lycoming County"**

GriefShare

The 13-week cycle of GriefShare began on Monday, December 26, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. at Redeemer Lutheran Church. Any adult who is grieving the loss of a loved one is

Church Women United

I pray everyone had a wonderful Christmas season. Our women distributed 875 Christmas Stockings to 8 nursing homes this past Christmas and gave 50 children stockings to MSCI in Muncy, through Yokefellows.

Our next meeting will be held January 23, 2023 at First Church of Christ (Disciples), 1250 Almond Street, Williamsport, at 1:30 p.m. We will be planning our 2023 Celebrations. Our first Celebration will be World Day of Prayer on March 3, 2023. Our May Friendship Day will be held May 5, 2023 and World Community Day will be held November 3, 2023. Mark your calendars!

We are currently in need of lap robes (36"x45"), walker bags, and catheter bag donations. Please contact Pat Wittig, psw342000@yahoo.com, for patterns or to schedule a time to drop them off.

Church Women United of Lycoming County welcomes all women to come join our celebrations, and our monthly meetings which are held on the Fourth

Monday of January thru May and August thru November. We would love for you to join us.

Yvonne Shenuski

encouraged to stop in and receive God's gift of hope. There is no cost involved, but donations are welcome. Call Barb Horn if you have any questions at 50.974.3744. Please register at www.GriefShare.org. Redeemer Lutheran Church is located at 1101 Washington Boulevard, Williamsport.

United Churches of Lycoming County's 12th Annual Golf Tournament

Save the date! Our 12th Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Friday, September 29th, 2023 at White Deer Golf Course. There will be a 9:00 a.m. shotgun start on the Vintage Course. Prizes, good food, and great fellowship all await you in your support of our ministry! We look forward to seeing you there!

President, Church Women United of Lycoming County

Souper Bowl of Caring

For over 30 years, the Souper Bowl of Caring movement has been inspiring people across the nation to tackle hunger in their local communities. Tackle Hunger's core initiative is to endeavor to create awareness and action so all food charities and feeding programs have critical resources to meet the needs of

the food insecure. How can you, your youth group, or your congregation help? Visit www.tacklehunger.org for some creative ideas and promotional materials in advance of the Big Event, February 12th. Consider donating or volunteering with any of the agencies lifted up in this newsletter! One person can make a difference in the life of another. One meal can give hope to someone who feels like no one sees them.

Rise Up Village Bakery

The Rise Up Village Bakery has received several unexpected and generous donations. From these funds we have added a second 20-quart stand mixer which will improve our efficiency. We also have new anti-fatigue floor mats which will bring some comfort for those who stand long hours preparing the breads and pastries. As a result of the TV news broadcast we have received the blessing of a monthly donation of various flours from Ardent Mills from Pocono Summit, PA. We are humbled by these donations and the support for the bakery.

Beginning January 4, we added a weekly "prep and training day" on Wednesdays. We also use this time to bake special orders, such as donations for church events. Mondays continue

United Campus Ministry

Shelley Litz, Coordinator
ucm@ucl.org

"...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:31

to be our baking day for pre-ordered items. To receive weekly notification of what we will have available for Monday purchase please sign up for our email list at riseupvillagebakery@gmail.com.

We now have four trainees and a roster of 10 volunteers. As we expand our time commitment we need even more help. Please contact us for information about how you can be a part of this ministry. Also, if your church is having a special event and wishes to partner with us, please be in touch.

Other ways you can assist with the ministry include:

- Donating staples such as white and brown sugar, unsalted butter, and eggs
- Washing aprons and towels
- Praying for our trainees and volunteers

As we begin this excited by all the the bakery. To our project stop Church at 202

New Year we are possibilities for learn more about by New Covenant East Third Street (Academy Street entrance) on Mondays and Wednesdays or call Marty at 570-295-8434. You can also follow us on Facebook.

"Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading." - Oswald Chambers

Happy New Year! As the scripture illustrates, it is that expectant hope in the Lord that renews our strength and helps us persevere. The beginning of a new semester at Penn College marks a renewed hope in what God can do in leading others to Him through United Campus Ministry. I am looking forward to meeting new students in the classroom and on campus to share the good news of the gospels and invite them to participate in UCM. I also invite you to participate by supporting our ministry with your prayers. I humbly ask you to pray for our current students in UCM and for those students searching for fulfillment that we know only our Lord and Savior can provide. Please pray that we discern God's direction this semester in choosing topics

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for Bible studies, worship events on and off campus, and fundraising efforts in our community. All glory, honor, and praise belong to Him!

I also ask for your support in our annual Spring Soup Fundraiser. An order form is available in this newsletter and will also appear in the February newsletter. A variety of soups will be available again this year, and orders can be picked up at the UCLC office or delivered to your home on either March 24th or 25th (please refer to enclosed form for more details).

As you journey through 2023, I pray that you hold these words close in your heart: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6). May you feel the power of God's presence and peace throughout this year and always.

In His Service,
Shelley

Interfaith Dialogue Commission

Join us on February 20th for a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. See the enclosed flier! Reserve your seat today!

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

For over 110 years, Christians have observed the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; eight days in January set apart for us to join Christ in praying "that they may all be one." The theme for 2023 is based on Isaiah 1:12-18, "Do good; seek justice." It was chosen by the Minnesota Council of Churches. More than ever, in these difficult times, we need a light that shines in the darkness and that light, Christians proclaim, has been manifested in Jesus Christ.

Some suggestions for you to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity within your church community:

- Worship daily in different churches of the community using the traditional prayer forms of the host congregation. If possible or permitted, include in each service leaders, readers, and choirs from the various participating congregations. Follow the service with refreshments and fellowship.
- Where joint worship cannot be shared, have pulpit and/or choir exchanges, observing the norms of reciprocity of the participating churches.
- Include activities and events of neighborhood churches and congregations in your Sunday bulletin. Ask the other churches to do the same for your events. Encourage attendance and participation in one another's events,

mindful of the norms of each community.

- Organize tours of area churches conducted by guides who can share each church's art, architecture, history, organization, liturgical traditions, membership profile, outreach programs, etc. Conclude with a time for refreshments and fellowship.
- Launch a speaker series, featuring theologians, ecumenical specialists/staff, spiritual directors, or social justice leaders.
- Schedule joint Bible Study sessions around this year's theme. Consider using the daily scripture guide and questions for reflection for these gatherings.
- Ask representatives of ecumenical groups, agencies, communities of prayer, and interchurch marriage and family support groups to share materials at an evening program.
- Attend the Ecumenical Celebration of God's Word on January 19th at 12:10 p.m. in Saint Peter's Cathedral, Scranton. A luncheon will follow. RSVP by calling 570.207.2213.

Additional resources for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are available from the Greymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute, www.geii.org.